

# Ban Ki-moon Opens Historic Dialogue with Candidates for the Next UN Leadership at the 21st Jeju Forum

JEJU, SOUTH KOREA, June 25, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, the 8th [United Nations](#) Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon opened a historic, high-level dialogue featuring six candidates campaigning to become the 10th Secretary-General of the United Nations. Held on the second day of the 21st [Jeju Forum](#) for Peace and Prosperity under the session theme "Reimagining Multilateralism: A Dialogue with UN Secretary-General Candidates," the event marked a crucial milestone moment for global diplomacy as the candidates presented their visions for the future of the United Nations.



Ban Ki-moon at the Jeju Forum for Peace and Prosperity / Copyright: Jeju Forum for Peace and Prosperity

In light of deep geopolitical fragmentation, the highest number of conflicts since World War II, and an escalating climate crisis, the session provided a critical platform to explore how the candidates plan to restore trust and make the United Nations fit for purpose.

Opening the session, Ban Ki-moon, who served as the 8th Secretary-General of the UN from 2007 to 2016 and is currently co-chairing the Ban Ki-moon Foundation, addressed the candidates directly.

"I do not envy you (...). Yet, I envy you because you will work side by side with the most dedicated people on earth, UN staff who have pledged their lives to the cause of humanity," said Co-chair Ban Ki-moon. "You will share burdens in the most difficult corners of the globe, and in doing so, you will forge bonds of fellowship that no title or salary can ever replicate. You will also be supported by diplomats, business leaders, and civil society organizations who are eager to unite behind your leadership to shape the course of history."

The panel brought together six candidates seeking to succeed António Guterres, the 9th Secretary-General of the UN. The selection process will be finalized in late 2026 before the appointed candidate takes office officially on January 1, 2027:

Michelle Bachelet, Former President of Chile, Former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (video statement)

María Fernanda Espinosa, President of the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador

Rafael Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General of the UN Trade and Development

Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett, Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations

Macky Sall, Former President of Senegal

With five of the six candidates representing the Latin American and Caribbean region, which is widely favored to assume the seat, the dialogue marked a milestone in the campaign for the UN's top seat.

Before the public session, the candidates engaged in private, bilateral consultations with Co-chair Ban Ki-moon, drawing from his decade of experience leading the organization through major global milestones, including the adoption of the Paris Climate Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The 21st Jeju Forum, co-hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea and Jeju Special Self-Governing Province, continues through June 26 under the overarching theme, "An Era of Fractured World: Reimagining Cooperation".

About the Ban Ki-moon Foundation:



Candidates for the 10th Secretary-General of the United Nations at the Jeju Forum for Peace and Prosperity / Copyright: Jeju Forum for Peace and Prosperity

The Ban Ki-moon Foundation works to foster leadership for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Agreement by inspiring today's leaders and empowering young changemakers. Through partnerships with governments, civil society, academia, and international organizations, the Foundation has reached more than 2.8 million people worldwide.

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