

## Make the UN great again?

*Special issue on  
the appointment  
of a new  
Secretary-General*



**WITH** *Mark Malloch-Brown on the Secretary-General's first 100 days in office / Shazia Rafi & Yvonne Terlingen on the push for a female UN chief / Stephen Browne & Thomas G. Weiss on making the process more transparent / Richard Gowan on what's in it for the UK / Ten things the candidates should be saying*

Guardian Live, UNA-UK and Future  
UN Development Project present:

## The next UN secretary general: meet the candidates

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EMBASSY OF DENMARK  
LONDON

*For 70 years, the decision on  
who gets the UN's top job  
has taken place in secret,  
dominated by the Security  
Council's permanent members  
and subject to backroom deals.*

UNA-UK's "1 for 7 Billion" campaign has transformed the process. Together with our partners around the world we fought for more transparency, for merit to be the main consideration, and for all UN member states to have a say in choosing the best possible person to lead the UN at this challenging time.

Our efforts have led to the most open process in the UN's history, with candidates holding hearings in the General Assembly. We also held three public debates with candidates, so that their most important constituency – the world's seven billion people – could make their voices heard.

Please help us to continue pushing for a strong, credible and effective UN. You can become a member by visiting [www.una.org.uk/join](http://www.una.org.uk/join) and make a donation at [www.una.org.uk/donate](http://www.una.org.uk/donate)

*From left to right: Igor Lukšić, Vuk Jeremić and António Guterres tell the Guardian's Mark Rice-Oxley why they're running for the UN's top job* © UNA-UK/Zoe Norfolk



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# New World

2 // 2016 // [www.una.org.uk](http://www.una.org.uk)

Bringing news and comment on the UN to the UK

## New World online

Included in this issue – a series of comment pieces on priorities for the next Secretary-General:

### Peace operations

Sarah von Billerbeck, University of Reading

### Climate change

Camilla Born, E3G

### Civil society

Sylvia Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, One World Trust

### Human rights

Marc Limon, Universal Rights Group

### Girls' empowerment

Zara Rapoport, Plan International

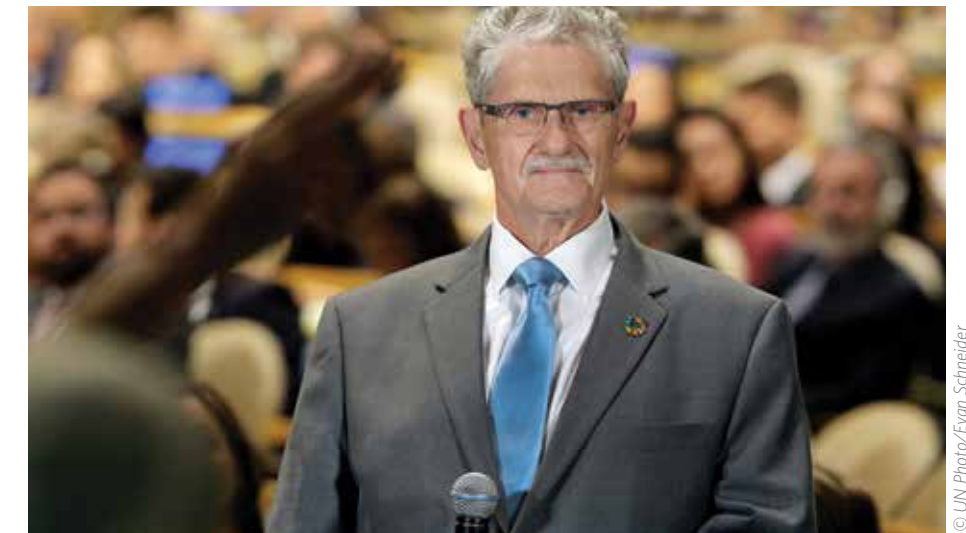
### Nuclear disarmament

Alyn Ware, UNFOLD Zero

And much more at:  
[www.una.org.uk/magazine](http://www.una.org.uk/magazine)

*New World – required reading for global citizens from all walks of life*

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© UN Photo/Evan Schneider

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## Leading the charge

**Natalie Samarasinghe,**  
*UNA-UK's Executive Director,*  
*on the Secretary-General race*

In October, the UN is expected to appoint its new chief. For the first time ever, thanks in part to UNA-UK and partners, we know who the candidates are – see p. 12 and updates on [www.1for7billion.org](http://www.1for7billion.org).

*1 for 7 Billion* was founded by UNA-UK, the World Federalist Movement, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung New York and Avaaz to transform the way in which the UN selects its leader. For the past 70 years, the process has been opaque, dominated by the Security Council's permanent members (P5), and subject to backroom deals and conventions such as regional rotation which served to shrink the talent pool.

Our aim was to institute a transparent, inclusive and merit-based process – an important end in itself as well as a crucial step in addressing worrying global trends: a resurgence in big power tensions and in populist movements, as people grow increasingly frustrated with political leaders and institutions.

With instability and insularity on the rise, many governments have narrowed their horizons and shied away from investing in global solutions. As a result, the UN, more in demand than ever, is overstretched and under-funded. It will not survive without concerted support. This must come from states and from the public. But the next Secretary-General will have to lead the charge.

So our campaign set out proposals to help find the best person for the job, and worked to build support for them in New York and outside the UN bubble, in capitals and communities. By 2015, we had built a movement involving the majority of UN member states and some 200 million supporters. Later that year, the General Assembly adopted a groundbreaking resolution that, with leadership from General Assembly President Mogens Lykketoft, saw many of our proposals realised: a public list of candidates, their CVs and vision statements; and broadcast candidate



**ABOVE: Figurines of G20 leaders made by artist Wu Xiaoli for the 2016 Hangzhou Summit**  
© Long Wei/VCG via Getty Images

dialogues with all UN member states, allowing for some civil society input.

Of course, the job is not yet done. We are still pursuing key campaign priorities, such as a non-renewable term of office, which would free the next postholder from the politics of re-appointment. Perhaps more importantly, we don't yet know to what extent, if any, our efforts will cut through P5 politics.

If nothing else, though, we have managed to raise the cost of them making a bad appointment. The P5 are not immune to the views of the wider UN membership. Their acquiescence to the new process might have reflected a genuine desire for reform on the part of some, but it was also a realpolitik calculation of the benefits of permitting changes that did not actually diminish their power.

And the new process has raised the bar. If the Secretary-General is to support the UN in addressing the existential challenges we face, such as climate change and big power conflict, then she or he must be able to inspire people, to bring them together and to set out a vision based on what needs to happen, not what people want to hear – an antidote to state short-termism.

But she or he also needs to be a good negotiator and mediator, someone who will be taken seriously by the P5. Whoever

is appointed will need to choose carefully when to play the role of secular pope and when to work behind the scenes. It is a fiendishly difficult balancing act but the new selection process, which involved appealing to the public which has no vote whilst not alienating the P5, has been good practice.

This issue of *New World* makes proposals for how the next UN chief should approach these challenges – from Mark Malloch-Brown's manifesto for his or her "first 100 days" (p. 8) to my tongue-in-cheek list of UN home truths (p. 21). In our feature, Stephen Browne and Thomas G. Weiss explain this year's innovations (pp. 10–15), Yasmin Kamel explores online campaigning (p. 9) and Shazia Rafi and Yvonne Terlingen debate the merits of the push for the first female Secretary-General (pp. 18–19).

Online, we feature UN to-do lists on issues from human rights to disarmament – a precursor to *1 for 7 Billion's* people's agenda for the UN, which will be presented to the next Secretary-General.

The next few weeks are likely to see candidates dropping out, at least one new contender throw her hat into the ring, and colour-coded ballots in the Security Council (p. 10). The latest news, rumours and commentary will be available at [una.org.uk](http://una.org.uk). ●

## Get in touch

UNA-UK welcomes your thoughts and comments on this issue of *New World*, and your suggestions for future issues.

You can email the editor, Natalie Samarasinghe, at [samarasinghe@una.org.uk](mailto:samarasinghe@una.org.uk), tweet @Natalie\_UNA or @UNAUK or write to **UNA-UK, 3 Whitehall Court, London SW1A 2EL.**

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*New World* – required reading for global citizens from all walks of life.



## Leading the charge

**Stewart Wood (Lord Wood of Anfield),**  
*UNA-UK's Chair,*  
*on why we need your support*

It is an enormous privilege to take over from Sir Jeremy Greenstock as Chair of UNA-UK. I do so at a time when making the case for international cooperation and global citizenship, and British leadership of these values, has never been more important.

A quick look around the world reveals a catalogue of challenges – some long-standing and familiar, some more recent – that affect the interests of both our country and the global community. Economic fragility continues to threaten stability around the world, as do the perils of uncontrolled climate change. More recently, we have seen the spread of a new variety of international terrorism, and the emergence of the most serious displacement crisis since 1945. Civil wars in Yemen and Syria have brought unspeakable tragedy with no end in sight, and threaten to draw in countries not just from the region but around the world. Meanwhile, in the midst of these crises, the UK's decision to leave the European Union has created uncertainty about Britain's future commitment to wider international engagement.

These challenges have put a serious strain on both international institutions and faith in global cooperation. The story is not all bleak – for example, the Paris Agreement shows what is possible through ambition, hard work and compromise (see p. 28 for details of our new climate change publication). But those of us committed to the indispensability of partnership among the community of nations, and robust international organisations with authority and capacity to act, need a stronger voice now than for many decades.

I passionately believe that UNA-UK should lead the charge. We must be an organisation that focuses our attention on influencing decision-makers at home and abroad, combined with working hard to build the consensus for active internationalism

among the people of the UK. This will involve building on the best of our unique organisation – the energy of our members and supporters – but also adapting to changing times: by reaching out to engage new audiences, and developing a wider range of activities and events.

Under Jeremy and Natalie's leadership, UNA-UK showed with its *1 for 7 Billion* campaign how a lasting impact on the international stage can be achieved by focusing on a clear set of issues with defined goals. These campaigns can succeed when there is unity of purpose – from the team in the UNA-UK offices in London to members, supporters, students and friends in organisations with whom we work. We need to translate our faith in the value of internationalism into targeted ambitions for change, and dedicate our organisation to achieving them. Richard Nelmes talks on p. 25 about one such planned campaign.

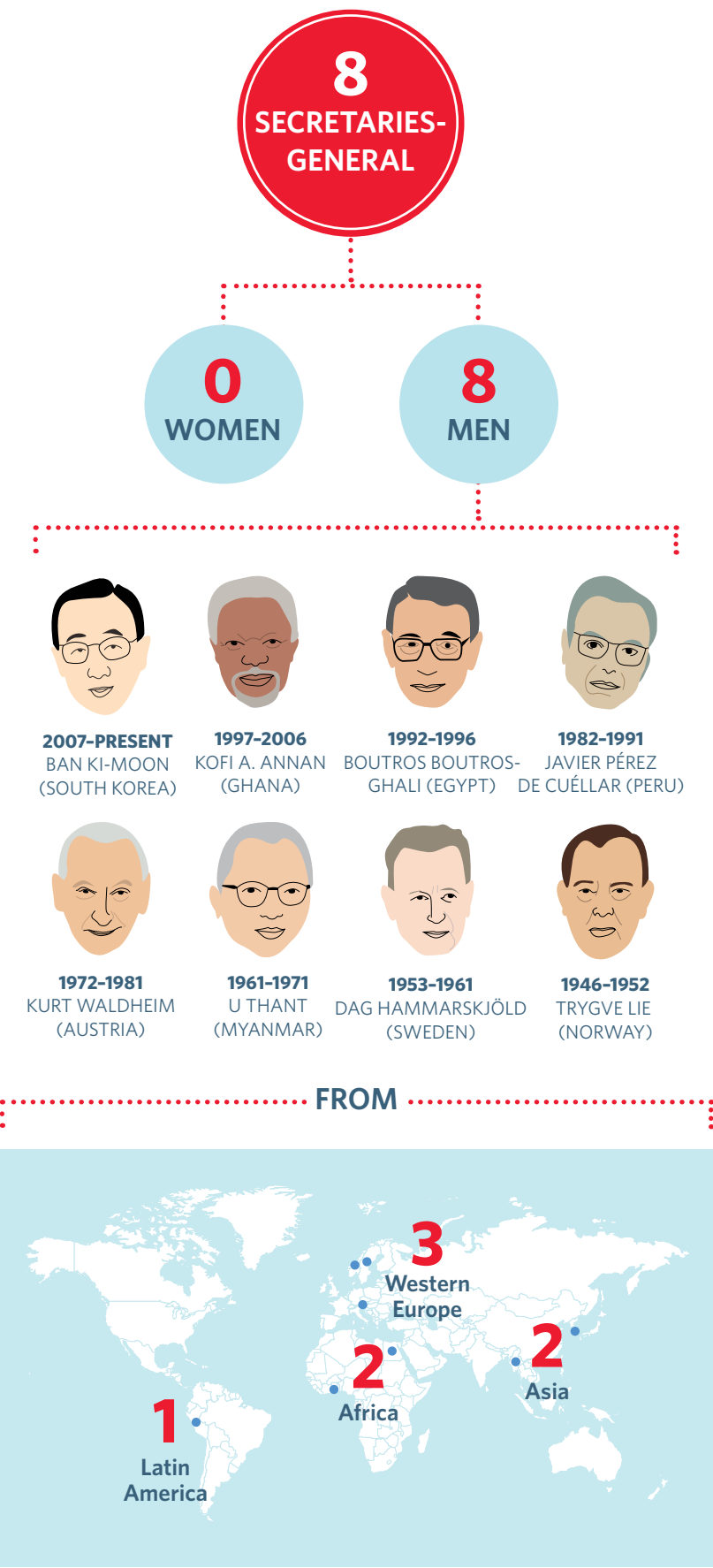
To make all this possible, however, UNA-UK needs continued financial support. I hope you will forgive me for the regularity with which I will ask you to provide that support, and to encourage others you know to do likewise. We are an organisation without corporate sponsorship and no financial support from the United Nations. If we are to survive and have an impact with new priorities and new campaigns, we will need this very practical help from you all, and to grow the base of donors to help fund our work. So, without apology, my call for your support begins here and now: you can go to [www.una.org.uk/donate](http://www.una.org.uk/donate) and help build our movement.

I know that you all share my enthusiasm for adapting to the next phase in UNA-UK's history, and I look forward to travelling around the country to meet many of you in the coming months. ●



The facts

New World lets facts and figures speak for themselves



ONE SEC-GEN

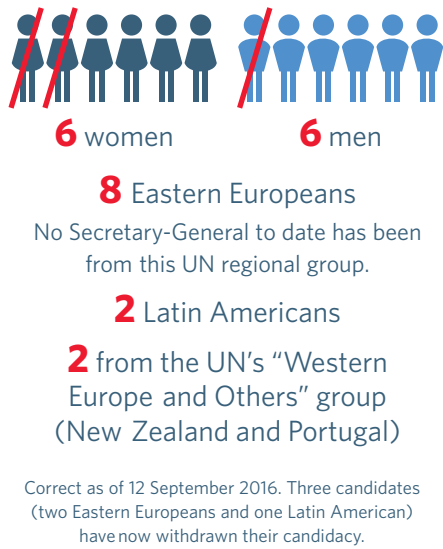
... was already working at the UN when appointed:  
**KOFI ANNAN**

... resigned, citing pressures from big powers:  
**TRYGVE LIE**

... died on duty:  
**DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD**  
*Last year the UN decided to investigate his death following decades of allegations that he was murdered.*

... was denied a second term through a US veto:  
**BOUTROS BOUTROS-GHALI**

2016 CANDIDATES



In 70 years, only **3 women** have been seriously considered as candidates:

-  **Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit** (India, 1953)
-  **Gro Harlem Brundtland** (Norway, 1991)
-  **Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga** (Latvia, 2006)

THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The UN Charter devotes just one sentence to the appointment process in Article 97:

*"The Secretary-General shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council."*

Original vision

This process was originally interpreted to mean the General Assembly would vote on multiple candidates. But in 1946, to promote post-war stability, the Assembly asked the Security Council to recommend just one candidate. Hence, the first Secretary-General, Trygve Lie, was elected by 46 votes to 3 in a secret ballot. After that first election, a number of informal practices evolved which led to an increasingly opaque process dominated by powerful states

PROCESS BEFORE 2015

CHARTER PROVISIONS: MUST DOS

- 1 To be nominated, a candidate must receive at least 9 affirmative votes in the Security Council (SC), with no veto by a permanent member (China, France, Russia, the UK and the US – the P5). The SC then forwards its recommendation to the General Assembly (GA)
- 2 The first-term limit for the postholder is five years with the option of a further five
- 3 Due regard should be given to regional rotation and gender equality

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS: WILL-DOS

- 1 The SC should put forward just one candidate to the GA
  - 2 The first-term limit for the postholder is five years with the option of a further five
  - 3 Due regard should be given to regional rotation and gender equality
- INFORMAL PRACTICES: HAVE-ALWAYS-DONES**
- 1 Nationals from the P5 are not nominated for the role, with candidates overwhelmingly from small or middle-ranking powers
  - 2 Since the 1990s, there has been an informal expectation that the post should be "rotated" regionally
  - 3 Postholders generally speak English and French, the two working languages of the UN Secretariat
  - 4 Postholders have generally been appointed for two terms of five years, although both the SC and GA could vary the term

A MORE TRANSPARENT PROCESS

2015

SEPTEMBER

The General Assembly adopts a resolution on a fairer, more inclusive process to appoint the next UN leader with:

- A broad timeline and selection criteria
- A strong call for merit to be the primary consideration, with due regard to gender and geographic balance
- The circulation of candidates' names and CVs
- Informal dialogues with candidates in the General Assembly

DECEMBER

The selection process is initiated by a joint letter sent to all UN member states by the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Security Council. Candidates' names, CVs and vision statements begin to be posted on the UN website.

2016

APRIL

The first round of candidate dialogues are broadcast on UNTV, with questions from states and a few from civil society. UNA-UK holds the first-ever candidate debate in New York.

JUNE

The second round of dialogues and second UNA-UK debate (in London) take place.

JULY

The third round of dialogues and third UNA-UK debate (in New York) take place. Al Jazeera broadcasts a 'townhall' meeting with candidates.

The Security Council holds the first of its 'straw polls' – informal ballots – to determine its recommendation to the Council. The 1 for 7 Billion campaign for a more transparent process calls on journalists to monitor any deal-making between candidates and states.

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER

Three further straw polls are held and topped, like the first, by Portugal's António Guterres.

OCTOBER

The Council is expected to hold further straw polls, with permanent members given coloured ballots so that the Council can see whether a prospective candidate could be vetoed in a formal vote. The formal vote on the recommendation is also expected to take place this month, under the Russian Council Presidency. It has been the Council's practice to include the term limit in its recommendation.






OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

The General Assembly will take a decision on the recommendation. Although a simple majority vote is stipulated, in the past the Assembly has made the decision by acclamation.

Many states have made it clear that they are prepared to reject a poor recommendation, as this would not respect the more open and inclusive selection process. Several are also thought to be considering varying the term limit. The 1 for 7 Billion campaign has called for a non-renewable term of office, to give the next Secretary-General the political space to take decisive action.

What difference can a UN Secretary-General make?

The Secretary-General's powers are limited, but, despite this, an effective leader can manoeuvre within the political constraints to great effect:

-  Trygve Lie initiated the first UN peacekeeping mission: military observers to monitor the armistice agreement between Israel and its neighbours in 1948
-  U Thant played a crucial role in resolving the Cuban Missile Crisis
-  Kofi Annan's deal with pharmaceutical companies widened access to HIV/AIDS treatment
-  Dag Hammarskjöld's diplomacy averted major conflict in Suez and Hungary. He is credited with developing the 'good offices' function of the UN
-  Ban Ki-moon used his moral authority and platform to champion LGBTI rights



**Mark Malloch-Brown on the Secretary-General's first 100 days**

**For politicians elected with a mandate derived from their manifesto, the first 100 days are a frenetic burst of activity intended to put early momentum behind its enactment. A new Secretary-General (SG) is in a different position. She, or he, has been chosen as the consensus candidate best able to bridge differences between member states – and must work with whatever elusive alignment of interests can be found to nudge the organisation forward. She is not a politician with an election victory under their belt but a civil servant with 193 stropky masters.**

The best SGs have eventually escaped that cage and gone over the heads of ambassadors, and sometimes even their presidents, to win the equivalent of a popular global mandate. Both Kofi Annan and Dag Hammarskjöld fit this model but it took time to create that trust and authority. First they quietly built their standing within the UN community and then they reached wider.

The more open nature of the selection process this time around (which UNA-UK played a key role in securing) may give the new SG a bit more independence and authority, at least initially, but the cautious nature of the answers in the General Assembly candidate hearings shows they are still officials cramped by the contradictory demands of their complex constituency rather than red-blooded politicians campaigning for a majority.

So the SG's first 100 days must lay the seeds for the 117 months that are likely to follow if the practice of two five-year terms is maintained. This is a marathon not a sprint.

Even if an SG does not have the privilege of a manifesto they should know their planned legacy before they start, bearing in mind that they will always be thrown off course and have to adjust. Here, then, is my 'secret manifesto' for the next SG.

First, win back the space. At the moment your organisation is micro-managed by governments. You have to arrive at a new bargain where, with your coaxing, they set the objectives for the UN but give you the freedom to manage the allocation of resources against those

objectives. They retain, of course, the power to hold you accountable for results.

Second, make the UN a 21st-century organisation: networked and distributed rather than New York-centric and multi-stakeholder, so that civil society, business, religious and social leaders can be at the table when they are part of the coalition to solve a problem.

***Win back the space. At the moment your organisation is micro-managed by states. You have to arrive at a new bargain... And recover the UN's place in peace and security.***

Third, boost staff morale by opening up this exciting new way of working to them – at the moment many feel trapped and demoralised. In the longer term you need to restore meritocratic staff promotion, rescue it from political interference, and build a gender and geographically representative staff that is fit for the changing purposes of the organisation.

Fourth, recover the UN's central place in international security. In recent years it's been driven off this agenda and reduced to championing environmental and development issues. The world is a very dangerous place in 2016 because major global and regional powers cannot agree on very much. This can paralyse the Security Council but it should empower an SG to be the world's foremost busybody, shamelessly poking her nose into other people's business and forging solutions where others won't.

Fifth, restore the other legs of the UN stool. On development and climate change the current SG has demonstrated formidable and imaginative convening power but the UN is struggling to live up to the operational implications. It needs to recognise that its role is as a convener, goad and measurer of results

but that it is the financial power of others, notably private sector finance and innovation, which will close the gap between aspiration and result.

This is about more than letting the private sector get a foot in the door. It's about what kind of world we want by 2030. One struggling under the burden of mass migration, environmental crises, and declining growth, or one that has embraced a future where these issues are met head on. An SG who can communicate these choices can literally change the world. It is an example of the potential power of the bully pulpit.

On the humanitarian side there remains unfinished business. Leadership is fragmented within the UN and beyond. When I was a young UN Refugee Agency field worker I helped lead the charge for UN agencies to do more on the ground because international NGOs were weak and local civil society organisations either weaker still or ciphers of unsympathetic governments. Now the UN could easily revert to the role of funder and standard-setter because there are first-class international and local implementing partners.

And on human rights, there has been a huge pushback, on the International Criminal Court, on the Responsibility to Protect and on individual country transgressions. The SG will need to support the authority and independence of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights while keeping her distance, so as to protect the non-political nature of the latter office.

There should be few limits on the SG's ambitions for her 120 months. Like the Pope, she has an extraordinary platform to change the world. But she needs to square her cardinals – her ambassadors – first. So, SG, use those 100 days to win the friends and lay the strategy for the rest of your term. Be Aesop's tortoise not his hare. ●

*Mark Malloch-Brown is a former UN Deputy Secretary-General and a member of the House of Lords*



**Yasmin Kamel on how to “sell” a Secretary-General in the digital age**

**When the process to choose Kofi Annan's successor as UN Secretary-General began in 2006, Twitter had not yet been launched and Facebook was still in its infancy. The opportunity to engage directly and personally with people in every continent simply did not exist in the way it does today.**

Ten years later, Ban Ki-moon's successor is being chosen in a radically different communications environment. And although the selection will ultimately be made by the Security Council – particularly the five permanent members (P5) who have dominated the process for 70 years – the arrival of social media has brought public campaigning into this characteristically private process.

The UN itself has sought to inject more transparency this time round, for example, through webcasting General Assembly Q&A sessions with candidates and through July's ground-breaking global townhall debate. Broadcast live by Al

Jazeera, the debate saw 10 candidates answering questions. It was a chance for each to showcase their vision for the UN and for the watching audience to hear their opinions on serious challenges such as the refugee crisis and the civil war in Syria.

But even before this occasion, candidates had taken advantage of the opportunities that digital communications provide to set out their stall in a way that has not been seen before.

Serbia's candidate, Vuk Jeremić, for instance, has used social media to publicise a policy platform outlining his response to global challenges. The former New Zealand prime minister, Helen Clark, has coupled the traditional lobbying of senior figures such as President Xi of China and President Hollande of France – both P5 countries – with an online push using the #Helen4SG hashtag to get her messages across and raise her public profile.

It is an approach that has been adopted by many of the candidates. From sharing

their personal experiences to making the case that it is time for a woman to take on this role, they have used social media to showcase what they could bring to what has been dubbed “the world's most impossible job”.

We should welcome this wider engagement with the public as it helps maintain and strengthen public support – not only for the candidates themselves, but also for the UN. An organisation that advocates equal rights, gender equality and transparent democratic elections should practice what it preaches. The more that the public feels they have a say in who fills this post, the better for the credibility of the UN.

In the end, of course, the decision will be made by national governments behind closed doors. It is still the case that no candidate can be appointed against the wishes of any of the P5, who all have a veto. Although the process has become more transparent, the system remains much as before. So is this new openness and greater public engagement merely window-dressing to hide business as usual?

I don't believe this is the case. There is clearly a long way to go before the UN can be said to have aligned its processes with its values. But the public campaigning and greater openness of the new selection process have made it harder for unqualified 'friends' of the P5 to advance in the leadership race.

Nor do countries act in a vacuum. They are concerned with how their own publics view their decisions. Increasingly, because of the importance of soft power, they take into account how their actions are viewed by the global public, too.

So while the effectiveness of candidates' campaigns and their ability to win public support may not prove to be too important this time, it is likely to have an increasing impact in future Secretary-General appointments. We are at the beginning of a process which is good for the UN and for all who share its ambitions for our world. ●

*Yasmin Kamel is an Account Executive at Portland Communications*



**Helen Clark and staff at the Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the UN sing a traditional song for luck at the launch of her Secretary-General campaign**  
© KENA BETANCUR/AFP/Getty Images



# The “other” election: appointing the ninth UN Secretary-General



Stephen Browne is Senior Fellow of the Ralph Bunche Institute for International Studies at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, where Thomas G. Weiss is Presidential Professor of Political Science. They are Co-Directors of the Future UN Development System (FUNDS) Project, which is collaborating with UNA-UK on the 1 for 7 Billion campaign. See [www.FutureUN.org](http://www.FutureUN.org) for more information.

Sometime later this year, a new UN Secretary-General will be selected to take over from Ban Ki-moon in January 2017. Why is the choice of the ninth head of the world organisation so important? And how has the election slog been going?

For only the second time – the first was in 1996 – the campaigns for the US president and the UN’s top job are running in parallel. Both have been long and protracted. While the US result has produced one Republican and one Democratic candidate, the UN version still has a

large slate of nominees pressing the flesh and employing lobbyists, although not yet kissing babies.

In the past, the two processes have been very different. The US presidential aspirants have been watched, tested, and paraded in front of respectful and hostile audiences in a primary process that is arguably far more prolonged and thorough than that for any other prospective head of state. The selection of the UN Secretary-General, in contrast, has more closely approximated a papal conclave composed of the five

## Straw polls and red ballots: clinching the Council’s support

According to the UN Charter, the Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council.

To secure the Council’s recommendation, a candidate must receive at least nine affirmative votes in a formal vote, with none of the five permanent members (P5) voting against. The decision is therefore subject to the P5 veto – or threat of veto – but the required threshold also gives the elected 10 members (E10) influence.

In 1981, an informal survey of members’ opinions was used to break the deadlock arising from China’s veto of Kurt Waldheim (Austria), who was seeking an unprecedented third term, and his main opponent, Salim Salim (Tanzania), who was blocked by Western countries, leading to 16 inconclusive ballots. Ugandan Ambassador Olara Otunnu persuaded the two candidates to step aside and devised a way to determine which new candidates would not be vetoed. The P5 were asked to identify which candidates they would “discourage” on a blue survey form. The E10 were given a white form. This system enabled the Council to identify which candidate was generally acceptable (eventually Javier Pérez de Cuéllar of Peru).

The survey developed into the ‘straw polling’ system that has been used ever since, with minor modifications. While the process has not been formalised, written guidelines were produced by Ambassador Nugroho Wisnumurti during Indonesia’s presidency of the Council in 1996.

When *New World* went to press, the current selection process had seen four rounds of undifferentiated straw polls, with Council members given the option to “encourage” or “discourage” candidates, or to express “no opinion”. Colour-coded ballots are expected to be introduced in October. Once these are in play, the Council will know whether a candidate is being discouraged by one or more of the P5.

This does not always spell the end for that candidate. In 1996, the first round of colour-coded polling saw Kofi Annan (Ghana) attract a “red ballot” (widely thought to have been cast by France). This threatened veto was sustained until, seven polls later, Annan had the support of all 14 other members and the ‘veto’ was dropped.

**Source: Security Council Report, especially ‘Research Report: Appointing the UN Secretary-General’ (October 2015) [www.securitycouncilreport.org](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org)**



Mogens Lykketoft organised the first-ever televised debate with Secretary-General candidates, in partnership with Al Jazeera. Candidates participating in the first round (from left to right): Natalia Gherman (Moldova), Vuk Jeremić (Serbia), Susana Malcorra (Argentina), António Guterres (Portugal) and Vesna Pusić (Croatia)

veto-wielding members of the Security Council – the P5: China, France, Russia, the UK and the US. The P5’s recommendation was then rubber-stamped by the General Assembly after the white smoke emerged from the Security Council chamber.

The electoral campaign for the ninth Secretary-General – a position which the first incumbent, Trygve Lie, described as “the most impossible job in the world” – thus far has been different. While the end result is still unclear, the Danish president of the 2015–16 General Assembly session, Mogens Lykketoft, has described the civil society advocacy effort by the *1 for 7 Billion* campaign as a “potential game changer”. We note the adjective “potential”.

***If seven billion constituents, along with 188 other member states, cannot have a real say, could their views at least be better represented? Could some modest accountability not be introduced into the usual great power manipulation? How about a job description?***

The campaign has called for geography to take a back seat to integrity and for a transparent and inclusive process to identify a Secretary-General who is “highly skilled, competent, persuasive and visionary”. For the first time, gender has become central, with the preference of many civil society groups and countries being specifically in favour of a woman. After eight males, female candidates have been actively solicited. Half of

the 12 people nominated to date are women. At the time of writing, two (and one man) had withdrawn and another woman was expected to enter the race.

If seven billion constituents, along with 188 other member states, cannot have a real say, could their views at least be better represented? Could some modest accountability not be introduced into the usual great power manipulation? How about a job description?

The *1 for 7 Billion* campaign has also recommended a single term of perhaps six or seven years for the next Secretary-General, a proposal that has been raised repeatedly over the years but without success. Doing so would require overcoming tradition but not a revision of the Charter, and it could eliminate the caution that customarily goes with concerns for reappointment and jolt the incumbent with a greater sense of urgency to strengthen – actually transform – the organisation.

The eventual outcome remains far from certain, and only Pollyanna would hope for politics to be set aside in favour of qualifications. At a minimum, the process has raised the potential embarrassment to the P5 if they recommend a clunker.

However, some useful steps have been made. Nominations have come from countries in different regions, although still none from the two largest regions: Asia or Africa. There have been two-hour hearings in the General Assembly with every candidate, split into batches in April, June and July, as well as three civil society debates (in New York and London) during those same weeks (see p. 24). The curricula vitae of candidates have been made available online for public scrutiny. Candidates have also published vision statements, some of which include thoughts for the shape of the UN system and how to make the most of its 80,000 international civil servants and 120,000 soldiers and civilians in peace operations.

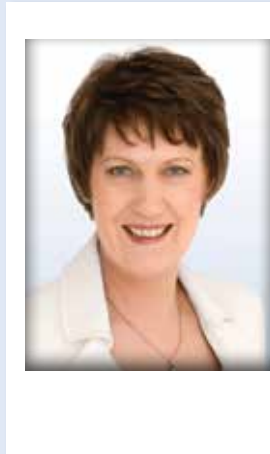
While eyes often glaze over at the mere thought of trying to alter the world organisation, there are three overwhelming reasons to reject such complacency. The



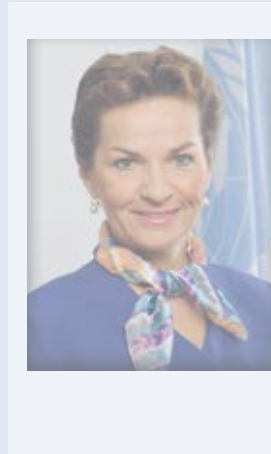
The candidates vying for “the world’s most impossible job”



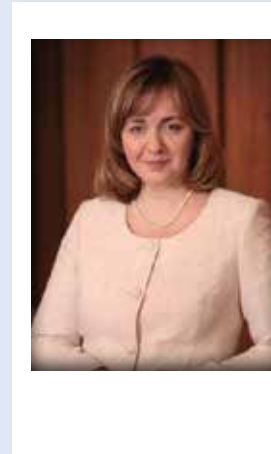
**IRINA BOKOVA**  
Bulgaria  
Director-General, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



**HELEN CLARK**  
New Zealand  
Administrator, UN Development Programme and former Prime Minister



**CHRISTIANA FIGUERES**  
Costa Rica  
Former Executive Secretary, UNFCCC (withdrew candidacy on 13 September 2016)



**NATALIA GHERMAN**  
Moldova  
Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs



**ANTÓNIO GUTERRES**  
Portugal  
Former UN High Commissioner for Refugees and former Prime Minister



**VUK JEREMIĆ**  
Serbia  
Former President of the UN General Assembly (2012-13) and former Foreign Minister



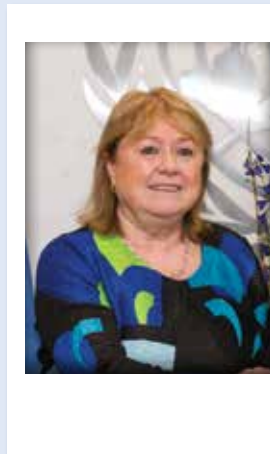
**SRGJAN KERIM**  
FYR Macedonia  
Former President of the UN General Assembly (2007-08) and former Foreign Minister



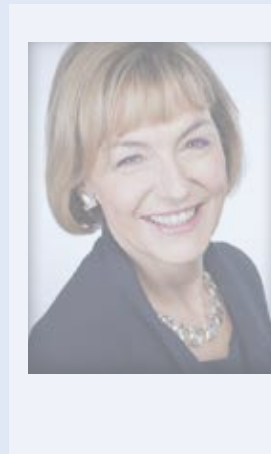
**MIROSLAV LAJČÁK**  
Slovakia  
Foreign Minister



**IGOR LUKŠIĆ**  
Montenegro  
Former Prime Minister (withdrew candidacy on 23 August 2016)



**SUSANA MALCORRA**  
Argentina  
Foreign Minister and former Chef de Cabinet for Secretary-General Ban



**VESNA PUSIĆ**  
Croatia  
Former Foreign Minister (withdrew candidacy on 4 August 2016)



**DANILO TÜRK**  
Slovenia  
Former President and former UN Assistant-Secretary-General for Political Affairs

first is the progressive marginalisation of the UN in many of its major functions, manifested by the creation of alternative organisations and sources of support designed specifically to circumvent the UN’s unwieldy bureaucracy. Actors from the G20 to the Gates Foundation are emerging as active competitors.

The second is that across a huge range of responsibilities, the challenges to the UN and the world are growing, but the UN is often unable or unsuited to act. Some of the world’s major conflagrations remain unresolved. Human rights and the status of women are still widely abused. The UN struggles to keep up with repeated humanitarian disasters. And its development activities across social, economic and environmental domains are marginalised, dispersed and duplicative. Global challenges demanding global responses – choose your favourites from pandemics like Ebola and terrorist attacks like those in Brussels and Paris, to climate change and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction – are increasing in numbers and intensity.

The third reason is that evidence from past attempts at reform shows that a strong leader, committed to change, and with the communication skills to match, can actually make a difference. If the UN is not to become a relic, the question is not what and whether, but rather when and how substantial adaptation will take

place. It is critical to identify and select a Secretary-General who understands the flaws in the structure and staffing of component parts of the UN family and has the knowledge, determination, and – dare we say – charisma to correct them because the possibilities for change are greater at the onset of a new Secretary-General’s term, the ‘honeymoon’ of the first six to twelve months. Both Boutros Boutros-Ghali of Egypt and Kofi Annan of Ghana instituted their most sweeping staffing and management changes in 1992, 1997 and 2002 – shortly after their appointment or reappointment. Let’s hope for similar initiatives from the successful candidate in 2017.

The process to date has witnessed welcome changes, but will they be sufficient to guarantee a strictly meritocratic process leading to the selection of a high-calibre Secretary-General? That requires a new spirit of boldness and originality among all governments, and especially among the P5, in influencing the selection. In a recent FUNDS survey of experts and UN-watchers, respondents were asked to name their preferred candidate. The name most frequently mentioned was Angela Merkel. She is not (yet) looking for the job, but she is the kind of person who should occupy the office on the 38th floor of UN headquarters on 1 January 2017. ●

Outcomes of Security Council straw polls

Candidate	Poll 4 (9 September 2016)			Poll 3 (29 August 2016)			Poll 2 (5 August 2016)			Poll 1 (21 July 2016)		
	“Encour- age”	“Discour- age”	“No Opin- ion”	“Encour- age”	“Discour- age”	“No Opin- ion”	“Encour- age”	“Discour- age”	“No Opin- ion”	“Encour- age”	“Discour- age”	“No Opin- ion”
<b>António Guterres</b> (Portugal)	12	2	1	11	3	1	11	2	2	12	0	3
<b>Miroslav Lajčák</b> (SlovakRepublic)	10	4	1	9	5	1	2	6	7	7	3	5
<b>Vuk Jeremić</b> (Serbia)	9	4	2	7	5	3	8	4	3	9	5	1
<b>Srgjan Kerim</b> (FYR Macedonia)	8	7	0	6	7	2	6	7	2	9	5	1
<b>Irina Bokova</b> (Bulgaria)	7	5	3	7	5	3	7	7	1	9	4	2
<b>Daniilo Türk</b> (Slovenia)	7	6	2	5	6	4	7	5	3	11	2	2
<b>Susana Malcorra</b> (Argentina)	7	7	1	7	7	1	8	6	1	7	4	4
<b>Helen Clark</b> (New Zealand)	6	7	2	6	8	1	6	8	2	8	5	2
<b>Christiana Figueres</b> (Costa Rica)	5	10	0	2	12	1	5	8	2	5	5	5
<b>Natalia Gherman</b> (Moldova)	3	11	1	2	12	1	3	10	2	4	4	7
<b>Igor Lukšić</b> (Montenegro)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	9	4	3	7	5
<b>Vesna Pusić</b> (Croatia)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	11	2

Candidates have been ranked in order of the highest number of “encourages” received in the most recent poll. Where candidates have received the same number of “encourages” they have been listed with those receiving the lowest number of “discourages” first.

Correct as of 13 September 2016. Further candidates are expected to withdraw in the coming weeks, and at least one individual is expected to enter the race. Visit [www.1for7billion.org](http://www.1for7billion.org) for the latest updates.

# We the peoples

**Who says no one cares about the UN? People around the world have jumped at the chance to engage with the selection process for the UN Secretary-General, from putting questions to candidates to taking part in debates and making sure their concerns and ideas are heard**

## 1 for 7 billion



Founded in 2013 to campaign for a more open, inclusive and – above all – merit-based selection process, with the aim of finding the best possible person to lead the UN at this turbulent time.



**>200 million** supporters



**>170** countries represented



**>750** NGO members

## Meet the candidates

1 for 7 Billion campaigns for all member states, and the wider public, to have the chance to engage with candidates in open hearings, in contrast to previous appointments, where only the Security Council knew who was in the running.

In September 2015, the General Assembly adopted a resolution calling for candidates' names and CVs to be circulated, and it decided to hold "informal dialogues" with candidates who agreed to participate – to date, all candidates have agreed. Their sessions were webcast on UN TV and followed by media stakeouts.

### Informal dialogues

- 12 two-hour Q&A sessions
- Over 1,000 questions from states collectively
- Over 1,000 questions from people in over 70 countries via a massive campaign headed by the UN NGO Liaison Service (UN-NGLS). Only 2–3 were asked per candidate but all have been encouraged to answer 10 representative questions, on issues from LGBT rights to income inequalities

### TV townhall

On 12 July, the President of the General Assembly partnered with Al Jazeera to hold the first-ever televised townhall meeting with candidates. 10 took part, fielding questions from the moderators, states and one from civil society.



**88 million** tuned in

## What was asked?

### Recurring themes

- Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Reform of the UN Security Council
- The global displacement crisis
- Whether the Secretary-General should be more "Secretary" or "General"
- Gender equality within the UN system, including whether it's time for a female Secretary-General

### Unexpectedly common issues

- The possibility of a single non-renewable term of office
- Merit-based senior appointments
- Accountability, e.g. sexual abuse by UN peacekeepers, Haiti cholera outbreak
- Civil society engagement

### Notable omissions

- Climate change and environmental protection
- Reform of the UN development system
- Gender equality and empowerment beyond the UN system
- Nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament
- Worsening big power relations

### Tricky questions

- LGBT rights
- Independence of the Secretary-General
- Specific country situations: e.g. Ukraine, Israel–Palestine

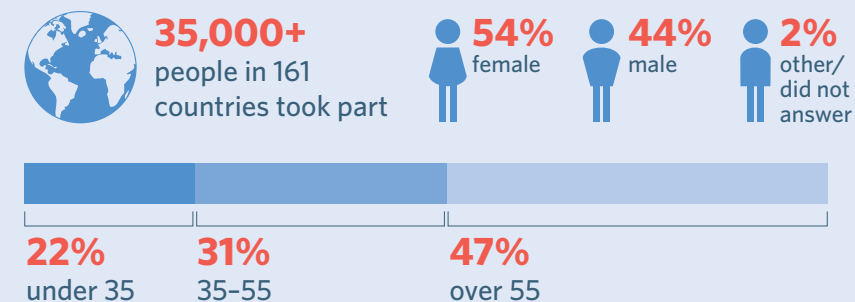
## UNA-UK debates

To give civil society a greater voice in the process, UNA-UK organised three debates with candidates, based on questions from the global public (see p. 24). These informal sessions enabled candidates to relax and to explore issues in more depth than during the time-constrained General Assembly meetings. You can watch all the debates via [una.org.uk](http://una.org.uk)

*"What is going on ... is only part of this process of transparency. An important part, a starting point, but there is a much broader discussion going on around the world, engaging a large number of people, engaging in particular a number of civil society organisations, among which we all remember 1 for 7 Billion as a driving force in this." Mogens Lykketoft, President of the 70th session of the General Assembly, speaking to the press after the first General Assembly dialogues in April 2016*

## Your questions

Our partner, Global Citizen, carried out a survey to gather questions to inform our debates.



### Top eight locations surveyed (in order)



1 UK, 2 Australia, 3 USA, 4 Canada, 5 Germany, 6 France, 7 New Zealand, joint 8th: Ireland, Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland

**Top languages (in order):** English, French, German, Arabic, Spanish, Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Korean

## Top questions globally

1. Last September world leaders signed up to the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development, aiming to end extreme poverty, stop climate change and tackle inequality by 2030. What will you do to ensure that these Sustainable Development Goals don't end up as empty promises?
2. Last year, the UN helped unite the world to secure an agreement in Paris to combat climate change and transition to 100% clean energy. How will you ensure the Paris agreement is implemented?
3. Climate change is fuelling more extreme weather events. These droughts, floods, and record storms are major contributors to hunger, and today some 800 million people – 1 in 9 on the planet – will go to bed hungry. What will you do as Secretary-General to improve global preparedness for these events?
4. We are in the midst of the greatest refugee crisis in the UN's history. What one thing would you do to improve the UN's response?

**? Top question in Arabic and Japanese:** A number of countries have taken to military intervention without the consent of the Security Council. Is this ever acceptable and why?

**? Top question in Russian:** Since the creation of the UN, war between countries has dramatically decreased, but we continue to see massive conflict within countries. How can the UN Secretary-General address this?

**Top four themes from UNA-UK supporters:**

- civil wars
- refugees
- military intervention without Security Council authorisation
- realising the goal of free, quality education for all



# Still great?



British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson speaks to the press after a Security Council stakeout where he spoke about the UK's post-Brexit priorities. © Albin Lohr-Jones/Pacific Press/Alamy Live News



**Richard Gowan**  
*on why the UK needs the UN if it hopes to maintain its global power*

The day after this June's Brexit vote, America's right wing Fox News channel briefly announced that Britain was leaving the United Nations, rather than the European Union. Though this was a mishap, it captured the fears of many internationally-minded Britons this summer: our decision to leave the EU is just the start of a wider rejection of the country's long-standing commitment to boosting global cooperation.

Since June, Whitehall has been pedalling the opposite message: While the UK may quit the EU, Britain remains a pillar of the global system, and its leading role at the UN is proof of just that. Prime Minister Theresa May has reassured UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that the UK will stick to its aid pledges. Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson hastened to

New York shortly after his appointment to cast a symbolic vote on Libya in the Security Council, and generally butter up UN officials.

These gestures have gone some way to scotch gossip around the UN that UK's permanent seat on the Security Council could be in question after Brexit. But British diplomats in New York cannot relax. There will be more questions about Britain's influence in the UN system as the Brexit process unfolds, especially as its leverage over the financially influential EU bloc inevitably wanes. Germany already pays a greater percentage of the UN budget than the UK. Britain's veto power in the Security Council remains an obvious diplomatic asset, but it has not proved to be a particularly useful tool in, say, UN negotiations over the Syrian

crisis, which Russia and the US have largely controlled.

If the UK wants to maintain real influence at the UN in the Brexit era, it needs to emphasise three priorities. The first is forging the closest possible strategic relationship with the new Secretary-General. The second is structuring a lasting diplomatic settlement with the EU at UN headquarters that gives it enduring influence over the bloc's multilateral policies. The third is fighting to dispel widespread suspicions that the current government will eventually renege on its aid obligations – an important element of British soft power.

The selection of a new Secretary-General is a particularly advantageous opening for the UK to bolster its status in New York. The next UN chief will be the standard bearer for a number

of causes the UK has championed in the past – such as climate change and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals – and London should aim to align their positions. There are good precedents for this: Britain enjoyed especially good ties with Kofi Annan, despite tensions over the Iraq war, and worked with him on issues including peacekeeping reform and international development.

The UK's relations with Ban Ki-moon have always been cordial, but have never reached Annan-era levels of intimacy. Ban has often seemed exclusively interested in US views. David Cameron reportedly once nixed the idea of proposing a top Whitehall official for a senior UN post on the basis that he was “too good for the UN”.

The British mission in New York has tried to lay the groundwork for more

fruitful relations with Ban's successor, advocating a transparent selection process – while also savagely briefing against candidates it dislikes, proving that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office still has some gumption left. Prime Minister May should offer the eventual winner strategic support on essential initiatives such as overhauling UN peace operations after the crisis in South Sudan, with a view to maximising Britain's voice in UN policy processes.

May should also ensure that British diplomats in New York work with their European counterparts to establish new mechanisms for policy coordination during the Brexit process. In addition to regular meetings with the EU as a whole, top UK diplomats should establish a regular ‘EU2+1’ format for meeting their partners from the French and German missions to address those challenges – such as the mandates and costs of new blue-helmet operations – that could prove most divisive. Berlin, Paris and London did a good job of projecting overall strategic unity during the Iran talks, despite tactical differences, and should maintain this on broader UN affairs.

Coordinating with other Europeans should not entirely distract UK officials from opportunities to strike alliances with non-Western powers. Norway and Switzerland have used their non-EU status to build bridges with African and Asian states around the UN. The UK may be able to do the same on a grander scale after Brexit. But it will not be taken seriously if it appears cut off from its European allies.

The UK will also struggle to maintain its status at the UN if it seems to lose interest in aid. While Prime Minister May has said she remains committed to spending 0.7 per cent of Gross National Income on development aid, new development secretary Priti Patel has suggested that this money could be used to advance national interests and stimulate post-Brexit trade agreements rather than help poor and fragile states. Whether or not this makes much sense economically, it would almost certainly undercut Britain's credibility in UN debates over how to eradicate absolute poverty or stabilise conflict-ridden poor countries.

London should emphasise that, while it is naturally interested in expanding its trade, it will maintain a focus on assisting the most vulnerable at the UN. If it does not do so, it may find that its standing as a leader in global diplomacy will fade away. ●

*Richard Gowan is a New York-based fellow with the European Council on Foreign Relations, focused on UN affairs*



# Must it be a woman?

*After eight men, a growing number of voices are calling for a female Secretary-General. Others insist that the best possible person, regardless of gender or region, should be appointed. Below, Shazia Rafi and Yvonne Terlingen make their case*

Portraits of the eight men who have served as UN Secretary-General since 1946  
© Randy Duchaine/Alamy Stock Photo



*Shazia Rafi represents the Campaign to Elect a Woman Secretary-General. She is former Secretary-General of Parliamentarians for Global Action.*

“My dear, I am coming to meet your family for tea”, said the President of Parliamentarians for Global Action, Murli Deora, after gruelling final interviews for the position of Secretary-General. The next day, after telling me that I had the job, he added, “You were the best candidate. The Board was hesitating as you are a mother of small children – so I decided to see for myself how you managed.”

This was in 1996. This July, as we saw six senior women take centre stage at the UN General Assembly ‘townhall’ meeting with Secretary-General candidates, I thought, we have come far indeed.

*In the UN’s 70th year, after eight men, a woman representing the other 50 per cent of the globe as the ninth UN Secretary-General should be a given*

In 2015, female UN experts started sounding out potential candidates with the stature, experience and power to be credible. Colombia formed a Group of Friends in Support of a Woman Secretary-General – it now comprises almost a third of the UN membership. In July, the Security Council, which makes the initial recommendation, held its first ‘straw polls’. Six women and six men crossed the first hurdles – won their national ‘primaries’

to be their government’s candidate, and presented their credentials to the UN General Assembly in the UN’s first open, transparent selection process, including answering questions in a televised townhall debate. (Three – two women and one man – have since dropped out.)

In the UN’s 70th year, after eight men, a woman representing the other 50 per cent of the globe as the ninth UN Secretary-General should be a given. Even the male candidates struggled to answer why it should be another man. Selecting a qualified woman would support the UN’s yet-to-be-implemented commitment to gender equality and bring new approaches to the UN’s entire programme of work – a woman, peace and human security agenda.

The female candidates made this case themselves; they dominated the stage at the General Assembly, effectively answering questions on peacekeeping, environment, development, internal management, fundraising, staff discipline and handling the powerful permanent five members of the Security Council. Between them, they have run major UN agencies, national governments, and ministries.

The question before the 15 Council members, who between them have just one female head of government (UK Prime Minister Theresa May) and one female UN ambassador (Samantha Power of the US) is not whether it is time for a woman, but which woman to choose. ●

Visit the United Nations building in New York and you will be confronted by portraits of its eight Secretaries-General in a row. The effect is striking: all are men. Prior to 2016, just three women made it to the shortlist drafted by the Security Council, which has dominated the hitherto secretive selection process, rubber-stamped by a compliant General Assembly. (They were Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit of India in 1953, Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway in 1991 and Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga of Latvia in 2006.)

*Clearly, it is time for change. Yet should a woman be selected because she is woman? Only if she is the best candidate*

No wonder that some 50 countries have joined Colombia in pressing for a woman to get the post, and that the General Assembly has specifically urged states to consider presenting female candidates – a call echoed by *1 for 7 Billion*. In an organisation where gender balance is an aspiration but not a reality, it is excellent that half of the 12 individuals nominated so far are women. Two have since withdrawn (as has one man) after four Security Council straw polls, in which many UN watchers felt that highly experienced women fared worse than less experienced men.

Clearly, it is time for change. Yet should a woman be selected because she is woman? Only if she is the best candidate. Indeed, successive General Assembly resolutions, including the historic resolution 69/321 of 2015 – which set the stage for the more open and transparent process we now see – have stressed the need to ensure the appointment of the best possible candidate. Should the most qualified candidate – possessing vision, charisma and, above all, the courage to uphold UN principles – be a man, then it should be him.

Of course, we should be mindful of existing bias. While many states are calling for a female Secretary-General, there has been also an appalling backlash against women’s rights. And we should take care to ensure that selection criteria does not reflect this, for example, by putting weight on particular types of experience, such as national politics, where men still dominate.

Ban Ki-moon has made commendable efforts to address the gender imbalance in senior UN posts, but he is faltering now that he is nearing the end of his term. The five permanent Security Council members who monopolise many senior UN posts nearly always put forward men. The next Secretary-General must address this. Candidates should be judged on whether they have concrete and realistic plans to close the gender gap at the UN. Those with the best plans might even turn out to be men ... ●



*Yvonne Terlingen represents the 1 for 7 Billion campaign to improve the process for selecting the next UN Secretary-General. Prior to this, she served as Head of Amnesty International’s UN office in New York.*





**Keith Hindell** on Boutros-Ghali  
*as a model and cautionary tale*

**Boutros Boutros-Ghali’s term as UN Secretary-General (1992–96) is an object lesson for those who want a more assertive post-holder, one who can reject or at least finesse pressure from the biggest players at the UN.**

The Egyptian academic, politician, former foreign minister and veteran of the Camp David Agreement – who died earlier this year – was as well-qualified for the job as anyone is likely to be. He spoke Arabic and French like a native and English very well. He was mildly left of centre politically, from an ethnic and linguistic group that had never held this post and from a continent that was teeming with political, economic and humanitarian problems that cried out for UN attention. He tried to be an independent world civil servant, as the UN Charter prescribes, but found, like all his predecessors, that he could not be frank or realistic when tackling pressing items on the world agenda.

Small countries don’t like to be told that the UN can only help them if they exert themselves on their own behalf and are ready to compromise. The big powers, who smugly boast that they pay the bills, pressure the Secretary-General at every turn, even to the degree of micro-managing which countries he may visit or which journalists he can talk to.

Boutros-Ghali’s account of his time on the 38th floor is bravely entitled *Unvanquished: A US–UN Saga* but actually it was a disgrace, highlighting just how tight a grip the big powers have on the world body. He was an effective leader of the UN – President Clinton called him “outstanding” – but many Americans detested him for being so. For its own crass domestic reasons Washington overrode the expressed intent of all the other members of the Security Council to prevent him being re-elected for a second term. The General Assembly was never even asked its opinion.

The early nineties was a very productive time for the UN. The Cold War had just come to an end; the Security Council had taken firm action to eject Iraq from Kuwait and might have

followed similar principles to deal with the implosion of Somalia and Yugoslavia, and the war in Rwanda.

In each case, long-standing antagonism and resentment in the face of years of domination and corruption burst out like an open wound. In each case, the local leaders thought they could eliminate their opponents by force, and in Bosnia and Rwanda, by genocide. In each case the Security Council recognised the danger but did not give the UN adequate means to respond, even though Boutros-Ghali kept reminding them of that unpleasant fact. Not that he was entirely blameless for the Rwandan massacres. The Hutu government was one of Egypt’s favoured states for aid and as Foreign Minister before he went to the UN, Boutros-Ghali had enabled the regime to acquire large quantities of weapons.

Confronted by the appalling evidence of slaughter in Rwanda in 1994, the Security Council was paralysed. It withdrew most of the UN force when it should have been doubled and its mandate strengthened to give priority to protection of civilians. It was influenced, no doubt, by what had happened in Somalia the previous year, when American troops were badly mauled by local militia in Mogadishu, losing 18 soldiers and two helicopters.

Although the operation was entirely directed by US generals, the American

media – and prominent politicians – blamed the UN. Senator Bob Dole, running for the Republican nomination in 1996, mocked Boutros-Ghali’s name, to popular approval. Fearing this would influence his own re-election, President Clinton authorised his UN ambassador to veto Boutros-Ghali’s reappointment. The 14 other members of the Security Council supinely bowed to this pressure, even though the issue did not in the least affect the security of the US.

Of course, Boutros-Ghali was not perfect. He could be abrasive, not just with ambassadors demanding subservience but with his staff too. More importantly, though, he fell foul of the UN’s perennial challenge: the wish list of the member states far exceeds the resources they provide. (While the US was carping about UN inadequacy in 1996, for example, it was also almost a billion dollars in arrears with its dues.)

Hearts and minds need to change in the major capitals before any Secretary-General, whatever their qualifications or method of selection, can realise his or her full potential. ●

*Keith Hindell was the BBC’s UN correspondent from 1980 to 1984. He is currently a member of UNA London & South-East Region’s Executive Committee*



*Boutros-Ghali walks with Egyptian peacekeepers in Sarajevo, 31 December 1992*  
© UN Photo / A Morvan

# 10

## things Secretary-General candidates should be saying

*For the most part, candidates chose to play it safe in their vision statements, which are peppered with platitudes and buzzwords such as “prevention”, “partnerships” and “principles” but little detail. Below New World lists 10 things we wish they had said*

- 1 “It’s not me, it’s you”**  
The biggest problem facing the UN is not a lack of reform. It’s member states. The UN’s built-in catch has always been to reconcile its long-term goals with the short-term interests of its members. But in recent years, there has been a visible retreat as states have turned inwards to their domestic constituencies, pursuing ever-narrower national agendas. The patterns of polarisation that were visible in the lead-up to the First World War are becoming noticeable. So too are the populist trends that led to the second.
- 2 “Especially you”**  
Poor relationships among the big powers are of particular concern, as their sabre-rattling has seen tensions rise in Eastern Europe and the South China Sea. All permanent members of the Security Council appear to be going through the state version of a mid-life crisis. This will be a key challenge for the next Secretary-General.
- 3 “I can’t be everything to everybody”**  
An inspiring communicator. A competent manager. A visionary leader. A smooth negotiator. A bold reformer. All these qualities are important but the Secretary-General cannot be everything to everyone at all times. Shouting from the bully pulpit 24/7 will not help a Secretary-General to build trust behind the scenes. An outreach-focussed Secretary-General who takes the UN on the road cannot also mastermind technocratic reforms. Given points (1) and (2), the UN chief should focus on diplomacy and appoint a good team to do the rest.
- 4 “Where’s my Doug Stamper?”**  
Key appointments: fixers. The next Secretary-General should have a couple of attack dogs, like Doug Stamper from *House of Cards* or Malcolm Tucker from *The Thick of It* (minus the killing and, possibly, the swearing) to help build consensus and get tough decisions through. Alternatively, member states could refrain from proposing politicised and poorly qualified candidates for senior roles.
- 5 “Comms, comms, comms”**  
More engagement, openness and transparency: good professional communications are essential if the UN is to become “fit for purpose”, to use the phrase adopted by

several states in the dialogues with candidates. Above all, this needs money, to be invested in-house and externally for forthright media engagement, information campaigns and coordination, so that the agencies with public-friendly mandates don’t steal all the limelight.



- 6 “Show me the money”**  
And while we’re on the subject: some things need money. The UN cannot always do more with less. There is a breaking point, as UN humanitarian agencies – forced to suspend life-saving assistance due to funding shortages – know only too well. The next Secretary-General should be honest in explaining the consequences of financial squeezes and force prioritisation if needed.
- 7 “There’s more to gender equality than parity at senior UN levels”**  
It’s great that candidates have been putting so much emphasis on improving gender balance in the UN Secretariat. But the extent to which this will make a tangible difference to the lives of half the world’s population is debatable. The next Secretary-General must do better and push for broader change within and outside the system, including for more political and financial support from states. She or he must be a proud and proactive feminist.



- 8 “Honesty”**  
The Secretary-General can be a useful scapegoat, helping states not to lose face when seeking peace, for example, but she or he should not take the rap when countries and the public react badly to UN decisions. When a dictator is selected to give a UN prize or a gross abuser given the chair of a human rights body, the UN should say: “This has been done by member states.” Again and again. Loudly, so that journalists hear.
- 9 “More honesty”**  
A key part of the Secretary-General’s role should be to tell it like it is. Take climate change. Does the amount of media coverage reflect the level of urgency? Or migration. Do politicians give us the facts or do they pander to vocal sections of their electorate? The Secretary-General should not shy away from imparting hard truths and providing thought leadership.
- 10 “Still more honesty”**  
Finally, the Secretary-General must be honest about the UN’s constraints and limitations. She or he should recognise that while the international system has brought stability and prosperity for many states and people, it has not delivered for everyone. The system will not survive unless we actively work to strengthen it. This means ensuring that it works for all people, so that we all have a stake in a stronger, more effective UN.





## Interview



# Do something

*After five eventful years as Chairman of UNA-UK, Sir Jeremy Greenstock – who was succeeded on 1 July by Lord Wood of Anfield – talks to New World about the UK's global role following the EU referendum, the 1 for 7 Billion campaign, why he worries about nationalism and why UNA-UK has been his antidote to “hell in a handcart” pessimism*

*In the wake of the EU referendum, the UK is going through a period of uncertainty in terms of defining its global role. What role do you think the UK should be playing in international affairs, and at the United Nations in particular?* The UK has always been connected. There is danger after this vote that it will become less connected. I was a remainer, and one of the reasons that I was a remainer was that I believed that the UK had – perhaps of all the advanced democratic countries – the best mix of positions and relationships on the international stage. So it's absolutely essential looking forwards that we keep up those relations, whatever the treaty relationship with our neighbours, and that we use the UN to show that we are good at helping the collective approach to solving global problems.

But there may be rhetorical and political attacks on our position as a permanent member of the Security Council: “Are you, Britain, not so reduced now from what you were in 1945, that you must resign your permanent seat?” We have got to earn our spurs back in the international institutions. That includes NATO, and our relationships with the other continental groups, as well as the big emerging nations. So, there's an enormous amount of work to do to fill the gap in perception of what the UK wants to be and how people see us as after the referendum. The Foreign & Commonwealth Office is really going to have its work cut out and, to my mind, it needs a bigger budget for that.

*Where do you think UNA-UK can have the most impact in this period of transition?*

We must be realistic about our size and our reach – we are an under-funded, tiny organisation. Against that background, the 1 for 7 Billion campaign has been an absolutely remarkable example of how the right concept, presented and followed up in the right way, can have an enormous impact on a wide swathe of the global public – all the way to the UN General Assembly. It doesn't matter how small you are. If people see that what you've said is important, it can go viral. So I think UNA-UK must look for the next campaign or campaigns that multiply the naturally small UNA-UK voice, because we've clearly shown a capability to do that. We must also go on grinding away to raise the standards of the British Government on global issues. That's very important – we represent all our members and supporters in that role.

*You have supported UNA-UK's 1 for 7 Billion campaign in bringing about changes to the way the UN Secretary-General (SG) is chosen. With a new leader due to be appointed at the end of this year, what do you think her – or his – top priorities should be?*

The next SG has maybe the last opportunity, as the world goes on fragmenting, to hold the power and the appeal of the UN together. So there's a very important leadership role which must concentrate on two things: one is to be a voice of moral authority that stands up to governments who aren't behaving in ways that serve the global collective. And secondly, to prioritise her or his focus on a particular issue, rather as UNA-UK is prioritising in its own strategic plan – that is, not to try and be all things to all people, but to delegate. The senior appointments the SG can make to UN agencies are part of his or her instrumental power in getting things done, so the SG must insist on member states sending really good candidates.

He or she must focus on those issues which the UN is capable of doing well – I think climate change is one of them; I don't think he or she will be able to achieve UN Security Council reform. But in the areas where the UN is working reasonably well, they must raise the game, the energy, the action, because this may be a last-chance period for an institution like the UN.

*You were Britain's ambassador to the United Nations at a particularly difficult moment in its history – the Iraq war. Today, terrorism, ongoing civil war in Syria and the current refugee and migrant crisis have caused many people to criticise the UN's credibility. What preserves your faith in such an imperfect organisation?*

I have no doubt in my mind that the UN is a marvellously invented organisation. It has made a real difference to our capacity as human beings to sustain a long period of

relative global peace, because even difficult governments understand that there is room to talk before you turn to the gun or the rocket. The UN stands as a massive voice for decent behaviour in the modern world and I have absolute faith in that.

It's the intergovernmental system that worries me. It's nationalism, it's the telling of untruths in order for regimes to hold onto power. In the West, I think we've been too reluctant to give up our position of superiority since the Second World War. But in the 21st century, power that matters – the good power that matters – is counted not in military capability, but through having a legitimate position of representing more than just your nation; representing humankind's need to find solutions for shared problems. So I don't think there's room for a superpower any longer; I think we're in a post-superpower era. I'm not sure America is there yet, if you look at the presidential campaign, they're still talking in anachronistic terms about making America great again. And even the Brexit campaign of ‘taking back control’, taking back our sovereignty – we never lost it. Sovereignty is a complex, mixed thing. For every bit of sovereignty we might have ‘conceded’ to Brussels, we gained something back because we had influence on other nations' decisions.

*What have you, personally, learnt from UNA-UK and its team?*

More than you would imagine. I think what has been the greatest pleasure for me is learning first-hand what the next generation's perspective is. I've been really inspired, not just by your idealistic hopes that you're going to change the world, but by the methodical way you've put together programmes to realise the realisable of those hopes. It's natural for old fogeys like me to say “the world is going to hell in a handcart” and to some extent, it is. But it is up to you to stop that handcart.

*What will you miss most about UNA-UK?*

The people. Just people. Just wandering in and thinking “Ah I've had a bad time in the last meeting I've been to, but this lot are smiling, or this lot have their heads down on something...” It's undoubtedly the people.

*Is there anything that you would like to say to UNA-UK's 15,000 members and supporters before you step down?*

The first thing to say is thank you. You have been inspiring in your enthusiasm and I really have enjoyed travelling around the country and meeting with people. So there's an obvious call to “keep going” – you mustn't let this organisation down. But to the younger generation I would say, you're going to have to cope with some of the bad things you're inheriting from my generation, and I apologise for that. But you must, as early as you can, involve yourselves in action. You must think globally, but you must act locally. And as you learn what it takes to build a little team and persuade people, and broaden the ripples of your impact, you will learn how to do it at wider and wider levels. But if you just take a placard out onto the street and say “Change the climate”, you're not actually doing anything useful. You've got to do something local that adds to the sum of things. Then, it will broaden as you get more responsibility in your career. That's what I want to see this next generation doing. ●

March for Europe,  
London, 2 July 2016 ©  
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Sir Jeremy Greenstock at  
UNA-UK's UN Day reception  
in 2011 at Australia House  
© UNA-UK/Mark Makela



Visit [una.org.uk/magazine](http://una.org.uk/magazine) to read the full version of this interview



# UNA-UK outreach

*1 for 7 Billion* has transformed the selection process of the next UN Secretary-General. The driving force behind the campaign was the belief that people – the UN’s most important constituency – should have a say in who will ultimately represent them.

Calling for change without being prepared to help make it happen is an empty gesture. So as well as pushing for reform, we gave Secretary-General candidates the chance to engage with the public through three unprecedented debates.

Held in New York and London, all declared candidates were invited and over half took part. More than 2,500 people attended the debates, with many times that number – over 35,000 in 161 countries – participating online: tuning in, asking questions and telling candidates their priorities via a poll.

To make sure we reached as wide an audience as possible, we partnered with the Danish Embassy in London; Future United Nations Development System project at CUNY Graduate

This first-ever candidate debate was chaired by Julian Borger and Mark Rice-Oxley from the *Guardian* and took place as the UN General Assembly held individual dialogues with candidates for the first time. There was a palpable sense that candidates and audience alike did not really know what to expect. An aide to one of the candidates described the dilemma facing them: “It’s not like national politics where the aim is just to be popular. In this election, if you are too popular, you might scare off the P5. So it’s a delicate balance.”

## Sailing into un-chartered waters

Civic Hall, New York – 13 April

- Natalia Gherman – Moldova
- Igor Lukšić – Montenegro
- Vesna Pusić – Croatia
- Danilo Türk – Slovenia



Center; Global Citizen; the *Guardian* and New America.

This series was the first time in the UN’s history that candidates for the organisation’s top job shared a platform and debated each other. You can find more coverage of these events, including webcasts and photos, at [www.una.org.uk](http://www.una.org.uk).

Since then, a number of other initiatives aimed at promoting

## “Is there any hope for future generations?”

Barbican, London – 3 June

- António Guterres – Portugal
- Vuk Jeremić – Serbia
- Igor Lukšić – Montenegro

Much larger than the other two events, with nearly 2,000 attendees, this debate felt like the people’s opportunity to grill candidates, far away from the UN’s New York headquarters. Candidates, by now more comfortable with the process, answered a broad range of questions, posed by everyone from from diplomats to school children, with perhaps the best question coming from 15-year-old Jessica from Leamington, who asked, “As a young person, I would like to ask, is there any hope for future generations?”

transparency have taken place: a UN General Assembly “Townhall” meeting with candidates, broadcast by Al Jazeera; an Amnesty International “pledging” event for states standing for election to the UN Human Rights Council and debates between countries vying for non-permanent Security Council seats organised by the World Federation of UN Associations.

## Drinking the “poisoned chalice” that is the UN

City University, New York – 13 July

- Christiana Figueres – Costa Rica
- Vuk Jeremić – Serbia
- Danilo Türk – Slovenia

Chaired by UN experts, Thomas G. Weiss and Barbara Crossette, this debate saw candidates pushed on the substance of their vision and the details of how they would change the UN system and secure the support – political and financial – to steer through reform. Candidates were asked why anyone would want to drink from the “poisoned chalice” that is the UN, eliciting answers based on the value of multilateralism, the UN’s little-touted success stories, and the need to fix this vital but tired organisation.

# UNA-UK outreach



***Richard Nelmes, UNA-UK’s Deputy Deputy (Outreach), explores what’s next after the success of 1 for 7 Billion***

“We are an island, we can survive by ourselves.”

Andy Fitch, a fishmonger from Cleethorpes, captured the mood of many in the UK earlier this year who feel little connection between international organisations and their own lives.

UNA-UK is a movement of people who believe the opposite. Our values are global. We believe that not only does the whole world prosper when countries work together, but we have no chance of survival unless we do so.

The “go it alone” rhetoric of nationalism is seductive and dangerous. If left unchallenged, our long and proud history of international cooperation, concern and friendship could easily be forgotten. The need to unite our organisation, reach out to others, and communicate our values with one voice has never been more urgent.

So we’re launching a year-long campaign, sharing this message with local communities, the media and politicians. We want to discuss what it means to have global values. We want to talk about why we should invest our effort, time and money into organisations like the UN and how we, and the rest of the world, benefit when we do.

Earlier this month we kicked off this national conversation by asking an apparently simple question: “What do you stand for?” Equipped with our resources and backed up with a social media campaign, local UNAs are quizzing people at freshers’ fairs and on high streets across the country on where they stand. Local groups are already using this to talk about their own work and recruit new supporters.

In November, we’ll launch the results of this poll. We’ll engage national media, accompanying the outcome with our own commentary and analysis. We will make funding available to local groups (including student-led UNAs), encouraging them to hold their own events to explore their community’s views on what it means to be an internationalist.

UNA-UK’s Policy Conference will be held in early 2017 and I’ve asked its independent organising committee



to give members and supporters the opportunity to discuss the importance of internationalism to them. The ideas produced on the day will help develop the second stage of the project and enable local UNAs to shape the activities and resources they need to spread the word and grow their presence.

Challenging a national mood that seems to say “we’re better off alone” is a daunting task. But our *1 for 7 Billion* campaign’s goal, to change the way the UN finds its leader, was equally audacious.

The only way we achieved it was by working together, combining contacts, experience and know-how from across our movement and the world. By building a coalition of some 200 million grassroots activists and policy experts, we managed to make the secretive selection process fairer and more transparent – the first such transformation for 70 years.

Now, we need to build a similar movement in the UK and we’re investing in making sure that everyone can take part and work together.

Local UNAs based in universities have long been a valued part of UNA-UK but

their work has often been disparate. Now, for the first time in decades, they’re at the heart of our campaign, adding their voice and doubling the number of local groups locally embedded across the country.

We have also recruited Laurel Hart to the brand new post of Outreach Assistant. Laurel has been coordinating local groups and individual supporters, making sure they are equipped with the messages and resources they need.

This time next year, I want us all to look back together on 12 months of engaging conversations on global values. Not just the important political, economic and diplomatic discussions in Parliament and the broadsheets but, more importantly, your stories of debates that happened in places more real and relevant to most of us: community centres, freshers’ fairs, local letters pages, pubs and on the bus home. Debates that argued passionately that global values are part of our shared heritage and identity. The thing that makes us, us.

I believe that the values of British people are global values at heart, and I’m counting on your help to remind them. ●



The last word

Why does the UN Secretary-General matter to you?

New World readers share their views on why they care about who gets the UN’s top job and what they hope the successful candidate will do

Sometimes our national leaders get caught up in domestic issues. I am reassured that the UN Secretary-General is in a position to take a step back and see the bigger picture – looking at how nations are affecting each other for good and bad.  
**Kiran Gupta**

I regard this job as potentially the most important in the world. It is a job of influence rather than power which, if used intelligently, can change the lives of poor and oppressed people all over the world for the better. The UN has the continuity which politicians of all persuasions lack and, with the right calibre of Secretary-General, can hold member and non-member countries to account for their actions, good and bad, by bringing them to the attention of the world.  
**Donne Buck**

The role of Secretary-General is extraordinarily challenging: advocate, diplomat, leader, speaker and negotiator, both innovator and traditionalist. And yet individuals have indeed managed to achieve what seems impossible, even if fleetingly. Hence I care deeply that we find a respected leader, worthy of being followed and helped, with and under whom it might just be possible to gain consensus between key nations. Without such an individual ... we are doomed to stumble back down the pathway that leads to the scourge of war.  
**Michael Harwood**

For the first time, and thanks to the 1 for 7 Billion campaign, I feel he or she will be representing me and the rest of the 7 billion, and answerable to all of us, as to the UN’s member states. In responding to Nikita Khrushchev’s demand he resign in 1960, Dag Hammarskjöld stated “It is not the Soviet Union or indeed any other big powers who need the UN for their protection. It is all the others.” Now, for the first time, “we the peoples” can fairly count ourselves amongst “the others”.  
**David Wardrop, UNA Westminster**



**Carol Allen**  
**@Cazabag**  
#NextSGmatters because we want someone with integrity and honesty, insight and resilience. Peace lies at the heart of this recruit!

RETWEETS 2  
10:45 PM - 4 Aug 2016



**Massoumeh**  
**@Massoumehtorfeh**  
Next #UNSG must be a visionary, have compassion, qualification + experience with resolving conflicts + crisis around the world  
#NextSGmatters

RETWEETS 4 LIKES 2  
11:19 AM - 3 Aug 2016

The role of all Secretaries-General is to be a spokesperson for the people of the world and now, more than ever, the world needs to be united, not divided. I believe the next leader of the United Nations must position themselves as an actor for peace, both publicly and privately, in order to make the world a better place.  
**Amelia Seeto, UNA Australia**

Global problems can only be solved with global solutions. In this challenging world, we need the best person, an inspiring leader – woman or man – who can hold the world in her or his heart and lead us towards a just, secure and peaceful world.  
**Celine Paramunda**

I am from a very tiny island in the Pacific. We need someone who understands what it is like to be sad and to become a refugee because your land is disappearing due to climate change. Especially when we do not have a big part in polluting our environment. We need someone who can sympathise with us ... and most importantly, someone who is a natural leader.  
**Matennang Atauea**

Our lovely planet and its inhabitants face so many threats – climate change, pandemics, terrorism, forced migration – and only the UN stands between Earth and catastrophe. Its Secretary-General needs to be strong, talented, understanding and the most complete leader we have known.  
**Olivia Richardson**

I feel that this period in history is one of the most dangerous in terms of conflict, displacement of peoples and climate challenges – and yet it is also a time when many of the world’s institutions seem to be disengaged. We need a leader who can articulate a clear set of solutions on the world stage and pull decision-makers together to make these solutions a reality.  
**Ngaire Bushell**

I care because I want somebody who is strong enough to carry the will of the majority of UN countries, rather than the vested interests of the permanent members of the Security Council.  
**Barry Horton**

Given that no country in the world has achieved gender equality, the prejudice and discrimination faced by women worldwide poses an undeniable and significant barrier to achieving a globally united world. I want a UN Secretary-General who will commit to enforce greater progress in women’s rights as part of their agenda.  
**Eshitha Vaz**

Tweet @UNAUK #NextSGmatters to tell us what you think

I STAND FOR

A major UNA-UK campaign on Britain’s new role and identity on the world stage, starting with this simple question

What do you stand for?

Equality Peace Cooperation Solidarity Integrity Family Communication Friendship Progress Honesty Kindness Positivity Identity Optimism Compassion Teamwork Openness Inclusiveness Representation Difference Unity Justice Collectiveness Bravery Humanity Heritage Democracy Fairness Courage Respect Diversity Harmony Human Rights Growth Sharing Charity Hope Empathy Generosity Determination Love Honour Loyalty Tradition Multiculturalism Equality Peace Cooperation Solidarity Integrity Family Communication Friendship Progress Honesty Kindness Positivity Identity Optimism Compassion Teamwork Openness Inclusiveness Representation Difference Unity Justice Collectiveness Bravery Humanity Heritage Democracy Fairness Courage Respect Diversity Harmony Human Rights Growth Sharing Charity Hope Empathy Generosity Determination Love Honour Loyalty Tradition Multiculturalism Equality Peace Cooperation Solidarity Integrity Family Communication Friendship Progress Honesty Kindness Positivity Identity Optimism Compassion Teamwork Openness Inclusiveness Representation Difference Unity Justice Collectiveness Bravery Humanity Heritage Democracy Fairness Courage Respect Diversity Harmony Human Rights Growth Sharing Charity Hope Empathy Generosity Determination Love Honour Loyalty Tradition Multiculturalism Equality Peace Cooperation Solidarity Integrity Family Communication Friendship Progress Honesty Kindness Positivity Identity Optimism Compassion Teamwork Openness Inclusiveness Representatice city ove nily sm ice sity rity ility sty ass acy pe ace ion

GLOBAL CITIZEN



UNA-UK

#StandFor

Thousands of people across the country are joining the debate about Britain’s identity by telling us what’s most important to them. Make your voice heard, find out how to get more involved and request resources for your local UNA at [www.una.org.uk/StandFor](http://www.una.org.uk/StandFor)  
See page 25 for more details.

#StandFor



# CLIMATE 2020

Rising to the challenge



**OUT  
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