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Organisation de Coopération et de Développement Économiques
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English - Or. English

COUNCIL

Council

**DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL ON THE PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTING THE
FUTURE SECRETARIES-GENERAL**

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Background

1. The Convention on the OECD was signed on 14 December 1960 and came into effect on 30 September 1961 with twenty Member countries.

2. The internal and external circumstances surrounding the Organisation have significantly changed since the entry into force of the Convention in 1961. Its Membership has increased to thirty-four countries, with four other countries involved in an active accession process. At the same time, the Organisation has become more visible and relevant. As the global economic and social configurations have become more complicated and challenging, it has become imperative for Governments to better co-ordinate policies and orchestrate international efforts in order to tackle emerging issues. In this context, the role of the Secretary-General in guiding the Organisation has become increasingly key.

3. The Convention does not provide for a specific procedure to appoint a Secretary-General of the Organisation, only indicating the appointing capacity of the Council, the term length of the Secretary-General, and her/his responsibilities to the Council, in Article 10.1: “*A Secretary-General responsible to the Council shall be appointed by the Council for a term of five years.*” At the same time, the Convention entrusts the Council with the powers set out in Article 7: “*A Council composed of all the Members shall be the body from which all acts of the Organisation derive.*”

4. As part of the Resolution of the Council on Several Governance Issues [[C\(2015\)78](#)] (hereinafter referred to as “the Resolution”), Paragraph 4 stated: “*The Council will develop procedures for appointing future Secretaries-General, for adoption prior to the 2016 Ministerial meeting of the Council.*” In the history of the Organisation, the Council has appointed five Secretaries-General.* Three out of the five, including the incumbent Secretary-General, have been re-appointed twice. Only once, in 2005, was a specific appointment procedure set up, and it was valid for that particular appointment process only.

5. To implement Paragraph 4 of the Resolution, a Small Group of Ambassadors (hereinafter referred to as “the Group”) was set up. The Group was chaired by the Permanent Representative of Japan, Ambassador Kazuo Kodama, and composed of the following Permanent Representatives: Ambassador Brian Pontifex (Australia); Ambassador Michael Forbes (Ireland); Ambassador Paul Dühr (Luxembourg); Ambassador Elin Østebø Johansen (Norway); Ambassador James Kember (New Zealand); Ambassador Noé Van Hulst (Netherlands); Ambassador Jakub Wiśniewski (Poland); and Ambassador Pavel Rozsypal (Czech Republic). It also included the Organisation’s Director for Legal Affairs, Mr. Nicola Bonucci.

6. The Group, open to the other OECD Members which could attend meetings as observers, met six times between October 2015 and March 2016 in order to identify all the relevant issues for developing the procedure for appointing the future Secretaries-General and agree on a proposal to be presented to all Members. In carrying out its work, the Group based itself on the procedure followed in 2005 as well as on the benchmarking of other intergovernmental organisations.

* Thorkil KRISTENSEN (09/1961 - 09/1969); Emile VAN LENNEP (10/1969 - 09/1984); Jean-Claude PAYE (10/1984 - 05/1996); Donald J. JOHNSTON (06/1996 - 05/2006); and Angel GURRÍA (06/2006 –)

Proposed Action

7. In the light of the preceding, the Council is invited to adopt the following draft conclusions:

THE COUNCIL

- a) noted document [C\(2016\)70](#);
- b) adopted the draft Resolution of the Council on the procedure for appointing the future Secretaries-General set out in the Annex to document [C\(2016\)70](#).

ANNEX

**DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL ON THE PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTING THE
FUTURE SECRETARIES-GENERAL**

THE COUNCIL,

Having regard to the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of 14 December 1960 (hereinafter “the Convention”), in particular its Article 10, paragraph 1, and Article 7;

Having regard to the Resolution of the Council on Several Governance Issues [[C\(2015\)78](#)], in particular its paragraph 4, to develop procedures for appointing future Secretaries-General, for adoption prior to the 2016 Ministerial meeting of the Council;

Mindful of the importance of demonstrating such fundamental guiding principles as fairness, openness, transparency, inclusiveness and due process to be sustained throughout the procedures, and therefore;

Aiming at appointing, based on merit, the best possible candidate as the Secretary-General;

DECIDES:

The following procedure shall apply for appointing the future Secretaries-General:

1. Throughout the appointment process, the meetings of Heads of Delegations (HODs) shall be convened, as appropriate.
2. A Selection Committee (hereinafter “the Committee”) shall be set up to oversee and facilitate the appointment process. The Committee shall be composed of the Dean of the Council (hereinafter referred to as “the Dean”) as Chair of the Committee and two or three Permanent Representatives as facilitators whom the Chair shall propose taking into account both seniority¹ and diversity. The facilitators shall be endorsed by the HODs.
3. The Committee, represented by the Chair, shall be responsible for the conduct of the appointment process.
4. To ensure the impartiality of the Committee, a Permanent Representative of the Member who nominated a candidate and/or whose national is a candidate for the position of Secretary-General shall not be a member of the Committee. In case the Dean is to be replaced, s/he shall be replaced on the basis of

¹ For purposes of this Resolution, seniority shall be based on the length of assignment as Permanent Representative to the Organisation.

seniority. In case a facilitator is to be replaced, such replacement shall be made in accordance with Paragraph 2 above.

5. To launch the appointment process, the Dean shall convene a meeting of the HODs, during which the HODs should:

- i) set up the Committee, including by endorsing the facilitators;
- ii) agree, where necessary, on a timetable for the various stages of the process;
- iii) set up any specific modalities regarding the public call for nominations, and
- iv) consider any other relevant matter, including the financial terms and conditions offered to the Secretary-General.

6. While the Convention does not set any given number of terms a Secretary-General may serve, Members consider that a Secretary-General should serve no more than two terms.

7. The appointment process shall be carried out in line with the following timeframe, unless the HODs otherwise decide:

- i) ten months before the term of an incumbent Secretary-General expires, the Dean shall convene a meeting of the HODs in accordance with Paragraph 5 above;
- ii) if an incumbent Secretary-General decides to seek reappointment, s/he shall so notify the Chair (or the Dean if it is notified before the Committee is set up) no later than one month before the public call for nominations, i.e. at least ten months before her/his term expires, and shall thereby be considered to be a candidate. The Chair (or the Dean) shall inform Members of the incumbent Secretary-General's candidacy, so that they may duly take this into consideration before submitting nominations;
- iii) nine months before the incumbent's term expires, the Chair shall call for nominations of candidates publicly;
- iv) nominations of candidates shall be addressed in writing to the Chair no later than two months following the public call for nominations. The Chair, upon receipt of each nomination, shall notify the Members in writing and provide them with relevant information on the candidates;
- v) at the close of the nomination period, i.e. seven months before the incumbent's term expires, the Chair shall notify the Members a consolidated list of the candidatures received;
- vi) within a maximum of two months following the close of the nomination period, the Chair shall invite each individual candidate to be interviewed by the Members at the meetings of HODs;
- vii) within a maximum of two months following the interviews, the Chair shall carry out confidential consultations with individual Members on which candidate receives the most support;
- viii) in a situation where there is only one candidate, the Chair shall call a meeting of HODs to consider the appropriate procedure;
- ix) at the latest three months prior to the expiration of the incumbent's term, the appointment process should be concluded.

8. A candidate for the position of Secretary-General shall be a national of an OECD Member country, and shall be nominated by an OECD Member.²

9. In accordance with Paragraph 7 iii), the Chair shall address a letter to all Permanent Representatives inviting the Members to nominate a highly qualified candidate. The vacancy shall also be made public through the most effective media.

10. The following qualifications are considered as important benchmarks in identifying and comparing candidates:

- i) broad international experience and proven leadership ability, in a governmental or intergovernmental setting;
- ii) substantive economic experience and the ability to engage with the broad range of the Organisation's work and a firm commitment to the OECD's core objectives;
- iii) proven managerial skills;
- iv) ability to represent the OECD at the highest level with governments, other stakeholders and academic institutions;
- v) capacity to provide strategic direction to the OECD and to enhance the competence and global influence of the Organisation;
- vi) first rate communication skills with the media, and
- vii) fluency in one of the two official languages, English or French, and an operational ability in the other.

11. Each candidate shall be given the opportunity to be interviewed by Permanent Representatives at a meeting of the HODs called by the Chair. Such interviews should allow the candidates to make a brief presentation, articulating their vision for the OECD in the future and how this could be achieved. These interviews shall be followed by question and answer sessions with the HODs.

12. Following the interviews, the Chair shall conduct confidential individual consultations with the Members, in order to narrow the field of candidates and ultimately identify the candidate around whom consensus can be built for appointment as the Secretary-General. The Chair shall proceed by successive stages of consultations, identifying, at each stage, the candidate or candidates with the least support of the Members. Straw polls may be used, as necessary.

13. At the outcome of each stage, the Chair shall report to the Members the identified candidates expected to withdraw. The number of stages of consultations and the number of candidates expected to withdraw at each stage should be determined by the Chair, according to the total number of candidates and other circumstances.

14. At the final stage of consultations, the Chair shall identify the candidate that has the most support to be proposed to the Council for appointment as Secretary-General. The conclusions of the Chair shall be formalised in a report addressed to the HODs.

15. If no such candidate can be identified, the Chair may invite each of the two finalist candidates to an additional individual interview with the HODs. Following these interviews, the Chair should determine which candidate has the most support, and propose her/him for appointment to the Council.

² An incumbent Secretary-General seeking reappointment need not be nominated by a Member.

16. Pursuant to the Resolutions of the Council on the Governance of the Organisation [[C\(2015\)100](#)], Council's decision to appoint the Secretary-General is a fundamental case requiring mutual agreement, i.e. the decision shall be taken by consensus.

17. In the event of vacancy of the position of the Secretary-General, the longest-serving Deputy Secretary-General should serve as Secretary-General *ad interim* until the appointment of a new Secretary-General.

18. In such a case, the Dean shall initiate, as soon as possible, a process as set out in Paragraph 5 above. The HODs may, in this context, agree on expedited deadlines, as necessary.