JOB AND TASK DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Political Adviser, Africa

Division: Governance and Peace Directorate

Grade: F

Reports to: Adviser and Head, Africa Section

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 her with 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).

Job Summary

Reporting to the Adviser and Head of the Africa Section, the post holder will support the directorate’s work programme in promoting Commonwealth fundamental political values and contributing to conflict prevention efforts in Commonwealth Africa member countries, through political analysis, policy development and project management. The job combines requirements for sound political judgement, diplomatic skills and sensitivity, effective project management skills, organisational ability and the requirement to travel overseas as well, sometimes in challenging circumstances.
Task description

1. Supporting the Adviser and Head of Africa by:

   • monitoring and analysing political developments relating to the promotion of democratic values, practices and institutions in Commonwealth Africa member countries;
   • deputising the Adviser and Head of Africa in overseeing the work programme of the Africa Section, including planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation for all programming;
   • supporting the work of the Electoral Support Section (ESS) in the planning, execution and follow-up to Commonwealth election observer missions in Commonwealth Africa member countries;
   • supporting the Secretary-General’s Good Offices role, by contributing to the work of the Good Offices Section (GOS) through the monitoring of emerging issues or situations of political tension and conflict in Commonwealth Africa, as well as contributing to policy papers and country strategies for consideration by the Secretary-General and senior management.
   • driving collaborative approaches within the Governance and Peace Directorate (GPD) on relevant projects/programming impacting on political engagements with Commonwealth Africa member countries.
   • preparing speeches, policy papers and briefing materials for the Secretary-General and other senior Secretariat officials in relevant engagements with Commonwealth Africa member countries.
   • supporting relevant Commonwealth meetings organised by GPD, including those of Heads of Government, Foreign Ministers and the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG);
   • supporting meetings of the Secretary-General and other senior officials with heads of government, ministers and high-level officials from Commonwealth countries, and following up decisions taken;
   • adhering to the Gender Equality values of the Commonwealth as enshrined in the Charter and Secretariat’s Gender Equality Policy; and
   • performing any other duties that may be required from time to time.

2. Represent the Secretariat externally by:

   • participating in meetings of intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, as well as seminars, colloquia and workshops as required, to promote the Commonwealth;
   • carrying out public speaking engagements when required; and
   • participating in missions across the African region and other Commonwealth states and meeting with relevant external stakeholders, as required.

Person specification

Education  A post graduate degree in a relevant subject, such as political science, international law or international relations.
**Experience**  
Significant experience in an international context, with exposure to inter-governmental processes.

**Desirable**  
Experience in diplomacy or international relations, as well as project management.

**Competencies**

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<th><strong>Respect for Diversity</strong></th>
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<td>Works effectively with people from all backgrounds.</td>
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<td>Treats all people with dignity and respect. Treats men and women equally.</td>
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<td>Shows respect and understanding of diverse points of view and demonstrates understanding in daily work and decision making.</td>
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<td>Examines own biases and behaviours to avoid stereotypical responses and does not discriminate against any individual or group.</td>
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<td>Challenges others to rectify biases in behaviour, systems &amp; process</td>
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<th><strong>Communication</strong></th>
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<td>Mentors a number of employees at a senior level</td>
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<td>Recognises the talent in the Commonwealth Secretariat, seeking to develop, support, and grow it</td>
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<td>Directs the energy of the organisation towards a common goal</td>
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<td>Provides an example to others by demonstrating moral courage in the face of challenging circumstances</td>
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<th><strong>Planning &amp; Analysis</strong></th>
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<td>Effectively assesses and advises on major programmes/activities at a divisional level</td>
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<td>Balances focus in order to deliver both Commonwealth Secretariat and member states' goals</td>
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<td>Ability to interpret incomplete and/or ambiguous information</td>
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<td>Effectively analyses and assesses new or uncertain critical situations</td>
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| **Adapting & Innovating** |
Identifies opportunities to improve divisional operations and effectively gains buyin

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.