



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

13 September 2016

Excellency,

As you know, one of the most significant on-going issues to be addressed by the United Nations in 2016 is the matter of the selection and appointment process of the next Secretary-General. As I conclude my mandate as President of the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly and hand over to you this important continuing process in your capacity as President of the 71st session, I wish to take this opportunity to convey some key questions for consideration that reflect my understanding of widely shared expectations of the membership, and as you consider next steps.

A key outstanding issue that will need to be further considered and explored in the coming weeks and months is the process and procedure for the formal appointment of the next Secretary-General by the General Assembly. As you are aware, a large segment of the membership has called for the appointment of co-facilitators to draft the General Assembly resolution for appointing the next Secretary-General, preferably before the Security Council reaches a decision on its recommendation, thus underlining the importance of the General Assembly to draft its own decisions in line with the renewed assertion of its role in the process. Furthermore, a significant number of members have called for the appointment to happen in conformity with rule 141 of the General Assembly Rules of Procedure.

You may recall that I invited the co-chairs of the Ad hoc Working Group on the Revitalisation of the work of the General Assembly to explore and take stock of Member States' views with regard to the issues raised in two letters addressed to me on behalf of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group (ACT) and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), dated 18 May 2016 and 29 June 2016, respectively, and to convey to me before the end of the 70th session any elements that may emerge. In response to my invitation, the co-chairs on 29 August 2016 organized a meeting to explore these issues with the membership.

Subsequently, the co-chairs conveyed to me that the meeting demonstrated two main positions among the membership: 1) a call for the appointment of two co-facilitators as soon as possible, launching consideration of the General Assembly resolution on the Secretary-General appointment well before the Security Council reaches its decision on a recommendation, and 2) avoiding any course of action that may cause division and controversy, jeopardizing the unity and fullest backing of the membership for the next Secretary-General. They also conveyed that several Member States stressed the imperative for a consensus-based process, while others emphasised the need for the appointment to happen through a secret ballot.

It is my hope that the General Assembly will be able to reach a decision, whether through the designation of co-facilitators or not, whereby the body can draft its appointment resolution and that this can subsequently be adopted by consensus in a timely manner upon receiving the recommendation from the Security Council, in order to give the next Secretary-General enough time to prepare.

On a more personal note, it is my hope that it will be possible to further consolidate and entrench the principles of transparency and inclusivity that have consistently guided the efforts throughout the 70th session, and which have met with the strong and constant backing of the membership and the wider public at large.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mogens Lykketoft', written in a cursive style.

Mogens Lykketoft

H.E. Mr. Peter Thomson
President of the 71st session of the General Assembly
United Nations
New York

CC.
To all Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York