United Nations Investigative Team to promote accountability for crimes committed by Da'esh / ISIL
UNITAD

JOB POSTING DETAILS

Posting Title: ISIL Language and Message Expert
Department/Office: United Nations Investigative Team to promote accountability for crimes committed by Da'esh / ISIL (UNITAD)
Location: Home based
Type of Contract: Individual Contractor
Posting period: 30 August 2020 – 25 September 2020
Job Opening Number: 20-United Nations Investigative Team for Accountability of Da'esh/ISIL-140616-Consultant6

United Nations Core Values: Integrity, Professionalism, Respect for Diversity

Duties and Responsibilities:

Background:

The United Nations Investigative Team to promote accountability for crimes committed by Da'esh / ISIL (UNITAD) was established by the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 2379 (2017), "to support domestic efforts to hold ISIL (Da'esh) accountable by collecting, preserving, and storing evidence in Iraq of acts that may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide committed by the terrorist group ISIL (Da'esh) in Iraq, to the highest possible standards, which should be addressed by the Terms of Reference referred to
in paragraph 4, to ensure the broadest possible use before national courts, and complementing investigations being carried out by the Iraqi authorities, or investigations carried out by authorities in third countries at their request".

ISIL has a social media-savvy propaganda component that appears to draw followers. Particularly, ISIL has apparently produced and released videos directed at audiences with particular messages. UNITAD seeks independent expert advice, both written and oral, concerning the examination, identification, research and analysis of the messages/speech within specified ISIL videos and materials. This advice should consider the messages/speech within the context of both the respective video/material under examination and other ISIL propaganda contemporaneously released or in circulation at the time. The main deliverables of this consultancy are expert reports regarding particular ISIL videos, and the deliverables should be for, among other things, the "broadest possible use before national courts".

**Purpose and Responsibilities:**

The purpose of this consultancy is to assist UNITAD in better understanding ISIL's messages disseminated through its propaganda materials. Responsibilities of the expert will include the following core elements:

1. Conduct examinations, identification, research and analysis of the language and meaning of messages/speech found in ISIL propaganda materials.

2. Determine the meaning of the messages/speech within ISIL videos and examine how they would have been understood by the intended audience. The examination of the messages/speech within a particular video should be considered to the extent possible within the context of, for example, other ISIL propaganda contemporaneously released or in circulation at the time, the utterances of ISIL leadership in different venues/fora and/or the general conduct of ISIL leaders and fighters.

3. Prepare written expert reports in English detailing the methodology and results of the examination, identification, research and analysis of the messages/speech within particular videos. The reports should be of a quality capable of being tendered for admission before a court pursuant to general principles of international criminal law.

4. Provide oral expert advice to UNITAD members regarding the examination, identification, research and analysis of the language and meaning of messages/speech found in ISIL propaganda materials.

5. The materials consulted can include open sources of information available from public, private, and other online-based materials within established security protocols. Collect and analyze international and domestic based publicly available information to identify trends, patterns, and relationships that provide unique insights about ISIL propaganda.

6. Aside from the abovementioned report, prepare memorandums, opinions, interim reports and other documents as requested.
7. Potentially collaborate with others in the examination, identification, analysis and research of the language and meaning of messages/speech found in ISIL propaganda materials.

**Work Location:**

Home based

**Expected Duration:**

This consultancy is potentially renewable depending upon the operational needs of UNITAD and the availability of funding, and the completion of the deliverables under these ToRs within the specified timeframe.

The methodology will therefore include approximately the following time commitment, to be allocated appropriately based on the expert's individual plans to deliver the items outlined in the following section:

10 working days of home-based consultancy (2 calendar weeks) for work on the first video.

**Result of Service:**

Expert report on a specified ISIL video provided by UNITAD, in particular to explain the meaning of the messages and speech within the video and to examine how it was understood by the intended audience. The report should be of a quality capable of being tendered for admission before a court pursuant to general principles of international criminal law.

**Qualifications/Special Skills:**

**Academic Qualifications:**

Advanced university degree (at minimum master's degree or equivalent) in linguistics, Islamic theology, political science, history, sociology, anthropology or a related field is required. A first-level university degree in combination with qualifying experience and relevant academic/professional qualifications, such as accreditations from law enforcement, military, or government command and staff colleges, may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.

Strong academic, research or professional background in linguistics and Islamic theology. Additionally, academic, research or professional backgrounds in political science, history, sociology or anthropology are desirable.
Strong knowledge of the Sunni Muslim faith in order to detect and explain potential cultural/religious connotations and nuances of messages/speech found within ISIL videos and materials.

Strong understanding of the relevant cultural/religious experiences and backgrounds in order to examine, identify and explain the messages/speech found within ISIL videos and materials. Proven report writing skills in English, including the ability to prepare reports of a quality capable of being tendered for admission before a court pursuant to general principles of international criminal law.

Proven ability to provide oral presentations in English regarding findings of research and analysis.

Knowledge of ISIL, in particular its propaganda methods and materials is highly desirable.

**Experience:**

Minimum of 10 years of progressively responsible academic, research or professional experience (or combination thereof) related to examining, identifying, researching and analyzing the language and meaning of messages/speech found in propaganda materials. Experience with propaganda videos is highly desirable.

Experience working in Iraq or the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is highly desirable.

**Languages:**

Oral and written fluency in both Arabic and English is required.

**United Nations Considerations:**

The United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs. (Charter of the United Nations - Chapter 3, article 8). The United Nations Secretariat is a non-smoking environment.

As per UN policy, Consultants and Individual Contractors may not apply for or be appointed to any position in the Professional or above categories and for positions at the FS-6 and FS-7 levels in the Field Service category within six months of the end of their current or most recent service. This restriction does not apply to associate experts (Junior Professional Officers) appointed under the Staff Rules.
No Fee:

THE UNITED NATIONS DOES NOT CHARGE A FEE AT ANY STAGE OF THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS (APPLICATION, INTERVIEW MEETING, PROCESSING, OR TRAINING). THE UNITED NATIONS DOES NOT CONCERN ITSELF WITH INFORMATION ON APPLICANTS' BANK ACCOUNTS.