

CHECKLIST

FOR SELECTION OF CANDIDATES FOR THE MANDATE OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

Relevant educational qualifications and equivalent professional experience in the field of human rights.

- ☐ Expertise in the field of protection for human rights defenders, preferably with an international, cross-regional component; experience working with and contributing to the protection of human rights defenders;
- ☐ Demonstrated experience addressing issues relevant to the mandate, from a human rights perspective (for example, through lived experience and practice, academic publications, studies, reports, research papers or any similar written material demonstrating in-depth knowledge);
- ☐ Extensive experience in public speaking (for example in expert seminars) as well as in communicating and/or working together with relevant stakeholders, including senior government officials, the diplomatic corps, intergovernmental organisations, national human rights institutions, NGOs, human rights defenders and victims of human rights violations, businesses, media and other non-state actors;
- ☐ Extensive experience in a discipline directly related to the mandate, preferably with a focus on international human rights law, would be highly desirable;
- ☐ Excellent oral and written communication skills in at least English and an additional UN working language. Communication skills in other UN official languages are welcome (knowledge of other widely used or official UN languages, such as Arabic, Chinese or Russian, would also be an asset).

RELEVANT EXPERTISE

Knowledge of international human rights instruments, norms, standards and principles; as well as knowledge of institutional mandates related to the united nations or other international or regional organisations' work in the area of human rights; proven work experience in the field of human rights.

- ☐ Extensive knowledge of international human rights law and standards, as well as protection mechanisms, including through the lens of non-discrimination and equality, and their application for the promotion and protection of human rights defenders and their work;

- ☐ Several years of progressively responsible work experience in the field of human rights or as a human rights defender, including in protection, human rights research, monitoring, reporting, investigating and advocacy;
- ☐ Excellent knowledge of the international and regional legal frameworks, including case law relevant to the promotion and protection of the rights of human rights defenders, including the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, torture and other ill-treatment, extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, and enforced or involuntary disappearances;
- ☐ Extensive experience in working in varied socio-cultural, legal and religious contexts to raise awareness on, and foster understanding of, issues related to the promotion and protection of the rights of human rights defenders; knowledge of the differential impacts of those contexts on women human rights defenders and defenders of the rights of LGBTTTIQ+ people and communities;
- ☐ Practical experience in promoting and protecting the rights of human rights defenders, including through a gender perspective;
- ☐ Excellent knowledge of institutional mandates of the United Nations and/or other international or regional human rights bodies.

ESTABLISHED COMPETENCE

Nationally, regionally or internationally recognised competence related to human rights.

- ☐ A demonstrated commitment to human rights law and standards;
- ☐ Excellent knowledge and expertise of the work of human rights defenders, and of responding to recent trends, developments and challenges human rights defenders face;
- ☐ Recognised knowledge and experience of human rights-based academic and field research and/or fact-finding methodology, including carrying out fact-finding visits;
- ☐ Experience in applying international human rights standards, such as the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, in particular with a view to furthering the recognition and protection of human rights defenders and their work;
- ☐ Experience at national, regional and/or international levels in developing legislation, policies and mechanisms for the protection of human rights defenders, including knowledge in developing comprehensive protection strategies that incorporate a collective, gender, ethnic and intersectional perspective, and in creating a safe and enabling environment for their work, including addressing issues related to discrimination, threats, intimidation, reprisals, and impunity;
- ☐ Extensive experience with and proven commitment to working and/or interacting with civil society and individuals who have been at risk, or who have experienced, among other, harassment, stigmatisation, smear campaigns, travel bans, surveillance, criminalisation, threats, intimidation, reprisals, violence or killings as a result of their work in defending human rights;

- ☐ Proven awareness of the particular risks faced by and particular protection needs of specific groups of human rights defenders, such as women human rights defenders, defenders working on sexual orientation and gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics issues, ethnicity, religion or belief, minorities or people discriminated against based on work, descent or socio-economic status, non-nationals, migrants, refugees and internally displaced people, defenders working on environmental and land rights issues, journalists and media workers and youth/children human rights defenders;
- ☐ Knowledge of the particular challenges and risks facing human rights defenders in the digital age and proven awareness of the digital security needs of human rights defenders and strategies for protecting and promoting the exercise and defence of human rights online;
- ☐ Experience in interacting with actors impacting the work of human rights defenders, such as governments and political groups, security forces, armed groups, companies, investors, international or regional financial institutions or development finance institutions and religious groups and institutions;
- ☐ Experience in the development and delivery of assistance and capacity building in human rights and the rule of law, including as relevant to the training of law enforcement officials, judges and other legal professionals and officials responsible for the protection of human rights defenders;
- ☐ Knowledge and sensitivity to the issue of reprisals or intimidation experienced by persons who interact with the mandate in any way.

FLEXIBILITY/READINESS AND AVAILABILITY

Time to perform effectively the functions of the mandate and to respond to its requirements.

- ☐ Willingness and ability to conduct in-country investigations, in all regions of the world, into laws, policies, and practices affecting human rights defenders and their work;
- ☐ Energy, determination and vision to promote the effective and comprehensive implementation of the Declaration on human rights defenders, including the protection of human rights defenders wherever they are at risk, and the promotion of a safe and enabling environment so that they can operate without fear of reprisals;
- ☐ Preparedness, willingness and ability to devote a substantial number of working hours to fulfilling the mandate, which includes undertaking two to three country visits per year, preparing and presenting reports to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly, attending conferences and seminars and other UN meetings relevant to the mandate. Willingness and ability to act urgently on individual cases or situations concerning human rights defenders requiring immediate attention;
- ☐ A demonstrated commitment to human rights in general, and a commitment to uphold the integrity, objectivity, discretion, independence and impartiality of the Special Rapporteur's mandate and the Special Procedures system as a whole.