

**41<sup>ST</sup> WFUNA Plenary Assembly – presentation of the resolution by Isabelle Younane, UNA-UK**

**RESOLUTION: A fair, open and inclusive process to select the best UN Secretary-General**

Fellow UNAs,

UNA-UK is a co-founder of 1 for 7 Billion – a global campaign committed to getting the best UN Secretary-General. Like many other UN Associations, we believe the world needs a strong United Nations led by a highly qualified, inspiring individual who can drive forward the UN's agenda on peace and security, human rights and development.

We're focusing on this campaign at WFUNA for three reasons: One, strong leadership at the UN will have a positive impact on the whole UN system. Two, WFUNA has the tools and expertise to bring about the change we need. And three, this is an achievable reform.

1. So firstly, success on this issue will have a multiplier effect benefiting the whole of the UN system. Just as the UN Charter begins, "We the peoples of the United Nations", the Secretary-General stands for the hopes and concerns of the world's seven billion people.

You may think that improving a UN recruitment process is a trivial ask. But the Secretary-General plays a large part in shaping public perception of the UN and bringing states around the table. And we have seen the difference a strong UN leader can make – from U Thant's role in de-escalating the Cuban Missile Crisis, to Kofi Annan's ground-breaking deal with pharmaceutical companies on widening access to HIV/AIDS treatment. These are just two examples from many.

The leader of the UN can – and should – improve the lives of the world's seven billion people

But if the current process is allowed to continue, we could get an unqualified UN leader unlikely to stand up to powerful countries.

Let's have a look at how things currently stand:

- There's no job description
- There's no timetable and no public scrutiny of candidates
- No women has ever been appointed
- Backroom deals between the permanent five members of the UN Security Council are common

It is, in the words of one prominent British politician, "a travesty" of a recruitment process that no respectable employer would get away with.

2. Secondly, 1 for 7 Billion speaks to the heart of what UN Associations were formed to do: work for a strong, credible UN equipped to tackle the world's hardest problems. And we have the tools to make it happen:

- We have strong links with our national governments, legislatures, members of the public and the United Nations
- We understand the complexities of the UN system and can see why strong leadership has the power to improve the Organization as a whole.

3. Thirdly, it's achievable. Change is already on the horizon.

- In September, the UN General Assembly unanimously passed a landmark resolution, adopting five reforms tabled by our campaign
- We have rallied support among two groupings of states: the Non-Aligned Movement and the Accountability, Transparency and Coherence group
- In the UK, we have used our unique position as a bridge between the UN and the UK to convert the British Government – a P5 member – into one of the campaign's most powerful advocates – we need legislatures around the world to also get involved

But this is just the beginning. Now, we need to ensure that the landmark General Assembly resolution is implemented by galvanising a critical mass of support. We hope UN associations will use their unique position as hubs for people, government and the UN to help us get the best possible UN leader in 2016.

I would like to thank the sponsors of our resolution – UNA Australia, UNA Benin, UNA Canada, UNA Denmark, UNA Finland, UNA Iceland, UNA Philippines, UNA Sweden, UNA Switzerland – and I encourage others to join us.

Thank you.