



# #UN70 INITIATIVE

An agenda for global leadership:  
five recommendations for the  
next UN Secretary-General

A joint initiative by Colombia, Ethiopia, Ghana,  
Indonesia, Jordan, Mexico and Norway

# Preamble

## The Secretary-General should

- i. Provide firm, independent leadership that champions and upholds the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and the rules-based international order, and faithfully and impartially implements the decisions of Member States.
- ii. Maintain and, where necessary restore, the standing and credibility of the UN.
- iii. Lead an impartial and consistent United Nations Organisation independent of specific national interests and free from double standards and politicisation.
- iv. Promote coherence and address fragmentation across the UN system and its three pillars, fostering cooperation and breaking down siloes.

- v. Strengthen key strategic partnerships – with regional organisations, multilateral development banks, civil society and the private sector – in order to support the global multilateral order and promote global governance.
- vi. To support the balanced implementation of the UN agendas for peace and security, development and human rights.
- vii. Ensure that gender-sensitive approaches are mainstreamed across the three pillars of the UN, and significantly improve gender balance in appointments at all levels, particularly senior leadership.
- viii. Make the strengthening of national, regional and local capabilities to prevent crises a theme across all three UN pillars.

## Summary of key messages for #NextSG

- I. Exercise strong and impartial leadership and show independence, accountability, efficiency and integrity as a manager.
- II. Place conflict prevention at the heart of the UN's peace and security agenda.
- III. Push to implement Agenda 2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement through advocacy, coherent UN support and deeper partnerships.
- IV. Adopt new approaches to effectively respond to humanitarian needs, while strengthening prevention, protection and resilience.
- V. Advocate for respect for human rights for all and reduce the implementation gap.

## Five recommendations for #NextSG

### I. **Exercise strong and impartial leadership and show independence, accountability, efficiency and integrity as a manager**

1. Advocate strongly and consistently for the universal values of the UN and the collective commitment to multilateralism, for example by giving an annual “state of the world” speech.
2. Withstand national interference over recruitment at any level – reject “national ownership” of posts, inter alia through establishing a permanent capacity in the Executive Office of the SG to professionalise the recruitment process of top leaders at headquarters and in the field.
3. Ensure recruitment of all staff is done in a transparent manner based on merit, as well as diverse and equitable geographical and gender representation in recruitment outcomes.
4. Ensure effective and efficient management of the UN Secretariat and work with Member States to ensure that adequate and predictable resources are allocated fairly to all three pillars of the UN: address areas that are currently underfunded.
5. Optimize staff buy-in to change and reform processes: listen to staff’s experiences on implementing reforms and administrative changes.
6. Promote improved accountability for performance across the system, and work with Member States to follow up on the independent review of the internal administration of justice system.
7. Initiate a frank discussion with Member States on how to make the budgetary process more efficient, drawing on relevant best practices.

8. Improve communication mechanisms, providing regular personal interaction with permanent and non-permanent Security Council members and the different groupings in the General Assembly.


## II. Place conflict prevention at the heart of the UN's peace and security agenda

1. Personally and proactively, use the Secretary-General's "good offices" role to engage in preventive diplomacy, mediation and the peaceful resolution of disputes, based on the principles of the UN Charter.
2. Ensure early warning of emerging crises by drawing the attention of the Security Council and other key stakeholders, as provided for under Articles 33 and 99 of the UN Charter, including publicly articulating the cost of inaction.
3. Bring the three pillars of the UN together in early warning, analysis and planning to prevent the outbreak, escalation, recurrence or continuation of conflict: build on the recent resolution on peacebuilding and on mechanisms such as the Senior Action Group, the UN Operations and Crisis Centre and the Regional Quarterly Reviews.

4. Strengthen the UN's conflict prevention and resolution capacities, including by establishing a standby team of senior envoys with experience from post-conflict and democratic transition.
5. Continue to implement the actions recommended by the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, such as improved strategic planning with a stronger focus on the primacy of politics, better force generation, enhanced safety and security, strengthened efforts to combat sexual exploitation and abuse, the continued development of performance standards and comprehensive reform of UN policing.
6. In light of the recent reviews, adapt the Secretariat's structures and processes to avoid duplication and competition, and make the UN more agile and effective in the field.
7. Ensure that gender perspectives are fully integrated in all of the UN's prevention and mediation work and strive for gender balance among UN envoys and mediators at all levels.
8. Strengthen the UN's partnership with regional and sub-regional organisations in prevention, peacekeeping operations and special political missions, as well as conflict resolution, including through Regional Offices.
9. Enhance the UN's ability to coordinate international efforts to prevent and counter transnational peace and security threats, including in the areas of disarmament, transnational organised crime, international terrorism, violent extremism and cyber crime.

### **III. Push to implement Agenda 2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement through advocacy, coherent UN support and deeper partnerships**

1. Promote commitment to Agenda 2030's central principles of inclusion and universality, and bring the major global development actors and institutions together in an integrated approach to ensure delivery of the 2030 Agenda.
2. Urge Member States to ratify and implement the Paris Agreement in all its elements – mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation, and to increase ambition over time, in accordance with the Agreement.
3. Push for the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as a key to realizing Agenda 2030, including on domestic public resources, private sector engagement, international cooperation and science, technology, innovation and capacity-building.
4. Promote inter-agency approaches and reduce duplication and competition, building on relevant General Assembly resolutions. Specifically, make more strategic use of the Chief Executives Board; review the mandate and functions of UN Development System entities, in particular the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs; promote system-wide strategic planning, implementation and reporting, and seek better alignment of funding with strategic plans and enhanced use of pooled funding.
5. Make support to national governments more coherent, result-oriented and responsive to agreed national priorities in line with universal standards: build on the UN Development Assistance Framework mandate and ensure that the Resident Coordinator carries the authority of the whole UN system, ultimately reporting and accountable to the Secretary-General.

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6. Build on existing partnerships with the private sector, civil society and other key stakeholders to support implementation of Agenda 2030 and identify opportunities for new partnerships where they do not currently exist.

#### **IV. Adopt new approaches to effectively respond to humanitarian needs, while strengthening prevention, protection and resilience**

1. Advocate for enhanced respect for and compliance with international humanitarian law, including by highlighting non-compliance, and work to ensure that affected populations enjoy protection and have access to safe and prompt humanitarian assistance.
2. Ensure that all parts of the UN system, based on their comparative advantage, work together towards collective outcomes to reduce need, vulnerability and risk, and support national and local efforts, while ensuring respect for humanitarian principles.
3. Work to increase the resources available for humanitarian emergencies, including by broadening the donor base and exploring other sources of new funding.
4. Make both speed and local capacity-building characteristic of the UN's humanitarian response: implement more humanitarian funds through national and local institutions:




remove the administrative barriers to partnership between the UN, national and local actors, and first responders.

5. Support the development of a new approach aimed at predictable and equitable sharing of responsibilities to address major refugee and migratory movements, while acknowledging the special burden experienced by countries that are neighbours to humanitarian emergencies.
6. Enhance global planning, structures and preparedness for responding to health emergencies and pandemics, drawing on lessons learned from the follow-up to the Ebola review and other emergent issues such as the Zika outbreak.
7. Better align the development, peacebuilding and humanitarian response in UN Development Assistance Frameworks, behind the priorities and needs of each country.

## **V. Advocate for respect for human rights for all and reduce the implementation gap**

1. Launch a global campaign to promote a renewed global commitment to implementing human rights before the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 2018.
2. Prevent and respond to massive and systematic human rights abuses by using a context-specific combination of behind-the-scenes diplomacy and vocal advocacy.
3. Ensure that a culture of human rights permeates the whole UN system, by improving coordination and by mainstreaming human rights, including through the continuation of the Human Rights up Front initiative.
4. Ensure the promotion of gender equality as part of the human rights culture in the UN System.

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5. Enhance the role of human rights in UN field missions, including through consistent implementation of the Human Rights Due Diligence policy, by vetting all UN peacekeepers, and by improving systems for preventing, reporting and responding to allegations of misconduct and sexual exploitation and abuse.
  6. Advocate principles of cooperation and genuine dialogue aimed at strengthening the capacity of Member States to comply with their human rights obligations.
  7. Initiate a review of the UN's ability to support capacity-building of national institutions that are responsible for rule of law, justice and reconciliation in order to promote and protect human rights.



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