



13.4. 2016 – A historic, “new and transparent process,” was kicked off yesterday at the UN General Assembly by its President Mogens Lykketoft who opened the so called informal dialogues with candidates for the next United Nations Secretary-General.

“The level of interest in these dialogues from the global public and civil society is extraordinary,”

[Lykketoft said](#)

. Yesterday the hearings opened with three of the eight candidates:

[Igor Luksic](#)

, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration,

[Irina Bokova](#)

, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,
and

[Antonio Guterres](#)

, former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Lukšić [suggested](#) creating a powerful deputy secretary general, who would take a leading role in conflict resolution and prevention. He said he would consider setting up a special tribunal to

try UN peacekeepers responsible for human rights violations, such as the sexual abuse uncovered in Central African Republic.

Bokova [insisted](#) that she would take a firm stand on human rights. “The secretary general has a moral authority and a stand to advocate and to talk to world leaders. I think this is an important responsibility,” she emphasized during her hearing. [According](#) to Bokova, the United Nations should do more to combat violence against women and stressed the importance of gender equality.

The third candidate to speak was António Guterres, the former prime minister of Portugal and a former UN high commissioner for refugees. Like the other candidates he was asked how he would resist pressure from the big powers on the Security Council. “I cannot say that I will not avoid pressure but I can resist pressure. Independence is an attitude. I don’t think I will change,” Guterres replied.

More candidates are expected to enter the race in the next few weeks. Today, some of the candidates will take part in [separate hustings in New York](#), open to the press and public, where they will face more questions from the public and NGOs.

The hearings continue today at 15.00 CEST and can be followed live here: <http://webtv.un.org/>

Today’s hearing schedule (EST):

09:00 Mr. Danilo Türk, Slovenia

11:00 Ms. Vesna Pusić, Croatia

15:00 Ms. Natalia Gherman, Republic of Moldova

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