

REFERENCE: OLA/OUSG

The Secretariat of the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations and has the honour to request the nomination of candidates for the position of Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) for Legal Affairs, United Nations Office for Legal Affairs (OLA). This position is based at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The ASG for Legal Affairs serves as deputy and is accountable to the Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Legal Affairs and Legal Counsel of the United Nations. The ASG serves as a role model for the United Nations Values (Inclusion, Integrity, Humility and Humanity) and Behaviours (Connect and Collaborate; Analyse and Plan; Deliver Results with Positive Impact; Learn and Develop; Adapt and Innovate) Framework, and the desired behaviours of the United Nations System Leadership Framework.

Background

The OLA was established in 1946 (General Assembly resolution 13(I) of 13 February 1946) and is the central legal service of the Organization. OLA performs the following functions: (a) Provides legal advice to the Secretary-General, Secretariat departments and offices, funds and programmes and other United Nations organs, including in support of the Organization's efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals as reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; (b) Represents the Secretary-General in legal conferences and judicial proceedings; (c) Performs substantive and secretariat functions for legal organs involved in public international law generally, as well as those involved in the law of the sea and ocean affairs and international trade law; and (d) Performs the functions conferred on the Secretary-General in Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations, in the Statute of the International Court of Justice and in other relevant instruments of international law.

Further information about OLA is available in the Secretary-General's Bulletin ST/SGB/2021/1 of 18 January 2021 on the Organization of the Office of Legal Affairs, and on the following website:  
<https://www.un.org/ola/en>

### **Call for nominations and closing date**

The Secretariat welcomes nominations to supplement the Secretary-General's search and consultations and would especially welcome the nomination of women candidates.

In accordance with the policy for the nomination of candidates, the Secretariat wishes to outline that it is the responsibility of the nominating Government to ensure that each candidate that it nominates has not been convicted of or is not currently under investigation or being prosecuted for, any criminal offence, or any violation of international human rights law or international humanitarian law. In the case of nominees who have been investigated for, charged with, or prosecuted for any criminal offence but were not convicted, the nominating Government is requested to provide information regarding the investigation(s) or prosecutions concerned.

The nominating Government is also requested to certify that it is not aware of any allegations against its nominated candidate, and that they have not been involved, by act or omission, in the commission of any acts that amount to violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law.



Nominations, including cover letter, must be submitted through the following email address: **OLA-ASG-nomination@un.org** by **11 August 2025, by midnight, New York time**.

All nominations will be treated with the strictest confidence, and short-listed candidates will be contacted directly to undergo an assessment process, reference, and background checks, including human rights and conflicts of interest screening.

### **Duties and responsibilities**

The ASG is accountable to the USG for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel.

S/he will assist the USG in the overall leadership and management of OLA. S/he will be expected to serve as Officer-in-charge of OLA in the absence of the USG.

The ASG will assist the USG in the overall formulation, communication, implementation and evaluation of advice, policies and activities within the mandate of OLA.

The ASG will be primarily responsible for leading the Office of the Legal Counsel in OLA. S/he will also be responsible for:

- Providing the USG with advice on issues of public international law;
- Providing the USG with strategic support across a range of operational and management issues;
- Supporting the USG in managing OLA's financial position, budgeting and strategic planning processes;
- Helping to ensure flexibility in the response by OLA to demands for legal advice, opinions and action within its mandate;
- Helping drive a performance culture across OLA;
- Helping ensure effective coordination and cooperation between the units of OLA in New York and Vienna;
- Representing OLA in the Secretariat's Deputies' Committee;
- Monitoring the implementation of the programme of work of OLA;
- Creating a working environment that is conducive to gender equality and ensuring that a gender perspective is systematically integrated in documents and workplans.

The ASG will support the USG in building and maintaining good relationships with key stakeholders and partners, including UN organs, Member States, other relevant international and regional organisations, academia and civil society.

### **Education, Skills and Expertise**

The Secretary-General is seeking an individual with the following attributes:

- An advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent degree) in law. A first-level university degree in law in combination with two additional years of qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.
- Unimpeachable personal integrity and 20 years of proven international legal as well as relevant diplomatic, policy advisory and advocacy experience, with at least 5 years of high-level experience;
- Demonstrated leadership experience with strategic vision and proven skills in managing complex legal issues within organizations, such as governmental and intergovernmental entities
- Demonstrated ability to deliver change and results in politically and operationally sensitive environments;



- Outstanding leadership, strategic visioning, management, communication, negotiating, teambuilding, and partnership skills;
- Extensive experience in effectively dealing with the diplomatic community, governments, and actors in international legal affairs; Experience in international litigation desirable;
- High commitment to the values and guiding principles of United Nations and good understanding of the United Nations system and relevant legal norms;
- Demonstrated aptitude to manage complex situations and emergencies effectively.

### **Languages**

English and French are the working languages of the United Nations. For this position, fluency in English, with excellent drafting skills is required. A working knowledge of French is desirable. Knowledge of other United Nations official languages will be an advantage.

### **Human rights screening**

In accordance with the policy for the nomination of candidates, the Secretariat wishes to outline that it is the responsibility of the nominating Government to ensure that each candidate it nominates has not been convicted of or is not currently under investigation or being prosecuted for, any criminal offence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, or any violation of international human rights law or international humanitarian law. In the case of nominees who have been investigated for, charged with or prosecuted for any criminal offence but were not convicted, the nominating Government is requested to provide information regarding the investigation(s) or prosecutions concerned. The nominating Government is also requested to certify that it is not aware of any allegations against its nominated candidates that they have been involved, by act or omission, in the commission of any acts that amount to a criminal offense, including sexual exploitation and abuse, or violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law.

Individuals who are either nominated by Member States or self-nominated will be required, if short-listed, to complete a self-attestation stating that they have not committed, been convicted of, nor prosecuted for, any criminal offence, including sexual exploitation and abuse, and have not been involved, by act or omission, in the commission of any violation of international human rights law or international humanitarian law, including sexual exploitation and abuse.

### **Conflicts of interest screening**

All United Nations staff members are expected to uphold the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. Senior leaders in particular, have the responsibility to serve as role models in upholding the Organization's ethical standards.

A conflict of interest occurs when, by act or omission, a staff member's personal interests interfere with the performance of his/her official duties and responsibilities, or call into question his/her integrity, independence and impartiality. Risk for conflicts of interest may arise from a staff member's engagement in outside (non-UN) employment or occupation; outside activities, including political activities; receipt of gifts, honours, awards, favours or remuneration from external (non-UN) sources; or personal investment.

In particular, no staff member shall accept any honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration from any Government (staff regulation 1.2 (j)).

Where a real or perceived conflict of interest does arise, senior leaders are obligated to disclose this to the organization without delay. In order to avoid real or perceived family influence or preferential treatment and conflicts of interest that could stem from such situations, the United Nations Staff Rules provide that



appointments “shall not be granted to anyone who is the father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister of a staff member” (staff rule 4.7 (a)).

Short-listed individuals will also be required to complete a pre-appointment declaration of interests for senior positions to identify possible conflicts of interest that may arise and to proactively prevent and manage, as much as possible and in a timely manner, situations in which personal interests may conflict or appear to conflict with the interests of the United Nations, should the individual be appointed to this position.

The Secretariat of the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Missions of Member States and Non-Member States to the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

New York, 11 July 2025