

Code of Conduct to Prevent Sexual Harassment During or In Relation to ITU Events

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Background

International Telecommunication Union (ITU) events are professional, respectful and harassment-free environments for all attendees, regardless of, *inter alia*, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, ethnicity, race, national origin, age, or religion.

Purpose

The purpose of this code of conduct ('Code') is to communicate that every attendee is expected to conduct themselves in a professional, respectful and responsible manner at all times. Sexual harassment of attendees is not tolerated.

Applicability

The Code applies to all attendees, including media representatives and visitors, of events organised or sponsored by the ITU at a duty station or external premises.¹

Prohibited conduct under this Code

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with a person's official activities or work or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive official or work environment. Sexual harassment may occur in the workplace or in connection with official activities or any event of an official character. While typically involving a pattern of conduct, sexual harassment may take the form of a single incident. In assessing the reasonableness of expectations or perceptions, the perspective of the person who is the target of the conduct shall be considered ('Prohibited Conduct').

Sexual harassment:

- Is the manifestation of a culture of discrimination and privilege based on unequal gender relations and other power dynamics;
- May involve any conduct of a verbal, nonverbal or physical nature, including written and electronic communications;
- May occur between persons of the same or different genders, and individuals of any gender can be either the targets or the perpetrator;
- May occur outside the workplace and outside working hours, including during social functions related to work or any official activities or events of an official character or nature;

¹ If a complaint is made against an ITU staff member, then relevant ITU regulations and rules apply.

- May be perpetrated by any person, whether or not that person is known to the person being harassed. A perpetrator's status as a senior official may be treated as an aggravating circumstance.

Complaint process

If Prohibited Conduct occurs during or in relation to an event organised or sponsored by ITU, then the person who is the target of possible sexual harassment or any third party who has direct knowledge of the incident should report it as soon as possible, preferably before an event has concluded, to the person(s) or service identified for this purpose by the organiser of the event ('Focal Point').

Unless indicated otherwise, the Focal Point is ITU's Head of Safety and Security Division who can be contacted on +41 79 715 84 77 and/or security@itu.int.

While a report may be made at any time, reporting an incident after an event has concluded may limit the options for action that can be taken by the organisers or sponsors of the event.

The Focal Point will gather and record relevant information in a written account of the incident, taking into consideration any applicable ITU regulations, rules and procedures. If the person who reports the incident is not the target of possible sexual harassment, the views and situation of the person who is the target of possible sexual harassment will be taken into consideration. Due discretion and relevant confidentiality rules apply to this process.

As a guide, the following is the information typically required to commence the preliminary fact-finding process: name or other identifying information of the person being accused of sexual harassment; date and location of the incident; a description of what happened; if there were witnesses, their names.

Response to complaint

Once it is completed, the Focal Point conveys the written account of the incident to the organiser of the event and Head of Security, if applicable, for such action as may be appropriate in response to a credible complaint, including revocation or suspension of access privileges of the alleged perpetrator to the event or future events organised or sponsored by ITU. If any additional information is required by the organiser of the event or Head of Security in relation to the Prohibited Conduct, it will be gathered in accordance with ITU regulations and rules, as applicable.

The organiser of the event or the Head of Security, if applicable, will keep the person who has reported the incident reasonably informed of actions taken while applying due discretion and relevant confidentiality rules.

No retaliation

Threats or other intimidation against a person who has made a complaint or provided information in support of a complaint will not be tolerated.