

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Human Rights Adviser, Small States Office, Geneva

Post title:	Human Rights Adviser
Duty station:	Geneva, Switzerland
Duration:	October 2022 to September 2023 (with possibility of extension)
Responsible to:	Head of Human Rights, Commonwealth Secretariat or nominee

Background

The Commonwealth Small States Office (CSSO) in Geneva aims to increase effective engagement of small states with human rights mechanisms and within the Geneva-based human rights discourse and decision-making process. This post, located at the Geneva CSSO, is expected to engage with human rights work including as it related to the UN Human Rights Council and its mechanisms, Treaty Bodies, other relevant UN and Inter-Governmental agencies, as well as international and Geneva - based civil society actors.

Job Summary

Under the supervision of the London-based Head of the Human Rights Unit (HRU), the Human Rights Adviser will support Commonwealth small states specifically and Commonwealth member states generally, while taking a senior role in advancing the Commonwealth's voice, visibility and dialogue on human rights issues and discourse in Geneva. They will monitor and participate in developments pertaining to international human rights mechanisms based in Geneva, assist Commonwealth small states with technical human rights expertise, and support the delivery of HRU's technical assistance and capacity development interventions. The Human Rights Adviser will liaise at a senior level with government officials and various international, regional and national human rights teams and UN agencies to further strengthen and develop partnerships.

Task Description

The Adviser's brief will include the following:

- Taking a senior role in advancing the Commonwealth's voice, visibility and dialogue on human rights issues and debates in Geneva;
- Supporting and liaising with the Head of Human Rights, and other team members, in the setting of strategic priorities for engagement with counterparts and UN agencies in Geneva;
- Providing timely briefings and advisories to the Head of Human Rights on current human rights developments and key debates within the Human Rights Council;
- Attending meetings/forums/events and representing the Secretariat as appropriate;
- Establishing, maintaining and strengthening partnerships and other working relationships with key agencies in Geneva;



- Working with HRU's London-based staff to contribute to the development and design of initiatives to implement technical co-operation and capacity-building programmes on thematic issues and national and international mechanisms to promote and protect human rights in member countries;
- Implementation of projects with London-based staff and Head of Human Rights, including budget monitoring and project reporting;
- Undertaking project and budget management and reporting in respect of Geneva-based activities;
- Organising and delivering capacity development interventions through workshops, seminars, conferences and consultations in Geneva;
- Undertaking/overseeing the necessary documentation and systems maintenance in Geneva;
- Any other duties as requested by the Head of Human Rights.

The Human Rights Adviser may be required to travel to member states if requested by the Head of Human Rights.

Person specification

Education:

A qualification at post-graduate level, in a discipline relevant to human rights. Preferred subjects include human rights, development, law, politics, international relations or social policy.

Experience:

- At least 9 years' experience, at national and international levels, in implementing and promoting human rights;
- At least 6 years' experience in delivering human rights training and capacity development interventions; development of training curricula and programmes; working with the Universal Periodic Review mechanism and treaty bodies, NHRIs, parliaments and civil society organizations;
- Demonstrable knowledge of Geneva-based human rights mechanisms including treaty bodies, special procedures, Universal Periodic Review and the Human Rights Council;
- Experience in human rights research and training at national and international levels;
- Good understanding of the workings of the Commonwealth Secretariat and its various processes. Previous engagement with the Commonwealth is an added value.
- Experience in drafting and developing project proposals;
- Good understanding of human rights issues and challenges of small states;

- Good working knowledge of the methods, dynamics, politics, and mandate of the UN to protect and promote human rights;
- Experience in the promotion of human rights in more than two regions of the Commonwealth, including directly with governments and NHRIs;
- Experience of addressing different audiences such as government officials, diplomatic staff, parliamentarians, civil society, and inter-governmental agencies - in writing and in person;
- At least five years' experience in human rights advocacy with governments, specifically within the Commonwealth;
- Experience of working effectively and collegially in a small team.

Competencies:

Respect for Diversity
Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.
Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally.
Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision making.
Examine own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group.
Changes systems and processes when biases are identified
Working with Others
Promotes team work and removes barriers to effective team working
Provides advice and guidance for others sensitively and where appropriate
Establishes ownership for relevant activities from the outset
Develops a wide network, including senior level contacts to facilitate activities and further own knowledge
Manages expectations of member states e.g. to ensure the alignment of what is requested and what Commonwealth Secretariat can offer
Demonstrates an ability to negotiate with and influence senior colleagues and contacts
Proactively liaises with other divisions, partners & third parties
Planning and Analysis
Breaks long term plans into clear milestones
Builds in contingencies for potential obstacles

Takes corrective action if activities are off trace

Uses past experience to inform future planning

Quickly and accurately identifies subtle themes and relevant issues in complex information

Developing and Applying Professional Expertise

Applies specialist knowledge to achieve anticipated results

Proactively identifies how to develop specialist knowledge

Presents self as credible to both internal and external contacts

Managing Resources

Identifies targets for team activities and manages progress against objectives

Plans and manages activity spend accurately against budget

Takes responsibility for team activity and finds solutions to set backs in a timely and professional manner

Effectively motivates team e.g. by recognising and promoting team and individual contribution inter alia

Recognises strengths and weaknesses in others, structuring teams based on this knowledge

Drives forward results of others

Takes ownership for team wellbeing

Decision Making

Considers the relevant justifications for a particular course of action

Takes context into consideration when making decisions

Makes effective decisions when acting on behalf of a senior colleague, seeking advice where appropriate

Bases actions and approaches on the root cause of an issue, rather than the symptoms

Accountability

Takes ownership of assigned tasks, honours deadlines.

Ensures timely delivery of outputs within defined cost and quality standard parameters.

Takes responsibility for own shortcomings and compliances.

Leadership & Development

Mentors colleagues effectively e.g. by suggesting development goals and providing

on the job coaching inter alia

Provides constructive feedback to team members and colleagues with confidence and sensitivity