



Navigating the Next Secretary-General Selection and Appointment Process: What You Need to Know to Engage

Date: December 2, 2025 | 1:15 – 2:30 p.m. (EDT)

Location: 777 United Nations Plaza, 8th Floor, New York

Format: Open to general public

Background

The United Nations is approaching the start of the 2026 Secretary-General selection and appointment process, and delegations will soon face practical questions and decisions on how to engage, navigate and make use of the new rules and standards introduced over the past decade, including those set out in resolution 79/327.

Marking its 80th anniversary, the organization stands at a defining moment. The upcoming choice of the next Secretary-General will shape not only its future direction but also its credibility at a time of deepening geopolitical divides and declining public confidence in multilateral institutions.

Over recent cycles, the process has undergone significant transformation. For decades, the process was shrouded in secrecy and largely controlled by the Security Council. That began to shift in 2015, when member states agreed on reforms that brought greater transparency, including for the first

time public dialogues with candidates. Since then, further steps have been taken to clarify who can be nominated and how. Most recently, the General Assembly adopted resolution 79/327, which consolidated these reforms and introduced new measures to strengthen inclusivity, transparency, and ethical standards in the upcoming process.

The next twelve months will be decisive. Delegations, the UN system, civil society and other stakeholders will soon need to decide how they intend to engage, and when to do so, and what opportunities exist to shape the process as it unfolds. For Permanent Missions, this will include early internal coordination, outreach to prospective candidates, and timely responses once the joint GA–SC letters are issued, with official nominations to follow shortly after.

This event is therefore conceived not only to clarify the existing rules but also to serve as a practical platform for Member States to understand:

- What avenues for engagement exist under the current framework;
- How and when delegations can most effectively influence the forthcoming process; and
- What strategic considerations arise from the new provisions of resolution 79/327.

Objectives

- Equip diplomats and stakeholders with a clear understanding of key procedural steps, expected milestones, and entry points for engagement.
- Understand what has changed in 2015, 2021, 2023, and 2025, in order to clarify the interplay between formal procedure and informal practice.
- Promote informed engagement by a broad range of stakeholders, including civil society, academics, and the interested public.
- Identify where stakeholders can exercise influence, including through nomination, endorsement, or advocacy for transparency
- Highlight opportunities for strengthening transparency, inclusivity, gender balance, and regional diversity in the selection process.

Agenda

- Welcome & Opening Remarks (5 minutes)
- Expert Briefing: How the 2026 Process Will Work in Practice (35 minutes)
- Interactive Q&A and scenario discussion (30 minutes)
- Closing remarks (5 minutes)