

Position: Research assistant (80%)

UNIDIR is seeking a part-time (80%) research assistant to work on the project “The Humanitarian Impact of Cluster Munitions: Practitioners’ Perspectives” over a 6-month period. The project will survey the opinions of practitioners’ working with the impact of cluster munitions in the 21 countries where they are known to have been used. This includes people working in clearance efforts, emergency medical treatment as well as longer-term physical rehabilitation and social reintegration, and risk education. This will be done principally through a questionnaire targeting individuals and organizations both in country and at the headquarters level. Dissemination of the questionnaire to the right people and organizations as well as the necessary follow-up are vital components of the project. Two case studies will also be conducted in Afghanistan and Cambodia. The findings and recommendations will be published in a UNIDIR report and findings will be presented to the delegates at the UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and other appropriate forums.

Description of responsibilities

Working under the supervision of the Project Manager, the Research Assistant will have the following responsibilities:

- Assisting the Project Manager;
- Creating, maintaining and updating a database (Microsoft Access) of contact details and questionnaire responses;
- Assisting in the development of the research questionnaire;
- Researching and analysing existing documentation;
- Assisting with the analysis of findings, the development of recommendations and report writing;
- Disseminating the research questionnaire and following up with recipients;
- Identifying appropriate contacts within international organizations, governments and NGOs;
- Offering regular updates to the Project Manager;
- Representing the project at relevant meetings in Geneva;
- Serving as a point of contact for the project in Geneva;
- Reporting on project progress at weekly UNIDIR meetings;
- Keeping up to date with developments in policy and practice; and
- Performing general administrative duties.

Qualifications required

The successful candidate will need:

- A degree, preferably post-graduate, in international relations, political science, development or a related field;
- An understanding of the discourse on cluster munitions, explosive remnants of war and landmines, as well as of security, development and humanitarian issues;
- Experience with arms control/disarmament, development and human rights issues, preferably in regards to cluster munitions, landmines and explosive remnants of war;
- Experience working for an NGO or an international organization, ideally the UN;

- Strong research and analytical skills;
- Excellent communication skills, both written and oral, including cross-cultural communication;
- Excellent command of English, both written and oral, and preferably knowledge of another UN language;
- Exceptional administrative and organizational skills;
- Excellent IT skills, including proven experience in database creation (Microsoft Access); and
- To be a self-starter, with the confidence to work with little direct supervision.

Terms

The Project Assistant will work part-time (80%) at the Institute, located at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland.

Salary: CHF 5,000–5,280 per month (the Institute is not responsible for medical insurance, pension, or relocation expenses).

Starting date: 2 October 2006

The appointment shall be for a fixed duration of 6 months.

Application procedure

Applications should be sent by e-mail to application-unidir@unog.ch with “Research Assistant” in the subject line. (If the applicant has limited Internet access, applications can be posted to the attention of “Projects Manager”, UNIDIR, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland.)

Only complete applications (an introductory letter, CV, the name/contact details of three references, and two writing samples) will be considered. The introductory letter should note the earliest availability of the applicant.

The deadline for submission of applications is **Wednesday, 23 August 2006**. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Interviews will be conducted on 4 and 5 September 2006.

No phone calls will be accepted concerning this position.

About UNIDIR

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research develops practical ideas for building peace and security through forward-looking analysis on disarmament and security issues.

UNIDIR’s activities address the entire security spectrum—human, regional and global security—and seek to strengthen linkages to areas such as human rights, humanitarian law and public health. The Institute’s work encompasses a diverse range of issues, from small arms to weapons of mass destruction, from the reintegration of former combatants to preventing an arms race in outer space.

Through its research projects, publications, conferences and expert networks, UNIDIR serves as a bridge between decision makers, researchers, practitioners, civil society groups, Member States and United Nations agencies to promote creative thinking and dialogue on both current and emerging security challenges.

Established in 1980 by the General Assembly as an autonomous institute within the United Nations, UNIDIR is based in Geneva, the international centre for security and disarmament negotiations, the Conference on Disarmament, and humanitarian agencies.

UNIDIR is funded by voluntary contributions from governments and foundations. This ensures the Institute’s freedom to conduct impartial and balanced research and provide policy recommendations to actors in the United Nations system and beyond.