

REFERENCE: EOSG/SLA/2025/6

**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**

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 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at the Under-Secretary-General level, located in Geneva, Switzerland.

The High Commissioner is a member of the Secretary-General's [Senior Management Group](#), and 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](#). The High Commissioner is also a member of the [United Nations Sustainable Development Group](#), which guides, supports, tracks, and oversees the coordination of United Nations development operations in 162 countries and territories.

In accordance with the Statute of UNHCR, the High Commissioner shall be elected by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Secretary-General. The terms of the appointment of the High Commissioner shall be proposed by the Secretary-General and approved by the General Assembly.

Background

UNHCR was established on 14 December 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly. The agency is mandated to lead and co-ordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. It strives to ensure that everyone can exercise the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge in another State, with the option to return home voluntarily, integrate locally or to resettle in a third country. It also has a mandate to help stateless people.

Further information on UNHCR is available in the Secretary-General's Bulletin ST/SGB/1998/9 and on the following website: <http://www.unhcr.org/>

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 of 11 December 2012 entitled, Policy on Human Rights Screening of the United Nations Personnel, 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, 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 must be submitted through the link to the Senior Leadership Vacancies online form located at the following web address: <https://www.un.org/sg/en/vacancies/index.shtml> by Monday, 6 October 2025 (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 responsibilities, authority and accountability of the High Commissioner are set out in the Statute of UNHCR. The High Commissioner is accountable to the Secretary-General for the administration of the Office.

The High Commissioner reports annually to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council; the High Commissioner is entitled to present his or her views before the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies; the High Commissioner is bound by policy directives given him or her by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council; the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General are to make appropriate arrangements for liaison and consultation on matters of mutual interest.

Skills and Expertise

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

- Demonstrated extensive knowledge and/or experience of the international humanitarian system and the challenges facing the refugee community,
- Demonstrated experience working in partnership with national, regional and international actors to resolve global challenges,

- Demonstrated leadership experience with strategic vision and proven skills in managing complex organizations (such as an intergovernmental, international non-governmental or multinational private sector entities),
- Proven ability to inspire, encourage, build trust and confidence, and build consensus and stimulate effective campaigns among and drive collective action among a broad spectrum of people and organizations, on humanitarian issues, with strong diplomatic and political skills,
- Ability to be a powerful and convincing advocate on all aspects of refugee issues worldwide and within the United Nations system,
- A solid understanding of the United Nations system and mechanisms, including peacekeeping, humanitarian, human rights and development settings and challenges,
- Demonstrated excellent communication and representation skills, proven ability to persuade, motivate and influence stakeholders to accelerate transformational approaches and implement commitments;
- Proven track record of change management and accomplishments at the national, regional or international level, with strong resource mobilization, political and diplomatic skills;
- Demonstrated ability to work harmoniously in a multi-cultural team and establish harmonious and effective working relationships both within and outside the organization,
- Impeccable personal and professional integrity, with high commitment to the values and guiding principles of the United Nations.

Languages

English and French are the working languages of the United Nations. For this position, fluency in English is required. A working knowledge of French or other United Nations official language 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 offence, 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 who seek to serve with the United Nations in any individual capacity 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 their official duties and responsibilities, or call into question their 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 takes this opportunity of reiterating to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations the assurances of its highest esteem.

20 August 2025