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Agenda item 11**Report of the Ethics Officer**

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**Report of the Ethics Officer for the period from 1 May 2025 to 30 April 2026****Executive summary**

This annual report is submitted by the UN Tourism Ethics Officer for the information of the Executive Council and covers the period from 1 May 2025 to 30 April 2026. The Ethics Function is carried out as a dual function alongside the Ethics Officer's responsibilities as Director of the International Development and Cooperation (IDC) Department.

The Organization recognizes the importance of strengthening the broader internal oversight and integrity framework, including clearer institutional arrangements relating to audit, investigation, ethics and accountability functions, in line with recommendations from oversight bodies and recent governance assessments.

During the reporting period, priorities focused on: (i) strengthening the policy framework on prohibited conduct, including the draft SGB on Addressing Discrimination, Harassment (including Sexual Harassment) and Abuse of Authority, the draft SGB on PSEA, and the draft IC on a Code of Conduct to prevent harassment at UN Tourism events; (ii) supporting the operationalization of investigative arrangements, including referrals under the Organization's applicable investigation arrangements; (iii) reinforcing prevention through training and communications; and (iv) providing confidential advice and guidance to personnel and management.

On Protection against Retaliation (PaR), the Ethics Office received eight (8) requests/concerns: three (3) led to formal PaR assessments, three (3) required coordination with HR/Management on interim protective measures, and two (2) were referred outside PaR as a workplace/HR matter. Under its advisory mandate, the Ethics Office provided confidential guidance to eleven (11) personnel/officials, primarily on workplace conduct concerns, reporting options, conflicts of interest, gifts/benefits, and clarification of roles and procedures.

The Ethics Officer also was officially registered and engaged with the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations (ENMO) through remote participation and exchanges to benchmark practice. The report concludes that sustained progress will require finalizing and operationalizing key policies, ensuring clear reporting and referral pathways, strengthening prevention and collaborator compliance measures, and maintaining modest dedicated resources to support the ethics function under a dual-hatted arrangement.



DRAFT DECISION¹

Agenda item 11
Report of the Ethics Officer
(document CE/126/11)

The Executive Council,

Having examined the report,

Thanks the Ethics Officer for his report on the activities carried out from 1 May 2025 to 30 April 2026.

¹ This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Executive Council, please refer to the Decisions document issued at the end of the session.

I. Introduction

1. Mr. Jaime I. Mayaki is Ethics Officer of UN Tourism since 1 May 2025 in line with SGB/10/25 issued on 25 April 2025, and this is his first annual report presented to the Executive Council in that capacity. The previous Ethics Officer, Ms. Marina Diotallevi, retired on 30 June 2023.
2. The Ethics Function is carried out as a dual function, alongside the Ethics Officer's duties as Director of the International Development and Cooperation (IDC) Department, reflecting the small size of the Organization and existing governance arrangements and as also performed by the previous Ethics Officer who occupied the post of Head of Ethics, Culture and Social Responsibility (ECSR) department.
3. The purpose of the Ethics Function is to promote and support an organizational culture grounded in the values of the United Nations, including integrity, accountability, transparency, independence, and respect, and to provide confidential advice, prevention-oriented support, and due process safeguards to UN Tourism personnel and, as applicable, other covered persons.
4. In parallel with ongoing ethics activities, the Organization recognizes the importance of strengthening the broader internal oversight and integrity framework, including clearer institutional arrangements relating to audit, investigation, ethics and accountability functions, in line with recommendations from oversight bodies and recent governance assessments.
5. During the reporting period, key priorities included: (i) strengthening the policy framework on prohibited conduct (including the draft SGB on "Addressing Discrimination, Harassment including Sexual Harassment, and Abuse of Authority" and the draft SGB on PSEA), (ii) supporting the operationalization of the Organization's investigation arrangements, including referrals under the Organization's applicable investigation arrangements, (iii) reinforcing prevention and awareness through training and communications (including a draft Information Circular on a Code of Conduct to prevent harassment at UN Tourism events), and (iv) providing confidential ethics advice and support to personnel and management, including matters related to workplace conduct, conflicts of interest, and standards of professional behaviour.

II. Background and general information

6. The Ethics Function at UN Tourism was established in 2013 by decision 12(XCIV) of the Executive Council, and the corresponding mandate and functions remain applicable.
7. In accordance with benchmarks applied across the United Nations system, the Ethics Function serves as an internal integrity management mechanism intended to promote ethical standards, prevent misconduct, and support the consistent application of the Organization's rules, policies and standards.
8. The terms of reference approved by the Executive Council include the following standard functions:
 - (a) development and dissemination of ethics standards;
 - (b) development and implementation of ethics-related training;
 - (c) provision of confidential advice and guidance to personnel, regardless of contractual status;
 - (d) administering the Organization's policy for the protection against retaliation; and
 - (e) administering the Organization's financial disclosure / declaration of interest programme.
9. In addition, the Ethics Function at UN Tourism includes further responsibilities that have evolved over time, including preliminary consideration of reports of misconduct, referrals for investigation as applicable, and support to management in handling sensitive integrity-related matters, in line with due process and confidentiality requirements.
10. The Organization is also considering, in the context of wider governance reform discussions, how ethics-related verification, reporting and referral mechanisms may be further integrated into future internal oversight arrangements to strengthen institutional integrity and accountability.

11. In performing these functions, the Ethics Officer works in close coordination with relevant offices and services, including Human Resources and the Office of Legal Counsel, while safeguarding the confidentiality and independence of the ethics advisory role, and ensuring that case-handling is aligned with the Organization's applicable investigative arrangements.

III. Activities of the Ethics Office during the period May 2025 to April 2026

A. Protection of staff against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits or investigations

12. UN Tourism maintains a policy framework for protection against retaliation (PaR) since 2023² designed to encourage personnel to report misconduct in good faith and/or cooperate with duly authorized fact-finding activities, and to safeguard them from retaliation.
13. The Ethics Office receives, on a confidential basis, requests for protection against retaliation and conducts a preliminary assessment to determine, *inter alia*, whether the matter falls within the scope of the PaR policy, whether the admissibility criteria are met, and whether there is a *prima facie* indication of retaliation that may warrant referral for further action. Where warranted, matters may be referred for independent investigation in accordance with the Organization's applicable investigation arrangements. The Ethics Officer's preliminary review is not an investigation and does not determine responsibility.
14. During the reporting period, the Ethics Officer received eight (8) PaR-related approaches (inquiries/concerns). Of these, three (3) were registered as formal PaR requests and were subject to preliminary assessment; three (3) required coordination with HR/Legal/management regarding interim protective measures; and two (2) were redirected as it fell outside the PaR framework but raised workplace/HR matters.
15. In addition to case-handling, the Ethics Office provided guidance to personnel and management on the practical meaning of non-retaliation, confidentiality, and the appropriate handling of concerns raised in good faith. Given the confidential nature of PaR matters and the need to protect due process and privacy, this Report provides only aggregated information. Case-specific details cannot be disclosed in a governing-body document.

B. Advice and guidance

16. Pursuant to its advisory mandate, the Ethics Office provides confidential advice and guidance to UN Tourism personnel and management to support decision-making consistent with UN Tourism rules and UN system standards. Confidential channels for advice and reporting include hotline ethics mailbox via ethicsofficer@untourism.int
17. During the reporting period, the Ethics Officer was approached by 10 personnel/officials for advice and guidance. Requests related primarily to:
 - (a) workplace conduct concerns and appropriate options for reporting/management;
 - (b) conflicts of interest (including outside activities), impartiality and standards of behaviour;
 - (c) gifts, honours, and benefits;
 - (d) questions related to the scope and application of policies on prohibited conduct; and
 - (e) requests for clarification on roles and procedures among HR, Legal, Ethics and the investigative mechanism.
18. As in prior years, a portion of the requests received concerned employment or administrative matters that do not fall strictly under the Ethics mandate. Where appropriate, the Ethics Officer provided guidance and referred individuals to the competent service, while highlighting the relevance of transparency, respectful conduct, and timely communication as core elements of an ethical organizational culture.
19. The Ethics Officer also recognizes the importance of clear institutional pathways for raising concerns relating to procurement integrity, conflicts of interest and other sensitive governance

² SGB 12/23 - Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct or cooperating with duly authorized fact-finding activities (the "Whistle-blowing" policy)

matters, including coordination with relevant oversight and investigative mechanisms where appropriate.

C. Outreach, training and education

20. Prevention, awareness and training are core pillars of an effective ethics function. During the reporting period, the Ethics Officer supported or contributed to awareness-raising on the Organization's standards of conduct and the expected workplace culture, including through:
 - (a) dissemination of guidance on ethics-related standards;
 - (b) targeted briefings and reminders on reporting channels and non-retaliation; and
 - (c) contributions to training and communication initiatives linked to prohibited conduct prevention.
21. In particular, UN Tourism advanced work on awareness tools related to prohibited conduct, including PSEA and sexual harassment prevention, in coordination with HR and Legal.
22. In addition, the Ethics Officer supported the preparation of a draft Information Circular on a "Code of Conduct to Prevent Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment, at UN Tourism Events", aimed at strengthening prevention, clarifying expected behaviour, and reinforcing reporting channels and non-retaliation safeguards in event settings.
23. The Ethics Officer also supported the clarification of roles and procedures for reporting and follow-up, emphasizing: confidentiality, duty of cooperation, protection from retaliation, and victim-centred principles where applicable.

D. Financial disclosure / declaration of interest programme

24. The Ethics Office is mandated to administer the Organization's declaration of interest process as a means of identifying, managing and mitigating potential conflicts of interest and protecting the integrity of decision-making.
25. During the reporting period, the Ethics Officer:
 - (a) provided confidential advice on disclosure obligations and conflict-of-interest management; and
 - (b) worked with relevant services to ensure appropriate handling and confidentiality safeguards.
26. During the reporting period, 1 staff member submitted a declaration of interest on a voluntary basis, however, a list will be provided by the HR department in line with the Management's guidance so that a new set of declarations are submitted and completed. The Ethics Officer notes that continuous communication and clear instructions remain important to support full compliance and consistent practice.

E. Standard setting and policy support

27. The Ethics Officer supported the Organization's standard-setting and policy work, notably in areas closely connected to the ethics function and integrity safeguards, including:
 - (a) SGB on "Addressing Discrimination, Harassment including Sexual Harassment, and Abuse of Authority": policy review, alignment of reporting and referral procedures, and clarification of roles between HR, EO and the investigative mechanism;
 - (b) IC on "Code of Conduct to Prevent Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment, at UN Tourism Events": prevention-focused standards for conduct in event environments, clarification of reporting channels and non-retaliation principles, and support to event organizers on practical implementation;
 - (c) SGB on "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (PSEA)": review and strengthening of reporting and follow-up pathways, consistent with the Organization's investigative arrangements and victim-centred principles;
 - (d) Operationalization of investigation arrangements : support of the alignment of reporting/referral pathways in key integrity instruments (including prohibited conduct and

- PSEA-related drafts), to ensure consistency with the Organization's independent investigations arrangement and clear coordination among HR, Legal and the Ethics function;
- (e) guidance on gifts, honours, benefits and conflicts of interest (as applicable); and
 - (f) mainstreaming of ethics safeguards into broader institutional processes (including where relevant in partner/collaborator arrangements).
28. Particular attention was given to the scope of application of prohibited conduct policies to covered non-staff collaborators (as defined), and to the need for practical contractual and operational measures to ensure enforceability and compliance, including the incorporation of relevant clauses in templates and appropriate dissemination of standards to covered collaborators.
29. The Ethics Officer notes that, as these policies are implemented, consistent internal guidance and coordination between functions (HR, Legal, Procurement/Administration and the Ethics Function) is essential to ensure clarity for personnel, prompt handling of reports, and predictable procedures consistent with due process and confidentiality.

IV. The Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations

30. In line with UN system collaboration on ethics and integrity, the Ethics Officer was integrated in the work of the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations (ENMO) through remote participation and interaction with the Chair of the ENMO for guidance and feedback.
31. Participation in ENMO supports: benchmarking with peer organizations, continuous professional development, and shared approaches on ethics advisory practice, protection against retaliation, conflicts of interest management, harassment prevention, and organizational culture.
32. The reporting period's exchanges included practical approaches on ethics advisory services, whistle-blower protection, handling of prohibited conduct concerns, and the evolution of best practices across the multilateral system.

V. Final considerations

33. The Ethics Officer underscores the importance of maintaining an ethics function that is accessible, credible, confidential, and prevention-oriented, and that supports the Organization's governance and integrity in line with UN standards.
34. The reporting period reflected continued demand for confidential advice and for clear procedures on prohibited conduct matters. Continued progress requires: (i) finalizing and operationalizing key policies (including anti-harassment and PSEA), including event-specific prevention measures (ii) ensuring consistent reporting and referral pathways aligned with the Organization's investigative arrangements, (iii) reinforcing training and awareness, and (iv) strengthening the practical application of standards for covered collaborators through contractual and operational measures.
35. The Organization also notes relevant system-wide oversight recommendations on ensuring that integrity and informal conflict resolution functions are adequately resourced to fulfil their mandates, taking into account operational realities such as geographic dispersion and linguistic diversity.
36. In view of the sensitivity and confidentiality of the ethics function and the dual-hatted arrangement, the Ethics Officer notes that modest dedicated resources (e.g., limited administrative support / expert review / targeted training / ENMO participation) would truly strengthen responsiveness, prevention work, and alignment with best practice, while remaining proportionate to the Organization's size and needs.
