

## **B: The Secretary-General**

### **Functions, Term of Appointment and Procedure of Appointment**

#### *Functions of the Secretary-General*

8. The principal functions assigned to the Secretary-General, explicitly or by inference, by the Charter, may be grouped under six headings: general administrative and executive functions, technical functions, financial functions, the organization and administration of the International Secretariat, political functions and representational functions.

9. Many of the Secretary-General's duties will naturally be delegated, in greater or lesser degree, to members of his staff and particularly to his higher officials. But the execution of these duties must be subject to his supervision and control; the ultimate responsibility remains his alone.

10. The Secretary-General is the "chief administrative officer of the Organization" (Article 97) and Secretary-General of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council (Article 98). Certain specific duties of a more narrowly administrative character derived from these provisions are indicated in the Charter (e.g., in Articles 12 and 20, and in Article 98, the last sentence of which requires the Secretary-General to present an annual report to the General Assembly on the work of the Organization) and in the Statute of the International Court of Justice (Articles 5 and 13).

11. Further specific duties falling under this head, many of which will no doubt be defined in the Rules of Procedure of the various principal organs concerned and their subsidiary bodies, relate to the preparation of the agenda and the convocation of sessions, the provision of the necessary staff, and the preparation of the minutes and other documents.

12. The Secretary-General also has administrative and executive duties of a wider character. He is the channel of all communication with the United Nations or any of its organs. He must endeavour, within the scope of his functions, to integrate the activity of the whole complex of United Nations organs and see that the machine runs smoothly and efficiently. He is responsible, moreover, for the preparation of the work of the various organs and for the execution of their decisions, in co-operation with the Members.

13. The last-mentioned functions of the Secretary-General have technical as well as administrative aspects. More particularly as regards the work of the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council, the expert technical assistance which the Secretary-General is able to provide, and which he himself must control, will clearly affect the degree in which these organs can achieve their purposes.

14. Under the Charter, the Secretary-General has wide responsibilities in connection with the financial administration of the United Nations; and it may be assumed that, under the financial regulations which will be established by the General Assembly, he will be made primarily responsible for preparing the budget, for allocating funds, for controlling expenditure, for administering such financial and budgetary arrangements as the General Assembly may enter into with specialized agencies, for collecting contributions from Members and for the custodianship of all funds.

15. The Secretary-General is the head of the Secretariat. He appoints all staff under regulations established by the General Assembly (Article 101, paragraphs 1 and 3), and assigns appropriate staff to the various organs of the United Nations (Article 101, paragraph 2). He alone is responsible to the other principal organs for the Secretariat's work; his choice of staff—more particularly of higher staff—and his leadership will largely determine the character and the efficiency of the Secretariat as a whole. It is on him that will mainly fall the duty of creating and maintaining a team spirit in a body of officials recruited from many countries. His moral authority within the Secretariat will depend at once upon the example he gives of the qualities prescribed in Article 100, and upon the confidence shown in him by the Members of the United Nations.

16. The Secretary-General may have an important role to play as a mediator and as an informal adviser of many governments, and will undoubtedly be called upon from time to time, in the exercise of his

administrative duties, to take decisions which may justly be called political. Under Article 99 of the Charter, moreover, he has been given a quite special right which goes beyond any power previously accorded to the head of an international organization, viz: to bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter (not merely any dispute or situation) which, in his opinion, may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security. It is impossible to foresee how this Article will be applied; but the responsibility it confers upon the Secretary-General will require the exercise of the highest qualities of political judgment, tact and integrity.

17. The United Nations cannot prosper, nor can its aims be realized, without the active and steadfast support of the peoples of the world. The aims and activities of the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council will, no doubt, be represented before the public primarily by the Chairmen of these organs. But the Secretary-General, more than anyone else, will stand for the United Nations as a whole. In the eyes of the world, no less than in the eyes of his own staff, he must embody the principles and ideals of the Charter to which the Organization seeks to give effect.

*Term of Appointment, etc.*

18. The first Secretary-General should be appointed for five years, the appointment being open to renewal at the end of that period for a further five-year term. There being no stipulation on the subject in the Charter, the General Assembly and the Security Council are free to modify the term of office of future Secretaries-General in the light of experience.

19. Because a Secretary-General is a confidant of many governments, it is desirable that no Member should offer him, at any rate immediately on retirement, any governmental position in which his confidential information might be a source of embarrassment to other Members, and on his part a Secretary-General should refrain from accepting any such position.

*Procedure of Appointment*

20. From the provisions of Articles 18 and 27 of the Charter, it is clear that, for the nomination of the Secretary-General by the Security Council, an affirmative vote of seven members, including the concurring votes of the permanent members, is required; and that for his appointment by the General Assembly, a simple majority of the members of that body present and voting is sufficient, unless the General Assembly itself decides that a two-thirds majority is called for. The same rules apply to a renewal of appointment as to an original appointment; this should be made clear when the original appointment is made.

21. It would be desirable for the Security Council to proffer one candidate only for the consideration of the General Assembly, and for debate on the nomination in the General Assembly to be avoided. Both nomination and appointment should be discussed at private meetings, and a vote in either the Security Council or the General Assembly, if taken, should be by secret ballot.

**C: Administrative Organization of the Secretariat**

22. The Purposes of the United Nations are set out in Article 1 of the Charter. One of the primary functions of the United Nations, which is to maintain international peace and security, is to be carried out jointly by all the principal organs of the Organization, among which the Security Council has special and unique powers.

23. Each organ has functions which give it a distinctive character, but any organ in carrying out its particular function may, and undoubtedly will, be concerned at some stage of its work with matters which are the concern of the other organs as well.

24. Because the organs have both distinctive and common functions, the staff or secretariat, which serves them at all times, should be so organized as to meet this situation. Every organ, therefore, has at its