

Basel Peace Office

Workplace guidelines on prevention of sexual harassment

Adopted by the Basel Peace Office Board

October 2013

The Basel Peace Office has a zero tolerance towards sexual harassment in the workplace. Sexual harassment is a form of illegal employment discrimination stipulated in the Swiss Federal Constitution and Federal Law.

- 1. Definition of sexual harassment:** Sexual harassment in the workplace refers to a verbal or physical act with a sexual nature, performed in recruitment or in the workplace by a boss, manager, employee, client or customer of a working unit, that is unwelcomed by the person receiving it and has caused the person to feel violated, insulted, and being in an unbearable hostile environment.

It could involve: (a) requests for sexual contact or activity with an implied or overt promise of preferential treatment or threat of detrimental treatment if the request is refused; (b) behaviour of a sexual nature that is unwelcome or offensive and which is either repeated or of such a significant nature that it has a detrimental effect on another person.

- 2. Procedure in case of alleged sexual harassment.** Any volunteer, intern or staff person who feels that an act is, or might be, one of sexual harassment is empowered to report on this act to the President of the Basel Peace Office or his/her designated representative who shall be of a different gender to the President. Depending on the seriousness of the alleged act or acts, the President or his/her designated representative is empowered to either:
 - a. discuss the issue with both the claimant and the alleged harasser in order to clarify any misunderstandings, reinforce the rules of appropriate and inappropriate behavior, and reach a settlement of the issue agreeable to both sides, or
 - b. seek legal advice on further action to be taken, taking into consideration necessary burdens of proof, protection of all people in the workplace, legal rights of all parties, personal damages that might have occurred from acts of sexual harassment and the need to prevent any further sexual harassment.

3. Confidentiality

Reports, discussions and decisions undertaken under section 2 (a) shall remain confidential to the parties involved. Reports, discussions and decisions undertaken under section 2 (b) shall observe confidentiality processes appropriate to such action.

- 4. Notification of guidelines.** All regular volunteers, interns and staff shall be informed about these guidelines and to whom they can approach to report any concerns relating to acts that might be sexual harassment.