



## Fact Sheet: The Gift Policy

As international civil servants, we must avoid situations and activities that may reflect adversely on the Organisation or compromise operations. Accepting gifts, honours and favours in connection with official duties may give rise to a real or apparent conflict of interest, as it may be seen to create an obligation. Accepting gifts, honours or other tokens of appreciation can impact our independence and impartiality.

Such situations may compromise both our integrity and the UN's reputation. We may not receive any gifts or other incentives that could induce us—or be perceived to induce us—to make decisions that are not independent or impartial. Staff members carrying out functions in sensitive areas such as procurement and investment management must be particularly attentive to this risk; they are held to an even higher standard, in relation to the discharge of their duties and responsibilities.

### RESTRICTIONS

#### **From Governments**

We are prohibited from accepting any honours, decorations, favours, remuneration or gifts (“gifts”) from Government sources. However, if refusal of an unanticipated gift would cause embarrassment, we may accept it on behalf of the Organization and immediately report and entrust it to the Secretary-General.

#### **From non-governmental sources**

While the receipt of honours, favours, gifts or remuneration from non-governmental sources may be permitted with the prior approval of the Secretary-General, approval will only be granted in exceptional cases.

#### **From any source having or seeking a contractual relationship**

Accepting gifts from a person or entity doing business with the UN or seeking to have any sort of contractual relationship with the UN is prohibited. We may not accept anything from such sources.

#### **Offering or promising gifts**

Staff members may exchange gifts with one another, provided that the intention is not to influence the recipients' performance or decision-making. Staff members in supervisory roles should avoid accepting gifts from staff they supervise. Gifts from supervisors to reporting staff members should be given in a transparent, fair and equitable manner. This guidance does not preclude staff members from contributing to group gifts. However, we cannot pressure or require colleagues to contribute towards any gift.

### **TAKING ACTION**

- Inform vendors and contractors of the UN's gift policy.
- Accepting meals, tickets, travel expenses, or other hospitality from UN vendors or contractors is prohibited.
- Register and dispose of gifts that arrive unexpectedly and cannot be returned in accordance with [ST/AI/2010/1](#).
- Do not distribute business cards, brochures, or any other type of business solicitation on behalf of an external entity.
- Never take a gift accepted on behalf of the Organization for your personal use.
- Never accept cash, or equivalents such as gift cards, as a gift in your official capacity from any person or entity, for any reason.



**Enquiries to the Ethics Office are confidential.** When you are unsure about the right course of action, step up and ask for advice. The Ethics Office will listen to your concerns and guide you. We provide confidential guidance on ethical issues. We're here to help – contact us to schedule an appointment.

**Ethics Helpline:** +1 (917) 367-9858

**E-mail:** [ethicsoffice@un.org](mailto:ethicsoffice@un.org)

**Address:** United Nations Ethics Office, 323 E. 44<sup>th</sup> St., DC2-0612, New York, NY 10017, USA

### References

- [ST/SGB/2018/1](#), *Staff regulations 1.2 (j), (k) and (l)*,
- [ST/SGB/2018/1](#), *Staff rules 1.2 (k), (l), (m), (n), (o), (p) and (w)*
- [ST/SGB/2016/9](#), *Status, basic rights and duties of United Nations staff members*
- [ST/AI/2010/1](#), *Reporting, Retaining and Disposing of Honours, Decorations, Favours, Gifts or Remuneration from Governmental and Non-governmental Sources*
- [ST/SGB/2006/5](#), *Acceptance of Pro Bono Goods & Services*
- [ST/SGB/2013/4](#), *Financial Rules and Regulations, Sect. III C, Reg. 3.11*
- [ST/SGB/2006/6](#), *Financial Disclosure, Section 3, paragraph (e)*

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IN THE DARK**

CONFIDENTIAL ADVICE ON CONFLICTS OF INTEREST,  
OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES, GIFTS AND OTHER ISSUES.

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