

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INTERNSHIP

Organizational Unit: Protection Unit, Sub-Office in Hong Kong (SOHK)

Duty station: Hong Kong SAR, China

Duration of the internship: Full-time 6 months (extendable to 8 months subject to performance)

Expected start date: 15 August 2022

Background Information/Organizational Context

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established on December 14, 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly. The Agency is mandated to lead and co-ordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide. Its primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees.

We work to ensure that everybody has the right to seek asylum and find safe refuge, having fled violence, persecution, war or disaster at home. Since 1950, we have faced multiple crises on multiple continents, and provided vital assistance to refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced and stateless people, many of whom have nobody left to turn to.

UNHCR's presence in Hong Kong dates back from the Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) period when over 200,000 Vietnamese Boat People fled to Hong Kong to seek asylum. After the end of the CPA, and in view of the fact that the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees was not extended to Hong Kong, UNHCR had undertaken Refugee Status Determination (RSD) under its own mandate.

However, on 25 March 2013, the Court of Final Appeal of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region delivered judgment in *C & others v Director of Immigration and the Secretary for Security (FACV18/2011)*. The Court ruled that the Hong Kong Government, despite not being Party to the 1951 Convention/1967 Protocol, has an independent duty, subject to judicial review, to enquire into whether asserted fear of persecution in the event of return is well-founded. The Court further stated the Government cannot defer to or rely on UNHCR RSD decision making, although it should give weight to UNHCR's decisions.

In compliance with the judgment, the Hong Kong Government commenced its Unified Screening Mechanism (USM) on 03 March 2014 to assess claims for *non-refoulement* protection. Such claims are those lodged by persons not having the right to enter and remain in Hong Kong, on the basis that removing them to another country would expose them to a risk of torture or persecution. Substantiated claimants are referred to UNHCR and are then considered as our Persons of Concern, for whom we actively seek opportunities for the long and short term, inside and outside of Hong Kong respectively. Despite UNHCR's changing role in Hong Kong, we continue working with all stakeholders to ensure that our Persons of

Concern receive adequate protection and assistance, as well as to seek durable solutions for refugees.

Duties and Responsibilities

The UNHCR SOHK Protection Internship scheme is a well-established programme which provides candidates with a broad exposure to the work of UNHCR locally and globally. It involves practical support to the work of the Protection Unit and the team as a whole and is a rewarding experience for those interested in pursuing careers in international or humanitarian affairs. The selected candidate will work in the small Protection Unit at SOHK, under guidance and supervision of the Head of Sub-Office, Senior Protection Associate and alongside another Protection Intern.

The incumbent's responsibilities will include:

- Communication with Persons of Concern
- Referrals to relevant stakeholders
- Face to face / online engagements with Persons of Concern
- Communication with Government, NGOs and legal partners
- Keeping abreast of media developments relating to refugees in Hong Kong
- Monitoring incoming communications
- Translating communications between Chinese and English
- Assisting in the preparation of resettlement submissions
- Assisting in the management of protection and solutions planning
- Attending meetings with relevant stakeholders
- Making appointments, keeping minutes, and documenting key events
- Ensuring all digital database and paper file records are kept up to date
- Undertaking project work as required
- Undertaking other duties as required in support of the team

Person Specification

- Recent graduate or current student who has completed at least two years of study
- Academic background in a development related field
- Fluent written and spoken English and Chinese
- Ability to work in a small team, sometimes with limited supervision
- Reliability in keeping deadlines and delivering a high quality of work
- Strong organizational skills
- Strong communication skills
- Strong IT skills
- Strong attention to detail

Financial Considerations

This position attracts a Food and Transportation Allowance in line with the internal regulations for internships.

COVID-19 Considerations

The office carefully follows Government guidelines regarding social distancing and as such remote work may be required during certain periods.

Interested candidates should email a CV and expression of interest to chihopro@unhcr.org