

# Code of Conduct

## ON SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SEXUAL ABUSE

All United Nations civilian and military personnel must uphold the highest standards of professional and personal conduct. At all times MONUC staff and UN contractual workers must treat the local population with respect and dignity. Our mandate includes the protection of civilians, in particular vulnerable groups such as women and children.

Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (SEA)<sup>1</sup> are acts of unacceptable behaviour and prohibited conduct for all UN staff. SEA damages the image and integrity of the United Nations in the DRC and erodes confidence and trust in the Organization.

***It is strictly prohibited for all MONUC personnel to engage in:***

- ▶ Any act of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, or other form of sexually humiliating, degrading or exploitative behaviour;
- ▶ Any type of sexual activities with children (persons under the age of 18 years)<sup>2</sup>; Mistaken belief in the age of a person is not a defence;
- ▶ Use of children or adults to procure sexual services for others;
- ▶ Exchange of money, employment, goods or services for sex with prostitutes or others;
- ▶ Any sexual favour in exchange of assistance provided to the beneficiaries of such assistance, such as food or other items provided to refugees<sup>3</sup>;
- ▶ Visits to brothels or places which are declared off-limits.

All MONUC staff must contribute to an environment that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse. Managers and commanders have a particular responsibility to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct. MONUC personnel are obligated to report any concerns regarding sexual exploitation and abuse by a fellow worker through the established reporting mechanisms.

Any violation of the Code of Conduct will be considered as serious misconduct. SEA activities will be investigated and may lead to drastic disciplinary measures, including suspension, immediate repatriation or summary dismissal. Immunity, when it exists, will be waived by the Secretary-General should this immunity impede the course of justice.

<sup>1</sup> Sexual exploitation means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including profiting monetarily, socially or politically. Sexual abuse means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

<sup>2</sup> This does not apply to MONUC national staff involved in a bona fide relationship in respect of Congolese national law and custom.

<sup>3</sup> Consensual sexual relationships between UN staff and beneficiaries of assistance are strongly discouraged as they are based on an inherently unequal power balance.