SPECIAL PROCEDURES
UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

COORDINATION COMMITTEE OF SPECIAL PROCEDURES
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17 October 2025

Dear Members of the Consultative Group,

On behalf of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures, I am writing to you in connection with the selection of new mandate holders at the upcoming session of the Human Rights Council in March 2026. I would like to assure you of the continued support of the Committee to your important work.

The high quality and integrity of mandate holders are crucial to ensure the effectiveness and credibility of the system of special procedures. I recently invited mandate holders whose term will end in April 2026 to provide information on the skills they consider essential for the new mandate holders to discharge the mandate. I sought their views in line with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, paragraph 51, which says that "the Consultative Group should take into account, as appropriate, the views of stakeholders, including the current or outgoing mandate-holders, in determining the necessary expertise, experience, skills, and other relevant requirements for each mandate".

I am therefore pleased to share with you the contributions received from the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights (Annex I) and the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (Annex II).

I trust that you will find these suggestions useful as you undertake the selection process. I am at your disposal to discuss this matter further if you have additional questions or require additional feedback. This letter will also be posted on the public website of special procedures. I wish you success in your deliberations.

Sincerely yours,



Surya Deva
Chair of the Coordination Committee of Special Procedures

cc: H.E. Mr. Jürg Lauber
President of the Human Rights Council

Annex I

CONTRIBUTION FROM THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF UNILATERAL COERCIVE MEASURES ON THE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

As a Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, I am happy to submit my contribution for the in connection with the selection of the new Special Rapporteur to be appointed at the 61st session of the Human Rights Council.

The mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of UCMs on human rights is extremely sensitive due to the existence of very strong political disagreements and attempts to present unilateral sanctions/ restrictive measures/ unilateral means of pressure as a political tool or action justified by certain "high interests or purposes" by sanctioning states as their principled position. The only solution upon my view is to collect and verify facts of the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, focus on factual challenges to ensure access to the critical infrastructure and delivery of humanitarian assistance, assessment of the legality of specific types of unilateral measures, means of their enforcement and over-compliance with unilateral sanctions. Purely political approach to the mandate will not help to find a solution.

Therefore, I am happy to share some pre-requisites to be met by the UN Special Rapporteur to be able to perform the mandate successfully.

1) The Special Rapporteur shall have critical thinking skills to be able to review the data, facts and statements on the justifiability and legality of UCMS, means of their enforcement and over-compliance in full conformity with the standards of international law, including law of human rights, international humanitarian law.
2) Analytical approach is very important as the topic have been severely under-researched, both in the sphere of law and humanitarian statistics. Therefore, the intense experience in participating in and especially launching and supervising research in the sphere of unilateral sanctions and their humanitarian impact could be extremely useful.
3) The Special Rapporteur shall have an intense experience in the drafting of reports, analytical works, international legal documents, Guidance, and recommendations.
4) The Special Rapporteur shall have a good knowledge on unilateral sanctions, means of their enforcement and over-compliance, therefore there shall be reports or publications directly relevant to the topic. The person shall have a good knowledge of the current developments and challenges in the sphere.
5) This mandate is extremely time and efforts consuming; therefore, the Special Rapporteur shall be able to dedicate a large part of their time to perform his/her tasks
6) The Special Rapporteur shall be able/ready to work under terrible pressure with high reputational risks.
7) The Special Rapporteur shall have good communication skills, as the topic is highly politicized, many people do not understand the scope of UCMs, their direct or indirect impacts, therefore lots of activities to raise awareness and build the dialogue shall take place.

8) Adherence to the principle of work of the UN Special Procedures shall be an inalienable part of the work within the mandate, including independence, impartiality, neutrality and verification of the data.
9) As Special Procedures demonstrate unity and consistency, the candidates shall have good knowledge about the work already done by 2 previous Special Rapporteurs, to ensure the consistency of efforts and vitality of the already launched projects.

Annex II

CONTRIBUTION FROM THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE SALE, SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN

It has been my great honour for having served as the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse since March 2020. I am writing to you in connection with the selection of new mandate holder for the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children and in line with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, paragraph 51 of which provides that "the consultative group should take into account, as appropriate, the views of stakeholders, including the current or outgoing mandate-holders, in determining the necessary expertise, experience, skills, and other relevant requirements for each mandate".

In order to assist the Consultative Group with the selection of new mandate holder for this position, I make the following recommendations with a specific emphasis on the skills, qualifications and attributes required for the successful performance of this mandate.

1. Knowledge and Expertise

The candidate must possess a strong background in child protection, with particular emphasis on addressing sexual abuse and exploitation of children. Given the sensitive nature of the mandate, it is essential that the candidate demonstrate a deep understanding of the psychological, social, and legal dimensions of working with child victims and survivors. Experience in trauma-informed approaches and safeguarding principles is vital.

Expertise in the thematic areas covered by the mandate is required, including legal expertise and understanding of the distinction of trafficking, slavery, and sale, and sexual exploitation of children as well as of new and emerging forms of sale and sexual exploitation of children in the context of digital environment and generative artificial intelligence. The candidate should be well-versed in international and regional human rights instruments and standards, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, its Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and other relevant legal frameworks.

A strong focus on prevention and/or accountability is expected. The candidate should have a proven track record in developing and implementing strategies aimed at preventing child sexual abuse and exploitation, or in promoting accountability through legal, policy, and institutional mechanisms. The ability to advocate for systemic change and to support survivors in accessing child-friendly justice is essential.

The mandate requires a child-centred approach. The candidate must demonstrate experience in integrating children's voices and perspectives into their work, ensuring that children are treated as rights-holders and active participants. This includes familiarity with participatory methodologies and a commitment to upholding the dignity and agency of child victims and survivors.

Excellent communication skills are indispensable. The candidate must be able to engage effectively with children, including those who have experienced trauma, in a manner that is respectful, safe, and empowering. The ability to communicate complex and sensitive issues to diverse audiences—ranging from policymakers and civil society to the general public—and to

develop thematic reports that provide conceptual clarity, legal interpretation and concrete recommendations is also crucial.

The candidate must have experience in assessing legal, institutional and policy frameworks and produce independent and credible findings. The candidate should possess the competence in guiding States in fulfilling their obligations by offering guidance, clarifying legal obligations, and supporting development of international standards.

The candidate should have the ability to serve as a global agenda-setter who can anticipate and respond to emerging threats and identify trends and patterns before they are widely recognized.

2. Gender Dimension

Given the gender dimension of child sexual exploitation and abuse, and the fact that the majority of victims are girls, gender sensitivity is a key requirement. The candidate must demonstrate a nuanced understanding of how gender intersects with child protection issues, and how to address the specific vulnerabilities faced by girls.

To ensure that child victims and survivors feel safe and comfortable engaging with the mandate holder, female candidates may be given preference. This consideration is based on the need to foster trust and create a supportive environment for child victims or survivors, many of whom may be more willing to disclose their experiences to a woman.

Nevertheless, regardless of gender, the candidate must show a commitment to gender-responsive approaches and to creating inclusive spaces for children of all genders.

3. Engagement with Relevant Stakeholders

The role of the Special Rapporteur requires extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. The candidate must have prior experience working collaboratively with United Nations entities, government bodies, civil society organizations, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), academic institutions and private sectors (such as tech companies). The ability to build and sustain partnerships as well as mobilize support across sectors is essential for the effective implementation of the mandate.

Importantly, the candidate must demonstrate meaningful experience in engaging with children and young people, including survivors. This includes the ability to facilitate consultations, incorporate young people's perspectives into policy and advocacy work, and promote child participation in line with international standards. A commitment to amplifying the voices of children and ensuring their views inform the mandate's priorities is fundamental.

Strong advocacy skills and diplomatic acumen are also required. The candidate must be able to influence policy, raise awareness, and mobilize action at national, regional, and international levels. The ability to navigate complex political environments while maintaining independence and integrity is a key aspect of the role.