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| **MINISTERS’ DEPUTIES** | Information documents | **CM/Inf(2019)5** | 11 January 2019[[1]](#footnote-1) |

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| **Election of the Secretary General** |

**I. Background**

1. According to the Statute of the Council of Europe, the election of the Secretary General is a shared responsibility between the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly:

* The Committee of Ministers draws up a list of candidates to be transmitted to the Parliamentary Assembly.
* The Parliamentary Assembly elects the Secretary General from the candidates included in that list.

2. Following the recommendation made in this regard by Prime Minister JC Juncker in his report prepared at the request of the Heads of State and Governments, the Committee of Ministers agreed at its 117th Session (Strasbourg, 10-11 May 2007) “that it will henceforth present to the Parliamentary Assembly candidates who enjoy a high level of recognition, are well-known among their peers and the people of Europe, and have previously served as Heads of State or Government, or held senior ministerial office or similar status relevant to the post”.

3. This was not an amendment of the Regulations on the election of the Secretary General but a clarification on how the Committee would hereafter interpret in particular the criteria of “highest ability and suitability” mentioned in these Regulations.

4. The 2007 Committee of Ministers’ decision was applied for the first time in 2009 in the election of the current Secretary General and resulted in the Committee of Ministers drawing up - on the basis of a commonly agreed competence framework - a shortlist which only included candidates meeting the “Juncker criteria”. This was the first time the Committee of Ministers drew up a short list, which it then transmitted to the Parliamentary Assembly.

5. In the wake of that election, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Committee of Ministers adopted a joint interpretative statement in March 2010 which sought to clarify the consultation process between the two organs during the election process and to strengthen gender aspects. The statement includes a revised timeframe for the election of the Secretary General to accommodate early consultation with the Parliamentary Assembly on all candidatures before the Committee of Ministers decides on the list of candidates to be forwarded to the Parliamentary Assembly. The revised timeframe was applied for the first time for the election in 2014. It was modified by the Parliamentary Assembly on 22 January 2018 and by the Committee of Ministers on 13 December 2017 ([CM(2018)138](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?Reference=CM(2018)138" \o "Rules and procedures for the future elections of the Secretary General – Joint interpretative statement (Adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly on 12 March 2010 and by the Committee of Ministers on 24 March 2010, modified by the Parliamentary Assembly on 22 January 2018 and by the Committee of Ministers on 13 December 2017))).

**II. Rules**

6. The relevant rules and provisions for the examination of candidatures for the post of Secretary General are:

- **Article 36.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe** which sets out the roles of the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly: “The Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General shall be appointed by the [Parliamentary] Assembly on the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers”;

- **the Regulations relating to the appointment of the Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General and Secretary General of the Assembly having the rank of Deputy Secretary General** which were adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 1956 with the agreement of the Parliamentary Assembly (cf. Appendix 1). These Regulations give practical effect to Article 36.b and set out, *inter alia*, provisions for the submission of candidatures, the criteria determining the choice of candidates and the consultation of the Parliamentary Assembly by the Committee of Ministers.

7. These rules have been clarified by:

- **the Joint interpretative statement on the Rules and procedures for the future elections of the Secretary General** adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly by the Committee of Ministers in March 2010 (cf. Appendix 2).[[2]](#footnote-2) This Joint Interpretative statement specifies *inter alia* that the Committee of Ministers will henceforth interpret the criteria in the Regulations by reference to the decision taken at its 117th Ministerial Session; it sets out the calendar for the election of the Secretary General and includes the competence framework for assessing candidates against the criteria.

**III. Procedure**

8. In line with the joint interpretative statement, the Deputies fixed in October 2018 the **timetable[[3]](#footnote-3)** for the election procedure for the next Secretary General, “it being understood that the candidates should comply with the criteria set by the Ministers at their 117th Session:

**10 January 2019**: deadline for member States to propose candidates;

**Week of 21 January 2019:** consultation with the Parliamentary Assembly through the Joint Committee on all proposed candidates;

**20 March 2019:** interviews of candidates by the Committee of Ministers, drawing up of the recommendation and subsequent transmission to the Parliamentary Assembly;”

They also “noted that it might be necessary to revise the timetable should the Committee of Ministers not include at least two candidates in the recommendation to be transmitted to the Parliamentary Assembly for the election of the next Secretary General.”

9. In light of the above calendar, the **practical steps** to be taken in order to draw up the recommendation to the Parliamentary Assembly are as follows:

- at the first Deputies’ meeting after the deadline on 10 January 2019, stocktaking of the number of candidates submitted by member States and fixing of the date of the interviews; the Assembly is informed of the proposed candidatures;

- the Committee of Ministers consults the Parliamentary Assembly in the Joint Committee at the January 2019 part-session on all the candidatures proposed by governments before it draws up its recommendation;

- the candidates are interviewed by the Committee of Ministers on 20 March 2019. The Committee will assess the candidates against the criteria specified in the Regulations by reference to the decision taken at the 117th Ministerial Session. When assessing candidates against these criteria, the Committee of Ministers will have a merit based approach and use the competence framework it has prepared to that effect (cf. Appendix 2 of the Joint interpretative statement);

- once the interviews have been completed, the Committee of Ministers determines which candidates are to be included in the recommendation to the Assembly, on the basis of the criteria, by means of a vote on each of the candidates. The vote takes place by secret ballot[[4]](#footnote-4). The candidates obtaining two-thirds majority of the representatives casting a vote and a majority of the representatives entitled to sit on the Committee (Article 20d. of the Statute) are included in the recommendation to be transmitted to the Parliamentary Assembly. The Committee of Ministers may list the names in order of preference, should it so desire[[5]](#footnote-5), otherwise they are listed in alphabetical order.

10. As regards the **content** of the recommendation to the Parliamentary Assembly, **the various options foreseen in the Joint Interpretative Statement**, as well as their possible implications on the 2019 timetable, are as follows:

a) In the case where there are **two or more candidates included in the recommendation**, the latter is transmitted to the Parliamentary Assembly for election of the Secretary General at the June 2019 part-session.

b) In the case where there is **only 1 candidate included in the recommendation**, the Committee of Ministers will need to consult the Parliamentary Assembly to seek agreement in the Joint Committee on the submission of only one candidature in the recommendation. This would preferably take place during the April 2019 part-session (8-12 April). If agreement is reached in the Joint Committee, the recommendation is transmitted to the Parliamentary Assembly for election of the Secretary General at the June 2019 part-session.

**c) If the Committee of Ministers considers that no candidates are suitable to appear in the recommendation or if no agreement is reached in the Joint Committee on the submission of only one candidature in the recommendation**, there will be a renewed call for candidates in April 2019 to be submitted within a deadline of maximum six weeks (cf. [CM(2018)38](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?Reference=CM(2018)38" \o "European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages - c. Fourth report of the Committee of Experts in respect of Austria [1312 meeting])).

The procedure is then resumed as follows:

* *24-28 June 2019 : new consultation in Joint Committee on candidatures proposed by member States at the June part-session;*
* *July 2019: interview of candidatures by the Committee of Ministers, drawing up of the recommendation and subsequent submission to the Parliamentary Assembly;*
* *30 September-1 October 2019 : election by the Parliamentary Assembly;*
* *1 October 2019: start of the mandate of the new Secretary General.*

**Appendix 1**

**Regulations**

**relating to the appointment of the Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General**

**and Secretary General of the Assembly having the rank of Deputy Secretary General****[[6]](#footnote-6)**

1. Submission of candidatures

a. When a vacancy occurs in any of the three senior posts of the Secretariat General, appointments to which are made by the [Parliamentary] Assembly on the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers, or in the case provided for in clause 8.b below, candidates may be proposed to the Committee of Ministers:

i. by one or more Member Governments;

ii. by the Secretary General, in respect of the posts of Deputy Secretary General and Secretary General of the Assembly.

Furthermore, when the post of Secretary General of the [Parliamentary] Assembly falls vacant, or in the case provided for in clause 8.b, proposals may be submitted to the Committee of Ministers by one or more groups of Representatives to the [Parliamentary] Assembly; they should bear not less than five and not more than ten signatures.

The Secretary General may only propose candidates who are already permanent or temporary members of the Secretariat General.

Candidates from the Secretariat General may also be sponsored by one or more Member Governments, provided that in the case of the Deputy Secretary General or Secretary General of the [Parliamentary] Assembly the Secretary General has been previously consulted and has given his assent.

b. Member Governments and Assembly Representatives shall send their proposals to the Secretary General, who will forward them, together with his own, to the Committee of Ministers.

2. Criteria determining the choice of candidates

The following criteria shall determine the choice of candidates:

a. The recruitment of persons of the highest ability and integrity and suitability for the post to be filled.

b. The qualifications and experience of persons already employed by the Council of Europe shall be taken into consideration, so that members of the Secretariat may have reasonable prospects of promotion.

c. The desirability of ensuring an equitable geographical allocation of appointments among nationals of the Member States subject to the overriding interests of efficiency. No office in the Secretariat shall be considered to be the prerogative of any particular Member State.

3. Preliminary examination of candidatures by the Committee of Ministers

The Committee of Ministers shall examine the list of candidates. The latter may be summoned to an interview by the Committee itself or by a Sub-Committee appointed for the purpose.

4. Consultation of the Assembly by the Committee of Ministers

Before transmitting to the [Parliamentary] Assembly a recommendation for the appointment of any one of the three senior officials of the Secretariat General, the Committee of Ministers shall consult the Assembly on the subject through the medium of the Joint Committee.

This consultation shall take place, unless otherwise agreed to by the Joint Committee, not less than thirty days before the date of the opening of the Session during which the Assembly will be called upon to make the appointment.

5. Nomination of candidates

a. Unless it has been otherwise agreed after discussion in the Joint Committee, the Committee of Ministers shall draw up a list containing at least two names, which shall be submitted to the Assembly.

b. In the case of candidates for the posts of Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General, the Committee of Ministers shall be free to list the names in order of preference, should it so desire.

6. Procedure in the Bureau

The proposals submitted to the Assembly by the Committee of Ministers shall be examined by the Bureau, which may summon candidates to an interview. The Bureau shall then transmit the proposals to the Assembly, indicating, if it thinks fit and where appropriate, its own order of preference and the order of preference of the Committee of Ministers with regard to the candidates.

7. Procedure in the Assembly

a. The Assembly shall proceed to make the appointment.

b. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

c. An absolute majority of the votes cast[[7]](#footnote-7) shall be required at the first ballot and a relative majority at the second[[8]](#footnote-8).

8. Term of office and possible re-appointment[[9]](#footnote-9)

a. The three senior officials shall henceforth be appointed for a period of five years.

b. Not less than six months before the expiry of the term of any such official, the procedure laid down in the preceding clauses shall be set in motion; the official may be put forward again as a candidate in accordance with clause 1, and his term may always be renewed for a period specified in advance by agreement between the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers in the Joint Committee.

**Appendix 2**

**Rules and procedures for the future elections of the Secretary General –  
Joint interpretative statement**

(**[CM(2018)138](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?Reference=CM(2018)138" \o "Rules and procedures for the future elections of the Secretary General – Joint interpretative statement (Adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly on 12 March 2010 and by the Committee of Ministers on 24 March 2010, modified by the Parliamentary Assembly on 22 January 2018 and by the Committee of Ministers on 13 December 2017)))**

*(Adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly on 12 March 2010 and by the Committee of Ministers on 24 March 2010, modified by the Parliamentary Assembly on 22 January 2018 and by the Committee of Ministers on 13 December 2017)*

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Having regard to the Statute of the Council of Europe, in particular Article 36.b;

Having regard to the Regulations relating to the appointment of the Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General and Secretary General of the Assembly having the rank of Deputy Secretary General which were adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 1956 with the agreement of the Assembly;

Having regard to the proposals for enhanced dialogue and co-operation between the Parliamentary Assembly and the Committee of Ministers, as they appear in document [CM(2009)142](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?Reference=CM(2009)142" \o "Enhanced Dialogue between the Parliamentary Assembly and the Committee of Ministers - Draft Proposals for Enhanced Dialogue and Co-operation between the Parliamentary Assembly and the Committee of Ministers on the basis of the previous ad hoc meetings in Brussels, Paris and Bled [1066 meeting]) and Appendix to Parliamentary Assembly Doc. 12028 Part II;

1. The Committee of Ministers and the Assembly agreed that the rules for future elections of the Secretary General need to be clarified in respect of the consultation process between the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers and that the gender aspects need to be strengthened.

2. In accordance with Article 36.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe, the election of the Secretary General is a shared responsibility. It is the responsibility of the Committee of Ministers to draw up a list of candidates to be transmitted to the Assembly. It is the responsibility of the Assembly to elect the Secretary General from the candidates included in that list.

3. The criteria for determining the choice of candidates is set out in Article 2 of the Regulations relating to the appointment of the Secretary General. These are:

*“a. The recruitment of persons of the highest ability and integrity and suitability for the post to be filled.*

*b. The qualifications and experience of persons already employed by the Council of Europe shall be taken into consideration, so that members of the Secretariat may have reasonable prospects of promotion.*

*c. The desirability of ensuring an equitable geographical allocation of appointments among nationals of the Member States subject to the overriding interests of efficiency. No office in the Secretariat shall be considered to be the prerogative of any particular Member State.“*

In this connection, the Committee of Ministers will interpret the criteria of “highest ability and suitability” in particular by reference to the decision taken at the 117th Ministerial Session (Strasbourg, 10-11 May 2007) whereby the Committee of Ministers agreed to present to the Parliamentary Assembly “candidates who enjoy a high level of recognition, are well-known among their peers and the people of Europe, and have previously served as Heads of State or Government, or held senior ministerial office or similar status relevant to the post”. When assessing candidates against these criteria, the Committee of Ministers will have a merit based approach and use the appended competence framework it has prepared to that effect (cf. Appendix 2).

4. With a view to strengthening gender aspects, both organs will, taking into account their different responsibilities in the election process, strive to make gender equality a reality, in line with the declaration adopted by the Committee of Ministers at its 119th session in Madrid in May 2009. The Chair of the Committee of Ministers, when calling for candidatures, will strongly encourage member states to put forward candidatures of both sexes. Furthermore and bearing in mind paragraph 3 above, when the Committee of Ministers draws up its recommendation to be transmitted to the Parliamentary Assembly, it will pay due regard to the desirability of ensuring an equitable gender balance of appointments.

5. In accordance with Article 4 of the Regulations relating to the appointment of the Secretary General, the Committee of Ministers shall consult the Assembly through the medium of the Joint Committee before transmitting the recommendation to the Assembly.

6. The Committee of Ministers shall seek the Assembly’s views before the Committee of Ministers draws up its recommendation. Therefore, consultation of the Assembly by the Committee of Ministers will take place at an early stage of the election procedure through the Joint Committee. It shall include a discussion on all the candidatures proposed by governments. The revised timeframe, which is part of this statement, to accommodate this early consultation, is set out in Appendix 1.

7. After the consultation of the Assembly within the Joint Committee, the Committee of Ministers will decide on the list of candidates to be included in the recommendation to the Assembly, in accordance with its own procedures. This may include voting when drawing-up the list of candidates. In this context, it is recalled that Article 20.d of the Statute of the Council of Europe applies to the adoption of the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to the Assembly in the absence of a consensus.

*Appendix 1: calendar for the election of the Secretary General*

For a mandate beginning on 1 October of year n:

– September n-1: after informal discussions between the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and the Chair of the Committee of Ministers (CM). PACE, through its Bureau, confirms the date of the election (June of year n);

– October n-1: the CM fixes the timetable and calls for candidatures to be received before 10 January n. The Chair of the CM writes to his/her colleagues asking for suitable candidates and drawing attention to the “Juncker criteria” and to the gender equality aspects;

– 10 January n: deadline for member States to propose candidates;

– January n: consultation with PACE through the Joint Committee on all proposed candidates;

– March n: interviews of candidates by CM, drawing up of the recommendation and subsequent transmission to PACE;

– Before June n: interviews by the Assembly of the candidates included in the recommendation;

– June n: election by PACE;

– 1 October n: start of the mandate of the new Secretary General.

If only one candidate appears in the recommendation:

– a discussion during the April n PACE part-session to seek agreement in the Joint Committee on the submission of only one candidate in the CM recommendation;

– if agreement is reached in the Joint Committee, subsequent transmission of recommendation to PACE;

– June n: interviews and election by PACE;

– 1 October n: start of the mandate of the new Secretary General.

If the CM considers that no candidates are suitable to appear in the recommendation or if no

agreement is reached in the Joint Committee on the submission of only one candidature in the

recommendation:

– April n: renewed call for candidates within a deadline of maximum six weeks;

– June n: new consultation in Joint Committee on candidatures proposed by member States;

– July n: interview of candidatures by CM, drawing up of the recommendation and subsequent transmission to PACE;

– End September/October n: interviews and election by PACE;

– 1 October or no later than three weeks after the day of election by PACE: start of the mandate of the new Secretary General.

*Appendix 2: Competence framework*

The Secretary General is responsible to the Committee of Ministers for the work of the Secretariat and provides secretariat and other assistance to the Parliamentary Assembly. She/he represents the values of the Council of Europe to the outside at the highest levels and provides leadership to a culturally diverse Secretariat. The budgets of the Council of Europe amount to approximately € 300 million in 2010.

a) To assess the “suitability for the post” (*Regulations*):

- “high level of recognition”, “well-known among their peers”, “has previously served as Heads of State or government, or held senior ministerial office or similar status relevant to the post” (*117th Session’s decisions*):

- strong and effective relations with governments of member states; ability to work with the Committee of Ministers at all levels;

- demonstrated commitment to human rights, democracy, rule of law;

- very good knowledge of at least one of the official languages of the Council of Europe;

- at least a passive knowledge of the second official language, or a declared readiness to follow appropriate training during the first six months of the mandate.

b) To assess “highest ability” (*Regulations*):

- political vision and insight on international affairs; including the role of the Council of Europe; strategic thinking;

- leadership skills; trust-building; inspires and motivates a culturally diverse staff of 2,000 from 47 countries;

- skills to manage a large Organisation; delegates authority and empowers staff while remaining accountable; innovative thinking; promotes and accompanies change;

- pro-active planning ability and priority setting, both in his/her responsibility and in making proposals to the Committee of Ministers;

- delivers results, with efficiency and transparency;

- communication skills, both oral and written;

- negotiating skills; ability to tackle sensitive issues while promoting Council of Europe values;

- advocacy skills; proven ability to establish, maintain and use strong and effective networks; capacity to interact effectively with diverse interlocutors (political and cultural figures, officials, NGOs, media, etc); highly developed ability to explain and to persuade.

c) To assess “highest integrity” (*Regulations*)

- proven personal commitment to the ethical values of the Council of Europe;

- respect for diversity;

- openness to scrutiny.

**Appendix 3**

**Sample ballot paper / Modèle du bulletin de vote[[10]](#footnote-10)**

**ELECTION OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL**

**Nomination of candidates to appear in the recommendation to the Parliamentary Assembly**

**ELECTION DU (DE LA) SECRETAIRE GENERAL(E)**

**Désignation des candidat(e)s à figurer dans la recommandation à l’Assemblée parlementaire /**

Each member state is invited to vote (in favour, against or abstention) in respect of each candidate/

Chaque Etat membre est invité à voter (en faveur, contre ou abstention) au titre de chaque candidat(e)

[Candidates are listed in the order of submission of their candidatures / Les candidat(e)s sont présentée)s dans l’ordre de soumission de leurs candidatures]

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | in favour:  en faveur | Against:  contre / | Abstention |
| First name, Name / Prénom, Nom  (presented by country / présenté par pays) |  |  |  |
| First name, Name / Prénom, Nom  (presented by country / présenté par pays) |  |  |  |
| First name, Name / Prénom, Nom  (presented by country / présenté par pays) |  |  |  |
| First name, Name / Prénom, Nom  (presented by country / présenté par pays) |  |  |  |

1. This document has been classified restricted until examination by the Committee of Ministers. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This Appendix has been updated with the new timetable decided in 2017/2018 (cf. document [CM(2018)138](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?Reference=CM(2018)138" \o "Rules and procedures for the future elections of the Secretary General – Joint interpretative statement (Adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly on 12 March 2010 and by the Committee of Ministers on 24 March 2010, modified by the Parliamentary Assembly on 22 January 2018 and by the Committee of Ministers on 13 December 2017))). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Cf. [CM/Del/Dec(2018)1327/1.6](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?Reference=CM/Del/Dec(2018)1327/1.6" \o "Election of the Secretary General – Procedure). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Cf. sample ballot paper in Appendix 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Cf. Regulations, paragraph 5.b.. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Regulations adopted by the Committee of Ministers (43rd Meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies on 3 to 6 December 1956) with the agreement of the Assembly, subsequently amended as to paragraphs 1 and 8 as a result of a proposal by the Assembly (Recommendation 289 of 23 September 1961), by the Committee of Ministers (107th Meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies on 13 to 20 March 1962), with the agreement of the Standing Committee (Meeting of 30 March 1962).

   By Resolution (49) 20 the Committee of Ministers, pending the amendment of articles 36 and 37 of the Statute, authorised the Assembly to appoint , on the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers, a Chief of the Administrative Services (Clerk) of the Assembly, having the rank of Deputy Secretary General. In January 2000, this title was replaced by Secretary General of the Assembly, see Rule 64 of the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Only those ballot papers bearing the names of persons who have been duly entered as candidates shall be taken into account for the purpose of calculating the number of votes cast. (Rule 35.8 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. For the other modalities of the appointment by the Assembly, reference is made to its Rules of Procedure. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. This paragraph was altered as a result of Recommendation 289 of the Assembly, adopted on 23 September 1961 (see Doc. 1326) and the joint decision of the Committee of Ministers and the Assembly (see Doc. 1431). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Sample of 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)