***APPLICATION DEADLINE: 30 JULY 2020 AT 12:00 NOON GREENWICH MEAN TIME***

* *The application process consists of two compulsory parts:****(1) online survey[[1]](#footnote-1)*** *(*[*https://ohchr-survey.unog.ch/index.php/797846*](https://ohchr-survey.unog.ch/index.php/797846)

*and****(2) application form in Word format[[2]](#footnote-2)*** *(to be downloaded from* [*https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/HRC45.aspx*](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/HRC45.aspx)*)*

* *Once fully completed, the Word application form should be submitted by email to* [*hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org*](mailto:hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org)
* *A maximum of up to three optional reference letters may be attached to the email (in Word or PDF format).*
* *No additional documents (e.g. CVs, resumes or supplementary reference letters) will be accepted.*
* *Applicants will receive an acknowledgment email when both parts of the application process, i.e. the data submitted through the online survey and the Word application form, have been received by the Secretariat. Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed at a later stage.*
* *Please note that an application will only be considered if both parts and all sections of the Word application form have been completed and received by the Secretariat before the expiration of the deadline.* ***No incomplete or late applications will be accepted.***
* *General description of the selection process and answers to frequently asked questions are available at* [*https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/Nominations.aspx*](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/Nominations.aspx) *and* [*https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/BasicInformationSelectionIndependentExperts.aspx*](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/BasicInformationSelectionIndependentExperts.aspx)
* *In case of technical difficulties or problems with accessing or completing the forms, you may contact the Secretariat by email (*[*hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org*](mailto:hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org)*) or fax (+41 22 917 9008).*

**I. PERSONAL DATA**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1. Family (last) name:**   Francis Watene | **5. Year of birth:**     17/02/1989 |
| **2. First (given) name:**   Robbie | **6. Place of birth:** Waikato, Aotearoa New Zealand |
| **3. Other name, if any:**    My legal name is Roberta Francis. | **7. Nationality (please indicate the nationality that will appear on the public list of candidates):**     New Zealand |
| **4. Gender:**       Female | **8. Any other nationality:**      None |

**II. MANDATE-SPECIFIC COMPETENCE / QUALIFICATIONS / KNOWLEDGE**

**NOTE: Please describe why the candidate’s competence / qualifications / knowledge is relevant in relation to the specific mandate:**

1. **QUALIFICATIONS** (200 words)

**Relevant educational qualifications or equivalent professional experience in the field of human rights; good communication skills (i.e. orally and in writing) in one of the six official languages of the United Nations (i.e. Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish.)**

*Education:*

2018 Doctor of Philosophy, National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Otago (Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand). Robbie’s doctorate investigated disability inclusive and accessible research methods and peace research/practice, as well as the experiences of Colombian and Venezuelan refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities.

2013 Master of Arts Research Thesis, National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Otago (Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand). Robbie’s Master’s thesis investigated alternative dispute resolution within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

2011 Master of Arts in International Conflict Resolution and Mediation, Tel Aviv University (Tel Aviv, Israel).

2009 Bachelor of Arts, Double Major in World Religion and Human Development, University of Waikato (Hamilton, New Zealand).

*Languages:*

English: Advanced/first language

New Zealand Sign Language: Intermediate

Te Reo Māori: Beginners

Spanish: Beginners

1. **RELEVANT EXPERTISE** (200 words)

**Knowledge of international human rights instruments, norms and principles. (Please state how this was acquired.)**

**Knowledge of institutional mandates related to the United Nations or other international or regional organizations’ work in the area of human rights and particularly in the area of the mandate. (Please state how this was acquired.)**

**Proven work experience in the field of human rights and particularly in the area of the mandate. (Please state years of experience.)**

Dr Robbie Francis Watene has over a decade of experience in disability and human rights activism, advocacy, and scholarship. Outlined below are examples of relevant expertise.

2020-current Contributing Editor, All Is For All, (Aotearoa New Zealand)

2020 Thesis examiner, University of Otago (Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand)

2019 Polus delegation to Colombia, to work with landmine survivors (Cauca, Colombia)

2019 Lecturer in Conflict Reduction, Auckland University of Technology (Auckland, New Zealand)

2018-current Senior Disability Rights Researcher, Donald Beasley Institute (Auckland, New Zealand)

2018 Project Manager, The Attitude Charitable Trust (Auckland, New Zealand)

2018 Expert Advisor, Child Youth and Wellbeing Strategy, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Education (Wellington, New Zealand)

2016-2017 Research Assistant, University of Otago Conference ‘Disability Matters: Making the Convention Real’ (Dunedin, New Zealand)

2016-2017 Expert Reference Group, New Zealand 2016-2026 Disability Strategy, Office for Disability Issues, Ministry of Social Development (Wellington, New Zealand)

2014-current Co-Founder and Director of The Lucy Foundation (New Zealand and Mexico)

2014-2015 Documentary Maker (disability researcher/reporter), Attitude Media (Auckland, New Zealand)

2013-2014 Disability Rights Intern, Disability Rights International (Mexico City, Mexico)

2012-2013 Au Pair (disability support worker), Private (Paris, Francis)

2008-2010 Disability Support Worker, Private (Hamilton, New Zealand)

1. **ESTABLISHED** **COMPETENCE** (200 words)

**Nationally, regionally or internationally recognized competence related to human rights. (Please explain how such competence was acquired.)**

Rights knowledge:

Robbie has worked extensively with all of the UNCRPD articles, in local, national, and international contexts, within various professional/volunteer roles.

Organizational skills/teamwork:

As Project Lead for the UNCRPD monitoring, Robbie has trained, contracted/employed 35+ persons with disabilities to interview 300+ people with disabilities on their rights under the UNCRPD. As Director of The Lucy Foundation (TLF), Robbie remotely manages an international team of fifteen people with and without disabilities, in Spanish and English.

Leadership:

All of Robbie’s past and present roles demonstrate leadership competency in disability and human rights advocacy.

Communication:  
Through her PhD and roles as Director of TLF and Project Lead for the UNCRPD monitoring, Robbie has successfully worked and communicated with a range of rights stakeholders (governmental authorities, grassroots activists, DPOs, funders, service providers, etc.), and has extensive knowledge on how to deliver information in accessible formats.

Scholarship:

Robbie’s key research areas are disability rights, and inclusive and accessible research methodologies within peace research and practice. Her doctorate investigated the experiences of Venezuelan and Colombian refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities during conflict and displacement. Robbie has authored peer reviewed articles and presented internationally on her research.

1. **PUBLICATIONS OR PUBLIC STATEMENTS**

**Please list significant and relevant published books, articles, journals and reports that the candidate has written or public statements, or pronouncements that the candidate has made or events participated in relation to the mandate.**

* 1. **Enter three publications in relation to the mandate applied for, in the order of relevance:**

**1. Title of publication:**  My Experiences, My Rights: A Monitoring Report on Disabled Person's Experience of Housing in Aotearoa New Zealand

**Journal/Publisher:** DPO Coalition New Zealand

**Date of publication:**  To be launched in September, 2020.

**Web link, if available:** Please note, an embargoed copy of the report can be provided. The report will be made available on the following website in September 2020: <https://www.donaldbeasley.org.nz/projects/disabled-person-led-monitoring-of-the-uncrpd/>

**2. Title of publication:** Searching for the Voice of People with Disabilities in Peace and Conflict Research and Practice

**Journal/Publisher:** Peace & Change

**Date of publication:**   July 2019

**Web link, if available:**  <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/pech.12360>

**3. Title of publication:** Nothing about us, without us: The Pursuit of Inclusive and Accessible Positive Peace

**Journal/Publisher:** University of Otago (Doctoral Thesis)

**Date of publication:**  2018

**Web link, if available:**  <https://ourarchive.otago.ac.nz/handle/10523/8356>

**If more than three publications, kindly summarize** (200 words):

Robbie currently has a book chapter and academic article on Article 33.3 of the UNCRPD under review. She has also written many opinion pieces for Attitude Live, The Lucy Foundation, and is a contributing editor for the disability-led online publication ‘Amplify’ by All is for All.

* 1. **Enter three public statements or pronouncements made or events that the candidate may have participated in relation to the mandate applied for, in the order of relevance:**

**1. Platform/occasion/event on which public statement/pronouncement made:**

**Event organizer:**  St Gallens World Leaders Symposium, Switzerland / Dr Francis Watene was invited to give an address on disability rights at the opening ceremony, as well as participate in a panel on diversity with Japan's first Minister of State for Gender Equality and Social Affairs.

**Date on which public statement/pronouncement made:** May 2017

**Web link, if available:** Script from opening address: <https://www.thelucyfoundation.com/disrupting-disablism/?fbclid=IwAR237gNHxleQiJZnJNHZ3PoE_CRkyFDp63ypfQIhKWrKDwKKvJ0rzbH_BaI>

**2. Platform/occasion/event on which public statement/pronouncement made:**

**Event organizer:** All Is For All / Instagram / graphic explanation of the rights-based model of disability that has gone viral on Instagram and Twitter.

**Date on which public statement/pronouncement made:** July 2020

**Web link, if available:** <https://www.instagram.com/p/CCf2uGlsiWo/>

**3. Platform/occasion/event on which public statement/pronouncement made:**

**Event organizer:** Shift Aotearoa Vision Week / discussion on the right to housing from a disability rights-based framework.

**Date on which public statement/pronouncement made:** June 2020

**Web link, if available:** <https://www.facebook.com/roberta.francis.3551/videos/10159198180940579/>

**If more than three, kindly summarize** (200 words):

Robbie is a respected public speaker and presenter/commentator on issues relating to peacebuilding, disability rights, human rights, gender and more. She has spoken at events and conferences in Israel, Mexico, Bangladesh, India, USA, Colombia, Hawaii, Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Robbie’s work has also featured in various television documentaries, magazines, and media articles, including:

Mccall, C. (2019, April 1). Game Changer: Roberta Francis Disability Activism. Mind Food Magazine. Retrieved from <https://www.pressreader.com/australia/mindfood/20190601/282278141788125>

Stevenson, R., Junn, J. (2018, March 8). Ten amazing New Zealand Women in Business. The Spinoff. Retrieved from <https://thespinoff.co.nz/business/08-03-2018/ten-amazing-new-zealand-women-in-business/>

Being Me: Robbie [TV Documentary]. (2016). Attitude Pictures. Retrieved from <http://attitudelive.com/watch/Being-Me-Robbie>

1. **FLEXIBILITY/READINESS AND AVAILABILITY OF TIME** (200 words)

**to perform effectively the functions of the mandate and to respond to its requirements, including participating in Human Rights Council (HRC) sessions in Geneva and General Assembly sessions in New York, travelling on special procedures visits, drafting reports and engaging with a variety of stakeholders. Kindly indicate whether the candidate can dedicate an estimated total of approximately three months per year to the work of a mandate.**

**Please note that the work of mandate holders is unpaid. Those appointed as mandate holders serve in their personal capacities. They are not United Nations staff members, they are not based in United Nations offices in Geneva or at another United Nations location, and they do not receive salary or other financial compensation, except for travel expenses and daily subsistence allowance of “experts on mission”.**

In February 2020, Robbie was invited by New Zealand’s NHRI to accompany the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, Leilani Farha, and Gunnar Thiessan (OHCHR) on their mission around Aotearoa New Zealand. During this time, Robbie had the opportunity to ask SR Farhar and Mr Thiessan about the role, function, responsibilities and objectives of a Special Rapporteur.

Having had this unique opportunity, Robbie now fully understands the nature of the Special Rapporteur role, and the time, finances, and resources that are required to fulfil the mandate effectively. As such, she has the full support of her employer - the Donald Beasley Institute (DBI) - who have committed to supporting her as Special Rapporteur should she be successful in her application. Of note, the DBI is able to provide academic and scholarly support for Robbie during report-writing, as well as guidance on ethical requirements, health and safety requirements, administration and budgeting, as well as mentoring and external supervision.

1. **NOMINATION FOR THE MANDATE**

**Indicate whether the candidate has been nominated by (check all that apply):**

X **Individual nominations (indicate this if the candidate is self-nominating)**

**☐ Governments**

**☐ Regional Groups operating within the United Nations human rights systems**

☐ **International organizations or their offices**

X **Non-governmental organizations**

☐ **National human rights institutions**

☐ **Other human rights bodies**

**Name of the nominating entity and additional information about the nomination (use if applicable, for third-party nominations only)** (200 words)**:**

The Donald Beasley Institute (DBI) is recognized nationally and internationally as a leader in the field of disability research. Key aims include:

* Advancing the rights of people with disabilities through research, monitoring, evaluation, and education;
* Generating inclusive and accessible evidence-based research that can be used to progressively realize the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD);
* Understand the lived experiences of people with disabilities, recognizing the impact of intersectionality;
* Disseminating accessible and evidence-based research and education;
* Building research capacity of researchers with disabilities through collaboration with disabled people, Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs), and the disability sector.

**III. MOTIVATION LETTER**(600 word limit. Must be typed in the space below and not sent in a separate email or as an attachment. To be drafted and signed (i.e. with a typed signature) by the candidate himself/herself even if nominated by another entity.)

To whom it may concern,

My name is Robbie Francis Watene. I am writing this letter of motivation in support of my application for the position of Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Since 2014, I have followed the work of the outgoing Special Rapporteur (SR) - Catalina Devandas Aguilar - with great interest. More recently, I was invited by the New Zealand Human Rights Commission to accompany Special Rapporteur, Leilani Farhar, and OHCHR staff member, Gunnar Theissen, on their mission around Aotearoa New Zealand. The time I spent with Gunnar and Leilani gave me unique insight into the skills, commitment, and resilience required to effectively fulfil the SR’s mandate. I ended the mission feeling inspired, motivated, and certain that I have what it takes.

I have since spoken with my community, employer, rights experts, family, and Ms Devandas Aguilar, about my desire to apply for the role, and have received a great deal of encouragement. As was highlighted by Gunnar and Leilani, it is important for young women, especially women with disabilities, to apply for such roles. However, I understand being a SR comes at a great personal, financial, and even physical cost - factors that have served to increase my resolve, rather than weaken it.

I have lived with disability my whole life. I was born with a condition called Phocomelia, which affected the development of my bones. I learned to walk on a prosthetic leg that became known as ‘Lucy Leg’. Lucy Leg has taken me to all corners of the earth. From studying peace and conflict in Israel and Palestine, to going undercover inside a Mexican psychiatric institution to document disability rights violations. In 2014, my friends and I developed the world’s first value chain of coffee that is entirely inclusive of people with disabilities - from farmer (Mexico), to consumer (New Zealand). In 2017, my doctoral research took me to Ecuador where I interviewed refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities from Colombia and Venezuela, and documented the intersecting experience of disability and displacement. More recently, I was invited to work with landmine survivors in Cauca, Colombia, to assist with training aid workers on person-centered and disability rights-based approaches to service provision. In 2018, I was appointed Project Lead for the Disabled Person-Led Monitoring of the UNCRPD in Aotearoa New Zealand - a role where I have the privilege of training more than 35 disability rights monitors with lived experience of disability, and facilitate interviews with more than 300 people with disabilities about their rights under the UNCRPD. In particular, this role has required me to quickly adapt and evolve, ensuring that disability rights monitoring is responsive to Covid-19 social distancing restrictions and the devastating consequences of a growing global pandemic.

What do these experiences have in common? A drive to witness the progressive realization of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals and Universal Design. A passion for amplifying inclusive and accessible positive peace. A heartfelt desire to promote inclusive, accessible and evidence-based research. A relentless and lifelong commitment to ensuring that no one is left behind

This is my motivation for applying for the role of Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. I believe my personal, professional, and academic life experiences make me an ideal candidate for this position. Not only will I bring expertise, professionalism and scholarship to this role, but also an abundance of energy, as we work together to progressively realize the rights of persons with disabilities.

Nāku noa, nā

Dr Robbie Francis Watene

**IV. LANGUAGES (READ / WRITTEN / SPOKEN)**

**Please indicate all language skills below.**

**1. Mother tongue:** English

**2. Knowledge of the official languages of the United Nations:**

**Arabic:** No.

**Chinese:** No.

**English:** Yes.If yes,

**Read:** Easily.**Write:** Easily.**Speak:** Easily.

**French:** No.

**Russian:** No.

**Spanish:** No.

**V. EDUCATIONAL RECORD**

**NOTE: Please list the candidate’s academic qualifications (university level and higher, indicating the type of degree and field of study, and whether full- or part-time; for example, *Masters in Law, University of XXX, part-time, 1975-1977, city and country)*. If space in the table is insufficient, more than one degree may be listed in a single row below, separating them by a blank line.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of degree, field of study and name of academic institution, full or part-time:** | **Years of attendance**  (provide a range from-to, for example 1999-2003; for ongoing education, please put, for example, 2018-present): | **Place and country:** |
| Doctor of Philosophy, Peace and Conflict Studies / Disability Rights, University of Otago National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, first 6 months part time followed by 2.5 years full-time. | 2015-2018 | Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand |
| Master’s Degree, Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Otago National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, full-time. | 2013-2014 | Dunedin, Aotearoa New Zealand |
| Master’s Degree, International Conflict Resolution and Mediation, Tel Aviv University, full-time. | 2010-2011 | Tel Aviv, Israel |
| Bachelor of Arts, World Religion and Human Development, University of Waikato, full-time | 2007-2009 | Waikato, Aotearoa New Zealand |
|  |  |  |

**VI. EMPLOYMENT RECORD**

**NOTE: Please briefly list ALL RELEVANT professional positions held in the area of human rights, beginning with the candidate’s current (most recent) occupation.** **Also indicate whether positions held were full-time or part-time. If space in the table is insufficient, more than one position may be listed in a single row below, separating them by a blank line.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of employer,**  **functional title,**  **main functions of position, full- or part-time:** | **Years of work** (provide a range from-to, for example 1999-2005; for ongoing activities, please put e.g. 2018-present): | **Place  and country:** |
| Donald Beasley Institute, Senior Researcher, Project Lead for the Disabled Person-Led Monitoring of the UNCRPD in Aotearoa New Zealand, full-time. | 2018-present | Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand |
| The Lucy Foundation, Co-Founder and Director, governance and all operations in Aotearoa New Zealand and Mexico, part-time. | 2014-present | Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand |
| Polus, Delegate, delegation to visit an active conflict zone to work with landmine survivors, service providers, and to meet with the indigenous Nasa Guard, one-off collaboration. | 2019 | Cauca, Colombia |
| Attitude Trust, Project Manager, managed the national awards on disability, full-time.  Attitude Pictures, Researcher/reporter, documentary maker (TV documentaries by people with disabilities for people with disabilities), full-time. | 2017  2016-2018 | Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand     Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand |
| Office for Disability Issues, Expert Reference Group, development of the national 2016-2026 Disability Strategy, part-time. | 2016-2017 | Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand |
| Disability Rights International - Mexico, Intern, monitoring rights violations, part-time. | 2013-2014 | Mexico City, Mexico |
| Private, Support Worker, support worker for a young person with Cerebral Palsy, part-time. | 2008-2010 | Hamilton, Aotearoa New Zealand. |
|  |  |  |

**VII. COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY PROVISIONS   
(of Human Rights Council resolution 5/1)  
*To be completed by the candidate or by the nominating entity on the candidate’s behalf.***

**1. To your knowledge, does the candidate have any official, professional, personal, or financial relationships that might cause the candidate to limit the extent of inquiries, to limit disclosure, or to weaken or slant findings in any way? If yes, please explain.**

No.

**2. Are there any factors that could either directly or indirectly influence, pressure, threaten, or otherwise affect the candidate’s ability to act independently in discharging the mandate? If yes, please explain:**

No.

**3. Is there any reason, currently or in the past, that could call into question the candidate’s moral authority and credibility or does the candidate hold any views or opinions that could prejudice the manner in which the candidate discharges the mandate? If yes, please explain:**

No.

**4. Does the candidate comply with the provisions in paragraph 44 and 46 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1? (Please answer YES if the candidate complies, NO if the candidate does not comply, together with an explanation.)**

***Para. 44: The principle of non-accumulation of human rights functions at a time shall be respected.***

***Para. 46: Individuals holding decision-making positions in Government or in any other organization or entity which may give rise to a conflict of interest with the responsibilities inherent to the mandate shall be excluded. Mandate holders will act in their personal capacity.***

No.

**5. Should the candidate be appointed as a mandate holder, the candidate will have to take measures to comply with paragraphs 44 and 46 of the annex to Council resolution 5/1. In the event that the current occupation or activity, even if unpaid, of the candidate may give rise to a conflict of interest (e.g. if a candidate holds a decision-making position in Government) and/or there is an accumulation of human rights functions (e.g. as a member of another human rights mechanism at the international, regional or national level), necessary measures could include relinquishing positions, occupations or activities. If applicable, please indicate the measures the candidate will take.**

Not applicable. The candidate will not accept accumulation of human rights functions that give rise to a conflict of interest.

**VIII. CERTIFY AND SUBMIT APPLICATION  
*To be completed by the candidate or by the nominating entity on the candidate’s behalf. The candidate’s name below should match how it is entered on the first page of the form and in the online survey.***

**I hereby certify that all of the statements made in this application are true, complete and are made in good faith. I understand that falsifying or intentionally withholding information will be grounds for not being selected or appointed or the withdrawal of any proposed appointment or, if an appointment has been made and accepted, for its immediate cancellation or termination.  
  
Kindly note that whilst no changes can be made after this application form has been submitted and the deadline for applications has expired, any relevant change of current occupation, employment, or position, or any other relevant fact or circumstance should be brought to the attention of the secretariat by   
email (**[**hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org**](mailto:hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org)**).**

**Please review the application before you insert your name and date to indicate your agreement.**

**Name:**   Dr Robbie Francis Watene

**Date:**    30.07.2020

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1. The short **online survey** is used to collect information for statistical purposes such as personal data (i.e. name, gender, nationality), contact details, mandate applying for and, if appropriate, nominating entity. The same name, gender and nationality must be used both in the online survey and in the Word application form. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The **application form in Word format** includes a motivation letter of maximum 600 words (section III of the form). The application form should be completed in English or French only, the two working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. The application form will be used as received to prepare the public list of eligible candidates who applied for the vacancy. The application forms of eligible candidates will also be posted as received on the OHCHR public web page for the selection process. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)