

United Nations Meets to Choose Successor to Ban Ki-moon



United Nations, August 29 (RHC)-- The UN Security Council is holding secret ballots on Monday to choose a candidate to replace Ban Ki-moon who leaves after serving two five-year terms as the United Nations Secretary General. The 15-member Security Council will cast a ballot for each of the 10 candidates, with the choices being "encourage, discourage or no opinion."

The candidate chosen unanimously by the Security Council will be recommended for appointment by the UN General Assembly as the new secretary general who starts work in January 2017. Ban, who had been initially selected for the post by the Security Council in October 2006, steps down on December 31st. He was the first Asian head of the organization in 35 years.

The selection of the secretary-general is subject to the veto of any of the five permanent members of the Security Council -- China, Russia, Britain, the United States and France.

The nominees for the position include five women, namely UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova of Bulgaria; former Croatian Foreign Minister Vesna Pusic; Moldova's former Foreign Minister Natalia Gherman; former New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark, who heads the UN Development Program; Argentinian Foreign Minister Susana Malcorra and former UN climate chief Christiana Figueres of Costa Rica.

There are also five male candidates. They are Montenegro Foreign Minister Igor Luksic; former Slovenian president Danilo Turk; former UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres, who is also a former Portuguese prime minister; former Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic; former Macedonian Foreign Minister Srgjan Kerim and Slovak Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajcak.

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