

APPOINTMENT OF NEXT SECRETARY GENERAL
MEETING OF HEADS OF DELEGATION

Friday, 21 October 2005

Chairman's report on the first stage of consultations

The purpose of this meeting is to allow me and my colleagues in this exercise – Ambassador Jocelyne Bourgon (Canada) and Ambassador Peter Brückner (Denmark), acting as Facilitators – to report to the membership on the outcome of the first stage of consultations regarding the selection and appointment of the next Secretary-General of the OECD.

The appointment process started on March 30th, 2005 with an invitation to Member countries to nominate candidates until July 15th 2005, based on the common understanding by Heads of Delegation (HOD) of March 24, 2005 on the modalities for the selection of the next Secretary-General (including the benchmarks for evaluating candidates).

The response to that invitation was very successful and allowed Member countries a choice among six outstanding candidates. The high stature of the candidates has been confirmed by the Hearings HOD conducted on October 3rd and 4th and the six Member countries which have proposed these candidates deserve high praise and sincere thanks.

The consultations we have held have been conducted on a strictly confidential basis, and I and both facilitators – and only we – have been present at all the consultations. According to paragraph 10 of the procedure for the Consultation with Members of the Council of September 9th, the Permanent Representatives were asked to indicate the names of the three candidates which in the opinion of their country would be best suited to lead the OECD in the coming years and to rank these three in order of preference.

Many participants in the process stressed how difficult it was for their governments to decide on their preferences in view of the fact that all candidates presented excellent credentials and fulfilled the requirements for the post.

The only criterion we considered in the assessment of the breadth of support for the candidates is the number – and only after that the spread - of countries which expressed a first, second and third preference for a candidate.

Based on all of the above and our assessment from the information provided to us during this consultation, Mr. Allan Fels, Mr. Seung-Soo Han and Mr. Alain Madelin (in alphabetical order) have decided to withdraw their candidature in order to facilitate the building of a final consensus. I would like to commend them and the country they represent for this dignified attitude and the high regard for the multilateral co-operation and the spirit on which it is based. The three candidates enriched us with their views on the future role, priorities and challenges for our Organisation and have made –through their candidature – a significant contribution to the prestige and image of the OECD.

For the sake of transparency, I would also like to inform the membership that Mr. Marek Belka and Mr. Angel Gurría (in alphabetical order) enjoyed the highest level of support from Members, both in terms of preference and breadth of support. The third highest level of support was obtained by Ms. Sawako Takeuchi.

We propose to hold the second stage of consultations on Thursday 3 November 2005 based on the remaining candidates: Mr. Marek Belka, Mr. Angel Gurría and Ms Sawako Takeuchi. This time we will ask you to give us two names in order of preference. The information we received from Members in the first round of consultations will not be used in the second round. We are inviting you to meet with us according to a schedule which the Secretariat will establish.

Copies of this statement will be made available to Delegations and to the media through the OECD website. Let me thank all of you for your excellent co-operation in this process. My particular thanks go to my two facilitators for their precious support.