

# | Protection Against Retaliation – Whistleblower Policy

## What is the United Nations Whistleblower Policy?

- ❑ **ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1** – *Protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorised audits and investigations* – promulgated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations is the **United Nations policy** relating to reporting **misconduct** (any violation of the organisation’s rules and regulations by staff members), **wrongdoing** (by any person that is harmful to the interest, operation and governance of the United Nations), or **cooperate with duly authorised audits or investigations**.
- ❑ **The policy** ensures that the organisation functions in an open, transparent and fair manner and enhances protection for those who report misconduct.



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## Protection under the Whistleblower Policy

- ❑ Reporting and cooperation pursuant to **ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1** are considered “**protected activities**”. In order to receive protection, any report should be made to the **United Nations Ethics Office** as soon as possible, in good faith and no later than six (6) months since one becomes aware of the original misconduct. To be considered a protected activity, a report of misconduct must include **information** or **evidence** to **support a reasonable belief that misconduct occurred**.
- ❑ All United Nations staff members (regardless of the type and appointment or its duration), interns, United Nations volunteers, individual contractors or consultants have the right to seek protection from retaliation under the policy.



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## Definition of Retaliation under the Whistleblower Policy

- Retaliation** as defined in the policy means “**any direct or indirect detrimental action that adversely affects the employment or working conditions of an individual, where such action has been recommended, threatened or taken for the purpose of punishing, intimidating or injuring an individual because that individual engaged in a protected activity.**”
- Pursuant to **staff rule 1.2(c)**, staff members, consultants, individual contractors and interns have a duty to report any violation of the organisation’s rules and regulations under **ST/SGB/2017/2/Rev.1** to the **United Nations Ethics Office** to take appropriate action.
- Retaliation for other reasons is also a form of abuse of authority or harassment which is prohibited conduct pursuant to **ST/SGB/2019/8 – *Addressing discrimination, harassment including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority.***



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## What are the reporting requirements to the United Nations General Assembly?

- As part of the United Nations Secretariat, UN-Habitat implements its ethics related activities with the support of the United Nations Ethics Office.
- Pursuant to General Assembly resolution [60/154](#), entitled: “*Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations*”; the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to **report annually** on the activities of the Ethics Office and the implementation of ethics policies.
- The 2019 Annual Report, [A/75/82](#), submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly pursuant to resolution [60/154](#), summarised the actions undertaken by Ethics Office as the **administering body** in matters relating to **protection against retaliation**.
- In the said report, the Ethics Office received 204 enquiries under the policy, (from 90 women, 103 men, 9 groups and 2 whose gender was not disclosed), for its review and determination.



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