

UN Geneva Working Group on Addressing Racism in the Workplace

Terms of Reference

Background

1. The Secretary-General has established a [Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All](#), that is conducting its work through 30 September 2021. Among the deliverables expected from the Task Force is a strategic plan to identify, prevent and address racism and racial discrimination in the UN. Once the strategic plan is issued, these Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated as needed.
2. The Director-General of UNOG has committed herself to addressing the issue of racism in UN Geneva's operations as a matter of urgency. Convinced that different perspectives, backgrounds, experiences and skills create value and contribute to success, the Director-General has decided to establish a Working Group on Addressing Racism in the Workplace at UN Geneva (Working Group). The overall objective of the Working Group is to support UN Geneva-wide efforts to make the United Nations in Geneva a more inclusive and respectful workplace, nurturing a permanent sense of belonging, connection and community, reflecting and capitalizing on the world's diversity and ensuring that these attributes underpin UN Geneva's work.

Mandate

3. The Working Group will:
 - a. Consider discrimination on the basis of race at UNOG and how it can be measured. To this end, it will analyse available data (including from the work of the Secretary-General's Task Force and other specialist academic and public sector sources) and gather new data to take stock of perceptions and individual experiences, including through surveys, professionally-facilitated focus groups, individual interviews, etc. Additionally, it will consider existing organizational commitments and other emerging developments. It will also examine similar data and other information and any best practices adopted by other Organizations, academe and the public and private sectors.
 - b. Based on the findings of the data and information collection phase, prepare the UN Geneva Action Plan on Addressing Racism in the Workplace to support the Director-General in her task and better address and prevent identified issues. It will include concrete actions to identify, address and prevent racism in UN Geneva and propose measures to promote racial diversity and inclusion throughout UN Geneva operations.
 - c. Engage with other stakeholders in the UN Secretariat and experts on Racism, Diversity and Inclusion in order to raise awareness and understanding of racism and its consequences, and diversity and its positive impact so that colleagues stand with and for each other on a continuing basis.
 - d. Advise on and contribute to ongoing efforts to respond to the results of the SG survey, and other initiatives as appropriate.
 - e. Present the Action Plan to the Director-General for consideration and approval.

Composition

4. The Working Group will report directly to the Director-General and will comprise staff of all UN Geneva divisions and services with a view to ensure gender parity, and diversity of races, nationalities, and staff levels. Staff outside UN Geneva who have relevant expertise may also participate in the Working Group.
5. The final membership will be agreed upon by the Staff Coordinating Council and Management and approved by the Director-General.
6. The Working Group will designate a chairperson and vice-chairperson who will be responsible for keeping records of each meeting, sharing key action points and reporting to the DG.

7. HRMS/UNOG staff will remain available for support as necessary. Recourse may also be made to interns for support in data collection and interpretation, race-related policy/constitutional law, and specialist communications.
8. The Working Group may also decide seek support through proposing assignments through Connecta or through cross-assignment opportunities.

Methods of work

1. The Working Group will decide on the periodicity of its meetings and its methods of work.
2. The Working Group will seek contributions from colleagues across UN Geneva and from UN agencies and international organizations involved in diversity and inclusion work.
3. The creation of sub-groups may be considered as necessary.
4. Regular updates on the activities of the Working Group will be posted on the intranet and the Working Group will ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for all staff to contribute to its efforts.

Timeline and membership

5. The Working Group is appointed for an initial period of 12 months.
6. Members serve in their individual capacity, represent themselves and cannot propose substitutes outside the Working Group for meetings that they cannot attend or deadlines they cannot meet.
7. If a member cannot fulfil their commitments for professional or other reasons, he/she will inform the Director-General and resign.
8. The Working Group membership may be revisited at any time by the Director-General.
