

Executive Council

123rd session

Real Sitio de San Ildefonso, Segovia, Spain

29-30 May 2025

Agenda item 4**Recommendation by the Executive Council to the General Assembly
of a nominee for the post of Secretary-General for the period 2026-2029****Aide-Mémoire¹****I. Steps for the consideration of the agenda item**

Step 1. Presentations by the candidates²

1. The candidates will make an oral presentation of their candidatures (10 minutes each). They will be called to speak by the Spanish alphabetical order of their surnames as follows:
 - (a) Mr. Muhammad Adam (Ghana)
 - (b) Ms. Shaikha Al Nowais (United Arab Emirates)
 - (c) Mr. Habib Ammar (Tunisia)
 - (d) Ms. Gloria Guevara (Mexico)
 - (e) Mr. Harry Theoharis (Greece)

Step 2. Restrictive private meeting: discussion on the candidates

2. Prior to the voting, the Chair will moderate a “discussion on the candidates” in a **restrictive private meeting**. This restrictive private meeting can be attended **only** by:
 - (a) Members of the Executive Council (Full Members) with the right to vote³, duly accredited; and
 - (b) interpreters and, if requested by the Council, any other staff of the Secretariat.

NOTE: Recording is forbidden. Candidates are not allowed at the meeting.

Step 3. Normal private meeting: vote by secret ballot

3. After the discussion, the Council will convene again in a **normal private meeting** and will hold the voting by secret ballot. The decision will be taken by **simple majority** (see below). The normal private meeting can be attended **only** by:
 - (a) Members of the Executive Council (Full Members), duly accredited;
 - (b) other Full Members as observers;
 - (c) the delegate of the Associate Members;
 - (d) the Chair of the Board of Affiliate Members;
 - (e) the Chairs of the Regional Commissions; and
 - (f) interpreters and necessary staff from the Secretariat.

NOTE: Candidates cannot be present at the meeting.

¹ The Secretariat has produced this Aide-Mémoire prioritizing information relevant to the Members on the long-standing rules and practice for the recommendation of a nominee to the post of Secretary-General. It is not a legal document and does not claim to be comprehensive. The complete procedure may be found in document CE/123/4.

² Curriculum vitae and statements of policy and management intent of all candidates are available as an Annex in Council document CE/123/4.

³ Members under Article 34 of the Statutes or Paragraph 13 of the Financing Rules at the time of this agenda item are deprived of the right to vote unless they have been granted a temporary exemption from the application of such provisions by the General Assembly.

II. Procedure for the conduct of elections by secret ballot

4. The Chair will appoint two tellers from among the Members of the Executive Council. The tellers will lock the ballot box and hand the keys to the Chair.
5. Members entitled to vote will be called upon in Spanish alphabetical order by the Chair.
6. Each delegate will deposit the ballot paper in the box. In order for the ballot paper to be valid, please note:
 - (a) The box corresponding to only one of the candidates has to be correctly marked on the ballot paper.
 - (b) The ballot paper has to be deposited in the ballot-box by the delegate of the Member or a duly accredited proxy.
 - (c) The Member voting cannot be identified on the ballot paper.
 - (d) Votes will be null when more than one of the candidates is marked.
 - (e) Abstentions (including blank votes) or null votes will be regarded as not voting.

NOTE: The voting cannot be interrupted under any circumstances.

7. At the conclusion of the calling, the Chair will declare the voting closed and announce that the votes are to be counted.
8. The tellers will count the number of ballot papers, and shall record abstentions and null votes. Once the counting is complete, the tellers will indicate the required simple majority together with the result of the vote in the Tellers' Report that will be handed to the Chair.

What is a simple majority? Simple majority shall be understood as "more than half of the valid votes cast". For example:

- 35 Members present and entitled to vote
- 2 null votes; 1 abstention; 1 blank vote
- 31 valid votes cast: the simple majority is 16.

9. The Chair will declare selected as a nominee the candidate who has obtained a simple majority in the first or final ballot and will announce it orally.

What if no candidate receives the required majority? What if there's a tie scenario?

10. Pursuant to Rule 29(3) of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council, if no candidate receives simple majority in the first ballot, "a second and, if necessary, subsequent ballots shall be held to decide between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes in the first ballot".
11. In the case of a tie for first or second place, the following procedures should apply:
 - (a) If two candidates share first place, a final ballot will be held between them to decide the nominee for appointment to the post of Secretary-General.
 - (b) If three or more candidates share first place, a run-off vote will be held between them to decide the two candidates who, having received the greatest number of votes, will participate in the final ballot;
 - (c) If two or more candidates share second place, a run-off vote will be held between them, including the candidate having obtained the first place, to decide the two candidates who, having received the greatest number of votes, will participate in the final ballot.
12. The purpose of the run-off ballot is simply to decide the two candidates who will participate in the final ballot. Therefore, even if a candidate obtains a simple majority in the run-off ballot, such simple majority shall have no legal bearing on the Executive Council's final decision on a nominee, as it is the final ballot between the last two remaining candidates that constitutes the basis of the Executive Council's recommendation of a nominee for appointment to the post of Secretary-General if no simple majority is reached in the first ballot.

Voting scenarios for the election by secret ballot

