



Terms of Reference Victims' Rights Advocate

I. Background

1. The Secretary-General in his report on “Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse: a new approach”, A/71/818, pledged that the United Nations will put the rights and dignity of victims at the forefront of its efforts to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse.
2. The Secretary-General will appoint a distinguished expert in human rights and humanitarian assistance and advocacy to serve in his Office at the Assistant Secretary-General level as a system-wide Victims' Rights Advocate (VRA). The VRA will support an integrated, strategic response to victim assistance in coordination with United Nations system actors with responsibility for assisting victims in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 62/214 and the Secretary-General's strategy. The VRA will work with government institutions, civil society, and national and legal and human rights organizations to build networks of support and to help ensure that the full effect of local laws, including remedies for victims, are brought to bear. Field-based victims' rights advocates will also be appointed in designated missions to advocate for victims at the field level, and will support the work of the VRA.

II. Terms of reference for Victims' Rights Advocate

Provide support and advice to UN entities

- Monitor, oversee and coordinate the strategic vision for victim assistance and support with all relevant UN system actors, at headquarters and in the field, taking into account their existing mandates and responsibilities for the provision of assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, with reference to General Assembly Resolution 62/214, to ensure the following:
 - Effective coordination among the Secretariat's Departments and Offices, as well as Agencies, Funds and Programmes, on designing and implementing policies that serve to assist victims who report sexual exploitation and abuse, through gender and child-sensitive approaches including: (i) referral for appropriate medical, psycho-social and legal assistance; (ii) provision of immediate emergency care and safe shelter; (iii) follow-up attention and information on the progress of the complaint; and (iv) that respect victims'/complainants' rights throughout the investigation and accountability process.
 - All organizations have designated focal points to assist victims.
 - Resident Coordinators are supported in executing their accountability for victim assistance and support and make recommendations to strengthen their role.
 - Resident Coordinators are supported in ensuring that there is a functioning and effective country team/PSEA Network catering to the needs of all victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, without discrimination.

- Provide policy support and advice to UN investigative entities in interactions with victims to protect and respect victims' rights including through gender and child-sensitive approaches.
- As required, consult with external experts, advocates, victims groups and leading aid organizations, among others, including those focused on children, trauma and stigma.

Engagement with Member States and civil society

- In coordination with relevant Secretariat Heads of Departments and Offices, and Agencies, Funds and Programmes, taking into account their existing mandates and responsibilities:
 - Engage and systematically follow-up with concerned Member States on the progress of investigations and criminal and disciplinary/administrative proceedings regarding allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN staff and related personnel.
 - Engage with Member States to advocate for protection measures for victims during investigation, criminal and disciplinary/administrative proceedings and to assure that victims, including child victims, are treated with care in respect of their rights, including the right to be advised of the outcome of the proceeding via updates from the relevant Member State.
- Identify and work closely with legal assistance networks and civil society organizations that can provide individualized support and assistance to victims including during investigation, judicial/administrative proceedings in host countries and countries of alleged perpetrators.
- He/she may consult with international, regional and sub-regional organizations, Member States, UN independent human rights experts, civil society organizations, national human rights institutions, academic institutions, think tanks and other entities as deemed appropriate.

Communication with and support to victims

- In collaboration with key UN partners, and taking into account their existing mandates and responsibilities, ensure that effective policies and procedures are in place to:
 - Provide information to victims on the complaint/reporting mechanisms and support services available to them in the United Nations and by Member States.
 - Facilitate gender-sensitive support to victims in gaining effective access to justice, including the provision of necessary information, guidance in filing complaints on allegations in accordance with their decision, and accompaniment to proceedings in host countries and/or countries of alleged perpetrators.
 - Facilitated by the aforementioned networks, maintain updated information on the status of judicial and administrative proceedings in host countries and countries of alleged perpetrators.
 - In consultation with victims, and in cooperation with relevant UN entities and other organizations, in line with the "Uniform Protocol on the Provision of Assistance to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse," contribute to the assessment of assistance needs and the ability of existing services to meet those needs.
 - In consultation with victims, and in cooperation with relevant UN entities, support the design and implementation of protection strategies for victims at risk, including child victims.

III. Experience and Qualifications

- ✓ Demonstrated expertise and experience in advocacy, victim/humanitarian assistance, human rights, and gender expertise in the context of related investigations, peacekeeping, peace and/or humanitarian environments;
- ✓ Experience in international human rights law, transitional and criminal justice and/or victim protection;
- ✓ Experience in dealing with issues related to sexual and gender-based violence and in applying a gender and child perspective in his/her work;
- ✓ Demonstrated ability to work in a cooperative manner across the United Nations (or other comparable multilateral organization), Member States and civil society;
- ✓ Proven record of strong oral communication skills with the ability to articulate the Secretary-General's objectives, actions and recommendations to Member States, the media and others;
- ✓ An excellent understanding of the United Nations system and mechanisms.
- ✓ Desirable: (i) familiarity with UN Staff Rules and Regulations, as well as with the framework on preventing and combatting sexual exploitation and abuse with regard to civilian, military and police personnel; (ii) knowledge of common and civil national legal systems and/or accountability mechanisms; (iii) multilingual communications skills.

IV. Nature of appointment

- ✓ The VRA will serve full time as a UN staff member at the level of Assistant-Secretary-General, and will report to the Secretary-General through the Chef de Cabinet. Funding for this position is available until 31 December 2017. The establishment of the post beyond that date is subject to consideration by the General Assembly. The VRA will function as an independent and confidential advisor to the Secretary-General through the Chef de Cabinet, on victims' rights and assistance issues.
- ✓ The VRA will be supported by a small team located within the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.
- ✓ The VRA will work in close cooperation with UN Resident Coordinators and Special Representatives of the Secretary General in Field Missions to whom the field Victims' Rights Advocates report as well as with similar focal points in Agencies, Funds and Programmes in the field, and relevant UN Departments and entities in the field and at headquarters.