



UNOMS 15
years

**UNITED NATIONS
OMBUDSMAN & MEDIATION SERVICES**

Always a safe first step in resolving your workplace concerns

■ Bangkok ■ Entebbe ■ Geneva ■ Goma ■ Nairobi ■ New York ■ Santiago ■ Vienna

Delivering in the Middle East and Western Asia: **The Regional Branch in Beirut**

The regional Branch in Beirut of the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services is the Office's newest branch providing informal conflict resolution services to staff at the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, and other staff of the Secretariat in the Middle East and Western Asia.

The Beirut branch is headed by Regional Ombudsman Dr. Hani Murad, who brings to the position broad experience with the United Nations. Recruited to serve in the Organization thirteen years ago, Dr. Murad has held positions as a Stress Counselor and as the Chief of the Counseling Unit serving DPKO, DPA and United Nations Funds and Programmes in the Middle East.



His career expands over three decades in the area of wellbeing and staff support, providing individual and group counselling, prevention training, emergency response and dispute resolution in a variety of settings. Hani holds a doctorate in clinical psychology from Fielding Graduate University in Santa Barbara, California, and an advanced study in human development from Harvard University.

How do we work?

Ombudsmen and mediators use a collaborative approach that emphasizes looking at disputes from all perspectives. The objective is to identify ways of moving towards a resolution of the conflict by assessing options, clarifying positions and understanding needs. From the moment a staff member contacts an ombudsman, he or she remains in control of the process, as no steps are taken without his or her consent, consultations are confidential and no records are kept. Moreover, ombudsmen cannot be called to testify in formal proceedings.

In some cases, it is appropriate to try mediation. For mediation to be an option, all those involved must agree to participate. Successfully mediated cases have the benefit of being acceptable to everyone involved because the parties have determined the outcome that best meets their needs (win-win solution).

Types of issues

The Office facilitates the resolution of a wide variety of workplace concerns. No issue is too small or too big. Staff are encouraged to contact the Office as early as possible, before the issue escalates and becomes more complicated.

Core principles

Independence The Office is independent in structure and function from all United Nations organs and officials. It is guided by the Charter of the United Nations, the staff rules and regulations and the principles of fairness and justice, not by the interests of a particular entity, department or individual within the Organization. The United Nations Ombudsman has direct access to the Secretary-General.

Neutrality and impartiality Ombudsmen do not take sides in a conflict. They look at each situation objectively and treat all parties equally.

Confidentiality All communication with an ombudsman is confidential. Information shared with an ombudsman will not be disclosed without permission.

Informality Ombudsmen do not participate in formal adjudicative or administrative procedures relating to concerns brought to their attention, nor do they keep records for the United Nations or any other party. They do not make binding decisions or mandate policies. They do, however, identify trends, issues and concerns, and report them to the Organization.

Contact UNOMS if you have a work-related concern and you:

- Don't know who to talk to and need a sounding board
- Would like a confidential, off-the-record conversation
- Don't know how to address your concerns
- Have not yet decided on a course of action
- Are uncertain of possible consequences
- Have started to pursue formal redress and want to explore alternatives

Contacting an ombudsman is always a good first step!

Dr. Hani Murad can be contacted confidentially by e-mail (muradh@un.org) and by telephone at +961 197 8402.

The Office's ombudsmen and mediators can be contacted confidentially by e-mail (unoms@un.org), telephone (+1 917 367 5731) or [online secure contact form](#).

Informal conflict resolution services are available in the six languages of the United Nations.