

United Nations JPO Programme



TERMS OF REFERENCE

JPO (Associate Expert) 18P049

I. General Information

Title:

JPO in Legal Affairs
(Associate Legal Affairs Officer)

Sector of Assignment:

Legal Affairs

Organization/Office:

United Nations Secretariat, Office of Legal Affairs, Office of the Legal Counsel

Duty Station:

New York, USA

Duration:

1 year (with possible extension for another year)

[Extension of appointment is subject to yearly review concerning priorities, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance]

II. Supervision

Title of Supervisor:

Senior Legal Officer, Office of the Legal Counsel, Office of Legal Affairs

Content and methodology of supervision: The Associate Legal Affairs Officer will be a member of the Office of the Legal Counsel, Office of Legal Affairs. The Office of the Legal Counsel has an agreed work plan, which will guide the overall functions and responsibilities of the Associate Legal Affairs Officer. The Associate Legal Affairs Officer will work under the direct supervision of a Senior Legal Officer of the Division and the overall guidance of the Principal Legal Officer and the Assistant Secretary-General. Supervision will entail work assignments, discussion and approval of time-bound work, guidance on how to accomplish specific assignments, progress review as well as review and discussion of all work products. There are regular Office meetings of all staff, and regular less formal meetings and discussions among the lawyers of the Division.

The UN Performance Appraisal System will serve as the primary platform to evaluate the Associate Legal Affairs Officer's performance.

III. Duties, Responsibilities and Output Expectations

Duties:

Within limits of delegated authority, the JPO will provide or assist in providing advice on a wide range of complex and substantive issues related to public international law, including the interpretation and application of constitutive, legislative and other instruments governing United Nations activities and operations.

Responsibilities:

In particular, the incumbent will be expected to:

- Conduct extensive legal research and analysis and prepare studies, briefs, reports and correspondence;
- Undertake extensive review of legal documents, instruments, or other material;
- Prepare or assist in the preparation of legal opinions, advice and notes or background papers, studies, reports, legislative texts and commentaries on those texts, on a wide range of public international law questions, involving, inter alia, questions relating to privileges and immunities, peace and security, international criminal tribunals, the overall legal and administrative framework of peacekeeping operations and special political missions, institutional questions, treaty law and practice and procedural questions arising during meetings of United Nations organs;
- Prepare draft host country, conference and other agreements, and other legal texts and instruments required for the conduct of activities carried out by the United Nations, including its offices, programmes and funds;
- Assist legal officers in servicing diplomatic conferences, commissions, committees, task forces, expert groups and other bodies, including preparation of background materials, summaries of issues and views of delegations, etc.
- Prepare or assist with the preparation of seminars and symposia, lecture on various legal issues at such events;
- Conduct research on, and assist legal officers in formulating advice on a range of specific legal issues related to criminal accountability mechanisms and the role of the Organization in relation to the establishment and operations of United Nations or United Nations-assisted tribunals and related residual mechanisms;
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Output expectations: Upon completion the assignment, the JPO/Associate Legal Affairs Officer will have developed an excellent understanding of the legal issues relating to the day-to-day administration of the mandates and programmes of the United Nations, and its offices located away from Headquarters, including issues arising in peacekeeping missions. The Associate Legal Affairs Officer will be able to provide well researched and sound analysis of issues dealt with by the Office, thereby contributing to its accomplishments. He/she will have been able to liaise and interact with colleagues and concerned parties internally and externally in an effective and in a timely manner.

IV. Qualifications and Experience

Education: Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in law, including a background, training or specialization in international law.

Experience: A minimum of 2 years of relevant working experience, including legal analysis, research and writing.

Language: Fluency in one of the working languages of the UN Secretariat, English or French, (both oral and written) is required. For this position, fluency in the English language is a requirement. Knowledge of French is desirable and fluency is an advantage. Knowledge of another UN official language is an advantage.

Other skills: Good computer skills, including proficiency in word processing, knowledge of spreadsheet, excel or PowerPoint is an advantage.

UN competencies:

Professionalism: Knowledge of, and ability to apply, legal principles, concepts and procedures for review,

examination, and processing of a range of legal documents. Sound knowledge of substantive and procedural criminal law or international criminal law. Knowledge of various legal research sources, including electronic/online research tools, and ability to conduct research and analyze information on a wide range of legal issues. Ability to interpret and apply legal instruments, develop and present results, recommendations, and opinions clearly and concisely. Ability to draft legal documents and work under pressure. Discretion and ability to apply good legal judgment in the context of assignments given. Experience and ability to work well in a multicultural environment. Commitment to implementing the goal of gender equality by ensuring the equal participation and full involvement of women and men in all aspects of work. Shows pride in work and in achievements; demonstrates professional competence and mastery of subject matter; is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results; is motivated by professional rather than personal concerns; shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges; remains calm in stressful situations.

Planning and Organizing: Develops clear goals that are consistent with agreed strategies; identifies priority activities and assignments; adjusts priorities as required; allocates appropriate amount of time and resources for completing work; foresees risks and allows for contingencies when planning; monitors and adjusts plans and actions as necessary; uses time efficiently.

Client Orientation: Considers all those to whom services are provided to be “clients” and seeks to see things from clients’ point of view; establishes and maintains productive partnerships with clients by gaining their trust and respect; identifies clients’ needs and matches them to appropriate solutions; monitors ongoing developments inside and outside the clients’ environment to keep informed and anticipate problems; keeps clients informed of progress or setbacks in projects; meets timeline for delivery of products or services to client.

Teamwork: Works collaboratively with colleagues to achieve organizational goals; solicits input by genuinely valuing others’ ideas and expertise; is willing to learn from others; places team agenda before personal agenda; supports and acts in accordance with final group decision, even when such decisions may not entirely reflect own position; shares credit for team accomplishments and accepts joint responsibility for team shortcomings.

Communication: Speaks and writes clearly and effectively; listens to others, correctly interprets messages from others and responds appropriately; asks questions to clarify, and exhibits interest in having two-way communication; tailors language, tone, style and format to match audience; demonstrates openness in sharing information and keeping people informed.

V. Learning Elements

The Associate Legal Affairs Officer will be involved in implementing specified aspects of the programme of work of the Office of the Legal Counsel, as set out above and will receive guidance, supervision and on the job-training on a regular basis. Through the assignment, the Associate Legal Affairs Officer will gain a good understanding and increase his/her knowledge of the various legal issues arising under the day-to-day administration of the mandates and programmatic activities of the United Nations, its offices located away from Headquarters, including its peacekeeping missions and political missions. The Associate Legal Affairs Officer will be able to provide well researched and sound analysis of issues dealt with by the Office. He/she will be able to liaise and interact with colleagues and concerned parties internally and externally in an effective and in a timely manner.

VI. Background Information

The Office of Legal Affairs is the central legal service of the Organization and provides legal advice to the Secretary-General, Secretariat departments and offices and United Nations organs in the field of public and private law; represents the Secretary-General in legal conferences and in judicial proceedings; performs substantive and secretariat functions for legal organs involved in public international law, the law of the sea and international trade law; and performs the functions conferred on the Secretary-General in Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Office of Legal Affairs is comprised of the Office of the Legal Counsel, the General Legal Division, the Codification Division, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, the International Trade Law Division and the Treaty Section.

The Office of the Legal Counsel is headed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs.

The core functions of the Office of the Legal Counsel are as follows:

- (a) Preparing legal opinions, studies and advice on the interpretation of the Charter and rules of international public law, including international criminal and humanitarian law, United Nations resolutions and regulations and the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, as well as preparing agreements and other legal instruments regulating relations of the United Nations with Member States, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other legal entities;
- (b) Preparing legal arrangements for and providing advice on legal aspects of peacekeeping and other United Nations operations and activities;
- (c) Preparing draft rules of procedure and advising United Nations organs and conferences on the conduct of business;
- (d) Providing secretariat services to the Committee on Relations with the Host Country and dealing with questions arising out of the Headquarters Agreement with the United States of America and other host Governments;
- (e) Maintaining liaison with the International Court of Justice and discharging the legal responsibilities of the Secretary-General under the Statute of the Court;
- (f) Developing the legal framework for the establishment of judicial and non-judicial accountability mechanisms, assisting in their practical implementation and providing continuous legal advice for their duration;
- (g) Advising on questions relating to the credentials of permanent representatives to the United Nations and representatives on United Nations organs, and providing secretariat services to the Credentials Committee;

The Website of the Office of Legal Affairs may be consulted at: <http://legal.un.org/ola/Default.aspx>