

More than 128 countries back pledged reforms to shape '21st century UN'

18 September 2017 – Pledging to overhaul the United Nations bureaucracy to make the world body stronger and more responsive to the people it serves, [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres today launched a pledge of support for reforms that has the backing of 128 countries.

“Our shared objective is a [21st century UN](#) focused more on people and less on process, more on delivery and less on bureaucracy,” the Secretary-General said at the event co-hosted by United States President Donald Trump.

He added that “value for money while advancing shared values – this is our common goal.”

Mr. Guterres said someone recently asked him what kept him awake at night – bureaucracy, was the simple answer. “Fragmented structures. Byzantine procedures. Endless red tape,” he added.

“To serve the people we support and the people who support us, we must be nimble and effective, flexible and efficient,” he stated.

The 10-point Declaration for support for UN reforms aims to simplify procedures and decentralize decisions, with greater transparency, efficiency and accountability, according to Mr. Guterres.

In recent months, the UN embarked on plans to achieve gender parity among the Organization’s middle and senior-management positions, and is working to reorganize the peace and security sections so they are refocused on prevention and mediation.

The UN has also prioritized ending sexual exploitation and abuse. At a high-level meeting scheduled for today, the UN is due to announce a ‘Circle of Leadership’ which will include Heads of State and Government committed to ending impunity and strengthening measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping and political mission, among other international deployments.

In his speech today, Mr. Guterres also noted reforms to the UN’s development system, to become more coordinated, focused on the people and more accountable to better assist countries along the 17 priorities in the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development.

These aims, Mr. Guterres said, will be measured through “tangible results in the lives of the people we serve” and in “the trust of those who support our work through their hard-earned resources.”

The UN chief quoted President Trump who he said on multiple occasions noted that “the UN has tremendous potential.”

"All of us have a responsibility to make sure we live up to it," Mr. Guterres said.