

Appointment of the Secretary General of INTERPOL

Explanatory note and applicable provisions of INTERPOL's legal texts

July 2023

EXPLANATORY NOTE ON THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF INTERPOL

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Secretary General of INTERPOL is INTERPOL's chief official and is responsible for the Organization's General Secretariat. The INTERPOL Constitution, in particular Articles 25 to 30, defines the role and functions of the Secretary General. The post of Secretary General is full-time at the seat of the Organization, in Lyon, France. The Secretary General shall represent the Organization and not any particular country and shall neither solicit nor accept instructions from any government or authority outside the Organization.

The Secretary General shall abide by INTERPOL's Constitution, Regulations and Rules and respect the Organization's ethical standards, in particular as provided for by the Organization's Staff Manual.

The Secretary General is appointed by the General Assembly upon a proposal of the Executive Committee for a five-year term of office and may be re-appointed once for another five-year term by the General Assembly.

The Executive Committee will select a candidate and propose his or her appointment to the General Assembly of INTERPOL during its 92nd session which will take place during the fourth quarter of 2024.

INTERPOL member countries are strongly encouraged to only submit applications for persons who meet the criteria set out in Section (2) of the present note.

The selection process for appointing the next Secretary General will be conducted by the Executive Committee in two phases:

- The first phase will take place during the first and second quarters of 2024, when the Executive Committee will review all applications and draw up a shortlist of candidates;
- The second phase will take place during the 222nd session of the Executive Committee, towards the end of the second quarter of 2024, when the Executive Committee will interview the shortlisted candidates. After the interviews and discussion by the Executive Committee, the Committee will select the candidate to propose to INTERPOL's General Assembly for appointment as Secretary General.

The Executive Committee will notify INTERPOL member countries of the candidate selected by the Executive Committee and to be presented to the General Assembly for appointment. The Executive Committee will also submit a report to the General Assembly which will attest to the integrity of the selection process and describe the successive stages which led to the Committee's final choice as well as the background of the candidate proposed for appointment.

Pursuant to Articles 37(1) and 50(2) of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly, the General Assembly's decision to appoint the Secretary General shall be taken by secret ballot, by a simple majority of the member countries present and casting an affirmative or negative vote. Those abstaining shall be considered as not voting.

In accordance with Article 50(3) of those same Rules, if the General Assembly fails to appoint the candidate proposed by the Executive Committee, the sitting shall be suspended and the Executive Committee shall meet immediately in order to submit another name.

2. CRITERIA OF THE CANDIDATE PROFILE

In conformity with INTERPOL's legal texts, the candidates for the post of Secretary General shall meet certain criteria:

Required

1. The candidate must be under the age of 65 upon commencement of his/her term of office.
2. The candidate must be highly competent in police matters.
3. The candidate must be in good health.
4. The candidate must be a national of a member country of the Organization.
5. The candidate must be proficient in at least one of the Organization's working languages.
6. The candidate must possess the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

Desirable

7. The candidate should have solid and extensive experience in law enforcement or in security matters, preferably as a law enforcement official.
8. The candidate should have thorough knowledge of international affairs, with a focus on international cooperation in law enforcement matters.
9. The candidate should have strong and recognized competence in strategic and organizational management, with proven leadership abilities.
10. The candidate should be sensitive to cultural and social diversity.
11. Working knowledge of at least two of the Organization's working languages would be an asset.

3. DOCUMENTS TO BE SUPPLIED BY THE CANDIDATES

All documents must be submitted in one of the Organization's working languages (Arabic, English, French and Spanish).

Upon submission of the application

In order to ensure compliance with the criteria specified in Section (2), each application must include:

- A curriculum vitae addressing the required and desirable criteria above;
- A short vision statement (not exceeding eight pages) describing the priorities and strategic direction which the candidate would pursue for the Organization if appointed;
- A copy of a valid passport indicating the candidate's nationality and date of birth; and
- A certificate issued by an appropriate governmental authority, attesting that the candidate is a national of that country and does not have a criminal record.

Following the shortlist of candidates drawn up by the Executive Committee

In accordance with INTERPOL's Staff Manual, the candidates shortlisted by the Executive Committee for appointment as Secretary General must present, prior to their interviews by the Executive Committee:

- A declaration of interest in private-sector entities (see Rule 1.3.3(2), Staff Manual); and
- A certificate of good health signed by a recognized medical facility (see Rule 2.1.10(1), Staff Manual).

In addition, confidential vetting enquiries shall be conducted at the Organization's request and with the candidates' consent (see Rule 2.1.10(1), Staff Manual), the result of which will be reported to the Executive Committee.

4. INFORMATION ON THE CANDIDATES

The Organization will publish each application received on INTERPOL's restricted website, which will display information and documents provided by the candidates, notably their curricula vitae and vision statements. The competent governmental authorities of INTERPOL's member countries may access the information of INTERPOL's restricted website through their INTERPOL National Central Bureaus, or by requesting specific access rights to the General Secretariat.

Following the closing of the application process on 31 January 2024, the Organization will publish the names, countries and current functions of the candidates received on INTERPOL's public website.

For any further information relating to the appointment of the next Secretary General, INTERPOL member countries may contact the General Secretariat.

APPLICABLE PROVISIONS OF INTERPOL'S LEGAL TEXTS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

INTERPOL Constitution

Article 8

The functions of the General Assembly shall be the following: [...]

- (e) To elect persons to perform the functions mentioned in the Constitution; [...]

Article 14

Decisions shall be made by a simple majority except in those cases where a two-thirds majority is required by the Constitution.

Article 27

The General Secretariat shall consist of the Secretary General and a technical and administrative staff entrusted with the work of the Organization.

Article 28

The appointment of the Secretary General shall be proposed by the Executive Committee and approved by the General Assembly for a period of five years. The Secretary General may be re-appointed only once, for a further period of five years, but must lay down office on reaching the age of sixty-five. The Secretary General may be allowed to complete the term of office on reaching the age of sixty-five but shall not hold office beyond the age of seventy.

The Secretary General must be chosen from among persons highly competent in police matters.

In exceptional circumstances, the Executive Committee may propose at a meeting of the General Assembly that the Secretary General be removed from office.

Article 29

The Secretary General shall engage and direct the staff, administer the budget, and organize and direct the permanent departments, according to the directives decided upon by the General Assembly or Executive Committee.

The Secretary General shall submit to the Executive Committee or the General Assembly any propositions or projects concerning the work of the Organization.

The Secretary General shall be responsible to the Executive Committee and the General Assembly.

The Secretary General shall have the right to take part in the discussions of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee and all other dependent bodies.

In the exercise of his or her duties, the Secretary General shall represent the Organization and not any particular country.

Article 30

In the exercise of their duties, the Secretary General and the staff shall neither solicit nor accept instructions from any government or authority outside the Organization. They shall abstain from any action which might be prejudicial to their international task.

Each Member of the Organization shall undertake to respect the exclusively international character of the duties of the Secretary General and the staff, and abstain from influencing them in the discharge of their duties.

All Members of the Organization shall do their best to assist the Secretary General and the staff in the discharge of their functions.

General Regulations

Article 19

The decisions of the Assembly shall be taken by a simple majority, except where otherwise provided by the Constitution.

Article 20

The majority shall be decided by a count of those persons present and casting an affirmative or negative vote. Those who abstain may justify their attitude. [...]

Article 42

The Assembly shall elect a Secretary General by secret ballot for a term of office of five years.

The candidate for the post of Secretary General shall be proposed by the Executive Committee.

Article 43

The Secretary General should be or have been a police official.

Article 44

The five-year term of office of the Secretary General shall commence at the end of the incumbent's term of office and terminate at the end of the General Assembly session held in the year in which his or her term of office expires.

The Secretary General's term of office shall terminate on completion of the prescribed five-year period provided for in Article 28 of the Constitution, or in the event of the Secretary General's resignation, death, removal from office, or upon reaching the age limit as specified in Article 28 of the Constitution.

The Executive Committee shall determine the Secretary General's conditions of employment.

Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly

Article 1: Functions of the General Assembly

In conformity with Article 8 of the Organization's Constitution, hereinafter referred to as "the Constitution", the functions of the General Assembly – which is the Organization's supreme governing body – are as follows: [...]

- (f) To appoint the Secretary General, in conformity with Article 28 of the Constitution. [...]

Article 37: Procedure for counting votes according to the majority required

- (1) In conformity with Article 14 of the Constitution and Article 19 of the General Regulations, decisions shall be taken by a simple majority except in cases where a two thirds majority is required by the Constitution. In conformity with Article 20(1) of the General Regulations, the majority shall be decided by a count of those present and casting an affirmative or negative vote. Those abstaining shall be considered as not voting; they may, however, take the floor to explain their abstention. [...]

Article 40: Secret ballot

- (1) Voting by secret ballot shall be compulsory in the following cases: [...]

- (b) the appointment of the Secretary General, in conformity with Article 42, first paragraph, of the General Regulations; [...]

Article 50: Appointment of the Secretary General

- (1) In conformity with Article 28, first paragraph, of the Constitution and Article 42 of the General Regulations, the appointment of the Secretary General, for a five-year term of office, shall be proposed by the Executive Committee and approved by the General Assembly.
- (2) The Secretary General shall be elected by secret ballot. The President shall announce the name of the candidate the Executive Committee has proposed for the post of Secretary General, and put the proposal to the vote.
- (3) Should the General Assembly fail to elect the candidate proposed by the Executive Committee, the sitting shall be suspended and the Executive Committee shall meet immediately. It shall submit another name within 24 hours.

- (4) In conformity with Article 28, third paragraph, of the Constitution, the General Assembly may, in exceptional circumstances on the basis of a proposal made by the Executive Committee, remove the Secretary General from office before the end of his or her term. In such cases, the General Assembly shall vote by secret ballot.

Rules of Procedure of the Executive Committee

Article 7: Voting in session

- (1) Each member of the Executive Committee shall have one vote.
- (2) Executive Committee decisions shall require a simple majority of the members present and voting for or against, unless some other form of majority is required. Regarding the selection of a candidate for the post of Secretary General, the decisions of the Executive Committee shall require a simple majority of the members present and voting for or against.
- (3) [...]
- (4) [...]
- (5) [...]
- (6) The Executive Committee shall normally vote by a show of hands, except if it decides otherwise before the vote. However, when the vote concerns the appointment of a particular person, the choice of a candidate for appointment by the General Assembly, or the proposal to terminate the term of an elected person, the vote shall be held by secret ballot.
- (7) The decision to appoint a particular person or to propose a candidate for appointment by the General Assembly shall be taken in accordance with the following procedure:
 - (a) If there are two candidates for the appointment, the candidate obtaining the most votes shall be selected. If both candidates obtain the same number of votes, a second ballot shall be taken. If both candidates again obtain the same number of votes, lots shall be drawn to decide between them.
 - (b) If there are more than two candidates and if no candidate obtains an overall majority, further ballots shall be taken and the candidate, or candidates in the event of a tie, obtaining the least number of votes shall be eliminated at each ballot. If only one candidate then remains, that candidate shall be selected. If two candidates remain, the procedure used shall be that outlined in (a) above.
- (8) A member of the Executive Committee shall not take part in a vote on:
 - (a) The appointment of a particular person or a choice of a candidate for appointment by the General Assembly whenever:
 - he or she is himself or herself a candidate for the post in question. A candidate eliminated in conformity with paragraph (7) above, shall once again be entitled to vote;

- the country where he or she holds an official position is presenting a candidate. The Executive Committee member shall once again be entitled to vote if the said candidate is eliminated in conformity with paragraph (7) above.

(9) [...]

(10) The quorum required for Executive Committee decisions shall be two-thirds of the members.

Staff Manual

Preamble

[...]

(3) The present Regulations and the Staff Rules shall apply to the officials of the ICPO-INTERPOL, hereinafter referred to as “the officials of the Organization” as defined below except as may otherwise be provided:

(a) The Secretary General, who is the Organization’s chief official, [...]

Rule 1.3.3: Outside activities and interests

[...]

(2) Any official who has any financial interest in any business concern with which he may be required, directly or indirectly, to have official dealings on behalf of the Organization shall at once disclose the nature and extent of that interest to the Secretary General.

Regulation 1.7: Information required of officials of the Organization

(1) Any official of the Organization who becomes a defendant in legal proceedings likely to compromise the dignity of his functions shall immediately inform the Secretary General, in conformity with the provisions of the Staff Rules.

(2) The Secretary General may, at any moment, require an official of the Organization to provide, or may have enquiries made to obtain:

(a) information concerning actions prior to and subsequent to the official’s appointment and relating to his aptitude, integrity and conduct;

(b) information concerning the manner in which he exercises his functions as an official of the Organization; [...]

Regulation 2.1: Recruitment

[...]

(2) Only nationals of the Organization’s Member States shall be eligible for recruitment as officials of the Organization.

- (3) The chief consideration to be taken into account by the Secretary General when appointing officials shall be to provide the Organization with the services of persons possessing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.
- (4) The Secretary General shall establish appropriate security and medical standards that applicants shall be required to meet before appointment. [...]
- (7) Officials of the Organization shall be selected without distinction as to race, religion or sex.

Rule 2.1.1: General conditions governing recruitment

- (1) No applicant for a post within the Organization may claim the right to be appointed, whatever his merits as an applicant.
- (2) [...]
- (3) The integrity and conduct of all applicants for posts within the Organization must be such as to qualify them for the performance of international functions within the Organization.
- (4) All applicants for posts within the Organization must have a working knowledge of the languages required for the performance of their functions, as indicated on the vacancy notice.

Rule 2.1.10: Conditions prior to appointment

- (1) The appointment of an official is subject both to a favourable medical report and to background clearance. [...]

Regulation 2.2: Notification of conditions of employment of the officials of the Organization

- (1) The Executive Committee shall determine the Secretary General's conditions of employment and communicate them to him in writing. [...]
