Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation



The International Civil Service
A Reference Compendium for United Nations Personnel

© 2020 Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation
For full copyright information on quoted source texts see Annex A.

Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation
Övre Slottsgatan 2, 753 10 Uppsala, Sweden
secretariat@daghammarskjold.se
www.daghammarskjold.se

Design and layout: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation

Photos: Adobe Stock Images

Printed by X-O Graf Tryckeri AB (Uppsala, Sweden)

ISBN: 978-91-985372-6-0

The International Civil Service: A Reference Compendium for United Nations Personnel

Table of contents

Foreword 6

Acknowledgements 9

Introduction 10

Structure of this compendium 11

Historical context 11

Current context 15

Overview of key source texts 18

United Nations Charter (1945) 18

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations (2018) 19

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service (2013) 19

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff (2017) 20

United Nations system leadership framework (2017) 20

Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (1946) 20

Miscellaneous policies 20

Note on hierarchy of source texts 21

1. Roles and characteristics 22

In the United Nations Charter 25

In the *Standards of Conduct* 27

In the United Nations system leadership framework 29

2. Values and principles 30

Specific values and principles 33

Values and principles as they relate to the role of the international civil servant 44

Values and principles and the mission of the United Nations 46

The human and cultural dimensions of leadership 48

3. Duties, obligations and privileges 52
General duties and obligations 56
Position-specific duties and obligations 66
The prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse 69
Operationalising duties and obligations 72
Privileges 74
4. Protections 78
Misuse of confidential information 81
Retaliation for reporting misconduct 82
Harassment (including sexual harassment) and abuse of authority 86
5. Prohibitions 88
Seeking or accepting instruction from third parties 91
Conflicts of interest 94
Discrimination and harassment 96
Operational interference 99
Disloyalty to the Organization 100
Disclosure of confidential information 101
Fraudulent acts 102
Attempts to influence other parties 105
Sexual exploitation and abuse 106
Disciplinary measures 109
Looking ahead 110
Annex A: Credits 113
Annex B: Further reading 114
Index 120
About the Foundation 122

Foreword

Civil service, whether national or international, builds on combination of principles, regulations and practices. For the United Nations, defending and upholding the highest standards of civil service is imperative for implementing its Charter. Like mountain peaks above the clouds, the international civil service transcends national politics. Its magnitude demands respect and inspires action.

In both national and international systems, individual civil servants are given operational mandates, responsibilities and resources. They make up the institutions that serve to provide sustainable governance. The importance of civil service is implicitly recognised in the Sustainable Development Goals, which promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies through the development of effective, accountable and transparent institutions.

Since the first professional international civil service was established 100 years ago with the birth of the League of Nations, the principles of internationality, independence and loyalty have functioned as its foundation, reinforcing the administrative body and the organisations it served. The modern international civil service has evolved significantly, including through the adoption of the UN Charter and the establishment of Standards of Conduct for International Civil Service.

The ethics and integrity of the international civil service are crucial aspects of Dag Hammarskjöld's legacy, as outlined in his 1961 Oxford speech, which underscored the importance of its international character and independence. In that speech, Hammarskjöld warned that if these are compromised, internationalism will in effect be undermined and peace may also be threatened.

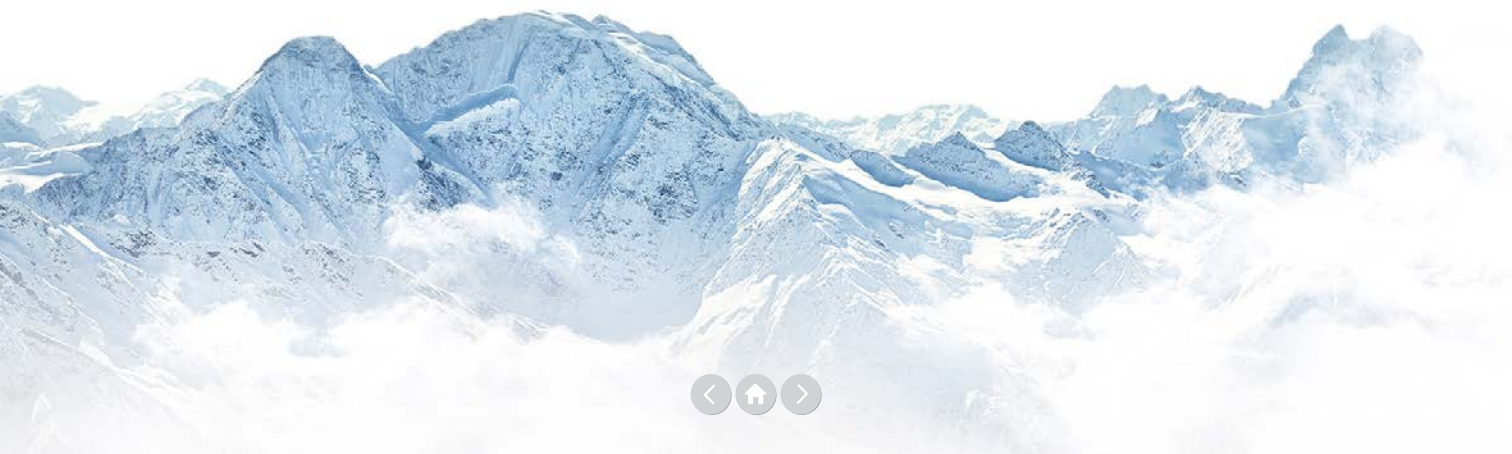


With this publication, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation seeks to raise awareness of the role and the importance of professional civil service. We hope that this compendium will support UN managers and staff in promoting integrity and ethics and Member States in understanding and respecting the function of the international civil service. This compendium is not an official UN publication or a compliance manual, nor does it claim to provide exhaustive or complete coverage of all provisions regulating UN civil service. It is designed to explore how existing UN policy frameworks promote norm-based, principled leadership, empower staff to uphold good behaviour and prevent conduct that might hinder the international civil service from fulfilling its intended role.

The international civil service is to the UN what rocks are to geology. As in geology, we must learn by examining its various components, origins and development. Its roles and characteristics are like grains of minerals, pebbles and stones. Values and principles are its bedrock. Duties and obligations of UN personnel are rock formations capable of bearing the weight of individual and collective responsibilities.

The international civil service continues to be strengthened by measures that promote ethical conduct and the development of systems of accountability at the individual and organisational levels. Even the strongest materials can be subject to erosion. It is an individual and a collective responsibility to safeguard the character and integrity of the international civil service.

Henrik Hammargren
Executive Director
Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation



Acknowledgements

This reference compendium is a result of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation's work on how to strengthen international civil service. The process of preparing the publication was managed by Kate Sullivan under the overall guidance of Per Nordlund and Henrik Hammargren.

The Foundation is grateful to those who offered their time and reflections throughout the content development process. The compendium has benefited from extensive external consultations with individual experts and networks, including Elia Armstrong, Helmut Buss, Katrina Campbell, Kate Gilmore, John Hendra, Fabrizio Hochschild, Marc Jacquand, Velibor Jakovleski, Miguel Mourato Gordo, Joel Nielsen, Ursula Wellen, Emilie Wiinblad Mathez and Young UN: Agents for Change.

Within the Foundation, Veronika Tywuschik-Sohlström initiated the project, with the assistance of Karin Abbor-Svensson, and provided continuous support during the production process. David Prater copy-edited the text and Johanna Mårtendal proofread the draft. Kristin Blom designed the publication.

The Foundation is also grateful to the contributors to its 100 Years of International Civil Service paper series, including Mona Ali Khalil, Kate Gilmore, Karen Gram-Skjoldager, Fabrizio Hochschild, Bruce Jenks and Alanna O'Malley.

As a reference compendium, this publication includes excerpts from a number of United Nations policy documents. Permission to reprint excerpts from these texts was graciously granted by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination Secretariat, the International Civil Service Commission and the UN Department of Global Communications.

Introduction

'Do we refer to the purposes of the Charter? They are expressions of universally shared ideals which cannot fail us, though we, alas, often fail them. Or do we think of the institutions of the United Nations? They are our tools. We fashioned them. We use them. It is our responsibility to remedy any flaws there may be in them…'

Dag Hammarskjöld, 30 May 1956[1]

This compendium is a reference point on selected laws, regulations, policies and guidelines that relate directly to the United Nations and the international civil service (ICS). It compiles excerpts from official UN texts and presents their main takeaways thematically in order to improve understanding about the texts and inform broader efforts to enhance the leadership, responsiveness, integrity and accountability of the ICS.

It is intended not as a compliance manual, but as a tool for discussing norm-based, principled leadership. It may also be useful for the purposes of induction, ethical decision making, staff development and training. The compendium has been produced for the benefit of UN personnel worldwide. This includes members of the UN Secretariat, duty-station staff, participants in peacekeeping missions, employees of the various UN funds and programmes, and staff within specialised agencies. It may have additional utility for new recruits to the UN system, members of the UN leadership, managers and trainers, and ethics offices.

The compendium's release coincides with two milestones – the 100th anniversary of the ICS in 2019 and the 75th anniversary of the UN in 2020 – which provide a suitable moment to catalyse dialogue on how the ICS could be strengthened. Against the backdrop of a changing geopolitical landscape, states' faltering commitments to international norms impose even higher demands on international civil servants to defend the values and principles that have enabled the UN to transcend special interests in the service of 'We the Peoples'. In that sense, the quality of the ICS is its own best defence against detractors.

Among a range of different perspectives and tools, this publication offers one particular lens for understanding the challenges and opportunities facing UN personnel. It complements the current public debate on the relevance and integrity of the international civil service, speeches and statements issued by UN Secretaries-General, the views of individual UN staff members, and scholarly analyses of UN reform and organisational development. It compiles extracts from key documents that relate directly to the ICS with the understanding that such texts are only useful if they are known, understood and applied. The policy frameworks outlined in these

[1] Dag Hammarskjöld, 'An International Administrative Service', Address to the International Law Association at McGill University, Montreal, 30 May 1956 in Wilder Foote (ed.), *Servant of Peace: A Selection of the Speeches and Statements of Dag Hammarskjöld* (London: The Bodley Head, 1962), p. 116.

documents provide mechanisms to help guard against bad conduct, as well as tools to uphold good conduct and protect the qualities that make multilateral organisations unique.

Structure of this compendium

This Introduction continues by mapping the historical context in which the ICS came into being as well as a brief discussion of the current context in which it operates. Then follows an overview of the key source documents discussed in the compendium. The compendium itself is structured according to five key themes:

1. Roles and characteristics
2. Values and principles
3. Duties, obligations and privileges
4. Protections
5. Prohibitions

Each of these themes is explored in a separate chapter. **Chapter 1** discusses the role and characteristics of the ICS, which are most clearly defined in the UN Charter. **Chapter 2** looks at the values and principles outlined in the UN Charter, which are reiterated in a number of UN staff documents, as well as in agency and programme-specific texts. **Chapter 3** concerns international civil servants' duties, obligations and privileges, many of which are stated explicitly in relation to the role of the ICS or can otherwise be inferred directly from the UN Charter. **Chapter 4** focuses on the protections afforded to international civil servants, particularly in relation to their independence and integrity. **Chapter 5,** in contrast, covers prohibited behaviours and activities that are designed to protect the UN system, the communities it serves and its workforce from harm.

Following a brief look at the way forward, two annexes provide reference materials for further reading. The first lists copyright acknowledgements for the key sources quoted in the compendium. The second includes links to other relevant documents issued by UN funds and programmes, and specialised agencies.

Historical context

Together with the other international organisations created under the 1919 Treaty of Versailles which ended the First World War, the League of Nations is one of the founding institutions of the modern multilateral system. The League Secretariat, an administrative

body led by a Secretary-General in the service of the League's other bodies, was the birthplace of the ICS and differed significantly from earlier international administrative bodies such as the International Telegraph Union, the Universal Postal Union and the International Health Office. While these bodies were staffed by national or host country officials seconded by governments, the League Secretariat was international in character and its employees were intended to be independent from allegiances to their countries of origin.[2]

This new type of administration was imagined by Sir Eric Drummond, the League's first Secretary-General, and developed rapidly in the years following its inception. From a handful of individuals operating out of Drummond's private home, the League Secretariat quickly became organised along functional lines by policy area. The development of its size and structure corresponded to an increase in diversity, with the number of nationalities represented in the administration increasing from 15 to 43 between 1920 and 1938.[3] In 1926, members of the League Secretariat were awarded diplomatic status, including certain privileges and immunities, and were required, from 1932, to take an oath of office. Although this represented a positive development in terms of the independence of the ICS, unfortunately, due to a bilateral agreement between the League and the Swiss Confederation, member states were not bound to recognise the diplomatic status of the League's international civil servants.[4]

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the founders of the newly created United Nations were careful to borrow from the League's achievements and shore up its vulnerabilities. For example, the UN Charter enshrined in law the principles of geographic diversity (Article 101), impartiality and international loyalty (Article 100).[5] The elevation of international loyalty from an internal policy matter to a legal requirement was designed to prevent the erosion of the independence of the UN Secretariat by UN Member States, as the national socialist and fascist regimes had done at the League during the inter-war period.[6] The 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations established the legal personality of the UN and further enumerated the legal rights and obligations of both the organisation and its staff as a means of preventing – or at least inhibiting – the exploitation endemic in the League Secretariat.[7]

[2] Karen Gram-Skoldager, 'From the League of Nations to the United Nations: Milestones for the International Civil Service', Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 100 Years of International Civil Service Paper No. 3, 11 September 2019, https://www.daghammarskjold.se/publication/milestones-ics.

[3] Egon Ranshofen-Wertheimer, *The International Secretariat: A Great Experiment in International Administration* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1945), pp. 355–58.

[4] Ranshofen-Wertheimer (note 3).

[5] Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice, signed 26 June 1945, entered into force 24 October 1945, 1 UNTS XVI, https://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/index.html. See also Karen Gram-Skoldager (note 1), p. 6.

[6] See Dag Hammarskjöld, 'The International Civil Servant in Law and in Fact', lecture delivered to Congregation at Oxford University, 30 May 1961, reprinted by the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation as 100 Years of the International Civil Service Paper No. 4, 3 October 2019, https://www.daghammarskjold.se/publication/the-international-civil-servant-in-law-and-in-fact, p. 5.

[7] Gram-Skoldager (note 2).

In 1949, the International Civil Service Advisory Board was created to develop a report, published in 1954, which affirmed the principles imported from the League—including internationality, independence and loyalty—and articulated the rules and procedures designed to ensure the institutional autonomy of the ICS at the UN.[8] Among these was the UN Secretary-General's authority to appoint staff, together with the Executive Heads of the specialised agencies, as described in Article 101 of the UN Charter.[9] At the same time, the role of the UN Secretary-General differs from that of the League Secretary-General in several important respects (see the box below).

[8] International Civil Service Advisory Board, *Report on Standards of Conduct in the International Civil Service* (New York: United Nations, 1954).

[9] Gram-Skoldager (note 2 on page 12).

The League of Nations and the United Nations

Although there are many important differences between the League of Nations and the United Nations, two of these differences are particularly relevant to the challenges and opportunities facing the international civil service today.

First, the role of the League's Secretary-General was designed to be purely administrative, whereas the UN Secretary-General also has a political and normative function. This function manifests in the Secretary-General's agenda-setting authority and ability to convene conferences and expert panels. These events and bodies create political space for discussion when there is little movement in the UN's principle organs, and provide platforms to engage non-state actors.[a] The political dimension of the UN Secretary-General's role creates agency to lead but has also generated tension when positions advocated by the Secretary-General have not coincided with those of individual Member States.

Second, the mandates of the two organisations are very different. Unlike the League of Nations, the UN's mandate encompasses human rights and sustainable development (that is, economic and social cooperation). This presents the UN with more comprehensive powers in the management of peace and security than its predecessor. In certain circumstances, this distinction has made the UN more effective. However, ambiguity regarding the boundaries of the UN's authority with respect to state sovereignty has also led to inaction.

[a] Bruce Jenks, 'On Leadership: The Art of Creating Public Value at the United Nations', Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 100 Years of International Civil Service Paper No. 5, 10 October 2019, p. 5, https://www.daghammarskjold.se/publication/on-leadership-the-art-of-creating-public-value-in-the-united-nations

See also Karen Gram-Skoldager, 'From the League of Nations to the United Nations: Milestones for the International Civil Service', Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 100 Years of International Civil Service Paper No. 3, 11 September 2019, https://www.daghammarskjold.se/publication/milestones-ics



League of Nations 1920 (UN Photo)

Like the League, the UN experienced growing pains during its early years of operation that tested the ICS. In addition to hindering the UN's ability to intervene in global conflicts, polarisation between the United States and the Soviet Union during the cold war permeated internal decision-making at the UN. In the most high-profile example, in 1952 the first UN Secretary-General, Trygve Lie, capitulated to US pressure and dismissed 18 US nationals employed by the UN who had been accused of harbouring communist sympathies. The subsequent decision by the UN Administrative Tribunal to award compensation to those who appealed their wrongful dismissal re-asserted the independence of the ICS after Lie's lapse.[10]

In the 1960s, the process of decolonisation contributed significantly to the enlargement of the UN and its global representation. The emergence of new states also permanently altered the global geo-political landscape, prompting questions about the relevance and legitimacy of multilateral structures and processes that replicated post-war power dynamics.[11] In 1965, the number of non-permanent members of the Security Council was increased, from 11 to 15.[12] As its membership grew, so did the UN's funds and programmes and the number of specialised agencies and related organisations in the UN system. With the creation of bodies such as the World Health Organisation (1948), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (1950), the International Atomic Energy Agency (1957), the World Food Programme (1963), the UN Development Programme (1965) and the UN Environment Programme (1972), the ICS grew organically to accommodate this expansion. This, in turn, led to a gradual increase in the need for a broader range of technical and local competencies among UN staff.

During this time of expansion, armed conflict within newly independent nations—often fuelled by foreign interests and interference—generated an increase in the number of UN peacekeeping operations, the results of which were mixed. Instances of paralysis, the mounting costs of its peacekeeping operations, allegations of mismanagement and high-profile failures opened the UN up to critique during the 1980s and 1990s. The ensuing developments prompted a series of reforms variously aimed at improving the organisation's effectiveness, accountability and integrity.

[10] United Nations General Assembly, 'Report of the Secretary-General on Personnel Policy', A/2364, 30 January 1953, https://search.archives.un.org/secretariat-investigation-of-united-states-citizens-employed-by-secretariat-secretary-generals-report-on-personnel-policy-january-1954, pp. 6–10; and 'UN unit reverses Lie rule on ouster; Administrative Tribunal Rules employee's service may not be ended without reason', *New York Times,* 12 August 1952.

[11] Alanna O'Malley, 'Turning Points: Defining Moments for the International Civil Service at the United Nations', Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 100 Years of International Civil Service Paper No. 7, 6 May 2020, https://www.daghammarskjold.se/publication/turning-points-ics-un

[12] United Nations General Assembly, 20th session, 1392nd plenary meeting, 10 December 1965, https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/PV.1392

Current context

75 years since the UN's founding, the number of UN Member States has increased more than threefold, from 51 to 193. In its modern form, the ICS comprises the staffs of the UN and its subsidiary bodies, as well as those employed by its six funds and programmes, 15 specialised agencies, eight other entities and bodies, and several related organisations.[13] At the end of 2019, the staffs of these entities totalled to 114,119 individuals from 194 countries (including all 193 Member States and the Cook Islands), the Palestinian Territories and Kosovo (the UN- administered province of Serbia), as well as 15 staff members whose national origin was unclear. The total figure does not include the staffs of the World Bank Group, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the International Criminal Court, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, non-staff personnel, or staff members employed for less than one year.[14]

There have been several attempts to refine administrative and procedural frameworks affecting the ICS, but these have not always received sufficient support. For example, in 2019 the UN General Assembly considered amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules, as outlined in several reports of the Secretary-General.[15] The proposed amendments aimed to streamline the policy framework for financial and human resources management, create a policy basis for gender parity, and render the text more gender inclusive. A number of the amendments were rejected by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the basis that they may generate an additional financial burden on the UN budget. Discussions in the General Assembly's Administrative and Budgetary Committee (the so-called Fifth Committee) regarding the changes reflects concerns raised by Member States about their impact on the composition of the UN, and especially the representation of certain nationalities among staff.[16]

External forces continue to transform the context in which the UN operates. For instance, between 1950 and 2020 the global population rose by over 5.3 billion, an increase with considerable impacts on the natural environment and competition for resources.[17] While industrialisation facilitates economic development that has lifted millions out of poverty, it has also contributed to large-scale environmental degradation, and to climate change.[18] Globalisation and the proliferation of new technologies have increased the level

[13] For an explanation of the composition of the UN system see United Nations, 'About the UN: Main Organs', [n.d.], https://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/main-organs/index.html and 'About the UN: Funds, Programmes, Specialized Agencies and Others', [n.d.], https://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/funds-programmes-specialized-agencies-and-others/index.html

[14] United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 'Personnel statistics, data as at 31 December 2019', CEB/2020/HLCM/HR/12, 4 September 2020, https://unsceb.org/content/un-system-hr-statistics-report-2019 Personnel numbers for the UN Environment Programme, the UN Institute for Disarmament Research and the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) are included in the total for the UN Secretariat.

[15] United Nations General Assembly, 'Amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules: Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions', A/74/289★, 7 August 2019, https://undocs.org/en/A/74/289

[16] United Nations General Assembly, 'Amendments to the Staff Regulations and Rules: Report of the Secretary-General', A/74/732, 3 March 2020, https://undocs.org/A/74/732

[17] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 'World population prospects 2019' (Online edition rev. 1), 2019, https://population.un.org/wpp/Download/Standard/Population

[18] Yong Li, 'Towards inclusive and sustainable industrial development', *Development*, 58/4 (2015), pp. 446–51, https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41301-016-0055-8

of connection and interdependence between both economies and peoples, forging unprecedented opportunities through the creation of new markets and platforms for information sharing, cross-cultural learning and new forms of international cooperation. However, they have also generated new risks, including increasing the global economic system's vulnerability to shocks, contributing to inequalities both within and between countries, enabling the weaponisation of trade and information, and obscuring accountability in governance.[19] The nature of conflict has also changed, with the majority of armed violence now occurring within countries, rather than between them.[20]

While the last two decades have been marked by a greater awareness of the scale, urgency and complexity of global challenges, the rise of populist and nationalist movements suggests that trust in global public institutions and support for international cooperation may be declining among certain groups.[21] This tension—between the growing need for the UN and increasing ambivalence towards multilateralism—places additional pressure on the ICS in a climate of decreased funding and heightened security risks. The Secretary-General is obliged to communicate a vision for the UN that reinforces its relevance by demonstrating its ability to contribute to solutions, especially at a time when many Member States have begun to withdraw or constrain the resources needed to deliver on that vision. Staff, meanwhile, have to innovate and adapt in order to do more with less, while continuing to defend values and principles which, despite being mutually agreed, are openly ignored by some Member States. Concurrently, developments in the understanding and practice of those values and principles—particularly non-discrimination and the protection of human rights—have given rise to new expectations among UN personnel and the communities they serve, in addition to complicating adherence to other fundamental precepts. So, although maintaining independence and impartiality are not new challenges, and while support for international cooperation has waxed and waned throughout the UN's 75-year history, these longstanding obstacles are amplified by the current context.

The size and structure of the ICS present it with additional challenges and opportunities unforeseen by its founders. For instance, non-staff personnel—which includes consultants, commercial contractors, volunteers, interns, government-provided personnel and military observers—make up roughly 40 per cent of the total

[19] François Bourguignon, *The Globalization of Inequality* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report 2019* (New York: UNDP, 2019), http://hdr.undp.org/en/2019-report

[20] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 'Global developments in armed conflicts, peace processes and peace operations', *SIPRI Yearbook 2020* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), https://www.sipri.org/yearbook/2020/02

Uppsala University, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) Conflict Database, https://ucdp.uu.se

[21] On the question of trust in public institutions see for example Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Trust and Public Policy: How Better Governance Can Help Rebuild Public Trust* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2017), https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264268920-en

UN workforce.[22] Because they are often funded by extra-budgetary resources, non-staff personnel can provide the UN with flexibility and may help to infuse it with new ideas. At the same time, they are not automatically bound to the principles of the ICS (including international loyalty, independence and impartiality) and they are not afforded the same rights and entitlements as official ICS staff. Furthermore, their functions, relative to international civil servants, are undefined. Non-staff personnel are increasingly being hired on short-term contracts, which can contribute to feelings of insecurity and vulnerability and may discourage innovation and investments in staff development. Together with the large number of international civil servants, who are distributed across a myriad of funds, programmes, agencies and other bodies that did not exist in 1945, the sheer number of non-staff personnel may challenge the idea of a discernible UN identity rooted in common values and principles. This raises the question of how the ICS can adapt to these new circumstances, for example by providing all personnel with the right tools to serve the organisation and ensuring that they receive adequate protections.

Among other internal challenges, UN financing still heavily relies on a small set of Member State contributors, with the top ten contributors accounting for over half of total UN revenue between 2010 and 2018. Earmarked contributions represent by far the largest financing instrument to the UN system, with core contributions on the decline. National elections and priorities have posed challenges to the UN budget, with some Member States not paying their dues.[23]

The COVID-19 pandemic may further exacerbate the UN's financial situation as Member States experience financial constraints related to managing immediate domestic needs. Although the idea of doing more with less has long characterised its work, with UN operations expanding more rapidly than its budget, the current global economic recession is likely to magnify this dilemma.

Despite these challenges, there are also numerous opportunities to strengthen the ICS. Discrete proposals have been put forward relating to refining or revising policy frameworks; enhancing the tools available to UN personnel; expanding professional development opportunities; and driving cultural transformation. Taken collectively, such opportunities could help create an enabling ecosystem that facilitates collaboration and innovation and empowers international civil servants to lead.[24]

[22] Cihan Terzi, *Review of Individual Consultancies in the United Nations System* (Geneva: United Nations Joint Inspection Unit, 2012), https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/744791?ln=en.

[23] For an overview of UN financing see *Financing the United Nations Development System: Time to Walk the Talk* (Uppsala/New York: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, 2020), https://www.daghammarskjold.se/publication/unds-2020

[24] Alain Sibenaler, 'The United Nations: A unique ecosystem for leadership and innovation', in *The Art of Leadership in the United Nations: Framing What's Blue* (Uppsala: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 2020), https://www.daghammarskjold.se/publication/leadership2020, pp. 66–69

Overview of key source texts

This section provides an overview of the key source texts used in the compendium. While the texts selected for inclusion are not exhaustive, they highlight important dimensions of the compendium's five key themes, namely: the role and characteristics of the ICS, values and principles, duties and obligations, rights and protections, and prohibitions.

To avoid repetition, and for the sake of brevity, this compendium does not reference the corresponding frameworks of UN programmes, funds and specialised agencies, many of which are referenced in Annex B. Over time, as the ICS continues to evolve and texts are updated, it may become necessary to amend or expand the original selection. In most cases, only excerpts have been included. The complete versions of all texts included in this compendium are available online. Copyright statements for each of these texts can be found in Annex A.

In some chapters, excerpts are presented sequentially to illustrate how ideas and concepts introduced in one text were later developed and clarified in subsequent documents. In others, the texts are grouped topically to facilitate a comparative analysis of complementarities. The selected texts address both individual and collective dimensions of each theme.

The chapters which follow contain multiple excerpts from these texts but are referenced only by title and, where relevant, section. Although some texts have been reformatted for stylistic coherence, their language has not been modified. Brackets [ ] denote editorial clarifications (for instance, when the subject of an excerpt is not evident), while ellipses […] indicate omissions.

United Nations Charter (1945)

The UN Charter describes the purpose of the organisation, guides all of its activities, and defines the responsibilities of its Member States.[25] Signed in June 1945 at the UN Conference in San Francisco and entering into force in October of that year, the UN Charter

[25] Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice, signed 26 June 1945, entered into force 24 October 1945, 1 UNTS XVI, https://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/index.html

is a multilateral treaty and thus an instrument of international law. Chapter XV of the UN Charter contains five articles that describe the Secretariat, the process for appointing the Secretary-General and their main duties, as well as those of their staff. Articles 100 and 101 in particular relate to the duties of the ICS and explain the process of staff appointments and associated considerations, including essential characteristics.

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations (2018)

The Staff Regulations and Staff Rules comprise two separate documents which are usually published together.[26] The Staff Regulations, drawn up by the UN General Assembly, 'represent the broad principles of human resources policy for the staffing and administration of the Secretariat'. The Staff Rules, formulated by the UN Secretary-General, outline the conditions of service in the ICS and describe the rights, duties and obligations of the UN Secretariat. Broadly speaking, this combined document establishes the UN's expectations of its international civil servants and vice versa. It is the Secretary-General's responsibility to enforce the Staff Rules.

The Oath of Office is included in the very first Article of the *Staff Regulations and Rules* and represents one of the most concrete ways in which international civil servants express their commitment to uphold the UN Charter and to respect the obligations inherent in their role. The practice of stating the Oath of Office before the Secretary-General or a designated deputy was established in 1946.[27] All staff should subscribe to the Oath when they begin their UN career.

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service (2013)

The *Standards of Conduct* were first drafted in 1954 by the International Civil Service Advisory Board. Its successor, the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) is tasked with revising, maintaining and promoting the Standards today. The *Standards of Conduct* describe the obligations of international civil servants which are unique to UN employment, and function as a behavioural and ethical guide for international civil servants.[28]

[26] United Nations, Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, Secretary-General's Bulletin, 1 January 2018, ST/SGB/2018/1, https://undocs.org/ST/SGB/2018/1; United Nations Human Resources Portal, 'Understanding management in the UN context', [n.d.], https://hr.un.org/page/understanding-management-un-context-0.

[27] United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/13(1), Annex II, 13 February 1946, https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/13(I).

[28] International Civil Service Commission, *Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service*, 2nd revision (New York: United Nations, July 2013), https://icsc.un.org/Resources/General/Publications/standardsE.pdf.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff (2017)

Putting Ethics to Work, published by the UN Ethics Office and the Office of Human Resources Management, seeks to improve understanding of the UN's ethical standards and their application by international civil servants. The guide offers practical examples that explain how to put ethical principles into action in the workplace.[29]

United Nations system leadership framework (2017)

The UN system leadership framework, which was adopted by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in 2017, is both an operational tool for UN staff and a call to action for UN leaders at all levels.[30] It identifies eight defining characteristics of UN leadership and describes how these characteristics promote a leadership culture that is aligned with the 2030 Agenda, among other key policy frameworks. Grounded in the UN's values and principles, the document aims to create a common vision of UN leadership across the UN system which can be operationalised according to the unique needs of individual UN entities.

Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (1946)

This Convention, which is binding, defines the privileges and immunities afforded to the UN, its assets and staff by its Member States.[31] The Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies subsequently expanded these assurances beyond the UN Secretariat.[32]

Miscellaneous policies

Within the UN system, official directives such as Secretary-General's Bulletins, administrative instructions, information circulars, and guidelines and agreements, are commonly referred to as policies. Examples of these policies can be found on the UN's Human Resources Portal.[33]

Specific policies have been created to prevent and address specific types of misconduct, often in the wake of high-profile investigations. Examples include 'Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse'[34]; the 'Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework of the United Nations Secretariat'[35]; and the so-called UN whistleblower protection policy, 'Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations'.[36]

[29] United Nations Ethics Office and United Nations Office of Human Resources Management, *Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff*, 2nd edition (New York: United Nations, 2017), https://www.un.org/en/ethics/assets/pdfs/Attachment_2_EN_Putting%20Ethics%20to%20Work.pdf

[30] United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 'United Nations system leadership framework', CEB/2017/1 (Annex), 20 June 2017, https://undocs.org/en/CEB/2017/1

[31] United Nations General Assembly, Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, signed 13 February 1946, entered into force 17 September 1946, https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=III-1&chapter=3&lang=en

[32] United Nations General Assembly, Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies, signed 21 November 1947, entered into force 2 December 1948, https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=III-2&chapter=3&clang=_en.

[33] United Nations, Human Resources Portal, Human Resources Handbook [n.d.], https://hr.un.org/handbook

[34] United Nations Secretariat, Secretary-General's Bulletin, 'Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse', ST/SGB/2003/13, 9 October 2003, https://undocs.org/ST/SGB/2003/13

[35] United Nations Secretariat, Under-Secretary-General for Management, 'Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework of the United Nations Secretariat', (Information Circular ST/IC/2016/25, 9 September 2016, https://undocs.org/ST/IC/2016/25

These policies clarify existing rules and regulations and provide information about related accountability mechanisms and processes, including how alleged incidents of misconduct should be reported.

Note on hierarchy of source texts

Among the legally binding texts pertaining to the legal framework that governs the UN's administration and management, matters internal to the Organisation, there is a hierarchy of norms, corresponding to the order of importance of each text within the UN legal system. This hierarchy is set out in a 2011 judgement of the UN Dispute Tribunal, and reiterated in the UN Human Resources Portal.[37]

The UN Charter is at the top of this hierarchy, followed by resolutions and decisions, the Staff Regulations, the Staff Rules, Secretary-General's Bulletins, and administrative instructions. Texts such as *Putting Ethics to Work*, the *Standards of Conduct*, the UN system leadership framework, information circulars, or guidelines and agreements are considered to be interpretative. That is, they offer guidance but do not have legal authority.

[36] United Nations Secretariat, Secretary-General's Bulletin, 'Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations', ST/SGB/2005/21, 19 December 2005, https://undocs.org/ST/SGB/2005/21

[37] United Nations Dispute Tribunal, *Villamoran v. Secretary-General of the United Nations,* UNDT/2011/126, 12 July 2011, https://www.un.org/en/internaljustice/files/undt/judgments/undt-2011-126.pdf, para. 29

United Nations Human Resources Portal, 'Understanding Management in the UN Context: Legal Framework for Management' [n.d.], https://hr.un.org/page/understanding-management-un-context-0



Chapter 1:
Roles and characteristics

‘Intellectually and morally, international service therefore requires courage to admit that you, and those you represent, are wrong, when you find them to be wrong, even in the face of a weaker adversary, and courage to defend what is your conviction even when you are facing the threats of powerful opponents. But while such an outlook exposes us to conflicts, it also provides us with a source of inner security; for it will give us “self-respect for our shelter”.’

Dag Hammarskjöld, 14 June 1955[1]

In addition to loyalty to the UN, the Charter demands that international civil servants maintain the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

Although the ICS comprises all staff in the UN Common System, early texts articulating its role and characteristics primarily focused on the UN Secretariat. As the ICS grew, these descriptions were extended to other parts of the ICS and developed further. Within the UN, the role and composition of the Secretariat is most clearly defined in Articles 97–101 of the UN Charter, excerpts from which are reproduced here. These texts describe a chiefly administrative body, appointed and led by a Secretary-General whose capacities are broadly defined as fulfilling the needs of the UN's primary organs. As a whole, the Secretariat is characterised by its independence and its exclusively international character.

Despite their many parallels, the role and character of the UN Secretariat departs significantly from that of the League in two main ways. First, as described in Article 99, the Secretariat has an inherently political function, as the UN Secretary-General is empowered to present to the UN Security Council, of their own accord, 'any matter which in his [sic] opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security'. Second, although the League Secretariat and the UN Secretariat were both designed to be independent, the latter's defining legal texts are much more explicit in their demands for loyalty and call for the protection of its independence (see the box in the Introduction on page 13). These demands reflect an understanding of how the League's power and authority were undermined by the exploitation of its international civil servants by national socialists and fascists during the Second World War.

In addition to loyalty to the organisation, the Charter demands that international civil servants maintain the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. These three characteristics, as well as the provision on geographic diversity, are echoed in other texts which collectively describe the values and principles of the ICS, as explained in Chapter 2.

[1]Dag Hammarskjöld, 'International Service', address at the Johns Hopkins University Commencement Exercises, Baltimore, MA, 14 June 1955, in Andrew W. Cordier and Wilder Foote (eds), Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations, Volume II: Dag Hammarskjöld, 1953–1956 (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1972), p. 503.

[2]The UN Common System "comprises the United Nations, its affiliated programmes, thirteen specialized agencies, and one organization with a special status under the ICSC statute. The World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (also known as the Bretton Woods institutions) are not part of the common system." International Civil Service Commission, 'The UN Common System' [n.d.], https://icsc.un.org/Home/CommonSystem.

In the United Nations Charter

Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice

Chapter XV: The Secretariat

Article 97

The Secretariat shall comprise a Secretary-General and such staff as the Organization may require. The Secretary-General shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council. He shall be the chief administrative officer of the Organization.

Article 98

The Secretary-General shall act in that capacity in all meetings of the General Assembly, of the Security Council, of the Economic and Social Council, and of the Trusteeship Council, and shall perform such other functions as are entrusted to him by these organs. The Secretary-General shall make an annual report to the General Assembly on the work of the Organization.

Article 99

The Secretary-General may bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.

Article 100

1. In the performance of their duties the Secretary-General and the staff shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization.

2. Each Member of the United Nations undertakes to respect the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their responsibilities.

Article 101

1. The staff shall be appointed by the Secretary-General under regulations established by the General Assembly.

2. Appropriate staffs shall be permanently assigned to the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, and, as required, to other organs of the United Nations. These staffs shall form a part of the Secretariat.

3. The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

In the Standards of Conduct

A number of other texts elaborate the role and characteristics of the ICS and Secretariat staff. One of the most notable is the *Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service.* In its Introduction, it highlights the importance of the Secretariat's independence, loyalty, integrity, competence and geographic diversity to the fulfilment of its administrative and political roles and, by extension, the achievement of the UN's unique mandate.

In addition to contextualising the role of the ICS, the *Standards of Conduct* affirm and further develop what is described in the Charter, as exemplified in the sections on the role of the secretariats, and on relations with Member States and legislative bodies.



Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Introduction

1. The United Nations and the specialized agencies embody the highest aspirations of the peoples of the world. Their aim is to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to enable every man, woman and child to live in dignity and freedom.

2. The international civil service bears responsibility for translating these ideals into reality. It relies on the great traditions of public administration that have grown up in member States: competence, integrity, impartiality, independence and discretion. But over and above this, international civil servants have a special calling: to serve the ideals of peace, respect for fundamental rights, economic and social progress, and international cooperation. It is therefore incumbent on international civil servants to adhere to the highest standards of conduct; for, ultimately, it is the international civil service that will enable the United Nations system to bring about a just and peaceful world.

Role of the secretariats (headquarters and field duty stations)

27. The main function of all secretariats is to assist legislative bodies in their work and to carry out their decisions. […]

28. In providing services to a legislative or representative body, international civil servants should serve only the interests of the organization, not that of an individual or organizational unit. It would not be appropriate for international civil servants to prepare for Government or other international civil service representatives any speeches, arguments or proposals on questions under discussion without approval of the executive head. It could, however, be quite appropriate to provide factual information, technical advice or assistance with such tasks as the preparation of draft resolutions.

29. It is entirely improper for international civil servants to lobby or seek support from Government representatives or members of legislative organs to obtain advancement either for themselves or for others or to block or reverse unfavourable decisions regarding their status. By adhering to the Charter and the constitutions of the organizations of the United Nations system, Governments have undertaken to safeguard the independence of the international civil service; it is therefore understood that Government representatives and members of legislative bodies will neither accede to such requests nor intervene in such matters. The proper method for an international civil servant to address such matters is through administrative channels; each organization is responsible for providing these.

Relations with member States and legislative bodies

34. International civil servants are not representatives of their countries, nor do they have authority to act as liaison agents between organizations of the United Nations system and their Governments. The executive head may, however, request an international civil servant to undertake such duties, a unique role for which international loyalty and integrity are essential. For their part, neither Governments nor organizations should place international civil servants in a position where their international and national loyalties may conflict.

In the United Nations system leadership framework

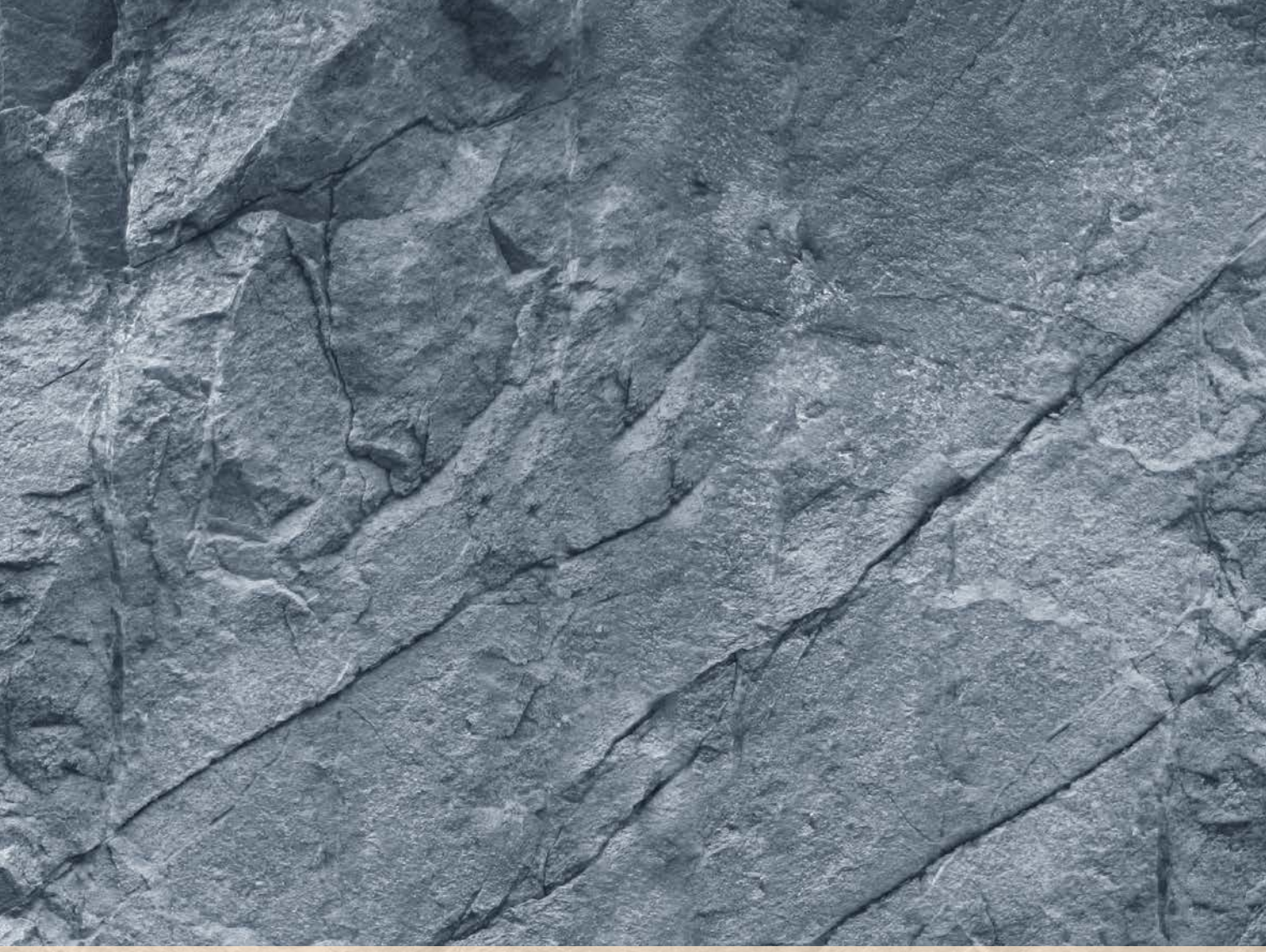
Both the UN Charter and the *Standards of Conduct* imply that international civil servants are representatives of the Organization and highlight the how the independence, loyalty, integrity, competence and geographic diversity of the ICS enable it to carry out its key functions in service of the UN's mandate. The *Standards of Conduct* extend this idea further by stating that international civil servants serve the UN's fundamental ideals, the application of which is their responsibility. Building on these principles, the United Nations system leadership framework specifies additional qualities incumbent on international civil servants in their role as UN leaders.



United Nations system leadership framework

II. Who we are: The eight defining characteristics of United Nations leadership

12. […] They are skilled in results-based management, in constructive performance appraisal, in transparent leadership approaches and in approaches that support a culture of individual growth and development, where good performance is incentivized and underperformers are held to account.



Chapter 2:
Values and principles

‘The principles of the Charter are,
by far, greater than the Organization
in which they are embodied,
and the aims which they are to safeguard
are holier than the policies
of any single nation or people.’

—Dag Hammarskjöld, 31 October 1956[40]

All actions and decisions undertaken by international civil servants are intended to be grounded in the values and principles of the UN Charter, which are reiterated in several documents widely applicable to all UN staff, as well as in agency- and programme-specific texts, such as codes of ethics. Among the UN-wide documents, the ***Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service*** and ***Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff*** arguably provide the most direct and comprehensive overviews of the Charter's values and principles. Rather than listing the relevant texts from each of these documents in sequence, this chapter groups excerpts by value or principle, in order to underscore their complementarity. As the excerpts illustrate, the values and principles are, themselves, mutually reinforcing.

The documents describing the values and principles of the ICS do not provide a comprehensive list of those rights which are understood to be fundamental. However, these can be discerned from other legal and normative frameworks, in particular from the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).[42] Although non-binding, the UDHR is considered foundational in the area of international human rights law. It subsequently inspired two binding treaties: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, both of which entered into force in 1976.[43]

[40] Dag Hammarskjöld, Statement to the United Nations Security Council during the Suez Crisis, 31 October 1956, Official Records of the United Nations Security Council, 751st meeting, https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/633325?ln=en

[41] António Guterres, 'Remarks at the Security Council open debate on Upholding the United Nations Charter to Maintain International Peace and Security', 9 January 2020, https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2020-01-09/upholding-the-united-nations-charter-maintain-international-peace-and-security-remarks

[42] United Nations General Assembly, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10 December 1948, https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights

[43] United Nations General Assembly, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, entered into force 23 March 1976, https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx and United Nations General Assembly, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, entered into force 3 January 1976, https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cescr.aspx

Specific values and principles

Respect for human rights

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Guiding principles

3. The values that are enshrined in the United Nations organizations must also be those that guide international civil servants in all their actions: fundamental human rights, social justice, the dignity and worth of the human person and respect for the equal rights of men and women and of nations great and small.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff

Part One: Introduction, The Ethical Framework of the UN, Our fundamental ethical values, Respect for human rights

United Nations personnel shall fully respect the human rights, dignity and worth of all persons and shall act with understanding, tolerance, sensitivity and respect for diversity and without discrimination of any kind.

Loyalty

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Guiding principles

4. International civil servants should share the vision of their organizations. It is loyalty to this vision that ensures the integrity and international outlook of international civil servants; a shared vision guarantees that they will place the interests of their organization above their own and use its resources in a responsible manner.

[…]

7. International loyalty means loyalty to the whole United Nations system and not only to the organization for which one works; international civil servants have an obligation to understand and exemplify this wider loyalty. The need for a cooperative and understanding attitude towards international civil servants of other United Nations organizations is obviously most important where international civil servants of several organizations are serving in the same country or region.

[…]

14. An international outlook stems from an understanding of and loyalty to the objectives and purposes of the organizations of the United Nations system as set forth in their legal instruments. It implies, inter alia, respect for the right of others to hold different points of view and follow different cultural practices. It requires a willingness to work without bias with persons of all nationalities, religions and cultures; it calls for constant sensitivity as to how words and actions may look to others. It requires avoidance of any expressions that could be interpreted as biased or intolerant. As working methods can be different in different cultures, international civil servants should not be wedded to the attitudes, working methods or work habits of their own country or region.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff

Part One: Introduction, The Ethical Framework of the UN, Our fundamental ethical values, Loyalty

Loyalty to the purposes, values and principles of the United Nations is a fundamental obligation of all United Nations personnel. They shall be loyal to the United Nations and shall, at all times, discharge their functions and regulate their conduct with the interests of the United Nations only in view.

Impartiality

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Guiding principles

8. If the impartiality of the international civil service is to be maintained, international civil servants must remain independent of any authority outside their organization; their conduct must reflect that independence […] International civil servants should be constantly aware that, through their allegiance to the Charter and the corresponding instruments of each organization, member States and their representatives are committed to respect their independent status.

9. Impartiality implies tolerance and restraint, particularly in dealing with political or religious convictions. While their personal views remain inviolate, international civil servants do not have the freedom of private persons to take sides or to express their convictions publicly on controversial matters, either individually or as members of a group, irrespective of the medium used. This can mean that, in certain situations, personal views should be expressed only with tact and discretion.

10. This does not mean that international civil servants have to give up their personal political views or national perspectives. It does mean, however, that they must at all times maintain a broad international outlook and an understanding of the international community as a whole.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff

Part One: Introduction, The Ethical Framework of the UN, Our fundamental ethical values, Integrity

United Nations personnel, in the performance of their official duties, shall always act with impartiality, objectivity and professionalism. They shall ensure that expression of personal views and convictions does not compromise or appear to compromise the performance of their official duties or the interests of the United Nations. They shall not act in a way that unjustifiably could lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment for or against particular individuals, groups or interests.

United Nations personnel, in the performance of their official duties, shall always act with impartiality, objectivity and professionalism.

Independence



Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Guiding principles

11. The independence of the international civil service does not conflict with, or obscure, the fact that it is the member States that collectively make up — in some cases with other constituents — the organization. Conduct that furthers good relations with individual member States and that contributes to their trust and confidence in the organizations' secretariat strengthens the organizations and promotes their interest.

12. International civil servants who are responsible for projects in particular countries or regions may be called upon to exercise special care in maintaining their independence. At times they might receive instructions from the host country but this should not compromise their independence. If at any time they consider that such instructions threaten their independence, they must consult their supervisors.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff

Part One: Introduction, The Ethical Framework of the UN, Our fundamental ethical values, Independence

United Nations personnel shall maintain their independence and shall not seek or receive instructions from any Government or from any other person or entity external to the United Nations and shall refrain from any action which might reflect negatively on their position as United Nations personnel responsible only to the United Nations.

Part Two: Applying Our Ethical Framework, A. Carrying Out the Mission, Main ideas

The UN Oath of Office requires us to act with impartiality and independence. As international civil servants, we should consider the impact of our comments and actions and manage our conduct so that we represent the international community, rather than individual governments or other political interests. This is especially important when working in peacekeeping operations and field-based missions, where daily work often involves significant inter-actions with governmental representatives, non-governmental organizations and other third parties.



Integrity

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Guiding principles

5. The concept of integrity enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations embraces all aspects of an international civil servant's behaviour, including such qualities as honesty, truthfulness, impartiality and incorruptibility. These qualities are as basic as those of competence and efficiency, also enshrined in the Charter.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff

Part One: Introduction, The Ethical Framework of the UN, Our fundamental ethical values, Integrity

United Nations personnel shall maintain the highest standards of integrity, including honesty, truthfulness, fairness and incorruptibility in all matters affecting their official duties and the interests of the United Nations.

Accountability

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Guiding principles

13. International civil servants at all levels are accountable and answerable for all actions carried out, as well as decisions taken, and commitments made by them in performing their functions.

[…]

Personal conduct

42. The private life of international civil servants is their own concern and organizations should not intrude upon it. There may be situations, however, in which the behaviour of an international civil servant may reflect on the organization. International civil servants must therefore bear in mind that their conduct and activities outside the workplace, even if unrelated to official duties, can compromise the image and the interests of the organizations. This can also result from the conduct of members of international civil servants' households, and it is the responsibility of international civil servants to make sure that their households are fully aware of this.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff

Part One: Introduction, The Ethical Framework of the UN, Our fundamental ethical values, Accountability

United Nations personnel shall be accountable for the proper discharge of their functions and for their decisions and actions. In fulfilling their official duties and responsibilities, United Nations personnel shall make decisions in the interests of the United Nations. They shall submit themselves to scrutiny as required by their position.

Tolerance and respect for different cultures

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Guiding principles

6. Tolerance and understanding are basic human values. They are essential for international civil servants, who must respect all persons equally, without any distinction whatsoever. This respect fosters a climate and a working environment sensitive to the needs of all. To achieve this in a multicultural setting calls for a positive affirmation going well beyond passive acceptance.

[…]

Respect for different customs and culture

40. The world is home to a myriad of different peoples, languages, cultures, customs and traditions. A genuine respect for them all is a fundamental requirement for an international civil servant. Any behaviour that is not acceptable in a particular cultural context must be avoided. However, if a tradition is directly contrary to any human rights instrument adopted by the United Nations system, the international civil servant must be guided by the latter. International civil servants should avoid an ostentatious lifestyle and any display of an inflated sense of personal importance.

Non-discrimination

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Guiding principles

15. Freedom from discrimination is a basic human right. International civil servants are expected to respect the dignity, worth and equality of all people without any distinction whatsoever. Assumptions based on stereotypes must be assiduously avoided. One of the main tenets of the Charter is the equality of men and women, and organizations should therefore do their utmost to promote gender equality.

International civil servants are expected to respect the dignity, worth and equality of all people without any distinction whatsoever.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff

Part One: Introduction, The Ethical Framework of the UN, Our fundamental ethical values, Integrity

At the UN, discrimination is any unfair treatment or arbitrary distinction based on a person's race, sex, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, social origin or other status. Discrimination may be an isolated event affecting one person or a group of persons similarly situated, or may manifest itself through harassment or abuse of authority.

Adherence by United Nations staff to the highest ethical standards is central to the work of the Organization and the maintenance of its good name.

Values and principles as they relate to the role of the international civil servant

In addition to the citations above, the introductory and concluding texts of *Putting Ethics to Work* and the *Standards of Conduct* explain the relationship between the organisation's values and principles, the role of the international civil servant, and their duties and obligations. These texts, listed below, reveal that the authority and legitimacy of the ICS is an outcome of the effective function of these three components as a system.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff

United Nations Oath of Office

Adherence by United Nations staff to the highest ethical standards is central to the work of the Organization and the maintenance of its good name. As we collectively endeavour to build a more peaceful and prosperous world, the ethical conduct of all staff members is paramount.

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Conclusion

52. The attainment of the standards of conduct for the international civil service requires the highest commitment of all parties. International civil servants must be committed to the values, principles and standards set forth herein. They are expected to uphold them in a positive and active manner. They should feel responsible for contributing to the broad ideals to which they dedicated themselves in joining the United Nations system. […]

54. Respect for these standards assures that the international civil service will continue to be an effective instrument in fulfilling its responsibilities and in meeting the aspirations of the peoples of the world.

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article I, Regulation 1.2, Core values

(a) Staff members shall uphold and respect the principles set out in the Charter, including faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women. Consequently, staff members shall exhibit respect for all cultures; they shall not discriminate against any individual or group of individuals or otherwise abuse the power and authority vested in them;

(b) Staff members shall uphold the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. The concept of integrity includes, but is not limited to, probity, impartiality, fairness, honesty and truthfulness in all matters affecting their work and status;

Values and principles and the mission of the United Nations

The UN system leadership framework similarly expresses how the UN's values and principles enable the organisation to deliver on its mission and goes further to ascribe their defence—and that of the associated international norms and standards—to principled leadership, which is both expected and required of international civil servants. It continues to explain that international civil servants should embody the norms and standards of the UN, to live its values, and to live up to its principles.



United Nations system leadership framework

I. Introduction: Our mission

1. The United Nations system has been charged with an awesome responsibility: to advance peace, human rights, development, environmental stewardship, and economic and social progress. Essential to our success will be an understanding of what 21st century UN leadership looks like.

[…]

4. To press our case for peace, dignity and prosperity for all, we need a three-pronged approach: (1) a principled defence of our norms and standards; (2) a much greater focus on prevention and (3) robust implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in a universal, all-out effort to tackle poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, instability, insecurity, and injustice. We need to move from managing crises to preventing them in the first place. And the best means of prevention, and of sustaining peace, is inclusive, rights-based, sustainable development.

5. Now, more than ever then, we need the United Nations to truly lead on these issues, to be a defender of peace, justice and universal values; to be the place where effective collective measures for the prevention of conflict are taken; and to do its part to ensure that indeed no one is left behind. We need to break down our silos and fully embrace a new way of working to better connect our work

across efforts at sustaining peace, human rights, sustainable development and humanitarian action. For this we need visionary and principled UN leadership – across the system.

6. It is in this context that this new UN system leadership framework is both a call to action – and a call for change – for all UN personnel. Of course, senior UN leaders have particular responsibilities under this framework. But UN leadership occurs in many contexts and at all levels. We are all called to lead. As such, the framework applies to all personnel of the UN system, regardless of their level, duties, or location.

7. In today's challenging world, we need UN personnel who stand up for the values inherent in the Charter: peace, justice, respect, human rights, tolerance and solidarity; who are able to nimbly manoeuvre complex political spaces and leverage multi-stakeholder coalitions; who think creatively and truly connect cross-pillar knowledge and experience; and who consistently seek more system-wide solutions that reach beyond individual entities and interests.

8. We need UN personnel who are transparent in how they manage, in how they use the resources entrusted to them, and who commit to accountability to the people we serve. In a world where fundamental human rights are at risk, we need principled personnel, who embody the very international norms and standards that have come under threat, and who are not afraid to defend them openly. At the same time, all UN personnel must be able to count on the full support and protection they need when acting with courage and principle. We need to live up to our own principles within the UN system. There must be zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse of any kind. And, as a global organization, we must do much better in bringing the diversity of the world into our own workforce, including with regard to the imperative of gender equality.

The human and cultural dimensions of leadership

The defining characteristics of UN leadership reiterate its values and principles as they relate to the attitudes and behaviour of international civil servants in the performance of their duties, and the fulfilment of the ICS' role.

Whereas other documents describe the UN's structure, the role and function of its principle organs and the relationships between them, the characteristics, duties and obligations of its staff, and the laws, policies and guidelines which dictate their activities, rights and protections, the UN system leadership framework eschews these technical aspects. Instead, it focuses on the UN's human and cultural dimensions. By professing that transformative leadership is required to deliver on the UN's transformative purpose, the UN system leadership framework implies that the organisation should change in order to meet the evolving needs of 'We the Peoples'. To an extent, this also empowers international civil servants by recognizing that personnel can facilitate change through their behaviour.

United Nations system leadership framework

II. Who we are: The eight defining characteristics of United Nations leadership

12. Properly understood, this approach reveals eight defining characteristics of United Nations leadership:

- **It is norm-based** in that it is grounded in United Nations norms and standards, beginning with the Charter itself. […] The United Nations is a norm-based organization, bound to promote and protect human rights, peace and security, humanitarian principles, economic and social progress and development, gender equality, environmental stewardship and countless other areas in accordance with the norms and standards contained in the international treaties, resolutions and declarations adopted under the auspices of the United Nations. […]

- **It is principled,** defending its norms and standards and their application without discrimination, fear or favour even — especially — in the face of pressure and push-back from powerful actors. It seeks out and promotes evidence over prejudice and popular assumptions for the basis of its work. Sometimes, this means telling government interlocutors, corporate actors, senior officials in our own organizations, and others — including the public — not just what they want to hear, but what they need to know. It means a principled approach to alleviating human suffering and protecting the lives, livelihoods and dignity of populations in need, without discrimination. […]

- **It is inclusive** of all personnel and stakeholders, irrespective of age, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, disability, grade, contractual status and other personal characteristics. This means rejecting discrimination in all its forms, embracing diversity as a strength and practicing cultural and gender sensitivity. […]

- **It is accountable,** both mutually within the system and to beneficiaries and the public beyond. […] United Nations personnel embrace accountability as a gauge of progress, as a check against waste, fraud or abuse, and as an opportunity for transparency, communication and learning. […]

- **It is multidimensional,** integrated and engaged across pillars[2] and functions[3]. It is now seen as axiomatic that the three pillars of the Charter (peace and security, human rights and development) are interdependent, and that all United Nations functions, whether humanitarian, political, security or others, have an impact on one another. […]

[2] Peace and security, human rights, and development.
[3] Development, human rights, humanitarian, political, environmental, safety and security, etc.

- **It is transformational,** of ourselves and of those we serve. […] The United Nations system needs to invest in strong transformational leadership at the individual, team and organizational levels. It needs to strengthen its own agility and adaptability to change. Transformational leadership requires a focus on redefining approaches to partnership building, strategy and systems thinking. It is heavily reinforced by attitudinal and behavioural adjustments, by development of leadership capabilities and by strong vision and leadership for change. United Nations personnel facilitate change through role model behaviour, recognizing and rewarding the contributions of others, fostering a work culture of reflection and through creating empowering conditions based on commitment and principled collaboration rather than compliance.

- **It is collaborative,** within and beyond the United Nations system. Today's United Nations personnel comprehend the interdependent imperatives of the Charter, as well as the comprehensive nature of the 2030 Agenda and the multiplicity of stakeholders beyond the Organization and its Member States. They seek collective "as one" cross-Charter thinking, joined-up approaches and solutions. And they use the United Nations' convening power to actively create safe and meaningful opportunities to hear the voices of the people themselves, civil society, local communities, the marginalized and excluded within them, and those most at risk of being left behind. [...]

- **It is self-applied,** that is, modelled in our own behaviour. A United Nations leader is expected not just to preach United Nations principles and norms to others, but to live them. She/he seeks to inspire, not to command. […]





Chapter 3:
Duties, obligations and privileges

‘A task becomes a duty from the moment you suspect it to be an essential part of that integrity which alone entitles a man to assume responsibility.’

—Dag Hammarskjöld, Markings (1964)[44]

Many of the duties and obligations ascribed to international civil servants are stated explicitly in relation to the role of the ICS or can otherwise be inferred directly from the UN Charter. For example, Article 99 of the Charter defines the political character of the Secretariat's role by allowing the Secretary-General to identify and present obstacles to international peace and security to the Security Council with the understanding that drawing attention to such issues may not always be in the national interests of its Permanent Members.[45] Others are expressed in terms of the responsibility to defend the UN's values and uphold its principles (described in Chapter 2), either as they relate to preventing and managing prohibited behaviours (described in detail in Chapter 5), or to creating an environment that fosters ethical behaviour.

The duties and obligations outlined in the *Staff Regulations and Rules* are applicable to all UN staff, including those of separately funded organs, and are largely designed to fulfil the functional obligations of the ICS. In that capacity, they address international civil servants' functional responsibilities, individual accountability, and internal and external compliance requirements. The duties and obligations outlined in in the *Staff Regulations and Rules* are expanded on in the *Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service*, which also emphasise the collective accountability of UN staff.

Other duties and obligations, such as those outlined in the so-called UN Zero-Tolerance Policy, 'Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse', and the so-called UN whistleblower protection policy ('Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations'), exist expressly to uphold the integrity and accountability of the UN by protecting individuals—both inside and outside the organiation—from harm. Many of the texts defining such duties and obligations have been developed more recently in the UN's history in response to specific challenges.

[44] Dag Hammarskjöld, *Markings*, translated from the Swedish by Leif Sjöberg and W. H. Auden (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 93.

[45] See United Nations Secretary-General, 'The role of the Secretary-General', [n.d.], https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/role-secretary-general and Gram-Skoldager (note 1), p. 6.

[46] United Nations Secretariat, 'Guidelines for the Personal Use of Social Media', United Nations Human Resources Handbook, 5 March 2019, https://hr.un.org/node/54074

Additional policies and guidelines have emerged in response to the changing global context in which the UN and its staff operate. For example, the UN Secretariat's 'Guidelines for the Personal Use of Social Media' were developed to better define the responsibilities of UN staff in virtual spaces.[46]

The excerpts in this chapter exemplify the different types of duties and obligations described above. They are organised by duty or obligation, rather than by text, in order to highlight linkages and enable comparative analysis and cross-referencing between sections. The duty of loyalty, which also appears in Chapter 2 on values and principles, has been included again here on the basis that international civil servants have an obligation to abide by the values and principles of the ICS.



General duties and obligations

Upholding the Charter

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article I, Regulation 1.2, General rights and obligations

(f) While staff members' personal views and convictions, including their political and religious convictions, remain inviolable, staff members shall ensure that those views and convictions do not adversely affect their official duties or the interests of the United Nations. They shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner befitting their status as international civil servants and shall not engage in any activity that is incompatible with the proper discharge of their duties with the United Nations. They shall avoid any action and, in particular, any kind of public pronouncement that may adversely reflect on their status, or on the integrity, independence and impartiality that are required by that status;

'Guidelines for the Personal Use of Social Media'

[…] Any comments or statements posted by staff on personal social media should be consistent with the ideals of peace, respect for fundamental human rights, the dignity and worth of the human person and the equal rights of men and women, respect for all cultures, and must not discriminate against any individual or group of individuals.

A staff member's activity on personal social media, even when unrelated to official duties, may reflect on the Organization and may expose the United Nations to reputational risk. As international civil servants, staff have a duty to be and appear to be both independent and impartial. As such, staff must ensure that the expression of their personal views and convictions on social media does not adversely affect their official duties, reflect poorly on their status as international civil servants or call into question their duty of loyalty, impartiality and responsibility to the Organization.

Loyalty

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article I, Regulation 1.1

(a) Staff members are international civil servants. Their responsibilities as staff members are not national but exclusively international;

(b) Staff members shall make the following written declaration witnessed by the Secretary-General or his or her authorized representative:

United Nations Oath of Office

"I solemnly declare and promise to exercise in all loyalty, discretion and conscience the functions entrusted to me as an international civil servant of the United Nations, to discharge these functions and regulate my conduct with the interests of the United Nations only in view, and not to seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of my duties from any Government or other source external to the Organization.

"I also solemnly declare and promise to respect the obligations incumbent upon me as set out in the Staff Regulations and Rules."

Article I, Regulation 1.2, General rights and obligations

(e) By accepting appointment, staff members pledge themselves to discharge their functions and regulate their conduct with the interests of the Organization only in view. Loyalty to the aims, principles and purposes of the United Nations, as set forth in its Charter, is a fundamental obligation of all staff members by virtue of their status as international civil servants;

[…]

(i) Staff members shall exercise the utmost discretion with regard to all matters of official business. They shall not communicate to any Government, entity, person or any other source any information known to them by reason of their official position that they know or ought to have known has not been made public, except as appropriate in the normal course of their duties or by authorization of the Secretary-General. These obligations do not cease upon separation from service;

Independence and impartiality



Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article I, Regulation 1.2, General rights and obligations

(h) Staff members may exercise the right to vote but shall ensure that their participation in any political activity is consistent with, and does not reflect adversely upon, the independence and impartiality required by their status as international civil servants;

Efficiency, competence and integrity

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article I, Regulation 1.3

(a) Staff members are accountable to the Secretary-General for the proper discharge of their functions. Staff members are required to uphold the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity in the discharge of their functions. Their performance will be appraised periodically to ensure that the required standards of performance are met;

Submitting to the Secretary-General's authority

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article I, Regulation 1.2, General rights and obligations

(c) Staff members are subject to the authority of the Secretary-General and to assignment by him or her to any of the activities or offices of the United Nations. […]

Compliance with rules and instructions

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Chapter I, Rule 1.2, General

(a) Staff members shall follow the directions and instructions properly issued by the Secretary-General and by their supervisors.

(b) Staff members must comply with local laws and honour their private legal obligations, including, but not limited to, the obligation to honour orders of competent courts.

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Working relations

19. International civil servants must follow the instructions they receive in connection with their official functions and, if they have doubts as to whether an instruction is consistent with the Charter or any other constitutional instrument, decisions of the governing bodies or administrative rules and regulations, they should first consult their supervisors. If the international civil servant and supervisor cannot agree, the international civil servant may ask for written instructions. These may be challenged through the proper institutional mechanisms, but any challenge should not delay carrying out the instruction. International civil servants may also record their views in official files. They should not follow verbal or written instructions that are manifestly inconsistent with their official functions or that threaten their safety or that of others.

Reporting misconduct through appropriate internal mechanisms

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Chapter I, Rule 1.2, General

(c) Staff members have the duty to report any breach of the Organization's regulations and rules to the officials whose responsibility it is to take appropriate action and to cooperate with duly authorized audits and investigations. Staff members shall not be retaliated against for complying with these duties.

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Working relations

20. International civil servants have the duty to report any breach of the organization's regulations and rules to the official or entity within their organizations whose responsibility it is to take appropriate action, and to cooperate with duly authorized audits and investigations. An international civil servant who reports such a breach in good faith or who cooperates with an audit or investigation has the right to be protected against retaliation for doing so.

'Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations' (the UN whistleblower protection policy)

Section 1, General

1.1 It is the duty of staff members to report any breach of the Organization's regulations and rules to the officials whose responsibility it is to take appropriate action. An individual who makes such a report in good faith has the right to be protected against retaliation.

[…]



Section 3, Reporting misconduct through established internal mechanisms

[...] reports of misconduct should be made through the established internal mechanisms: to the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, the head of department or office concerned or the focal point appointed to receive reports of sexual exploitation and abuse. It is the duty of the Administration to protect the confidentiality of the individual's identity and all communications through those channels to the maximum extent possible.

Cooperating with duly authorised audits and investigations

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Chapter I, Rule 1.2, General

(d) Disciplinary procedures set out in article X of the Staff Regulations and chapter X of the Staff Rules may be instituted against a staff member who fails to comply with his or her obligations and the standards of conduct set out in the Charter of the United Nations, the Staff Regulations and Rules, the Financial Regulations and Rules and administrative issuances.

'Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations' (the UN whistleblower protection policy)

Section 1, General

1.2 It is also the duty of staff members to cooperate with duly authorized audits and investigations. An individual who cooperates in good faith with an audit or investigation has the right to be protected against retaliation.

For an organization of the United Nations system to function successfully, it must have the support of the public.

Promoting understanding of the United Nations and its work

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Relations with the public

35. For an organization of the United Nations system to function successfully, it must have the support of the public. All international civil servants therefore have a continuing responsibility to promote a better understanding of the objectives and work of their organizations. This requires them to be well informed of the achievements of their own organizations and to familiarize themselves with the work of the United Nations system as a whole.

[…]

Relations with the media

38. Openness and transparency in relations with the media are effective means of communicating the organizations' messages. The organizations should have guidelines and procedures in place for which the following principles should apply: international civil servants should regard themselves as speaking in the name of their organizations and avoid personal references and views […]

Promoting a positive image of the United Nations

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Relations with the public

37. It would not be proper for international civil servants to air personal grievances or criticize their organizations in public. International civil servants should endeavour at all times to promote a positive image of the international civil service, in conformity with their oath of loyalty.

Role of the secretariats (headquarters and duty stations)

27. […] The executive heads are responsible for directing and controlling the work of the secretariats. Accordingly, when submitting proposals or advocating positions before a legislative body or committee, international civil servants are presenting the position of the executive head, not that of an individual or organizational unit.

Maintaining positive relations with Governments

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Relations with member States and legislative bodies

33. It is the clear duty of all international civil servants to maintain the best possible relations with Governments and avoid any action that might impair this. […]



Position-specific duties and obligations

While the citations above are broadly applicable, there are also position-specific duties and obligations, which are primarily directed toward managers and supervisors, including the Secretary-General. Such individuals have additional responsibilities as a function of their authority, as illustrated by the citations below.

Ensuring respect for the rights and duties of staff

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article I, Regulation 1.1

(c) The Secretary-General shall ensure that the rights and duties of staff members, as set out in the Charter and the Staff Regulations and Rules and in the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, are respected;

Prioritising efficiency, competence and integrity

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article I, Regulation 1.1

(d) The Secretary-General shall seek to ensure that the paramount consideration in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing staff of the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity;

Ensuring a harmonious workplace

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Working relations

16. Managers and supervisors are in positions of leadership and it is their responsibility to ensure a harmonious workplace based on mutual respect; they should be open to all views and opinions and make sure that the merits of staff are properly recognized. They need to provide support to them; this is particularly important when staff are subject to criticism arising from the performance of their duties. Managers are also responsible for guiding and motivating their staff and promoting their development.

Leading by example

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Working relations

17. Managers and supervisors serve as role models and they have therefore a special obligation to uphold the highest standards of conduct. […]

Communicating effectively

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Working relations

18. Managers and supervisors should communicate effectively with their staff and share relevant information with them. International civil servants have a reciprocal responsibility to provide all pertinent facts and information to their supervisors and to abide by and defend any decisions taken, even when those do not accord with their personal views.

Advising staff on ethical conduct

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff

Part Two: Applying our ethical framework, D. Creating a harmonious workplace, Mutual Rights, Duties and Obligations

Managers and supervisors are expected to provide timely advice and guidance to staff on ethical conduct. The more we talk openly about workplace conduct and our standards, the clearer we will be about what is expected.

The prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

As explained in the introduction to this chapter, the duties described in the 'Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse' are among the texts that serve to uphold the integrity and accountability of the UN by protecting individuals. The excerpts included here, which are not exhaustive, outline several obligations in relation to preventing and managing sexual misconduct.

Creating and maintaining an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse

'Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse'

Section 4, Duties of Heads of Departments, Offices and Missions

4.1 The Head of Department, Office or Mission, as appropriate, shall be responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and shall take appropriate measures for this purpose. In particular, the Head of Department, Office or Mission shall inform his or her staff of the contents of the present bulletin and ascertain that each staff member receives a copy thereof.

Appointing an official focal point for reporting on sexual exploitation and abuse

'Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse'

Section 4, Duties of Heads of Departments, Offices and Missions

4.3 The Head of Department, Office or Mission shall appoint an official, at a sufficiently high level, to serve as a focal point for receiving reports on cases of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. With respect to Missions, the staff of the Mission and the local population shall be properly informed of the existence and role of the focal point and of how to contact him or her. All reports of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse shall be handled in a confidential manner in order to protect the rights of all involved. […]

Informing the Department of Management of related investigations

'Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse'

Section 4, Duties of Heads of Departments, Offices and Missions

4.6 The Head of Department, Office or Mission shall promptly inform the Department of Management of its investigations into cases of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and the actions it has taken as a result of such investigations.

Ensuring contracted non-UN entities conform with UN standards on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse



'Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse'

Section 6, Cooperative arrangements with non-United Nations entities or individuals

6.1 When entering into cooperative arrangements with non-United Nations entities or individuals, relevant United Nations officials shall inform those entities or individuals of the standards of conduct listed in section 3, and shall receive a written undertaking from those entities or individuals that they accept these standards.

United Nations personnel are responsible for the safety and well-being of their staff, especially those who serve in volatile crisis contexts.

Operationalising duties and obligations

Unlike most of the UN's guiding texts on the duties and obligations of international civil servants, which focus on ***what*** is required of the Secretariat, the UN system leadership framework elaborates on ***how*** these and similar tasks across the organisation should be undertaken, with an emphasis on the necessary skill sets. Because the excerpt below speaks to operationalising many of the aforementioned duties and obligations in parallel, the citations are not grouped by individual responsibility. These texts come from the second part of the UN system leadership framework, which outlines the defining characteristics of UN leadership. The subsequent section ('What We Do: UN Leadership in Action'), lists four ways of working that promote their practical application: focusing on impact, driving transformational change, systems thinking, and co-creation.



United Nations system leadership framework

II. Who we are: The eight defining characteristics of United Nations leadership

12. [...]

- It requires actively reaching out to those less likely to engage in group settings, facilitating multi-stakeholder access and engagement and demonstrating empathy in interpersonal relationships. It means as well recognizing the authority of host communities and treating all human beings with respect, whether peers, supervisees, supervisors or external partners and stakeholders. And it means working to maximize geographic diversity and to achieve gender parity within the United Nations system, while maintaining the highest standards of competence and integrity.

[...]

- United Nations personnel are responsible for the safety and well-being of their staff, especially those who serve in volatile crisis contexts. And, most of all, they recognize that our ultimate accountability is to the people that we serve — especially the most vulnerable, excluded or marginalized — for the causes that we serve — peace, human rights, sustainable development, humanitarian relief and so on.

- That is why today's United Nations leader is required to learn, access and shape new ways to connect cross-pillar knowledge and experience and to ensure coherence while safeguarding a principled approach. S/he must be prepared to help unpack complex challenges and to build a shared understanding of problems, enabling collective support for effective solutions beyond the scope of individual organizations. […]



Privileges

In order to preserve its independence and resist external pressures, the ICS, and the international civil servants who comprise it, is afforded a number of special privileges. Those privileges are clearly articulated in the UN Charter and reiterated in the Staff Regulations and Rules.

The provisions in these two texts, as well as other details pertaining to the status of the UN, its assets and officials, are clarified and better defined in the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. The Convention was passed by the UN General Assembly in 1946 and has since been ratified by 162 Member States. Similar provisions are elaborated for staff of UN agencies and programmes in the Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 1947 and has since been ratified by 127 Member States.



Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice

Chapter XVI: Miscellaneous Provisions

Article 105

1. The Organization shall enjoy in the territory of each of its Members such privileges and immunities as are necessary for the fulfilment of its purposes.

2. Representatives of the Members of the United Nations and officials of the Organization shall similarly enjoy such privileges and immunities as are necessary for the independent exercise of their functions in connection with the Organization.

3. The General Assembly may make recommendations with a view to determining the details of the application of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article or may propose conventions to the Members of the United Nations for this purpose.

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article I, Regulation 1. 1

(f) The privileges and immunities enjoyed by the United Nations by virtue of Article 105 of the Charter are conferred in the interests of the Organization. These privileges and immunities furnish no excuse to the staff members who are covered by them to fail to observe laws and police regulations of the State in which they are located, nor do they furnish an excuse for non-performance of their private obligations. In any case where an issue arises regarding the application of these privileges and immunities, the staff member shall immediately report the matter to the Secretary-General, who alone may decide whether such privileges and immunities exist and whether they shall be waived in accordance with the relevant instruments.

Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations

Article V, Officials

Section 17

The Secretary-General will specify the categories of officials to which the provisions of this Article and Article VII shall apply. He shall submit these categories to the General Assembly. Thereafter these categories shall be communicated to the Governments of all Members. The names of the officials included in these categories shall from time to time be made known to the Governments of Members.

Section 18

Officials of the United Nations shall:

a) be immune from legal process in respect of words spoken or written and all acts performed by them in the official capacity;
b) be exempt from taxation on the salaries and emoluments paid to them by the United Nations;
c) be immune from national service obligations;
d) be immune, together with their spouses and relatives dependent on them, from immigration restrictions and alien registration;

e) be accorded the same privileges in respect of exchange facilities as are accorded to the officials of comparable ranks forming part of diplomatic missions to the Government concerned;
f) be given, together with their spouses and relatives dependent on them, the same repatriation facilities in time of international crisis as diplomatic envoys;
g) have the right to import free of duty their furniture and effects at the time of first taking up their post in the country in question.

Section 19

In addition to the immunities and privileges specified in Section 18, the Secretary-General and all Assistant Secretaries-General shall be accorded in respect of themselves, their spouses and minor children, the privileges and immunities, exemptions and facilities accorded to diplomatic envoys, in accordance with international law.

Restrictions on privileges

However, the privileges associated with international civil service are not without restrictions, as explained by the citations below.

Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations

Article V, Officials

Section 20

Privileges and immunities are granted to officials in the interests of the United Nations and not for the personal benefit of the individuals themselves. The Secretary-General shall have the right and the duty to waive the immunity of any official in any case where, in his opinion, the immunity would impede the course of justice and can be waived without prejudice to the interests of the United Nations. In the case of the Secretary-General, the Security Council shall have the right to waive immunity.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff

Part Two: Applying Our Ethical Framework, A. Carrying out the UN Mission, Respect for National Laws, Main ideas

The UN operates in countries across the globe. Just as we respect diversity, we must respect the laws of the nations that host our activities. The privileges and immunities that you hold as a staff member are conferred upon you solely for the interests of the Organization. They do not exempt you from observing local laws, or provide an excuse for ignoring your private legal or financial obligations.

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Personal Conduct

43. The privileges and immunities that international civil servants enjoy are conferred upon them solely in the interests of the organizations. They do not exempt international civil servants from observing local laws, nor do they provide an excuse for ignoring private legal or financial obligations. It should be remembered that only the executive head is competent to waive the immunity accorded to international civil servants or to determine its scope.



Chapter 4:
Protections

‘It was in fact foreseen at San Francisco that in exceptional circumstances there might be a clash between the independent position of a member of the Secretariat and the position of his country, and consequently that an immunity in respect of official acts would be necessary for the protection of the officials from pressure by individual governments and to permit them to carry out their international responsibilities without interference.’

—Dag Hammarskjöld, 30 May 1961[47]

The privileges described in Chapter 3 provide international civil servants with a certain measure of protection, particularly in relation to their independence and integrity. There are also additional measures in place to protect UN personnel.

While participating in UN operations, all UN and associated personnel (except those engaged as combatants against organized armed forces as part of an enforcement operation authorized by the Security Council under Chapter VII of the UN Charter), and their equipment and premises, are protected from attack. This protection, detailed in the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, assigns the States Parties with a duty to, 'take all appropriate measures to ensure the safety and security of United Nations and associated personnel', particularly those deployed in their territory. The latter includes measures to prevent crimes against UN and associated personnel; the establishment of legal processes to ensure prosecution or extradition; and the commitment to information sharing with concerned parties, in the event that such a crime should occur.

Beyond this, international civil servants are afforded additional general rights and protections from threats to their person, well-being and performance, which may come from inside or outside the organisation. Examples of such threats may include misuse of information, retaliation, or harassment. Provisions relating to these forms of misconduct are designed to promote a fair, equitable and healthy workplace that enables UN staff to perform their duties competently. Providing for the safety of staff and upholding their dignity strengthens the ICS as a whole.

[47] Dag Hammarskjöld (note 6), p. 6.

[48] United Nations General Assembly, Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, 9 December 1994, https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=X-VIII-8&chapter=18

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article I, Regulation 1.2, General rights and obligations

(c) […] In exercising this authority the Secretary-General shall seek to ensure, having regard to the circumstances, that all necessary safety and security arrangements are made for staff carrying out the responsibilities entrusted to them;

Misuse of confidential information

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Use and protection of information

39. […] Organizations must maintain guidelines for the use and protection of confidential information, and it is equally necessary for such guidelines to keep pace with developments in communications and other new technology. It is understood that these provisions do not affect established practices governing the exchange of information between the secretariats and member States, which ensure the fullest participation of member States in the life and work of the organizations.



Retaliation for reporting misconduct

Putting Ethics to Work:
A Guide for UN Staff

Part Three: Making ethical decisions,
Duty to report and the right to protection against retaliation

[…] the Ethics Office protects staff from being punished for reporting misconduct or for cooperating with audits or investigations.

Part Three: Making Ethical Decisions, Duty to Report and the Right to Protection against Retaliation

By providing protection to staff who may otherwise be reluctant to come forward, the UN learns about and can respond to misconduct. This strengthens accountability and maintains the integrity of our operations and programmes.

Protection against retaliation applies to all staff members interns and UN volunteers. […]

Standards of Conduct
for the International Civil Service

Working relations

20. […] An international civil servant who reports such a breach in good faith or who cooperates with an audit or investigation has the right to be protected against retaliation for doing so.

Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework of the United Nations Secretariat

V. Prevention measures for fraudulent acts,
B. Protection against retaliation

16. The Secretary-General issued a specific administrative issuance prohibiting retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations. […]

18. The Secretariat is obliged to protect the confidentiality of the individual's identity and all communications related to misconduct that have been made through the channels established in paragraph 16 above to the maximum extent possible.[23]

[23] […] The established internal mechanisms for reporting misconduct are OIOS, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, the head of the department or the office concerned or the focal point appointed to receive reports of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations' (the UN whistleblower protection policy)

Section 1, General

1.3 Retaliation against individuals who have reported misconduct or who have cooperated with audits or investigations violates the fundamental obligation of all staff members to uphold the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity and to discharge their functions and regulate their conduct with the best interests of the Organization in view.

1.4 Retaliation means any direct or indirect detrimental action that adversely affects the employment or working conditions of an individual, where such action has been recommended, threatened or taken for the purpose of punishing, intimidating or injuring an individual because that individual engaged in an activity protected by the present policy as set out in section 2 below ("protected activity").

Section 2, Scope of application

2.1 Protection against retaliation applies to any staff member (regardless of the type of appointment or its duration), intern, United Nations volunteer, individual contractor or consultant who:

a) Reports the failure of one or more staff members to comply with his or her obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules or other relevant administrative issuances, the Financial Regulations and Rules, or the Standards of Conduct of the International Civil Service, including any request or instruction from any staff member to violate the above-mentioned regulations, rules or standards, or reports wrongdoing by any person that, if established, would be manifestly harmful to the interests, operations, or governance of the Organization. In order to receive protection, the report should be made as soon as possible and not later than six years after the individual becomes aware of the misconduct. The individual must make the report in good faith and must submit information or evidence to support a reasonable belief that misconduct has occurred; or
b) Cooperates in good faith with a duly authorized investigation or audit.

Section 4, Reporting misconduct through external mechanisms

Notwithstanding staff regulation 1.2 (i), protection against retaliation will be extended to an individual who reports misconduct to an entity or individual outside of the established internal mechanisms, where the criteria set out in subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c) below are satisfied:

(a) Such reporting is necessary to avoid:

i. A significant threat to public health and safety; or
ii. Substantive damage to the Organization's operations; or
iii. Violations of national or international law; and

(b) The use of internal mechanisms is not possible because:

i. At the time the report is made, the individual has grounds to believe that he/she will be subjected to retaliation by the person(s) he/she should report to pursuant to the established internal mechanism; or
ii. It is likely that evidence relating to the misconduct will be concealed or destroyed if the individual reports to the person(s) he/she should report to pursuant to the established internal mechanisms; or
iii. The individual has previously reported the same information through the established internal mechanisms, and the Organization has failed to inform the individual in writing of the status of the matter within six months of such a report; and

(c) The individual does not accept payment or any other benefit from any party for such report.

Protection against retaliation applies to any staff member (regardless of the type of appointment or its duration), intern, United Nations volunteer, individual contractor or consultant (…)

Harassment (including sexual harassment) and abuse of authority

One of the most obvious examples of misconduct and a type of harassment covered by the provisions hereafter is sexual harassment. In the UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment, the UN defines sexual harassment as 'any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment'.[49]

The UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment was developed by the CEB Task Force on Sexual Harassment. It provides indicative examples of behaviour which meet this definition, as well as detailed information on prevention, procedures for reporting sexual harass ment and processing such reports, and background information on the cultural and normative dimensions of sexual harassment. While a detailed analysis of policies on particular types of misconduct is outside the scope of this publication, the policy may serve as complementary reading for those interested in texts that discuss duties and obligations, values and principles, rights, privileges and protections, and prohibitions in relation to a specific issue.

This chapter continues with an extract from the Staff Regulations and Rules that outlines a general principle of protection. International civil servants are also afforded several specific protections, some of which also serve to protect the credibility and integrity of the UN itself.

[49] United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 'UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment', 1 December 2018, https://www.unsystem.org/content/un-system-model-policy-sexual-harassment-0, p. 2



Putting Ethics to Work:
A Guide for UN Staff

Part Two: Applying Our Ethical Framework,
D. Creating a harmonious workplace,
Avoiding harassment and abuse of authority, Abuse of authority

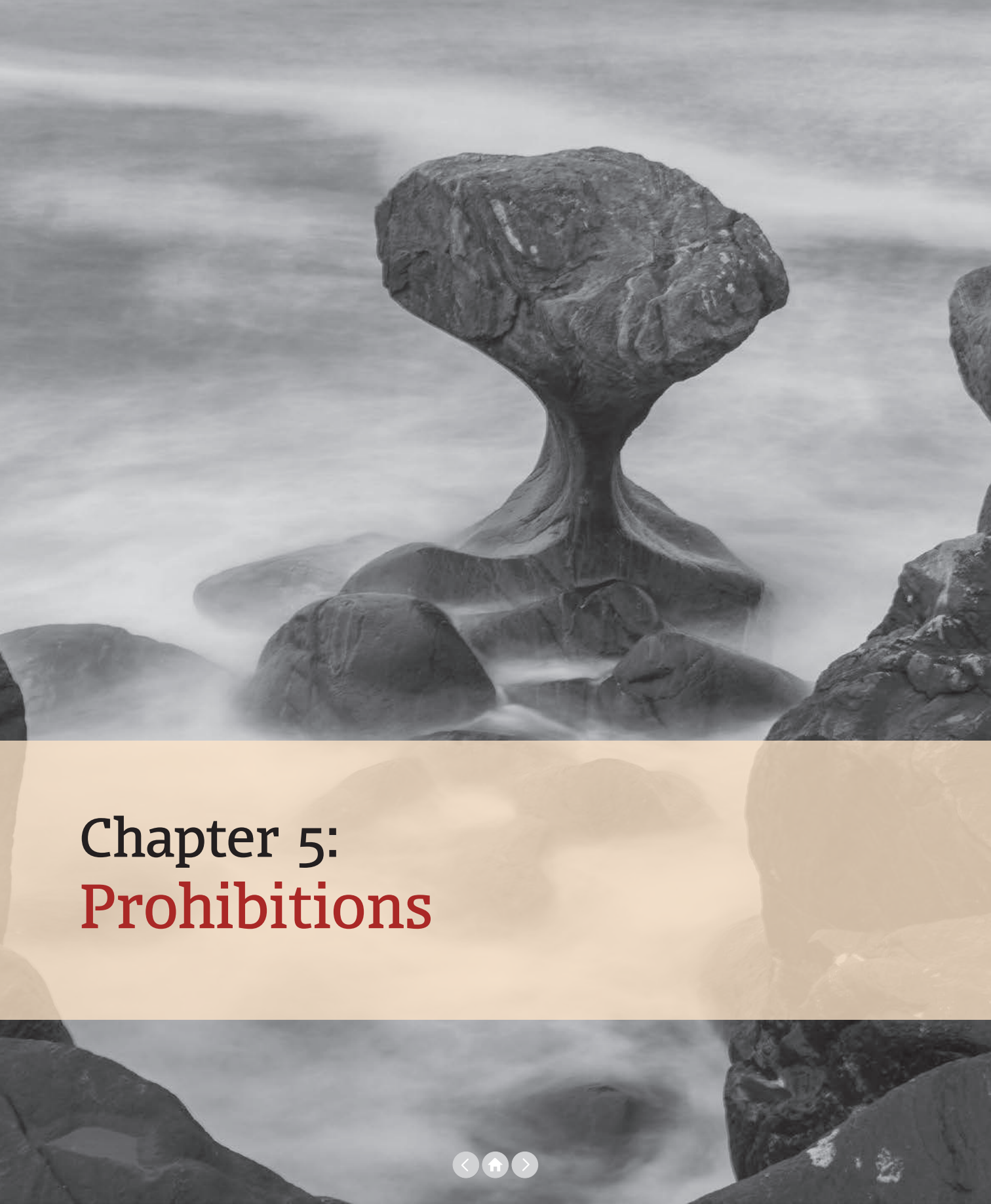
[…] You have the right to be free from improper or offensive conduct at work. You don't have to keep silent if you believe you are being harassed or if you observe harassing behaviour. […]



Standards of Conduct
for the International Civil Service

Harassment and abuse of authority

21. […] International civil servants have the right to a workplace environment free of harassment or abuse. All organizations must prohibit any kind of harassment. Organizations have a duty to establish rules and provide guidance on what constitutes harassment and abuse of authority and how unacceptable behaviour will be addressed.



Chapter 5:
Prohibitions

‘There is only one answer to the human problem involved, and that is for all to maintain their professional pride, their sense of purpose, and their confidence in the higher destiny of the Organization itself, by keeping to the highest standards of personal integrity in their conduct as international civil servants and in the quality of the work that they turn out on behalf of the Organization.’

—Dag Hammarskjöld, 8 September 1961[50]

While Chapter 4 describes protections afforded to international civil servants, this chapter explores behaviours and activities that are prohibited in order to protect the organisation, the communities it serves and its workforce from harm. Most prohibitions are framed in relation to specific values, principles, duties, obligations or protections. Certain areas of misconduct—such as fraudulent acts and sexual exploitation and abuse—that have been grossly mishandled by UN officials in the past are now the subject of their own respective policies aimed at preventing and better managing similar incidents in the future.

As in Chapter 3, the citations in this chapter are grouped by prohibition rather than by document. The following constitute misconduct and are expressly forbidden.

[50] Dag Hammarskjöld, Speech to Secretariat staff on the occasion of Staff Day in the General Assembly Hall, 8 September 1961, in Andrew W. Cordier and Wilder Foote (eds), Public Papers of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations, Volume V: Dag Hammarskjöld, 1960–1961 (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1975), p. 564.

Seeking or accepting instruction from third parties

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Chapter I, Regulation 1.2, General Rights and obligations

(d) In the performance of their duties staff members shall neither seek nor accept instructions from any Government or from any other source external to the Organization;

[…]

(g) Staff members shall not use their office or knowledge gained from their official functions for private gain, financial or otherwise, or for the private gain of any third party, including family, friends and those they favour. Nor shall staff members use their office for personal reasons to prejudice the positions of those they do not favour;

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Guiding principles

8. [….] In keeping with their oath of office, they should not seek nor should they accept instructions from any Government, person or entity external to the organization. It cannot be too strongly stressed that international civil servants are not, in any sense, representatives of Governments or other entities, nor are they proponents of their policies. This applies equally to those on secondment from Governments and to those whose services have been made available from elsewhere. […]

In the performance of their duties the Secretary-General and the staff shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization.

Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice

Chapter XV: The Secretariat

Article 100

1. In the performance of their duties the Secretary-General and the staff shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization.

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Working Relations

17. […] It is quite improper for them [managers and supervisors] to solicit favours, gifts or loans from their staff; they must act impartially, without favouritism and intimidation. In matters relating to the appointment or career of others, international civil servants should not try to influence colleagues for personal reasons.

Gifts, honours and remuneration from outside sources

50. To protect the international civil service from any appearance of impropriety, international civil servants must not accept, without authorization from the executive head, any honour, decoration, gift, remuneration, favour or economic benefit of more than nominal value from any source external to their organizations; it is understood that this includes Governments as well as commercial firms and other entities.

51. International civil servants should not accept supplementary payments or other subsidies from a Government or any other source prior to, during or after their assignment with an organization of the United Nations system if the payment is related to that assignment. Balancing this requirement, it is understood that Governments or other entities, recognizing that they are at variance with the spirit of the Charter and the constitutions of the organizations of the United Nations system, should not make or offer such payments.

Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework of the United Nations Secretariat

III: Definitions

6. (h) Improperly assisting a person external to the Organization to secure United Nations employment in exchange for money or other favours;

[...]

6. (l) Soliciting or accepting bribes;

Conflicts of interest

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article I, Regulation 1.2, Conflict of Interest

(m) A conflict of interest occurs when, by act or omission, a staff member's personal interests interfere with the performance of his or her official duties and responsibilities or with the integrity, independence and impartiality required by the staff member's status as an international civil servant. When an actual or possible conflict of interest does arise, the conflict shall be disclosed by staff members to their head of office, mitigated by the Organization and resolved in favour of the interests of the Organization;

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Conflict of interest

23. Conflicts of interest may occur when an international civil servant's personal interests interfere with the performance of his/her official duties or call into question the qualities of integrity, independence and impartiality required the status of an international civil servant. Conflicts of interest include circumstances in which international civil servants, directly or indirectly, may benefit improperly, or allow a third party to benefit improperly, from their association with their organization. Conflicts of interest can arise from an international civil servant's personal or familial dealings with third parties, individuals, beneficiaries, or other institutions. If a conflict of interest or possible conflict of interest does arise, the conflict shall be disclosed, addressed and resolved in the best interest of the organization. Questions entailing a conflict of interest can be very sensitive and need to be treated with care.

Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework of the United Nations Secretariat

III: Definitions

6. (n) Participating in the recruitment process of a family member or a person with respect to whom one has an undisclosed conflict of interest;

6. (o) Participating in a procurement and/or contract management process involving a person or entity with whom/which one has an undisclosed conflict of interest;



Discrimination and harassment

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Chapter I, Rule 1.2, Specific instances of prohibited conduct

(f) Any form of discrimination or harassment, including sexual or gender harassment, as well as abuse in any form at the workplace or in connection with work, is prohibited.

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Harassment and abuse of authority

21. Harassment in any shape or form is an affront to human dignity and international civil servants must not engage in any form of harassment. […] All organizations must prohibit any kind of harassment. Organizations have a duty to establish rules and provide guidance on what constitutes harassment and abuse of authority and how unacceptable behaviour will be addressed.

Putting Ethics to Work:
A Guide for UN Staff

Part Two: Applying our ethical framework,
D. Creating a Harmonious Workplace,
Non-discrimination, Main ideas

[…] All forms of discrimination are prohibited.

Avoiding Harassment and Abuse of Authority, Main ideas

Behaviour that is offensive and unwelcome or unreasonably disrupts another person in his or her work is harassment. We will not tolerate harassment or abuse of authority.

[…] Workplace harassment is any inappropriate conduct, including words or actions, that can reasonably be expected to cause offense or humiliation to another person. Disagreement about work performance is normally not considered harassment and is to be dealt with in the context of performance management.

[…] Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that can reasonably be expected to cause offense or humiliation to another person.

Power and seniority will not confer impunity.

UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment

II. Policy Statement

3. […] All forms and expressions of sexual harassment are prohibited in the [entity's], regardless of national criminal or other provisions where any behaviour or actions occur.

4. Power and seniority will not confer impunity. Any staff member who engages in sexual harassment will be subject to proportionate disciplinary sanctions, up to and including [summary] dismissal; non-staff personnel shall be covered to the extent applicable under the entity's policies and practices.

'Addressing discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority'[51]

1.1 For the purposes of the present bulletin, discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority collectively be referred to as "prohibited conduct".

2.2 Staff members who are alleged to have committed prohibited conduct may be subject to disciplinary or other administrative action […]

3.2 The Organization shall:
(a) Take appropriate measures to […] protect personnel from prohibited conduct through preventative measures […]

[...]

3.5 Staff members shall:
(c) Demonstrate commitment to zero tolerance of any prohibited conduct […]

[51]United Nations Secretariat, Secretary-General's Bulletin, 'Addressing discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority', ST/SGB/2019/8, 10 September 2019, https://undocs.org/en/ST/SGB/2019/8

Operational interference

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Chapter I, Rule 1.2, Specific instances of prohibited conduct

(g) Staff members shall not disrupt or otherwise interfere with any meeting or other official activity of the Organization, including activity in connection with the administration of justice system, nor shall staff members threaten, intimidate or otherwise engage in any conduct intended, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the ability of other staff members to discharge their official functions. Staff members shall not threaten, retaliate or attempt to retaliate against such individuals or against staff members exercising their rights and duties under the present Rules.

Disloyalty to the Organization



Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Conflict of interest

33. […] [International civil servants] should not interfere in the policies or affairs of Governments. It is unacceptable for them, either individually or collectively, to criticize or try to discredit a Government. At the same time, it is understood that international civil servants may speak freely in support of their organizations' policies. Any activity, direct or indirect, to undermine or overthrow a Government constitutes serious misconduct.

[…]

Relations with the media

38. […] in no circumstances should [international civil servants] use the media to further their own interests, to air their own grievances, to reveal unauthorized information or attempt to influence their organizations' policy decisions.

Disclosure of confidential information

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Use and protection of information

39. Because disclosure of confidential information may seriously jeopardize the efficiency and credibility of an organization, international civil servants are responsible for exercising discretion in all matters of official business. They must not divulge confidential information without authorization. International civil servants should not use information to personal advantage that has not been made public and is known to them by virtue of their official position. These obligations do not cease upon separation from service.

Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework of the United Nations Secretariat

III. Definitions

6. (m) Revealing internal confidential information in order to obtain a benefit for oneself or a third party;

Fraudulent acts

Unlike most of the other types of prohibited conduct listed previously, fraudulent acts are extensively and very specifically defined. They can include, but are not limited to, the misrepresentation or abuse of authority, and document falsification. Excerpts on both these issues are therefore included in order to provide additional clarity on the overall definition of fraudulent acts.



Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework of the United Nations Secretariat

I. Introduction

2. The Secretariat takes a zero-tolerance approach to fraud and corruption involving its staff members, other personnel or third parties in relation to their work with the Secretariat. […]

III. Definitions

5. […] the term "fraudulent acts" in the United Nations Secretariat is intended to include both "fraud", which encompasses any act or omission whereby an individual or entity knowingly misrepresents or conceals a material fact in order to obtain an undue benefit or advantage for himself, herself, itself or a third party, or to cause another to act to his or her detriment; and "corruption", which encompasses any act or omission that misuses official authority or that seeks to influence the misuse of official authority in order to obtain an undue benefit for oneself or a third party.

Misrepresentation or abuse of authority

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Chapter I, Rule 1.2, Specific instances of prohibited conduct

(h) Staff members shall not intentionally misrepresent their functions, official title or the nature of their duties to Member States or to any entities or persons external to the United Nations.

Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service

Harassment and abuse of authority

22. International civil servants must not abuse their authority or use their power or position in a manner that is offensive, humiliating, embarrassing or intimidating to another person.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff

Part Two: Applying our ethical framework,
D. Creating a Harmonious Workplace,
Avoiding harassment and abuse of authority, Main ideas

Abuse of authority is the improper use of a position of influence, power or authority against another person. This is considered particularly serious when a person uses their influence, power or authority to improperly influence another person's career or employment conditions.

Document falsification

Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework of the United Nations Secretariat

III. Definitions

6. (a) Submitting falsified documentation;

[...]

6. (e) Knowingly submitting an education grant, a medical, travel or other entitlement claim and documentation containing false information;

6. (f)
Knowingly including false information in movement-related documentation submitted to the Organization;

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Chapter I, Rule 1.2, Specific instances of prohibited conduct

(i) Staff members shall not intentionally alter, destroy, falsify or misplace or render useless any official document, record or file entrusted to them by virtue of their functions, which document, record or file is intended to be kept as part of the records of the Organization.

Attempts to influence other parties

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Chapter I, Rule 1.2, Specific instances of prohibited conduct

(j) Staff members shall not seek to influence Member States, principal or subsidiary organs of the United Nations or expert groups in order to obtain a change from a position or decision taken by the Secretary-General, including decisions relating to the financing of Secretariat programmes or units, or in order to secure support for improving their personal situation or the personal situation of other staff members or for blocking or reversing unfavourable decisions regarding their status or their colleagues' status.



Sexual exploitation and abuse is prohibited.

Sexual exploitation and abuse

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Chapter I, Rule 1.2, Specific instances of prohibited conduct

(e) Sexual exploitation and abuse is prohibited. Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or the age of consent locally, except where a staff member is legally married to a person who is under the age of 18 but over the age of majority or consent in his or her country of citizenship. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence. The exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, is prohibited. United Nations staff members are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN staff

Part Two: Applying our ethical framework,
A. Carrying out the UN Mission,
Zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, Main ideas

[…] Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse by UN personnel represents a catastrophic failure to adhere to our ethical obligations. It brings harm to those whom the UN is mandated to protect, and violates universally recognized human rights, norms and standards.

[...]

[…] Very often, there is a great disparity in economic and social power between a UN staff member and our beneficiaries. You must be alert to the potential for exploitation and abuse, regardless of intention, and take every measure to avoid even the appearance of inappropriate behaviour.

UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment

II. Policy Statement

3. […] All forms and expressions of sexual harassment are prohibited in the [the entity], regardless of national criminal or other provisions where any behaviour or actions occur.

'Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse'

Section 2, Scope of application

2.1 The present bulletin shall apply to all staff of the United Nations, including staff of separately administered organs and programmes of the United Nations.

2.2 United Nations forces conducting operations under United Nations command and control are prohibited from committing acts of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and have a particular duty of care towards women and children […]

Section 3, Prohibition of sexual exploitation and abuse

3.1 Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse violate universally recognized international legal norms and standards and have always been unacceptable behaviour and prohibited conduct for United Nations staff. Such conduct is prohibited by the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules.

3.2 In order to further protect the most vulnerable populations, especially women and children, the following specific standards which reiterate existing general obligations under the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules, are promulgated:

(a) Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse constitute acts of serious misconduct and are therefore grounds for disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal;
(b) Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18) is prohibited regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence;
(c) Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour, is prohibited. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance;
(d) Sexual relationships between United Nations staff and beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics, undermine the credibility and integrity of the work of the United Nations and are strongly discouraged;
(e) Where a United Nations staff member develops concerns or suspicions regarding sexual exploitation or sexual abuse by a fellow worker, whether in the same agency or not and whether or not within the United Nations system, he or she must report such concerns via established reporting mechanisms;
(f) United Nations staff are obliged to create and maintain an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. Managers at all levels have a particular responsibility to support and develop systems that maintain this environment.

3.3 The standards set out above are not intended to be an exhaustive list. Other types of sexually exploitive or sexually abusive behaviour may be grounds for administrative action or disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal, pursuant to the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules.

Disciplinary measures

Violation of prohibitions relating to sexual exploitation and abuse can result in a variety of disciplinary measures, depending on the type and severity of the offense.

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

Article X, Regulation 10.1

(a) The Secretary-General may impose disciplinary measures on staff members who engage in misconduct;

(b) Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse constitute serious misconduct.

Chapter X, Rule 10.1

(a) Failure by a staff member to comply with his or her obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, the Staff Regulations and Rules or other relevant administrative issuances or to observe the standards of conduct expected of an international civil servant may amount to misconduct and may lead to the institution of a disciplinary process and the imposition of disciplinary measures for misconduct.

(b) Where the staff member's failure to comply with his or her obligations or to observe the standards of conduct expected of an international civil servant is determined by the Secretary-General to constitute misconduct, such staff member may be required to reimburse the United Nations either partially or in full for any financial loss suffered by the United Nations as a result of his or her actions, if such actions are determined to be wilful, reckless or grossly negligent.

(c) The decision to launch an investigation into allegations of misconduct, to institute a disciplinary process and to impose a disciplinary measure shall be within the discretionary authority of the Secretary-General or officials with delegated authority.



Looking ahead

The texts presented in this compendium provide a lens for analysing responses to the challenges and opportunities facing UN staff today, as well as a starting point for discussions on how to cultivate norm-based, principled leadership across the ICS. The advantage of using official policies as a foundation for such conversations is that, whether binding or not, whether immutable or open to revision, the existence of these texts cannot be debated. At the same time, of course, disagreements can and do arise over how they are interpreted and applied, whether they are still relevant, and the extent to which they are sufficient.

Some of the texts included here are visionary, describing the purpose, character and values of the ICS relative to the UN's transformative mission. Others are strictly compliance-oriented, listing requirements, standards and regulations incumbent on UN staff. Still others function as tools for operationalising theoretical concepts. Whatever their character, status or function, they are more than mere words on a page. Each text relays part of the story of the ICS. This compendium, therefore, summarises what the official texts say, laying the groundwork for subsequent follow-on work.

Importantly, not all the texts are uniformly understood or applied. Plural interpretations can be symptomatic of a lack of clarity or commitment to essential norms but are also typical features of complex bureaucracies in which subsidiarity generates efficiencies and the subcultures and policies of component organisations conform to their individual mandates. There are also scenarios in which different interpretations of the same text could generate multiple viable courses of action. Looking ahead, there is a need to explore the trade-offs inherent in various interpretations, and to interrogate discrepancies (within and between various UN bodies) to understand their origins and the contexts in which they might hinder the ICS.

Incoherence in the degree of importance assigned to individual issues (eg integrity, non-discrimination, the prohibition of sexual harassment, or the duty to maintain positive relations with Governments) and inconsistency in how each is described and operationalised across different texts suggests that policies alone are incomplete as a platform for understanding. In this regard, it is

essential to understand their respective enforcement and review mechanisms, as well as the mandates of the associated authorities, whether bodies or posts. For binding texts, case law may provide additional context and complementary insights into the application of various issues beyond that which is described in official texts.

In some cases, the failure to systematically uphold certain values, norms and principles may relate to the operating environment itself. The UN system leadership framework obliges UN staff to defend its norms and standards without fear or favour, but formal protections afforded to those who do so are limited and the organisational culture often promotes cautiousness over moral courage. While the juxtaposition of the instrument of diplomacy and the UN's human rights functions may be false, the practical implications—particularly on financing—of aggrieving Member States are real. And yet, silence and inaction, whether on the part of individual civil servants or the ICS as a whole, undermines its accountability and integrity and erodes its independence.[52] In addition to understanding how and why the texts are being applied, subsequent work must identify steps to encourage norm-based, principled leadership at the individual and institutional levels.

Without diminishing the importance of such internal obstacles, many of the forces acting upon the ICS are external to the organisation. Appreciating how the UN has adapted and continues to adapt to such forces is critical to understanding its responsiveness, the continued relevance of its values and principles, and the sufficiency of its policy framework in translating and regulating their application. Insomuch as the culture or norms of the UN have evolved in response to external forces, they may be discerned from shifts in the language, thematic emphases, or the subjects of official texts over time. It follows, then, that efforts to strengthen the ICS should analyse the evolution of concepts in the texts themselves. However, since policies and laws are lagging indicators, recent shifts in attitudes, public discourse and power dynamics may not yet be evident in official texts. Consequently, there is also a need to consult international civil servants and engage them in a dialogue on how external forces impact on their work and the capacity and effectiveness of the ICS.

[52] For further discussion of these issues see Kate Gilmore, 'Without Fear or Favour?', Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 100 Years of International Civil Service Paper No. 6, 10 December 2019, https://www.daghammarskjold.se/publication/without-fear-or-favour

Mona Ali Khalil, 'Restoring the Values and Spirit of the International Civil Service', Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 100 Years of International Civil Service Paper No. 2, 20 May 2019, https://www.daghammarskjold.se/publication/restoring-the-values-and-spirit-of-the-international-civil-service



'At this time of great ideological conflicts and violent clashes of interests, technological and economic developments have, as never before, brought us together as members of one human family, unified beyond race or creed on a shrinking globe, in face of dangers of our own making. In such a situation many ethical problems take on a new significance and our need to give sense to our lives exceeds the inherited standards. True, our duties to our families, our neighbours, our countries, our creeds have not changed. But something has been added. This is a duty to what I shall call international service, with a claim on our lives equal to that of the duty to serve within those smaller units whose walls are now breaking down. The international service of which I speak is not the special obligation, nor the privilege, of those working in international economic corporations, in the field of diplomacy, or in international political organization. It has become today the obligation, as well as the privilege of all.'

—Dag Hammarskjöld, 14 June 1955[53]

[53] Dag Hammarskjöld (note 38).

Annex A: Credits

This compendium contains extracts from a number of key source documents, many of which are subject to specific copyright licensing requirements.

Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice (1945), © 2020 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the United Nations. Source: https://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/index.html

Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations,
© 2020 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the United Nations.
Source: https://undocs.org/ST/SGB/2018/1

Standards of Conduct for International Civil Service (2013),
by the International Civil Service Commission.
© 2020 International Civil Service Commission.
Source: https://icsc.un.org/Resources/General/Publications/standardsE.pdf?r=07110568

Putting Ethics to Work: A Guide for UN Staff (2017), by United Nations Ethics Office and United Nations Office of Human Resources Management.
© 2020 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the United Nations.
Source: https://www.un.org/en/ethics/assets/pdfs/Attachment_2_EN_Putting%20Ethics%20to%20Work.pdf

United Nations System Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB),
'**United Nations system leadership framework'**, CEB/2017/1, 18 April 2017.
©2020 UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).
Source: https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/Leadership.pdf

Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (1946), by the United Nations General Assembly, ©2020 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the United Nations. Source: https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1946/12/19461214%2010-17%20PM/Ch_III_1p.pdf.

'Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations' (ST/SGB/2005/21), by the United Nations Secretary-General,
©2020 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the United Nations.
Source: https://undocs.org/ST/SGB/2005/21

'**Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse'** (ST/SGB/2003/13), by the United Nations Secretary-General,
©2020 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the United Nations.
Source: https://undocs.org/ST/SGB/2003/13





Annex B: Further reading

This Annex contains links to relevant texts on the conduct of international civil servants that have been issued by UN-related funds, programmes and specialised agencies.

Codes of ethics and conduct

International Criminal Court, **'Code of Judicial Ethics',** ICC-BD/02-01-05, 9 March 2005, https://www.icc-cpi.int/pages/item.aspx?name=icc-cje

—, **'Code of Conduct for the Office of the Prosecutor'**, 5 September 2013, https://www.icc-cpi.int/Pages/item.aspx?name=Code-of-Conduct

International Organization for Migration (IOM), **'IOM Standards of Conduct'**, IN/15 Rev. 1, 1 December 2014 [internal document].

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, **'Code of Conduct for Staff Members of the Secretariat',** AD/PER/1, 7 May 2001, https://www.opcw.org/sites/default/files/documents/ADM/HRB/AD-PER-1.pdf

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), ***Code of Ethics: Operating with Unwavering Integrity*** (New York: UNDP, June 2020), https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/accountability/ethics.html

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), **'UN Women legal framework for addressing non-compliance with UN standards of conduct'**, 30 July 2018, https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/accountability

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), ***Code of Conduct and Explanatory Notes*** (Geneva: UNHCR, June 2004), https://www.unhcr.org/admin/policies/422dbc89a/unhcr-code-conduct-explanatory-notes.html

United Nations Office for Project Services, **'Human Resources, Ethics and Culture'**, OD.PCG.2017.01, 13 July 2017, https://content.unops.org/documents/libraries/policies-2020/operational-directives-and-instructions/human-resources-ethics-and-culture/en/OD.PCG-HR-Ethics-Culture.pdf?mtime=20200306120300

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), **'Code of Conduct: To prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, at UNFPA events'**, 2019, https://www.unfpa.org/resources/code-conduct-prevent-harassment-including-sexual-harassment-unfpa-events

World Food Programme, **'World Food Programme Code of Conduct'**, Executive Director Circular, OED2014/016, 20 October 2014 [internal document]
World Health Organization, 'Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct', April 2017, https://www.who.int/about/ethics/code_of_ethics_full_version.pdf

Rules and regulations

International Labour Organization, **'Staff Regulations'**, May 2020, https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/accountability-and-transparency/WCMS_754231/lang--en/index.htm

Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, **'Regulations and Rules of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization'**, CTBT/RR/11, 15 January 2020, https://www.ctbto.org/fileadmin/user_upload/legal/2020/CTBT_RR_11.pdf

United Nations, **'Regulations Governing the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of Officials other than Secretariat Officials, and Experts on Mission'**, Human Resources Portal, 17 June 2002, https://hr.un.org/content/regulations-governing-status-basic-rights-and-duties-officials-other-secretariat-officials

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, **'International Staff Rules'**, Cod. I/61/Rev. 7, 1 January 2018, https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/international_staff_rules_11.1_-_11.5_effective_1_jan_2018.pdf

—, **'International Staff Regulations'**, Cod. I/61/Rev. 7, 1 January 2018, https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/international_staff_regulations_11.1_-_11.5.pdf

Policies related to protection against retaliation

International Labour Organization, **'Reporting misconduct and protection from retaliation'**, Office Directive, IGDS No. 551 (Version 1), 11 November 2019, https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/accountability-and-transparency/ethics-office/WCMS_713106/lang--en/index.htm

United Nations Development Programme, **'Policy for Protection against Retaliation'**, April 2018, https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/accountability/ethics.html

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), **'Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations policy'**, 31 August 2018, https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/about%20us/accountability/un-women-policy-on-protection-against-retaliation-en.pdf?la=en&vs=317

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), **'FAO Whistleblower Protection Policy'**, Administrative Circular 2019/06, 14 August 2019, http://www.fao.org/aud/48699-03f867c68c965c8bbad27e7d5f7512e43.pdf





United Nations Office for Project Services, **'Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations or other fact-finding activities'**, OI.Ethics.2018.01, 22 February 2018, https://content.unops.org/documents/libraries/policies-2020/operational-directives-and-instructions/human-resources-ethics-and-culture/en/OI.Ethics-Protection-against-retaliation.pdf?mtime=20200306120311

United Nations Population Fund, 'Policy on protection against retaliation', 11 June 2019, https://www.unfpa.org/admin-resource/policy-protection-against-retaliation

World Food Programme, **'Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits and investigations'**, ED2008/003, 31 January 2008, https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/4d7a56c75257419fa375031296a9cba6/download

World Health Organization, **'Whistleblowing and protection against retaliation: Policies and procedures'**, 2015, https://www.who.int/about/ethics/WHOwhistleblowerpolicy.pdf

Anti-fraud and anti-corruption policies

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), **'UN Women Anti-fraud Policy'**, 20 June 2018), https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/about%20us/accountability/un-women-anti-fraud-policy-framework-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5042

United Nations Environment Programme, **'Interim Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Guidelines'**, 2019, https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/31974/AFC.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), '**UNITAR Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy'**, March 2017, https://unitar.org/sites/default/files/uploads/unitar-anti-fraud-policy-march2017.pdf

United Nations Office for Project Services, **'Policy to Address Fraud and Corruption'**, OI.ED.2018.01, 15 March 2018, https://content.unops.org/documents/libraries/policies-2020/operational-directives-and-instructions/internal-audit-and-investigations-charter/en/OI.ED-Policy-to-Address-Fraud-and-Corruption.pdf?mtime=20200306122358

United Nations Population Fund, **'Policy against fraudulent and other proscribed practices'**, October 2018, https://www.unfpa.org/admin-resource/unfpa-policy-against-fraudulent-and-other-proscribed-practices

Policies on protection from harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse

International Labour Organization, **'Prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse'**, 9 July 2020, https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/accountability-and-transparency/WCMS_750824/lang--en/index.htm

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), **'UNICEF Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment'**, January 2019, https://www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/UNICEF-Strategy-Prevent-Respond-Sexual-Exploitation-Abuse-Sexual-Harassment-January-2019.pdf

United Nations Development Programme, **'Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Abuse of Authority'**, 11 May 2018, https://popp.undp.org/SitePages/POPPSubject.aspx?SBJID=352&Menu=BusinessUnit

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), **'Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination and Abuse of Authority Policy'**, 6 May 2020, https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/about%20us/accountability/un-women-harassment-sexual-harassment-discrimination-and-abuse-of-authority-policy-en.pdf?la=en&vs=3803

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), **'UNHCR's Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority**', April 2005, https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/UN_system_policies/(UNHCR)policy_on_harassment.pdf

World Health Organization, **'Policy on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Prevention and Response: Policy and procedures'**, March 2017, https://www.who.int/about/ethics/sexual-exploitation_abuse-prevention_response_policy.pdf?ua=1

World Food Programme, **'Protection from Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Abuse of Authority, and Discrimination'**, 1 March 2018, https://www.wfp.org/publications/2018-ed-circular-protection-harassment-sexual-harassment-and-abuse-authority-and-discriminat

Policies on financial disclosure and conflicts of interest

United Nations Development Programme, **'Policy for the Financial Disclosure Programme, and Declaration of Interest Statements'**, November 2012, https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/Financial%20Disclosure.pdf&action=default

United Nations Office for Project Services, **'Financial Disclosure and Conflict of Interest Statements'**, OI.Ethics.2018.02, 22 February 2018, https://content.unops.org/documents/libraries/policies-2020/operational-directives-and-instructions/human-resources-ethics-and-culture/en/OI.Ethics-Financial-Disclosure-and-Conflict-of-Interest-Statements.pdf?mtime=20200306120319

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), **'UNFPA policy on financial disclosure and declaration of interest'**, 19 January 2010, https://www.unfpa.org/admin-resource/unfpa-policy-financial-disclosure-and-declaration-interest





Policies on gifts, decorations, honours, awards, favours and remuneration
International Labour Organization, **'Gifts and hospitality offered to officials by external sources'**, Office Guideline, IGDS No. 552 (Version 1), 11 November 2019, https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/how-the-ilo-works/accountability-and-transparency/ethics-office/WCMS_728042/lang--en/index.htm

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), **'UNFPA policy for outside activities and/or honors, decorations, favors, gifts, awards, remuneration from outside parties'**, 19 January 2010, https://www.unfpa.org/admin-resource/policy-outside-activities-andor-honors-decorations-favors-gifts-awards-remuneration

United Nations Office for Project Services, **'Prohibition of accepting gifts, honours, decorations, favours or non-UN remuneration or benefits from governmental and non-governmental sources'** OI.Ethics.2020.01, 6 July 2020, https://content.unops.org/documents/libraries/policies-2020/operational-directives-and-instructions/human-resources-ethics-and-culture/en/OI.Ethics-Prohibition-of-accepting-gifts-honours-decorations-favours-or-non.pdf?mtime=20200714151030

Other documents

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), **'The Competency Framework: A guide for IAEA managers and staff'**, March 2018, https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/18/03/competency-framework.pdf

International Labour Organization (ILO), **'ILO Constitution'** (1919, with multiple amendments), https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:62:0::NO:62:P62_LIST_ENTRIE_ID:2453907:NO

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), ***Basic Texts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Volumes I and II*** (Rome: FAO, 2017), http://www.fao.org/3/K8024E/K8024E.pdf

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), **'UNFPA Oversight Policy'**, 30 January 2015, https://www.unfpa.org/admin-resource/unfpa-oversight-policy

Index

This index provides a general overview of the issues covered in the compendium but should not be considered definitive.

Accountability 41
Advising staff on ethical conduct 68
Appointing an official focal point for reporting on sexual exploitation and abuse 70
Attempts to influence other parties for one's own benefit or that of a third party 105

Communicating effectively 68
Compliance with rules and instructions 60
Conflicts of interest 94
Cooperating with duly authorised audits and investigations 63
Creating and maintaining an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse 69

Disciplinary measures 109
Disclosure of confidential information 101
Disloyalty to the Organization 100
Document falsification 104

Efficiency, competence and integrity 59, 66
Ensuring contracted non-UN entities conform with UN standards on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse 71
Ensuring a harmonious workplace 67
Ensuring respect for the rights and duties of staff 66

Fraudulent acts 83, 102

Harassment (including sexual harassment) and abuse of authority 86

Impartiality 36, 58
Independence 38, 58
Informing the Department of Management of related investigations 70
Integrity 37, 40

Leading by example 67
Loyalty 34, 57

Maintaining positive relations with Governments 65
Misrepresentation or abuse of authority 103

Non-discrimination 43, 97

Oath of Office 19, 39, 44, 57
Operational interference 99

Prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse 69
Privileges 74
Promoting a positive image of the United Nations 65
Promoting understanding of the United Nations and its work 64

Reporting misconduct through appropriate internal mechanisms 61, 85
Respect for human rights 33
Retaliation for reporting misconduct 82

Seeking or accepting instruction from third parties 91
Sexual exploitation and abuse 106
Submitting to the Secretary-General's authority 59

Tolerance and respect for different cultures 42

Upholding the Charter 56



The Dag Hammarskjöd Foundation office in Uppsala, Sweden.

About the Foundation

The Swedish Government established the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation in 1962 in memory of the second Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Foundation is an autonomous non-governmental organisation with an internationally recruited board and a distinguished advisory committee (the International Honorary Committee). Situated in the shadows of Uppsala Castle and Hammarskjöld's childhood surroundings, the Foundation has since its establishment built up a record of diverse achievements.

The Foundation's mission is to advance dialogue and policy for sustainable development and peace, and it generates new perspectives and ideas on global development and multilateral cooperation. The Foundation collaborates with international and regional actors, working with a clear UN focus and bringing voices from developing countries, academia and civil society to global debates. The Foundation aims to influence policy on international cooperation, development and peace through dialogue, meetings and publications. In essence, it serves as a platform for new ideas and as a bridge-builder, working to involve diverse actors across the globe.

Dag Hammarskjöld's legacy also comprises his values and moral compass, in particular his emphasis on the integrity of the international civil servant. The Foundation works to promote these values and to contribute to the renewal and revitalisation of these issues in the UN system.

Every year, the Foundation, together with the University of Uppsala, also hosts the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture, which is given in his memory and in recognition of the values that inspired him personally and as Secretary-General. The University of Uppsala has also instituted a special medal, which is bestowed on the Dag Hammarskjöld lecturers.

www.daghammarskjold.se

This compendium is designed to serve as a reference point on the laws, regulations, policies and guidelines that relate directly to the international civil service (ICS). It has been produced for the benefit of United Nations personnel worldwide, including members of the UN Secretariat, duty-station staff, participants in peacekeeping missions, employees of the various UN funds and programmes, and staff within specialised agencies. It may also have additional utility for new recruits to the ICS, members of the UN leadership, managers and trainers.



Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation

The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation is a non-governmental organisation established in memory of the second Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Foundation aims to advance dialogue and policy for sustainable development, multilateralism and peace.

www.daghammarskjold.se