

UNITED NATIONS

SECRETARIAT

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## ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services

Subject: ESTABLISHMENT OF A PANEL TO INVESTIGATE  
ALLEGATIONS OF DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT  
IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT

1. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 31/26, a Panel is hereby established to investigate allegations of discriminatory treatment and to recommend appropriate action. Its composition, terms of reference and procedures are outlined below.

Composition

2. The Panel shall consist of five members of high integrity selected from among the staff of the Secretariat. Panel members shall be appointed by the Secretary-General on the recommendation of the Joint Advisory Committee. They shall hold office for a term of one year, renewable only for one more term. When a member resigns from the Panel or separates from the Organization, the Secretary-General, on the recommendation of the Joint Advisory Committee, shall appoint another member to serve the remainder of the term.

3. The membership of the Panel shall be broadly representative of the varied composition of the Secretariat.

4. Panel members shall perform their functions as part of their official duties.

5. The Panel shall be assisted in its work by a Co-ordinator appointed by the Secretary-General.

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\*/ Insert under Section XII, of the Administrative Handbook.

Terms of reference

6. The Panel shall investigate allegations by staff members of discriminatory treatment in the United Nations Secretariat on grounds such as those referred to in article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It shall seek to resolve cases by achieving a reconciliation between the parties or by recommending appropriate action.
7. In the discharge of their functions, Panel members shall act with complete independence and impartiality.
8. If, as a result of its investigation, the Panel considers that grievances or problems exist in the Secretariat which bear on general conditions of work, it may submit a special report to the Secretary-General through the Joint Advisory Committee.
9. The Panel may decline to deal with matters which, in its opinion, fall within the competence of other advisory bodies established under the Staff Regulations and Rules and related administrative instructions.
10. Recourse to the Panel shall be without prejudice to the staff member's right of appeal under chapter XI of the Staff Regulations and Rules.

Procedures

11. Any staff member, whatever his or her duty station, who wishes to have recourse to the Panel may contact any member of the Panel or the Co-ordinator.
12. Once a case is under investigation by a panel member, he or she shall inform the staff member concerned and the other party or parties involved in a confidential manner.
13. The Panel member may require the staff member to submit a written statement giving details of the allegation.
14. The Panel member shall make every effort to resolve a case and to effect a reconciliation between the parties concerned. If a matter cannot be so settled, the Panel member shall refer it to the Panel for consideration.
15. The Panel shall recommend appropriate action regarding the case to the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services. A copy of its recommendation shall be provided to each of the parties concerned.
16. Panel members shall treat all cases on a confidential basis. No reference to the Panel's proceedings shall be included in the personnel records of the staff members concerned.
17. Panel members shall have access, on a confidential basis, to all documents which, in their opinion, may be pertinent to the case and shall have authority to obtain information regarding the issues before it from the members of the Secretariat orally or in writing.

18. The Panel shall have authority to follow up on its recommendations.

19. The Panel shall submit an annual report of its work to the Secretary-General through the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services. The report shall set forth, without disclosing the identify of the parties involved, the number and types of all cases investigated, the results achieved and a summary of its recommendations, and of the action taken thereon. The report shall be circulated to the staff.

20. The above arrangements shall be subject to periodic review by the Joint Advisory Committee in the light of the Panel's experience.

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