

Opening an Interview

Eligibility Officer: Good morning. My name is ----- and I will be interviewing you today. Could you please tell me your name?

Applicant: My name is Akram Muhtadi.

Eligibility Officer: Mr. Muhtadi, this is ----- who is our interpreter. Mr. Interpreter what is the language of interpretation?

Interpreter: I am interpreting from Armenian to Arabic and from Arabic to Armenian.

Eligibility Officer: Have you had a chance to have a few words with the applicant?

Interpreter: Yes I have and I understand him.

Eligibility Officer: Thank-you. Mr. Muhtadi, do you understand the interpreter?

Applicant: I understand him very well.

Eligibility Officer: The interpreter will be interpreting my questions and your answers so it is important to speak clearly and slowly so he can interpret everything that is said. If he holds his hand up, that means you should stop speaking and give him a chance to interpret. And if at any time you do not understand something, please ask for it to be repeated. If you do not know the answer to a question, please say so. You should not guess at an answer. Do you understand?

Applicant: Yes, I understand.

Eligibility Officer: Let me explain the process to you. You have been called for this interview so you have an opportunity to tell me about your reasons for leaving your home country. I have read your file and I am familiar with country conditions in your country. I have some questions to ask you to get more detail about your particular situation. You must cooperate and answer truthfully. If you don't do so, this may affect the outcome of your asylum application for protection.

Applicant: I will tell the truth.

Eligibility Officer: That's good. I am glad to hear that. I know you are probably nervous. That is normal. But please try and relax and do your best. What you tell me is confidential and will not be shared with the authorities in your country. The interpreter is also bound by the confidentiality rule so what you say here will be held in confidence.

I will be recording the questions and answers on my computer but the interpreter will read everything back to you. If you think something is not correct or you would like to clarify something, please advise me. We will have a break after about one hour and 15 minutes. However, if you need a break at any time, please tell me. There is water on the table for you.

Are you feeling well today? Are you ready to start?

Applicant: It's true I am nervous but I am well. We can begin.

Eligibility Officer: Do you have any questions before we start?

Applicant: No. I think you explained it very well.

Eligibility Officer: Very well – I want to start with some questions about your family.