



February 1, 2008

Dear Staff Member,

Subject: Zero Tolerance for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)

As we begin a new year, we take this opportunity to remind all UN Agency Staff of the UN Country Team in Liberia's Zero Tolerance for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.

As you are aware, the Secretary-General has set forth the policy of the United Nations regarding Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in his Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, ST/SGB/2003/1.

The Bulletin clearly defines sexual exploitation and abuse. It also clearly states that such acts, especially when perpetrated against the beneficiaries of the United Nations' protection or assistance, constitute serious misconduct. SEA offences are grounds for disciplinary measures, including summary dismissal.

Furthermore, the bulletin obliges all staff to report concerns or suspicions of sexual exploitation and abuse. A Focal Point based SEA reporting system has been set up in all Agencies to assist staff in discharging this responsibility. All allegations will be investigated and, only if misconduct is proven, will disciplinary action be taken on individuals and contractors. All reports of sexual exploitation and abuse will be handled in a confidential manner in order to protect the rights of all involved. The UN is committed to protect staff members who report SEA concerns or allegation from retaliation (backlash) in the workplace.

We the UNCT Heads of Agencies are committed to fully implement the provisions of the Secretary-General's Bulletin in an effort to prevent and address SEA here in Liberia. In this regard, there is a dedicated staff position to coordinate agency activities to ensure greater compliance with the Secretary General's Bulletin as well as to work with government, national and international partners to prevent and respond to SEA.

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All Staff Members
of United Nations Country Team, Liberia

First, we take this opportunity to reiterate the requirement that all UN Personnel familiarize themselves with and abide by the provisions of the Secretary General's Bulletin on SEA (copy attached).

Second, in an effort to ensure a common understanding of SEA, the UNCT, in conjunction with UNMIL, have developed a United Nations Common Training on SEA. All staff are required to attend and participate in this 3 hour training session and any refresher trainings that may be given. Newly recruited staff will take such training as part of their induction process.

Finally, in order to facilitate monitoring and reporting activities, each agency has identified a Focal Point or Focal Point Alternate. Please find attached a copy of the current SEA Focal Points and Alternates for each of our agencies both in Monrovia and in the Field. The focal points have been trained on SEA issues and are available to provide advice and support. In addition, staff can contact Lorraine Anderson, our SEA Coordination Officer for the Prevention of SEA, who can clarify any issues regarding implementation of our Zero Tolerance Policy on SEA.

SEA is an issue that all of us who work in the United Nations must continue to take seriously. We intend to maintain a vigorous effort to educate our staff about SEA as well as take all necessary steps to prevent its occurrence and appropriately respond if it occurs. We expect your full cooperation in this important effort.

(See attached signatories' list)

Cc: Ms. Roselyn Odera
Chief, Conduct and Discipline Unit

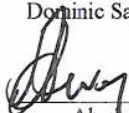
UNITED NATIONS COUNTRY TEAM



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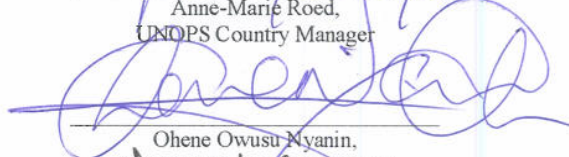
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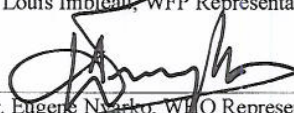
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Sina Chuma-Mkandawire, ILO Director



Jordan Ryan
Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General,
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UN Agency Focal Points for SEA

Agency	Focal Point	Alternate 1	Alternate 2
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Updated 2/7/2008

UN AGENCY FIELD FOCAL POINTS

Location	UNHCR	WFP	FAO	UNDP	UNFPA
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9 October 2003

Secretary-General's Bulletin

Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

The Secretary-General, for the purpose of preventing and addressing cases of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and taking into consideration General Assembly resolution 57/306 of 15 April 2003, "Investigation into sexual exploitation of refugees by aid workers in West Africa", promulgates the following in consultation with Executive Heads of separately administered organs and programmes of the United Nations:

Section 1 Definitions

For the purposes of the present bulletin, the term "sexual exploitation" means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Similarly, the term "sexual abuse" means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

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, pursuant to section 7 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1999/13, entitled "Observance by United Nations forces of international humanitarian law".

2.3 Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/253, entitled "Promotion of equal treatment of men and women in the Secretariat and prevention of sexual harassment", and the related administrative instruction¹ set forth policies and procedures for handling cases of sexual harassment in the Secretariat of the United Nations. Separately administered organs and programmes of the United Nations have promulgated similar policies and procedures.

¹ Currently ST/AI/379, entitled "Procedures for dealing with sexual harassment".

Section 3

Prohibition of sexual exploitation and sexual 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.

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.

4.2 The Head of Department, Office or Mission shall be responsible for taking appropriate action in cases where there is reason to believe that any of the standards listed in section 3.2 above have been violated or any behaviour referred to in section

3.3 above has occurred. This action shall be taken in accordance with established rules and procedures for dealing with cases of staff misconduct.

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. However, such reports may be used, where necessary, for action taken pursuant to section 4.2 above.

4.4 The Head of Department, Office or Mission shall not apply the standard prescribed in section 3.2 (b), where a staff member is legally married to someone under the age of 18 but over the age of majority or consent in their country of citizenship.

4.5 The Head of Department, Office or Mission may use his or her discretion in applying the standard prescribed in section 3.2 (d), where beneficiaries of assistance are over the age of 18 and the circumstances of the case justify an exception.

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.

Section 5

Referral to national authorities

If, after proper investigation, there is evidence to support allegations of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, these cases may, upon consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs, be referred to national authorities for criminal prosecution.

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.

6.2 The failure of those entities or individuals to take preventive measures against sexual exploitation or sexual abuse, to investigate allegations thereof, or to take corrective action when sexual exploitation or sexual abuse has occurred, shall constitute grounds for termination of any cooperative arrangement with the United Nations.

Section 7

Entry into force

The present bulletin shall enter into force on 15 October 2003.

(Signed) Kofi A. Annan
Secretary-General



19 December 2005

Secretary-General's Bulletin

Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations

The Secretary-General, for the purpose of ensuring that the Organization functions in an open, transparent and fair manner, with the objective of enhancing protection for individuals who report misconduct or cooperate with duly authorized audits or investigations, and in accordance with paragraph 161 (d) of General Assembly resolution 60/1, promulgates the following:

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.

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.

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 recommended, threatened or taken because an individual engaged in an activity protected by the present policy. When established, retaliation is by itself misconduct.

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 or United Nations volunteer 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. 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.

2.2 The present bulletin is without prejudice to the legitimate application of regulations, rules and administrative procedures, including those governing evaluation of performance, non-extension or termination of appointment. However, the burden of proof shall rest with the Administration, which must prove by clear and convincing evidence that it would have taken the same action absent the protected activity referred to in section 2.1 above.

2.3 The transmission or dissemination of unsubstantiated rumours is not a protected activity. Making a report or providing information that is intentionally false or misleading constitutes misconduct and may result in disciplinary or other appropriate action.

Section 3

Reporting misconduct through established internal mechanisms

Except as provided in section 4 below, 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.

Section 4

Reporting misconduct through external mechanisms

Notwithstanding Staff Rule 101.2 (q), 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.

Section 5

Reporting retaliation to the Ethics Office

5.1 Individuals who believe that retaliatory action has been taken against them because they have reported misconduct or cooperated with a duly authorized audit or investigation should forward all information and documentation available to them to support their complaint to the Ethics Office as soon as possible. Complaints may be made in person, by regular mail or by e-mail, by fax or through the Ethics Office helpline.

5.2 The functions of the Ethics Office with respect to protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct or cooperating with a duly authorized audit or investigation are as follows:

- (a) To receive complaints of retaliation or threats of retaliation;
- (b) To keep a confidential record of all complaints received;
- (c) To conduct a preliminary review of the complaint to determine if (i) the complainant engaged in a protected activity; and (ii) there is a prima facie case that the protected activity was a contributing factor in causing the alleged retaliation or threat of retaliation.

5.3 The Ethics Office will seek to complete its preliminary review within 45 days of receiving the complaint of retaliation.

5.4 All offices and staff members shall cooperate with the Ethics Office and provide access to all records and documents requested by the Ethics Office, except for medical records that are not available without the express consent of the staff member concerned and OIOS records that are subject to confidentiality requirements. Reports of the Joint Appeals Boards shall be routinely sent to the Ethics Office unless the appellant objects.

5.5 If the Ethics Office finds that there is a credible case of retaliation or threat of retaliation, it will refer the matter in writing to OIOS for investigation and will immediately notify in writing the complainant that the matter has been so referred. OIOS will seek to complete its investigation and submit its report to the Ethics Office within 120 days.

5.6 Pending the completion of the investigation, the Ethics Office may recommend that the Secretary-General take appropriate measures to safeguard the interests of the complainant, including but not limited to temporary suspension of the implementation of the action reported as retaliatory and, with the consent of the

complainant, temporary reassignment of the complainant within or outside the complainant's office or placement of the complainant on special leave with full pay.

5.7 Once the Ethics Office has received the investigation report, it will inform in writing the complainant of the outcome of the investigation and make its recommendations on the case to the head of department or office concerned and the Under-Secretary-General for Management. Those recommendations may include disciplinary actions to be taken against the retaliator.

5.8 If the Ethics Office finds that there is no credible case of retaliation or threat of retaliation but finds that there is an interpersonal problem within a particular office, it will advise the complainant of the existence of the Office of the Ombudsman and the other informal mechanisms of conflict resolution in the Organization.

5.9 If the Ethics Office finds that there is a managerial problem based on the preliminary review of the complaint or the record of complaints relating to a particular department or office, it will advise the head of department or office concerned and, if it considers it necessary, the Management Performance Board.

5.10 Where, in the opinion of the Ethics Office, there may be a conflict of interest in OIOS conducting the investigation as referred to in section 5.5 above, the Ethics Office may recommend to the Secretary-General that the complaint be referred to an alternative investigating mechanism.

Section 6

Protection of the person who suffered retaliation

6.1 If retaliation against an individual is established, the Ethics Office may, after taking into account any recommendations made by OIOS or other concerned office(s) and after consultation with the individual who has suffered retaliation, recommend to the head of department or office concerned appropriate measures aimed at correcting negative consequences suffered as a result of the retaliatory action. Such measures may include, but are not limited to, the rescission of the retaliatory decision, including reinstatement, or, if requested by the individual, transfer to another office or function for which the individual is qualified, independently of the person who engaged in retaliation.

6.2 Should the Ethics Office not be satisfied with the response from the head of department or office concerned, it can make a recommendation to the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General will provide a written response on the recommendations of the Ethics Office to the Ethics Office and the department or office concerned within a reasonable period of time.

6.3 The procedures set out in the present bulletin are without prejudice to the rights of an individual who has suffered retaliation to seek redress through the internal recourse mechanisms. An individual may raise a violation of the present policy by the Administration in any such internal recourse proceeding.

Section 7

Action against the person who engaged in retaliation

Retaliation against an individual because that person has reported misconduct on the part of one or more United Nations officials or cooperated with a duly

authorized audit or investigation of the Organization constitutes misconduct which, if established, will lead to disciplinary action and/or transfer to other functions in the same or a different office.

Section 8

Prohibition of retaliation against outside parties

Any retaliatory measures against a contractor or its employees, agents or representatives or any other individual engaged in any dealings with the United Nations because such person has reported misconduct by United Nations staff members will be considered misconduct that, if established, will lead to disciplinary or other appropriate action.

Section 9

Entry into force

The present bulletin shall enter into force on 1 January 2006.

(Signed) Kofi A. Annan
Secretary-General
