

# CODE OF CONDUCT FOR REPRESENTATIVES AND CONSULTANTS

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The Olof Palme International Center (the Palme Center) and our member organisations represent the Swedish labour movement and our proud history of international solidarity. Our tradition of solidarity has given us a good reputation within the international community. We are known as a reliable, efficient, democratic and transparent international partner. The Code of Conduct reflects the core values of the Swedish labour movement. It serves as a guideline to all representatives or consultants of the Palme Center, at home, abroad or when travelling. The Code of Conduct is instrumental in maintaining a high quality in our international solidarity work.

The Palme Center's Code of Conduct aims to:

- Uphold the good reputation of the Swedish labour movement within the international community and ensure that all who, in various ways, represent the Palme Center maintain a high level of professionalism and accountability in their work.

The Palme Center's Code of Conduct include:

- All individuals and organisations that have signed an agreement with the Palme Center.

One's conduct and actions should always be in accordance with the Code of Conduct thus be observant and act accordingly to reduce the risk violations. If a breach has occurred, the Palme Center's management or responsible programme manager should be inform as soon as possible.

In other steering documents the basic vision and goals of the Palme Center are stated, and these should be regarded as an integral part of the Code of Conduct. It includes the Statues of the Palme Center, our Operational policy, our Safety when travelling instruction and the policies for our cross-cutting issues; Gender and equality, Environment and climate, Conflict sensibility and Anti-corruption.

## OWNERSHIP AND MONITORING - COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE

The Secretary General is responsible for the compliance of the Code of Conduct and ensuring it is updated and relevant. The Code of Conduct is reviewed annually by the board of Palme Center.

The Code of Conduct forms an integral part of all agreements signed by the Palme Center. This means that the Palme Center has the right to terminate an agreement or take legal action if a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred. Swedish law applies to those covered by the Code of Conduct, regardless whether in Sweden or in another country. National legislation should be followed by as long as it is not in direct conflict with international conventions. If a breach

concerns suspicion of crime, the person in question could be reported to the police, in Sweden or in another country.

It is important that violations of the Code of Conduct, or suspicion thereof, is reported to the programme manager or the management of the Palme Center, who are obliged to investigate the accusations and, if necessary, take action. It is not always clear what constitutes a violation, hence those covered by the Code of Conduct are encouraged to seek advice and guidance from staff or management of the Palme Center. An active and open dialogue is crucial.

Given that the information concerning violations can be very sensitive, it should always be handled with care, both by the person providing the information and the person receiving it. It is also possible to anonymously submit information via the Palme Center's website. If witnessing or suspecting a violation of the Code of Conduct among members of the labour movement, member and partner organisations, among representatives of international organisations or in the Palme Center, take, if possible, a resolute stand against it.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations (UN) is embodied in the core values and the overall objectives of the Palme Center, as stated in the statutes:

*The Olof Palme International Center works in the spirit of Olof Palme for democracy, human rights, and peace.*

Tolerance, understanding and solidarity are fundamental values of Palme Center and prerequisites for international development cooperation. Freedom from discrimination and harassment is also a fundamental human right, guaranteed in the UN Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The international solidarity work of the Palme Center is based on relationships. These relationships between various stakeholders; employees of the Palme Center, member and partner organisations and other international organisations, are the cornerstone of our work and should bare the hallmark of mutual respect and understanding. To those covered by the Code of Conduct, it is expected to be exemplary in this regard, and to be constructive and respectful in any conflict situation. It is incumbent upon all of us to be professional and do our utmost to enhance good relations. The financial, material and human resources of the Palme Center should be managed responsibly. To act responsibly is to act in a cost-effective manner, with respect to individual rights and with consideration to the environment.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest exists when a decision might have been taken by other intent than by the mission's best interest. This is regardless whether it has occurred or merely constitutes a risk that it could be interpreted as such. If there exist family ties, friendship relations or financial relations between individuals in our work, it might damage the perception of the Palme Center as neutral and independent.

The existence of conflict of interest is particularly sensitive in relation to persons within our target group or persons who are somehow linked to our projects. Especially in relation to the management of our financial resources, assets, contracts and procurements, but also in relation to travels, appointment of positions and participation in activities and trainings. Those covered by the Code of Conduct should, without reservation, report possible conflicts of

interest to employees or management of the Palme Center. If any doubt prevails, it is important to be extra careful and very explicit regarding the information.

## **ABUSE OF POWER**

The work of the Palme Center is with and among people and organisations who are, in various degrees, dependent of our support. Hence, power relations are inevitably a part of it. This is true in Sweden as in any other country. It is therefore essential that this position of power never is used inappropriately for personal gain or at the cost of others. A financial, or other close relationship with a person who is, or may be perceived to be, dependent to the Palme Center and our representatives is inappropriate and should be avoided. Such a relationship risks to expose the other person to possible negative consequences, both during the relationship and in the future. If such relations exist, the Palme Center's staff or management should be informed as soon as possible. Our position of power should not be used to grant privileges to persons which they normally would not have had attained. Our conduct and interaction with others shall never be done in a way that it could be interpreted that certain favours or benefits are expected or required.

## **CORRUPTION**

The Palme Center defines corruption as the abuse of trust or power causing improper gain, often financial, for a person, an organisation or a political party. Corruption includes bribery, embezzlement, fraud, nepotism and cronyism. Corruption occurs all around the world but is often more widespread in countries with weak states and institutions. It is often prevalent in countries where citizens have little possibility to influence, where there exists inadequate citizen participation, lack of transparency and power sharing.

What is perceived as corrupt behaviour is partly subjective and culturally determined. Therefore, it is imperative to facilitate an open dialogue with all involved in our work. The Palme Center, our member and partner organisations have an important role to play to combat corruption. Those who are covered by the Code of Conduct should act proactively and respond to any suspicion of irregularities in projects or organisations we work with. If any type of corruption is suspected, immediately contact the management or the Secretary General of the Palme Center. To protect those who are covered by the Code of Conduct from suspicion of inappropriate conduct, no gifts, allowances, services, or economic benefits should be accepted, unless to a symbolic value. Consult with your programme manager or employer if uncertain. This also applies to non-material gifts such as dinner appointments, or anything similar, external to one's assignment.

## **SAFETY**

The Palme Center cares for the health and well-being of individuals, the safety of our partners and the sustainability of our relationships. Therefore, safety for all who are covered by the Code of Conduct is a priority. This concerns issues of personal safety, such as threats, vulnerability, conflicts and behavioural risk factors as well as matters of organisational safety such as damage to reputation and confidentiality. The Palme Center has an obligation to ensure the safety of staff and to discuss safety and security with partners. Everyone also has a personal responsibility to act safely with a high degree of risk awareness. Those covered by the Code of Conduct should practice utmost care not to expose themselves or others to unnecessary risks. Consideration to safety should be taken when planning accommodation and trips as well as for activities on your spare time when travelling. It is important to be updated on the security situation in the country concerned, follow general travel instructions (including the Foreign

Ministry's), recommendations of the Palme Center as well as other information that would ensure safety.

## **MEDIA AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

The dissemination of information through various channels is key to the work of the Palme Center. It is an effective way to reach out with our message and our goals. The Code of Conduct outlines the primary principles that should be followed in relation to media and the public. When representing the views of the Palme Center or being perceived as a representative, it is important to differentiate between personal opinions and the official position of the Palme Center when presenting one's views. Public platforms such as social media should not be used to disclose sensitive information or actions that could damage the reputation of the Palme Center. The disclosure of confidential information could seriously jeopardize the safety of partners and activists. It may impair the effectiveness of the Palme Center and diminish our credibility. Discretion is expected and confidential information should not be disseminated. Information that is not in the public domain but known to employees, should not be used for personal benefit. By implication, this does not deteriorate the quality of information exchange in our work, neither collective ownership, nor participatory.

## **ALCOHOL AND DRUGS**

A restrictive approach to alcohol should be adhered to when visiting partners, whether in Sweden or another country. In service or in performing an assignment for Palme Center, alcohol consumption is permitted under certain circumstances such as public events, dinner parties with partners or similar. Project funds cannot be used to purchase alcohol; this must be covered by private means or your organisation. On such occasions, it is important that alcohol consumption is moderate. Meetings should not be held in pubs and to invite others for drinks should not be a form of social interaction. No "alcohol relationships" should develop within the operations of the Palme Center. When on an assignment, and even during leisure time, one should be restrictive with alcohol consumption, since you are regarded a representative of the Palme Center during your entire stay. Driving under influence is strictly forbidden and as a passenger, one should react at the least suspicion of it. All narcotic products are forbidden during both work hours and leisure time. Exemptions are made for prescriptions for medical purposes.

## **DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

The Palme Center condemns all forms of harassment and discrimination and will never tolerate it in our work. No individual or group, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, status, political beliefs or the physically challenged, shall be discriminated against. Within the framework of international solidarity, it is an essential commitment to have an active collaborative approach to enhance participation on equal terms and not to prevent full participation. No person should be subjected to sexual harassment, neither physically nor psychologically. Sexual harassment is an act that violates employees or employer. It could include touching, groping, jokes, suggestions of a sexual nature, stares or exhibiting sexually explicit pictures. The person exposed to it, is entitled to decide whether such behaviour is acceptable or not.

## **SEXUAL ASSAULT AND EXPLOITATION**

All forms of sexual assault and exploitation are forbidden, as well as all forms of sexual contact between adults and minors. It is unacceptable to exploit the vulnerability of a person or group within our development or humanitarian work.

## **PURCHASE OF SEXUAL SERVICES AND THE USE OF PORNOGRAPHIC MATERIAL**

The purchase of sexual services is forbidden. All types of transactions, money, venues, merchandise or services, in exchange for sexual acts or other forms of humiliating behaviour and exploitation are forbidden. The purchase of sexual services does not only refer to services from sex workers but also include the so-called "private assistance" which comprises of payment of rent, buying of cloths, payment of school tuition, payment of debt, etc., in exchange for sexual favours. Visits to brothels, striptease clubs or similar are not allowed. Equipment provided by the Palme Center should not be utilized to access pornographic material. If possible, hotels that provide pornographic material should be avoided. All dealings with child pornographic material are strictly forbidden.

## **ORGANISED CRIME**

Activities connected to organised crime exists in many spheres of society. It could include anything from counterfeit goods to human trafficking. When visiting a country, try to acquire knowledge about organised crime, to avoid contributing to the problem unwittingly, for example, when exchanging money, buying cheap goods in markets, choosing accommodation, visiting restaurants, booking hotels, conference facilities, etc.