

Blue Smoke

Shining a light on UN elections & senior appointments

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Chapeau

(Add your concise, concrete, and action-oriented language for the Chapeau)

- Now, more than ever, the public needs confidence in the UN. In order to foster this trust we must ensure the UN's leadership is accountable.
- "We, the peoples" have a right to know who is exercising the power vested in the United Nations, and how they got there - a principle enshrined in the UN Charter and multiple UN General Assembly resolutions adopted in through the Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly.
 - Article 100 (2) of the Charter seeks to establish a truly independent international service which member states must not attempt to influence. Article 101 (3) states that staff should be recruited "on as wide a geographical basis as possible."
 - The most recent AHWG Resolution (A/RES/77/335) confirmed that it is entirely inappropriate for certain senior positions to be ring-fenced for nationals from certain states. It asks the secretariat for increased transparency relating to forthcoming appointments and the selection processes involved.
- The Pact for the Future should make a strong call for accountable, transparent senior leadership appointments - such appointments must be, and be seen to be, conducted using an open, inclusive and merit-based approach.

(see Chapter 5 for specific proposals)

Chapter I. Sustainable development and financing for development

(Add your organization's concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 1)

Chapter II. International peace and security

(Add your organization's concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 2)

Chapter III. Science, technology and innovation and digital cooperation

(Add your organization's concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 3)

Chapter IV. Youth and future generations

(Add your organization's concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 4)

Chapter V. Transforming global governance

(Add your organization's concise, concrete, and action-oriented recommendations for Chapter 5)

- UN leaders must be accountable to those they serve and must stay true to their independent role established by the UN Charter.
- The appointment of senior UN leaders must be inclusive, merit-based and transparent.
- Appointments must also be fair, ensuring that geographic diversity is promoted and doors are opened for those who currently find them closed. No position should be considered to be the exclusive property of any state.
- Building on Our Common Agenda, as well as the work of the High Level Board on Multilateralism which highlighted the need for a transformation of the way IFI's appoint their leaders, we need a set of principles to guide UN senior appointments which should be implemented across the UN secretariat, championed by member states and promoted by all actors to the wider UN system:
 - **FAIR:** All UN appointments should be guided by principles of fairness. All UN appointments should follow established best practice, with a job description, timely advertisement, wide circulation, an appropriate process of vetting, and a fair, competitive, proportionate and rigorous selection process to ensure that the best possible candidate is chosen.
 - **INCLUSIVE:** All UN appointments should be open to the most qualified candidates without regard for nationality, background, race, sexuality, gender, or religion. All UN appointments should be publicly advertised in good time with the advert circulated to all member states, to civil society, and in conventional and social media.
 - **TRANSPARENT:** The public has a right to know key relevant details of any senior appointment at the UN: when they were appointed, when their contract starts, how long their contract lasts for, if and when their contract is renewed, how the post is funded, and when and how to apply when the post falls vacant. This information should be consolidated in one readily accessible online location, and press releases should be issued whenever an appointment is made or a contract renewed.
 - **NO MONOPOLIES:** No UN role should be de facto ring-fenced for the nationals of any UN member state, the institutional practice of placing emphasis on the nationality of appointees should be curtailed, and the Secretary-General should be called to give account whenever appointing someone of the same nationality as their predecessor.
 - **GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY:** A fair distribution based on gender, region and background should be achieved at all levels of UN appointments. The UN and member states should proactively invest in removing barriers to participation by less well-represented and marginalized groups.
 - **NO LOBBYING:** States should desist from seeking to influence UN decisions on senior appointments, in keeping with Article 100(2) of the UN Charter.

- **RETHINKING STATE BACKING:** In general, states should refrain from backing candidacies for senior UN roles, publicly or otherwise. While states can play a positive role in ensuring that job vacancies are widely circulated and talent nurtured, they should not seek to influence UN-led application processes. Where an appointment requires nominations from member states, states should be willing to support the best candidate for the job, not just their own nationals and states should be encouraged to work together in jointly nominating a candidate.
- **GENDER EQUALITY:** Acknowledging the huge disparities that persist across the UN system with respect to the fair representation of women, the UN and member states must play a proactive role in combating gender discrimination. This should include equal or greater than equal representation at all stages of the recruitment process and within the hiring team, as well as due regard given to exclusionary practices built into employment conditions, working methods and selection criteria.
- **STAKEHOLDER INCLUSION:** The UN serves the people, not member states. Whenever the UN consults with states it should also consult with the people, including civil society representatives and those stakeholders who stand to be affected by the mandate of the role in question as part of the recruitment process.
- **MAINSTREAMING PROGRESS:** The independence of UN Specialized Agencies and related international organizations must not be used as an excuse to avoid accountability and transparency. All parts of the UN system should seek to emulate or better the best practice laid down by the UN Secretariat with respect to senior appointments.

Note to Germany and Namibia: The principles outlined above have been widely celebrated and promoted by a large network of civil society organisations - for more information see [here](#).