

16 July 2018

Dear members of the Consultative Group,

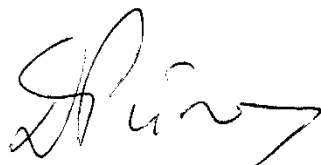
On behalf of the Coordination Committee of Special procedures, I have the pleasure of writing to you in connection to the selection of mandate holders, in particular the selection of several of our future colleagues at the upcoming session of the Human Rights Council in September. A new Coordination Committee has been constituted at the Annual Meeting of Special Procedures that took place in June. As I have just started my mandate as Chairperson of the Coordination Committee, I would like to assure you of the full support of the Committee in your task ahead.

The high quality of mandate holders is crucial to ensure the effectiveness and credibility of the system of special procedures. Taking the opportunity laid down in Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, paragraph 51, which says that “the Consultative Group should take into account, as appropriate, the views of stakeholders, including the current or outgoing mandate-holders, in determining the necessary expertise, experience, skills, and other relevant requirements for each mandate”, I invited the outgoing mandate holders to provide information on the skills they consider essential for the new mandate holders to discharge the mandate.

I am therefore pleased to share with you the contribution received from the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Belarus (annex I) and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea (annex II).

I trust that you will find these suggestions useful and I would be happy to continue discussing this matter further with you should you find it necessary. As indicated earlier, special procedures mandate holders have decided that these contributions should be made publicly available as a way to enhance transparency. This letter will therefore be posted on the public website of special procedures. I wish you success in your deliberations.

Sincerely yours,



Dainius Puras
Chairperson of the Coordination Committee of the Special Procedures

cc: H.E. Mr. Vojislav Šuc
President of the Human Rights Council

Annex I

CONTRIBUTION FROM THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN BELARUS

In the view of the current Special Rapporteur, the mandate-holder should have demonstrated expertise, experience and skills in the following areas:

- Reliable record of expertise in human rights and democracy.
- Proved record of knowledge of the country and region.
- Integrity and devotion to the improvement of human rights and democracy in the country.

Annex II

CONTRIBUTION FROM SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ERITREA

Pursuant to Human Rights Council Resolution 5/11 it is a duty to communicate my thoughts on the essential skills, experience, expertise and, to a lesser extent, qualities an individual would need to demonstrate as the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Eritrea. The views shared in this short document are based solely on the current mandate holder's experience gathered over a period of six years.

In view of the complexities attaching to this particular mandate, the mandate holder would require a mix of backgrounds and skills to be able to address the human rights issues as well as the impediments which have been experienced, including non-cooperation with the mandate by the country concerned.

Country mandates are all-inclusive in nature. Based on the indivisibility of all human rights, the mandate holder would need to demonstrate a steadfast commitment to all human rights as well as expertise and experience in human rights law.

The mandate would benefit hugely if the mandate holder could show a proven track record in monitoring, documenting and reporting on all human rights as guaranteed in international human rights instruments. In short, field experience in human rights work is essential.

A mandate holder would be able to better deliver on the mandate if he/she possesses practical experience in human rights advocacy and networking skills. It would be useful if he/she could tap into diverse networks. The mandate holder should be able to work with varied groups of stakeholders, including states, intergovernmental organisations, regional human rights bodies, civil society, community based and faith-based organisations, academia, minority and indigenous organisations. The mandate holder should also be able to reach out with empathy to survivors of human rights violations, their families and others who represent them.

In view of the preceding, the mandate holder should show willingness and availability to dedicate considerable time to the implementation of the mandate, to maintain contact with different networks, as well as flexibility for travels.

The mandate holder would need to show a high degree of Independence and impartiality, as well as sound political judgement.

Given the high risk of reprisals (against human rights defenders, those cooperating with the mandate as well as against the mandate holder) the mandate holder should be able to show how he/she can tap into resources which could assist in denouncing these practices, with a view to putting a stop to them.

Given the foregoing, last but not least, the mandate holder should demonstrate a high level of resilience, to be able to deliver on the mandate on behalf of the Human Rights Council.