



Secretariat

22 September 2020

Administrative instruction

Reporting, retaining and disposing of honours, decorations, favours, gifts or remuneration from governmental and non-governmental sources

The Secretary-General, for the purpose of implementing the prohibition in staff regulation 1.3 (see [ISBA/25/A/19](#)) and staff rule 1.2 (see [ISBA/ST/SGB/2020/1](#)) against the receipt by staff of honours, decorations, favours, gifts or remuneration from governmental and non-governmental sources, promulgates the following:

Section 1

Scope and purpose

1.1 Staff regulation 1.3 sets out the prohibition against staff receiving any honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration from governmental and non-governmental sources. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of staff regulation 1.3 deal with the prohibition on acceptance from governmental sources, and paragraph (c) deals with the necessity of obtaining the prior approval of the Secretary-General for acceptance from non-governmental sources. Staff rule 1.2, in its paragraphs (j) to (m), covers these same matters. Staff regulation 1.3 reads as follows:

“Honours, gifts or remuneration

(a) No staff member shall accept any honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration from any Government;

(b) If refusal of an unanticipated honour, decoration, favour or gift from a Government would cause embarrassment to the Authority, the staff member may receive it on behalf of the Authority and then report and entrust it to the Secretary-General, who will either retain it for the Authority or arrange for its disposal for the benefit of the Authority or for a charitable purpose;

(c) No staff member shall accept any honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration from any non-governmental source without first obtaining the approval of the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General shall not grant such approval if it is likely to reflect on the integrity of the staff member as an international civil servant.”

1.2 The intended purpose of the staff regulations and rules regarding honours, decorations, favours, gifts and remuneration from governmental and non-governmental sources is to ensure the independence and impartiality of staff members. Latitude is allowed only in cases where the prior approval of the Secretary-



General is obtained to accept an honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration from a non-governmental source. The procedure for obtaining the Secretary-General's prior approval is detailed in section 5 below.

1.3 The main purpose of the present instruction is to describe a set of procedures that highlights the obligations of staff and simultaneously provides guidance to officials responsible for the management of this matter.

1.4 The present policy and procedures relate to honours, decorations, favours, gifts and remuneration that are offered or presented by either governmental or non-governmental sources in the course of staff members' official duties or in relation to staff members' status as international civil servants. When in doubt whether the present policy applies in a given situation, staff members are expected to seek guidance from the Office of Legal Affairs.

1.5 Staff members carrying out functions in sensitive areas such as procurement and investment management shall be subject to higher standards as considered necessary in relation to the discharge of their duties and responsibilities.

Section 2

Definitions

2.1 For the purposes of the present instruction, the following definitions shall apply:

(a) "Governmental source" means:

(i) Any unit of governmental authority, including any national, state, local or municipal government;

(ii) Any intergovernmental organization;

(iii) Any agent or representative of a governmental authority or intergovernmental organization;

(b) "Non-governmental source" means: any non-governmental organization, academic institution or private source. Educational institutions are considered as a non-governmental source;

(c) "Honour" means: an award or recognition, tangible or intangible, given by a governmental or non-governmental source to a staff member. Such honours may include, inter alia, medals, awards, plaques or scrolls;

(d) "Decoration" means: an object awarded by a governmental or non-governmental source to a staff member to honour the recipient in a very visible manner. Such decorations may include, inter alia, medals, pins and ribbons;

(e) "Favour" means: a special privilege or treatment granted to a staff member by a governmental or non-governmental source;

(f) "Gift" means: any item that has a physical form, offered to a staff member. The term includes minor gifts of essentially nominal value, but does not include:

(i) Participation in official functions (such as meals and diplomatic receptions) for which staff members are invited as part of their official functions (see staff rule 1.2 (l)). Staff members are expected to exercise judgement and to refrain from accepting invitations that are or could be perceived as inconsistent with the obligations and behaviour of staff members of the Authority;

(ii) Participation in activities organized by governmental or non-governmental sources that has been authorized by the Secretary-General, and in which the organizing entity covers the accommodation, travel and subsistence allowance in line with that payable by the Authority (see staff rule 1.2 (s));

(g) “Minor gift of essentially nominal value” means: representational or courtesy gifts of limited value (no more than 150 United States dollars) that might be given to a staff member by a governmental or non-governmental source as an expression of courtesy;

(h) “Remuneration” means: any monetary compensation not associated with approved outside occupation or employment;

(i) “Administering official” means: the Budget and Oversight Officer or another staff member designated by the Director of the Office for Administrative Services to carry out the functions of an administering official.

Section 3

Obligations of staff members

3.1 When an honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration is offered or presented to a staff member by a governmental or non-governmental source, the appropriate response is for the staff member to decline with an explanation that it is a requirement in accordance with the staff member’s duties and obligations as an international civil servant.

3.2 There may be other situations in which an honour, decoration, favour or gift has already been delivered or in which the refusal of an unanticipated honour, decoration, favour or gift from a governmental or non-governmental source would cause embarrassment to the Authority. In such cases, if the return of the honour, decoration, favour or gift would cause embarrassment to the Authority, a staff member may accept it on behalf of the Authority and, in that case, shall promptly report and entrust the item, irrespective of its value, to the administering official.

3.3 Staff members may not accept any honours, decorations, favours, gifts or remuneration from a governmental source or from any individual or entity doing business with, or seeking to do business with, the Authority. However, in exceptional cases, staff members may request the prior approval of the Secretary-General for accepting honours, decorations, favours, gifts or remuneration from a non-governmental source, as provided for in staff regulation 1.3.

3.4 Staff members may accept, on behalf of the Authority, without prior approval from the Secretary-General, minor gifts of essentially nominal value from a governmental or non-governmental source. In such instances, the requirement to report and entrust the gift, as set out in section 3.2 above, shall apply, as well as the procedure for the recording, retention and disposal, as set out in section 4 below.

Section 4

Procedure for recording, retaining and disposing of minor gifts and anticipated honours, decorations, favours, gifts and remuneration presented by governmental and non-governmental sources

4.1 In accordance with the provisions of the present instruction, the administering official shall establish and maintain a registry in which to record summary information on all honours, decorations, favours, gifts or remuneration that have been accepted by staff members in accordance with sections 3.2 or 3.4. The register shall contain the name and functional title of the recipient; a description of the event that led to the honour, decoration, favour or gift that was presented; the name of the governmental or non-governmental source; whether there is any relationship – official or otherwise – between the staff member and the governmental or non-governmental source; the date of receipt; and the action taken for disposal as described in section 4.2 below. The register shall be provided to the Director of the Office for Administrative Services upon request.

4.2 Once the item has been recorded in the registry, it will be disposed of or retained in consultation with the administering official as detailed below, bearing in mind that any honour, decoration, favour or gift must not be incompatible with the interests of the Authority or give rise to an actual or apparent conflict of interest for the staff member or the office concerned:

(a) Any honour, decoration, favour or gift from any individual or entity doing business with or seeking to do business with the Authority shall promptly be declined and returned;

(b) Minor gifts of essentially nominal value may be retained by the recipient. Those that are retained by the Authority will be dealt with in accordance with section 4.3 below;

(c) Any remuneration or the monetary portion of any honour, decoration, favour or gift that is presented by a non-governmental source as a consequence of performing official duties and responsibilities of the Authority should be either declined or deposited to the Authority's bank account in consultation with the Budget and Oversight Officer;

(d) All other honours, decorations, favours and gifts shall be retained by the Authority.

4.3 For items retained by the Authority, the Director of the Office for Administrative Service may allow the honour, decoration or gift to be displayed or exhibited for educational, informational or decorative purposes in any premises of the Authority. In all other instances, the Director of the Office for Administrative Services shall dispose of the items, whether individually or combined, in accordance with rules 7.5 and 7.6 of the Financial Rules of the Authority ([ISBA/ST/SGB/2008/02](#)).

Section 5

Procedure for obtaining the Secretary-General's approval to receive an honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration from a non-governmental source

5.1 When a staff member becomes aware that an honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration other than a minor gift of essentially nominal value is being offered to that staff member (i.e., considered, nominated or selected) by a non-governmental source, the staff member shall notify in writing the administering official of the name and functional title of the intended recipient; the circumstances of the proposed offer; the nature of the honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration; the name and role of the source; and, if possible, the estimated value.

5.2 The administering official shall communicate that information to the Director of the Office for Administrative Services, who may approve, on behalf of the Secretary-General, the acceptance of the honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration from a non-governmental source.

5.3 In the event that approval is not granted, the staff member shall decline the honour, decoration, favour, gift or remuneration.

Section 6

Final provisions

6.1 The present instruction shall take effect on the date of its issuance and remain effective until further notice.

(Signed) Michael W. Lodge
Secretary-General