



Dear Secretary-General,

As you assume office, 1 for 7 Billion congratulates you on your appointment and applauds your vision of the United Nations and ‘we the peoples’ working jointly for the well-being of humanity.

We welcome your remarks to the General Assembly on 19 October 2016, which emphasised the importance you attach to civil society as a crucial instrument in solving global problems, as well as your assertion that dialogue and cooperation with civil society are central to the UN across its activities. We also appreciate the example you set last year by actively participating in civil society fora to explain your candidacy for the position of Secretary-General, further contributing to the transparency of the selection process.

1 for 7 Billion, which comprises some 750 civil society organisations (CSOs) with a combined reach of almost 200 million people worldwide, was formed in 2014 to campaign for a fair, open and inclusive selection process to appoint the most qualified candidate as Secretary-General. Much has been achieved in the last two and a half years, notably the adoption and implementation of the landmark General Assembly resolution 69/321. Yet much more needs to be done to ensure that these crucial gains are maintained and built upon.

Throughout the campaign, 1 for 7 Billion worked hard to improve the selection process by advocating and supporting input from civil society. We were delighted that the new procedures enabled CSOs and people from all over the world to engage with the process. The high level of public interest was remarkable, demonstrating the huge appetite that exists around the world for closer interaction with the United Nations.

Building on that interest, four of the campaign’s founding CSOs – the United Nations Association – UK, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung New York Office, CIVICUS and Avaaz – have compiled suggestions from 1 for 7 Billion supporters for improved civil society-UN relations. While the views contained in the compilation are those of the individual contributors, rather than 1 for 7 Billion, they reflect key principles and proposals for cooperation with civil society for which we seek your support:

- The recognition of civil society as an integral part of a coherent system that delivers on the UN agenda;
- Respect for, and safeguarding of, the consultative rights of CSOs through transparent rules of procedure;
- The full realisation and regularisation of CSO engagement with the General Assembly, the Security Council and other UN fora;
- Practical steps to enhance access to the UN, including by those left furthest behind, such as championing broad and diverse civil society and public participation, overcoming logistical and security obstacles and utilising the full potential of modern technology.

We hope that the contributions in this document, which reflect perspectives from all over the world, will support our common aim: fostering stronger relationships between the UN and civil society.

In this regard, we were greatly encouraged by your appointment as Deputy Secretary-General of Ms Amina Mohammed, who helped to ensure unprecedented levels of civil society participation in the process leading up to the adoption of the Agenda 2030.

We are counting on you to be the UN champion for civil society and wish you every success in your work.

Yours sincerely,

The 1 for 7 Billion campaign