

JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Adviser and Head, Good Offices Section

Division: Political Division

Grade: E

Reports To: Senior Director, Governance and Peace Directorate

General Information

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the principal intergovernmental body of the Commonwealth, responsible for advancing and achieving the shared goals of the association's 54 member governments in promoting democracy, development and respect for diversity.

The Governance and Peace Directorate (GPD) is the lead directorate in the Secretariat's high-profile programme for the promotion of democracy and good governance in the Commonwealth. Its work ranges from monitoring and analysis of political developments and the preparation of briefings, to the organisation of election observation and the provision of technical assistance. The directorate works closely with the Secretary-General, providing advice and support on all political issues, and particularly in her Good Offices role. The work is often of great sensitivity and to demanding time-frames.

GPD is also responsible for organising and servicing the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM), the annual Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers' Meeting (CFAMM) and meetings of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG).

The Good Offices Section coordinates activities undertaken by the Commonwealth Secretariat to implement the Secretary-General's 'Good Offices for Peace' work which is aimed primarily at enhancing peace and democracy through conflict prevention and political dispute mitigation and resolution.

Job Summary

Reporting to the Secretary General through the Senior Director, the post-holder leads the Division's support for the Secretary-General's 'Good Offices for Peace' work. This principally entails identifying, organising and supporting the deployment of high-level envoys on behalf of the Secretary-General, while enhancing peace and democracy through conflict prevention and political dispute mitigation and resolution. The post-holder provides expert technical advice on dispute resolution. The post-holder also either organises and manages or contributes to the provision of relevant capacity-building in member states.

The job requires sound political judgement and sensitivity, effective diplomatic, negotiating and management skills; and when required, working long hours and under pressure in challenging situations.

The Good Offices Section currently draws on the wider resources of the Political office in carrying out its role.

Task description

The post-holder:

- Manages the Good Offices Section, ensuring that its agreed contributions to the Secretariat's strategic outcomes are achieved on time and within budget, and that Section staff are motivated and achieving performance expectations;
- Provides advice to the Senior Director and Secretary-General on situations in which the Secretary-General's Good Offices may be introduced in order to mitigate political tension and promote the Commonwealth's fundamental political values;
- Coordinates the organisation of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG), ensuring in particular that all Secretariat inputs to CMAG deliberations are comprehensive, intersectional, and properly coordinated; CMAG members receive appropriate briefings on time; and, post-meeting reporting and follow-up action is advanced in timely and coordinated fashion.
- Develops proposals for the Secretary-General's personal Good Offices and for such interventions by his/her Envoys; and ensures that such interventions are organised and supported;
- Develops and manages implementation of capacity-building activities in member states that are linked to the Secretary-General's Good Offices work and aimed at advancing the Commonwealth's fundamental political values;
- Contributes to the ongoing development and understanding of contemporary Secretariat practices in conflict and dispute mitigation, prevention and resolution. This includes preparing speeches, policy papers and briefing materials for the Secretary-General and other senior Secretariat staff as necessary;
- Contributes to a consultative, inclusive and collegiate Division, including through scheduled exchanges of information and knowledge between Sections;
- Represents the Secretariat and promotes the Commonwealth publicly as required;
- Adhere to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat's Gender Equality Policy; and
- Perform any other duties that may be required from time to time.

Person specification

Education

- A post graduate degree or other advanced qualification in a relevant subject such as law, political science or international relations.

Experience

- Minimum ten years' experience at a senior level in preventive diplomacy and political negotiation.
- Experience in research, publishing, and speech writing on issues related to preventive diplomacy and political negotiation.
- Experience in an international context in managing and leading a diverse team involved in sensitive issues such as conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict capacity-building.

Desirable

- Significant policy formulation experience in an international context;
- Experience of working/consulting in political or diplomatic environments.
- A doctoral degree in a relevant area is an added advantage.
- International media interview appearances will be an added advantage

Competencies

Respect for Diversity

Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.

Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally.

Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision making.

Examine own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group.

Challenges others to rectify biases in behaviour, systems & process.

Communication

Mentors a number of employees at a senior level.

Recognises the talent in the Commonwealth Secretariat, seeking to develop, support, and grow it.

Directs the energy of the organisation towards a common goal.

Provides an example to others by demonstrating moral courage in the face of challenging circumstances.

Planning & Analysis

Effectively assesses and advises on major programmes/activities at a divisional level.
Balances focus in order to deliver both Commonwealth Secretariat and member states' goals.

Ability to interpret incomplete and/or ambiguous information.

Effectively analyses and assesses new or uncertain critical situations.

Adapting & Innovating

Identifies opportunities to improve divisional operations and effectively gains buy-in.

Evaluates impact of improvement initiatives.

Remains receptive to and encourages innovative ideas from more junior colleagues.

Initiates change that will enable programme/team to fulfil objectives in light of changing circumstances.

Adhering to Principles & Values

Sets example and embodies Commonwealth Secretariat principles and values.

Demonstrably protects the reputation of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Interprets and implements Commonwealth Secretariat principles and values.

Ensures that division/programmes operate in a manner aligned to the values and principles of the organisation.

Leadership & Development

Mentors a number of employees at a senior level.

Recognises the talent in the Commonwealth Secretariat, seeking to develop, support, and grow it.

Directs the energy of the organisation towards a common goal.

Provides an example to others by demonstrating moral courage in the face of challenging circumstances.

Provide top level professional advice in strategic issues at management committee, board of governor & ExCo level. Lead on strategic issues.