***APPLICATION DEADLINE: 5 APRIL 2023 AT 12 NOON GENEVA TIME***

* *The application process consists of two compulsory parts:****(1) online survey[[1]](#footnote-1)*** *(*[*https://ohchr-survey.unog.ch/index.php/838551*](https://ohchr-survey.unog.ch/index.php/838551)*)
and****(2) application form in Word format[[2]](#footnote-2)*** *(to be downloaded from* [*https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/sp/hrc53*](https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/sp/hrc53)*)*
* *Once fully completed,* ***in English or French only****, the Word application form should be submitted by email to* *ohchr-hrcspecialprocedures@un.org*
* *A maximum of up to three optional letters of support may be attached to the email (in Word or PDF format).*
* *No additional documents (e.g., CVs, resumes or additional letters of support) will be accepted.*
* *Applicants will receive an acknowledgment email when both parts of the application process, i.e., the data submitted through the online survey and the Word application form, have been received by the Secretariat.*
* *Applications will only be considered if both parts and all sections of the Word application form have been completed and received by the Secretariat before the expiration of the deadline.* ***No incomplete or late applications will be accepted****.*
* *Candidates eligible for Working Group mandates are only nationals of the States belonging to the* [*regional groups*](https://www.un.org/dgacm/content/regional-groups) *for which specific vacancies have been advertised.*
* *General description of the selection process and answers to frequently asked questions are available at* [*https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/sp/nominations*](https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/sp/nominations) *and* [*https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/sp/basic-information-selection-independent-experts*](https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/sp/basic-information-selection-independent-experts)
* *In case of technical difficulties or problems with accessing or completing the forms, you may contact the Secretariat by email (**ohchr-hrcspecialprocedures@un.org**) or fax (+41 22 917 9008).*

**I. PERSONAL DATA**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1. Family (last) name:** Mihlar  | **5. Year of birth:** 1977 |
| **2. First (given) name:** Farah  | **6. Place of birth:** Colombo |
| **3. Other name, if any:**        | **7. Nationality (please indicate the nationality that will appear on the public list of candidates):** Sri Lanka |
| **4. Gender:** Female  | **8. Any other nationality:** British |

**II. MANDATE-SPECIFIC COMPETENCE / QUALIFICATIONS / KNOWLEDGE**

**NOTE: Please describe why the candidate’s competence / qualifications / knowledge is relevant in relation to the specific mandate:**

1. **QUALIFICATIONS** (200-word limit)

**Relevant educational qualifications or equivalent professional experience in the field of human rights, and good communication skills (i.e., orally and in writing) in one of the six official languages of the United Nations (i.e., Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish).**

My PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) and master’s degree (LSE) covered human rights, conflict, gender, identity and religion.

I am a senior lecturer in human rights at Oxford Brookes University. My knowledge of human rights and its intersection with conflict has advanced through developing curricula at Brookes and at the University of Exeter where I taught human rights, conflict studies and transitional justice and at the School of Advanced Studies where I convened the minority rights module. I have related my knowledge on the normative framework to national contexts in guest lectures at Jaffna University, Sri Lanka, and Ben Gurion University, Israel.

Working for Minority Rights Group International in their conflict and media programmes and as Head of Asia, I gained extensive knowledge of the international framework through policy and advocacy work. I also developed substantive understanding of issues affecting minority populations, particularly women, through research, training and project work at the community level in over ten countries.

As a journalist and academic, I have excellent spoken and written communication skills. I can cater complex ideas to different audiences evidenced by regular contributions to the international media and public presentations on minority issues.

1. **RELEVANT EXPERTISE** (200-word limit)

**Knowledge of international human rights instruments, norms and principles (please indicate how this was acquired). Knowledge of institutional mandates related to the work of the United Nations or other international or regional organizations in the area of human rights, and particularly in the area of the mandate (please indicate how this was acquired).**

**Proven work experience in the field of human rights and particularly in the area of the mandate (please indicate years of experience).**

I am a leading international expert on minority rights with over 20 years experience, focusing on conflict, gender and religious minorities. My expertise derives from research, policy, advocacy, and media work for INGOs, the UN and at community level.

An expert at three UN Minority Forums, I made substantive contributions to the work of previous mandate holders; and worked with the mandates on FoRB, transitional justice and the office on prevention of genocide. I have presented on minorities in conflict at international events and engaged on this with the European Commission and UN in-country teams. In 2022 I was in an expert group which, with the current mandate holder, produced a draft treaty on minority rights.

Expertise on the normative and legal framework was gained through working for the leading minority rights organisation, running tertiary level human rights courses and in specialised research networks.

My expertise in the international rights regime developed through a decade of engagement with the human rights council and treaty bodies, through research and advocacy, and conducting trainings in Africa, Europe and Asia.

I have 15 authoritative publications on minority issues and dozen media articles, many based on empirical work in South East Asia and East Africa.

1. **ESTABLISHED** **COMPETENCE** (200-word limit)

**Nationally, regionally or internationally recognized competence related to human rights (please explain how such competence was acquired).**

My competencies derive from an exceptional understanding of the international, national and local levels throughout a career dedicated to human rights protection.

Journalism and human rights monitoring developed excellent investigative skills that acquired methodological rigour since becoming an academic, enabling me to produce internationally renowned reports.

I have strong communication, engagement and diplomacy skills gained through years of advocacy with WEOG, African, Asian and OIC groups. My reputation for independence and impartiality led to expert presentations at policy and academic events, including with EC entities and parliamentary bodies.

My international experience encompasses the OHCHR and 15 years working for INGOs, including MRG, ICG and ICJ, and top UK universities. My collaboration and team building abilities created strong networks within the UN and with INGOs, regional NGOs and academic centres.

I have worked on minority protection with governments in South East Asia and conducted rights trainings for national civil service representatives, media and NGOs. I have developed and implemented national minority rights monitoring tools, documented and reported in-country violations in South Asian countries. My credibility arises from decades of working with minority groups in East Africa, Asia and the Middle East; understanding their lived experiences and championing their rights

1. **PUBLICATIONS OR PUBLIC STATEMENTS**

**Please list significant and relevant published books, articles, journals and reports that the candidate has written or public statements, or pronouncements that the candidate has made or events in which the candidate has participated in relation to the mandate.**

* 1. **Enter three publications in relation to the mandate applied for, in the order of relevance:**

**1. Title of publication:** Religious change in a minority context: transforming Islam in Sri Lanka

**Journal/Publisher:** Third World Quarterly

**Date of publication:** 2019

**Web link, if available:** https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436597.2019.1632186

**2. Title of publication:** Voices from the margins: including the perspectives of minorities and indigenous people in the post-2015 development agenda

**Journal/Publisher:** Minority Rights Group International

**Date of publication:** 2013

**Web link, if available:** http://minorityrights.org/publications/voices-from-the-margins-including-the-perspectives-of-minorities-and-indigenous-peoples-in-the-post-2015-development-agenda-march-2013/

**3. Title of publication:** Minorities and indigenous peoples combating climate change

**Journal/Publisher:** Minority Rights Group International

**Date of publication:** 2008

**Web link, if available:** http://minorityrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/MRG\_Brief\_ClimateC.pdf

**If more than three publications, kindly provide a summary of the rest** (200-word limit):▪ Mihlar, F. ‘Autocratisation, Buddhist nationalist extremism and the Muslim minority in Sri Lanka’ in Widmalm, S (ed) Routledge handbook on Autocratisation in South Asia. Routledge, 2021.

▪ Mihlar, F. Pursuing an ‘Oppressed Peace’: Religion, Identity, and Minority Politics among Muslims in Sri Lanka in Wiley Blackwell Companion to Religion and Peace, Mitchell, J. et al (eds), Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2021/22.

▪ De Silva, M, Fonseka, N and Mihlar, F. 2019. The forgotten victims of war: A border villages study. Neelan Thiruchilvam Trust.

▪ International Crisis Group. Sri Lanka’s conflict affected women: dealing with the legacy of war. Asia Report No 289. Brussels: ICG, 28 July 2017.

▪ Mihlar, F. 'Everything has shattered'- rising levels of violence against Shia in Pakistan. London: MRG, 2014.

▪ Mihlar, F. Israel’s denial of the Bedouin. London: MRG, 2010.

▪ Mihlar, F. Living with insecurity: Marginalisation and sexual violence against women in north and east of Sri Lanka. London: MRG, 2013.

▪ Mihlar, F. No war, no peace: the denial of minority rights and justice in post war Sri Lanka London: MRG, 2010.

▪ South Asia chapters of State of the World’s Minorities 2016, 2013, 2010 and 2009.

* 1. **Enter three public statements or pronouncements made or events that the candidate may have participated in with respect to the mandate applied for, in the order of relevance:**

**1. Platform/occasion/event of public statement/pronouncement:** 15th UN Forum on Minority Issues/ Reform: Filling the gaps in the implementation of the human rights of minorities.

**Event organizer:** OHCHR

**Date of public statement/pronouncement:** 2 December, 2022

**Web link, if available:** https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1f/k1fx05gdea

**2. Platform/occasion/event of public statement/pronouncement:** 14th UN Forum on Minority Issues/ Towards a lasting peace: positive initiatives to better protect the rights of minorities to prevent conflicts

**Event organizer:** OHCHR

**Date of public statement/pronouncement:** 3 December 2021

**Web link, if available:** https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1q/k1qljucsrl

**3. Platform/occasion/event of public statement/pronouncement:** Side event to mark 25 years since the UN Declaration on Minorities

**Event organizer:** Missions of Austria, Slovenia and Senegal and Minority Rights Group International

**Date of public statement/pronouncement:** 28 February 2017

**Web link, if available:** http://minorityrights.org/2017/02/17/25th-anniversary-un-declaration-rights-persons-belonging-national-ethnic-religious-linguistic-minorities-looking-ahead-opportunities-challenges/

**If more than three, kindly provide a summary of the rest** (200-word limit):

- UN Forum on Minority Issues on minorities in humanitarian crisis, Expert presentation, 25 November, 2016

- Transitional justice and religious change in Sri Lanka – presentation to the South Asia Centre at the University of Edinburgh, November 2021.

- Exclusivity, rigidity and disconnect: the role of identity and religion as failings of transitional justice – presentation at the Norwegian Human Rights Centre, October, 2021.

- Carving their space: Muslims’ engagement with justice and peace-building – University of Zurich, June, 2018.

- Invited by UN Special Rapporteur on Transitional Justice, Pablo de Grieff, for a United Nations expert level discussion on transitional justice and the prevention of genocide, Geneva, 2017.

- Minorities affected by violent extremisms and religious radicalism – Panel discussion on the side lines of the UN Human Rights Council to mark 25 years of the UN Declaration on Minority Rights, Geneva, March 2017.

- Marginalised groups in situations of conflict - Kings College London, February, 2016.

- Violence and hate crimes against minorities – discussion hosted by UN expert on minorities at UN Forum on Minority Issues, Palais Nations, Geneva; 2013.

1. **FLEXIBILITY/READINESS AND AVAILABILITY OF TIME** (200-word limit)

**to perform effectively the functions of the mandate and to respond to its requirements, such as participating in Human Rights Council sessions in Geneva and General Assembly sessions in New York; travelling on two country visits per year; drafting reports according to established deadlines; organizing and participating in consultations and meetings; addressing allegations of human rights violations with all concerned; providing advice to States and other stakeholders on issues related to the mandate; and engaging with a variety of stakeholders. Kindly indicate whether the candidate can dedicate an estimated time of four to six months per year to the work of a mandate depending on its workload.**

**Please note that the work of mandate holders is unpaid. Those appointed as mandate holders serve in their personal capacities. They are not United Nations staff members, they are not based in United Nations offices in Geneva or at another United Nations location, and they do not receive a salary or other financial compensation, except for travel expenses and daily subsistence allowance of “experts on mission”.**

I currently work part-time at Oxford Brookes University and I will have no difficulty combining the mandate with my academic work. I am confident that the university will support my work. I am fully aware of the of the dedication and commitment required for this post, including the travel and I will have no problem making the necessary effort to successful carry out the work of the mandate.

1. **NOMINATION FOR THE MANDATE**

**Indicate whether the candidate has been nominated by (check all that apply):**

☒ **Individual nominations (select this option if the candidate is self-nominating)**

**☐ Governments**

**☐ Regional groups operating within the United Nations human rights system**

☐ **International organizations or their offices**

☐ **Non-governmental organizations**

☐ **National human rights institutions**

☐ **Other human rights bodies**

**Name of the nominating entity and additional information about the nomination (use if applicable, for third-party nominations only)** (200-word limit)**:**

**III. MOTIVATION LETTER, INCLUDING YOUR VISION OF THE MANDATE**600-word limit. Must be typed in the space below. Cannot be sent in a separate email or as an attachment. To be written by the candidates themselves, even if nominated by another entity.

I am a Muslim minority woman whose career, as a journalist, human rights practitioner, researcher and now as an academic, has focused on the advancement of minority rights. I offer an unique multi-dimensionality: longitudinal experience from media, activism, policy, research, academia and latitudinal from the grassroots to national and international levels.

I have lived and worked closely among minority communities supporting capacity building, networking, campaigning and learned from their courage and resilience. This work covered: Central and Southern Europe, Middle East, East Africa and Asia. As a woman who grew up in an armed conflict I draw on the lived realities of minorities, especially women, and my work remains rooted within communities. I can traverse from ‘local’ to the national and international thanks to the range of experience gained on the ground as well as analytical, diplomatic and communication skills achieved through years of working in leading INGOs, universities and the UN.

I expect to muster substantial support for the advancement of the mandate from my minority activist networks in Asia and Africa and from scholars and practitioners of minority rights, some of whom encouraged me to apply for this position.

This mandate is a focal point that draws on the widespread normative minority rights framework and connects communities, national and international actors to protect and promote minority rights, which is why I am committed to it.

My vision for the mandate:

Firstly, explore optimising and where necessary strengthening the current normative framework. I believe a comprehensive study is necessary; mapping all available tools and mechanisms, assessing their focus on minorities and collating specific recommendations of Forums. Without losing the momentum built in 2022 among practitioners and activists for a treaty, I want to use an evidenced based approach to work collaboratively with OHCHR and states to comprehensively use the current framework whilst looking at ways of strengthening it.

This includes reviewing the UN inter-agency framework and improving monitoring of UN agencies in their protection and promotion of minority rights. In addition, I want to collaborate with other mandate holders and human rights bodies to consider widening protection.

I will also work towards acquiring funds to form a minorities caucus that can provide a bottom-up approach to this process.

Secondly, debates on the normative framework are fundamentally important, yet remain distant from the current everyday challenges faced by minority groups. Cognisant of this I want to a) develop a framework of analysis, based on UNDM and relevant articles in ICCPR and ICERD, with which a specific minority rights approach, can be promoted to states and UN agencies to ensure protection and promotion of rights of minorities, and b) strengthen national and regional capacity of minority groups by building resilient networks that can feed into the caucus, including by maintaining the regional forums.

Thirdly, I want to augment positive framing of minorities nationally and internationally to counter the impact of negative tropes used to devalue their rights. I will focus on identifying and promoting the national, regional, global contributions made by minorities, especially women, and document and develop good practices within states and UN agencies. Through this reframing I will pursue the inclusion of minorities as an opportunity for states, in SDGs, conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

The thematic areas I would like to consider are a) the socio-economic situation of minorities as a consequence of the current cost of living crisis; b) climate change and minorities and c) minority rights in the prevention of atrocity crime and in transitional justice.

I believe my passion, expertise, understanding, empathy, lived experiences, dedication, impartiality and extensive skills will enable me to succeed in this post.

**IV. LANGUAGES (READ / WRITTEN / SPOKEN)**

**Please indicate all language skills below.**

**1.** **Mother tongue: English**

**2. Knowledge of the six official languages of the United Nations:**

**Arabic:** Yes or no:If yes,

**Read:** Easily ornot easily:
**Write:** Easily or not easily: **Speak:** Easily or not easily:

**Chinese:** Yes or no: **No** If yes,

**Read:** Easily or not easily: **Write:** Easily or not easily: **Speak:** Easily or not easily:

**English:** Yes or no: **Yes** If yes,

**Read:** Easily or not easily: **Easily
Write:** Easily or not easily: **Easily
Speak:** Easily or not easily: **Easily**

**French:** Yes or no: **Yes** If yes,

**Read:** Easily or not easily: **Not easily
Write:** Easily or not easily: **Not easily
Speak:** Easily or not easily: **Not easily**

 **Russian:** Yes or no: **No** If yes,

**Read:** Easily or not easily: **Write:** Easily or not easily: **Speak:** Easily or not easily:

**Spanish:** Yes or no: **No** If yes,

**Read:** Easily or not easily: **Write:** Easily or not easily: **Speak:** Easily or not easily:

**V. EDUCATION**

**NOTE: Please list the candidate’s academic qualifications (university level and higher, indicating the type of degree and field of study, academic institution and whether full- or part-time; for example, *Masters in Law, University of XXX, part-time, 1975-1977, place and country)*. If space in the table is insufficient, more than one degree may be listed in the additional cell below, separating them by a blank line.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of degree, field of study and name of academic institution, full or part-time**: | **Years of attendance**(provide a range from-to, for example 1999-2003; for ongoing education, please put e.g. 2018-present): | **Degree obtained** (please indicate YES or NO): | **Place and country:** |
| Name of degree: PhDField of study: Study of ReligionAcademic institution: School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) University of LondonFull or part-time: Part-time  | 2005 - 2015 | Yes | London, United Kingdom |
| Name of degree: Masters in Science (MSc)Field of study: Social PolicyAcademic institution: London School of EconomicsFull or part-time: Full-time  | 2002 - 2003 | Yes | London, United Kingdom |
| Name of degree: Bachelor of Science (BSc)Field of study: Law and ManagementAcademic institution: University of London (External)Full or part-time: Full-time  | 1996 - 1999 | Yes | Colombo, Sri Lanka |
| Name of degree: Bachelor of Arts (BA)Field of study: International RelationsAcademic institution: University of ColomboFull or part-time: Full-time  | 1998 - 2002 | Yes | Colombo, Sri Lanka |
| Name of degree:      Field of study:      Academic institution:      Full or part-time:        |       |       |       |
| Additional:       |  |  |  |

**VI. EMPLOYMENT**

**NOTE: Please briefly list ALL RELEVANT professional positions held in the area of human rights, beginning with the candidate’s current (or most recent) occupation.** **Also, indicate whether positions held were full-time or part-time. If space in the table is insufficient, more than one position may be listed in the additional cell below, separating them by a blank line.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of employer,****functional title,****main functions of position, full- or part-time:** | **Years of work**(provide a range from-to, for example 1999-2005; for ongoing activities, please put e.g. 2018-present): | **Place and country:** |
| Name of employer: Oxford Brookes UniversityFunctional title and main functions of position: Senior Lecturer - Teaching, research and admin (Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Steering Group)Full- or part-time: Part-time (Permanent) | 2022-present | Oxford, United Kingdom |
| Name of employer: University of ExeterFunctional title and main functions of position: Lecturer - Teaching, research and citizenship including (Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity lead)Full- or part-time: 80% (Permanent) | 2018- 2022 | Exeter, United Kingdom |
| Name of employer: School of Advance StudiesFunctional title and main functions of position: Lecturer and Module Convenor - Minority Rights module for the MA in Human RightsFull- or part-time: Part-time temporary | 2018-2020 | London, United Kingdom |
| Name of employer: International Crisis Group (ICG)Functional title and main functions of position: Consultant - research and reportingFull- or part-time: Part-time | 2016-2017 | Jaffna, Sri Lanka |
| Name of employer: UNDPFunctional title and main functions of position: Consultant - ResearchFull- or part-time: Part-time | 2016-2018 | Jaffna/Colombo, Sri Lanka |
| Name of employer: Minority Rights Group InternationalFunctional title and main functions of position: Head of Asia - Management, strategy, fundraising, project design, research, publications, trainings.Full- or part-time: Full-time | 2013-2015 | London, United Kingdom |
| Name of employer: Minority Rights Group InternationalFunctional title and main functions of position: Programme Coordinator (Conflict programme and Media) - Project Coordination, research, publications, trainings, fundraising, media work.Full- or part-time: part-time and moved on to full-time | 2006-2013 | London, United Kingdom. |
| Name of employer: Office of the High Commissioner for Human RightsFunctional title and main functions of position: Media OfficerFull- or part-time: Full-time | 2005-2006 | Geneva, Switzerland |
| Additional: 2004 Consultant Media Advisor, International Commission of Jurists, Geneva. 2003 Broadcast Journalist, World Today, BBC World Service, London. 98-01 Correspondent/reporter, various including; Times of India newspaper and website, Reuters, ETV and Capital Radio, Colombo.  |  |  |

**VII. COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY PROVISIONS
(of Human Rights Council resolution 5/1)
*To be completed by the candidate or by the nominating entity on the candidate’s behalf.***

**1. Does the candidate have any official, professional, personal, or financial relationships that might cause the candidate to limit the extent of inquiries, to limit disclosure, or to weaken or slant findings in any way? If yes, please explain.**

No

**2. Are there any factors that could either directly or indirectly influence, pressure, threaten, or otherwise affect the candidate’s ability to act independently in discharging the mandate? If yes, please explain:**

No

**3. Is there any reason, currently or in the past, that could call into question the candidate’s moral authority and credibility, or does the candidate hold any views or opinions that could prejudice the manner in which the candidate discharges the mandate? If yes, please explain:**

No

**4. Does the candidate comply with the provisions in paragraph 44 and 46 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1? (please answer YES if the candidate complies, NO if the candidate does not comply, together with an explanation).**

***Para. 44: The principle of non-accumulation of human rights functions at a time shall be respected.***

***Para. 46: Individuals holding decision-making positions in Government or in any other organization or entity which may give rise to a conflict of interest with the responsibilities inherent to the mandate shall be excluded. Mandate holders will act in their personal capacity.***

Yes

**5. Should the candidate be appointed as a mandate holder, the candidate will have to take measures to comply with paragraphs 44 and 46 of the annex to Council resolution 5/1. In the event that the current occupation or activity, even if unpaid, of the candidate may give rise to a conflict of interest (e.g., if a candidate holds a decision-making position in a Government) and/or there is an accumulation of human rights functions (e.g. as a member of another human rights mechanism at the international, regional or national level), necessary measures could include relinquishing positions, occupations or activities. If applicable, please indicate the measures that the candidate will take.**

N/A

**VIII. CERTIFY AND SUBMIT APPLICATION
*To be completed by the candidate. The candidate’s name below should match how it is entered on the first page of the form and in the online survey.***

**I hereby certify that all of the statements made in this application are true, complete and are made in good faith. I understand that falsifying or intentionally withholding information will be grounds for not being selected or appointed or the withdrawal of any proposed appointment or, if an appointment has been made and accepted, for its immediate cancellation or termination.

Kindly note that whilst no changes can be made after this application form has been submitted and the deadline for applications has expired, any relevant change of current occupation, employment, or position, or any other relevant fact or circumstance should be brought to the attention of the Secretariat by
email (****ohchr-hrcspecialprocedures@un.org****).**

**Please review the application before you insert your name and date to indicate your agreement.**

**Name:** Farah Mihlar

**Date:** 3 April 2023

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1. The short **online survey** is used to collect information for statistical purposes such as personal data (i.e., name, gender, nationality), contact details, mandate applying for and, if appropriate, nominating entity. The same name, gender and nationality must be used both in the online survey and in the Word application form. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The **application form in Word format** includes a motivation letter of maximum 600 words (section III of the form). The application form should be completed in English or French only, the two working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. The application form will be used as received to prepare the public list of eligible candidates who applied for the vacancy. The application forms of eligible candidates will also be posted as received on the OHCHR public web page for the selection process. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)