

Terms of reference
Senior diplomatic advisor

I. Background

The Peace and Human Rights Division of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) is opening an assignment within the Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding and international organisations to be seconded to the [Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation](#) (CCHN).

The CCHN is a joint initiative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Médecins sans Frontières Switzerland, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the UN World Food Programme. It facilitates the capture, analysis, and sharing of experiences and practices around humanitarian negotiation to provide a space for dialogue across humanitarian organisations. The CCHN is administratively hosted by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and is based in Geneva, Switzerland.

Over the last 8 years, CCHN has built a professional community of humanitarian negotiators comprised of over 8'000 humanitarian workers from more than 400 different organizations. The CCHN has also expanded beyond humanitarian actors to capacitate and support negotiation efforts of affected communities on the frontlines all the way up to diplomats engaged in humanitarian issues. Since 2023, Switzerland has been collaborating closely with the CCHN on its humanitarian diplomacy priorities, exploring the intersection between diplomatic efforts and frontline negotiations.

II. Objectives of the Assignment

While the CCHN is exploring the intersection of humanitarian negotiations and diplomacy, the purpose of this assignment is to benefit from the experience and expertise of a Swiss national with robust diplomatic experience, who has been engaged in bilateral and multilateral humanitarian diplomacy processes.

More specifically, the objectives of the assignment are to:

1. Strengthening Switzerland's Engagement in Humanitarian Diplomacy:

- Support Switzerland's priorities in Humanitarian Diplomacy in close collaboration with CCHN
- Enhance Switzerland's collaboration with CCHN to advance humanitarian dialogue and negotiation efforts

2. Building CCHN's diplomatic capacities and engagement:

- Strengthen CCHN's diplomatic capacities and its ability to engage effectively with States
- Design and implement diplomatic engagement strategies for the CCHN

3. Advancing Research and Innovation in Humanitarian Diplomacy:

- Further research and development of humanitarian diplomacy from the perspective of diplomatic actors

4. Fostering collaboration between humanitarian and diplomatic actors

- Create safe spaces between humanitarian and diplomats to enhance collaboration and address humanitarian needs

III. Duties and Responsibilities

The senior diplomatic advisor will be working in the CCHN Operations team.

Technical Expertise and Strategic Advice:

1. Designing diplomatic engagement strategies

- Provide expertise to develop engagement plans for the CCHN with a diversity of States
- Develop bilateral engagement plans with States who have a leading role in terms of humanitarian diplomacy in some of today's most challenging crisis (such as Sudan, Gaza, Ukraine, Myanmar, Afghanistan)
- Translate field realities into compelling narratives for diplomats to engage on humanitarian priorities

2. Support humanitarian diplomacy processes led by CCHN, including those with Switzerland

- Provide expertise on the content, roll-out and facilitation of these processes
- Support the development of CCHN's network with Swiss Embassies in the field and in key capitals such as Brussels, New York

3. Contribute to CCHN's capacity building efforts

- Deliver negotiation and humanitarian diplomacy training for CCHN's various stakeholders, such as humanitarians, diplomats, armed actors and authorities
- Provide diplomatic expertise to further develop CCHN's curriculum on humanitarian diplomacy
- Support CCHN's efforts to train diplomats and other government bodies on humanitarian negotiations and diplomacy

4. Strengthen CCHN's diplomatic capacities

- Work closely with the operations co-leads to further develop the diplomatic awareness and skills of the CCHN operations team
- Share experience, knowledge and provide guidance to the CCHN team on diplomatic engagement

5. Contribute to CCHN's research and development efforts on humanitarian diplomacy

- By identifying seasoned diplomats, support operational research efforts to develop case studies and identify best practices to further develop the domain of humanitarian diplomacy
- Contribute to the development of training modules on humanitarian diplomacy and negotiations for diplomats

IV. Qualifications and Experience

Education:

- University degree in international relations, political science, law or equivalent;

Experience:

- At least 5-8 years of professional experience in diplomacy, ideally with the Swiss Government

Skills and Competencies:

- Excellent diplomatic and negotiation skills;
- Sound understanding of diplomatic processes and ability to navigate complex political dynamics
- Strong knowledge of Switzerland's foreign policy, priorities and working modalities
- Understanding of the humanitarian system and trends affecting humanitarian action;
- Excellent communication and facilitation skills to facilitate critical exchanges and workshops;
- Solid writing, editing and analytical skills, with the ability to think critically and creatively;
- Agility, flexibility and capacity to work under pressure with tight deadlines;
- Solid and proven capacities in teamwork and collaboration within a multidisciplinary and multicultural team;
- Fluent command of English and French. Spanish and/or Arabic are an asset;
- Available for up to 50% for field missions.

V. Reporting and Accountability

- This position will be reporting to the CCHN Operations Lead;
- Within FDFA, the focal person for this project will be the FDFA Humanitarian Diplomacy Program Officer responsible for CCHN partnership;
- A few months before the end of the assignment, a hand-over process is launched to reflect on key achievements, identify recommendations for the way forward and potential areas of continued support beyond the phase of this secondment to ensure the sustainability of the project.

VI. Duration of Assignment

This assignment will be for a period of 24 months.