***APPLICATION DEADLINE: 11 JUNE 2021 AT 12 noon GENEVA TIME***

* *The application process consists of two compulsory parts:****(1) online survey[[1]](#footnote-1)*** *(*[*https://ohchr-survey.unog.ch/index.php/717995*](https://ohchr-survey.unog.ch/index.php/717995)*)   
  and****(2) application form in Word format[[2]](#footnote-2)*** *(to be downloaded from* [*https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/HRC48.aspx*](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/HRC48.aspx)*)*
* *Once fully completed, in English or French only, the Word application form should be submitted by email to* [*hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org*](mailto:hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org)
* *A maximum of up to three optional reference letters may be attached to the email (in Word or PDF format).*
* *No additional documents (e.g. CVs, resumes or additional reference letters) will be accepted.*
* *Applicants will receive an acknowledgment email when both parts of the application process, i.e. the data submitted through the online survey and the Word application form, have been received by the Secretariat.*
* *Applications will only be considered if both parts and all sections of the Word application form have been completed and received by the Secretariat before the expiration of the deadline.* ***No incomplete or late applications will be accepted****.*
* *Eligible for Working Group mandates are only nationals of the States belonging to the* [*regional groups*](https://www.un.org/dgacm/content/regional-groups) *for which specific vacancies have been advertised.*
* *General description of the selection process and answers to frequently asked questions are available at* [*https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/Nominations.aspx*](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/Nominations.aspx) *and* [*https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/BasicInformationSelectionIndependentExperts.aspx*](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/SP/Pages/BasicInformationSelectionIndependentExperts.aspx)
* *In case of technical difficulties or problems with accessing or completing the forms, you may contact the Secretariat by email (*[*hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org*](mailto:hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org)*) or fax (+41 22 917 9008).*

**I. PERSONAL DATA**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1. Family (last) name:** POLYMENOPOULOU | **5. Year of birth:** 1980 |
| **2. First (given) name:** Eleni | **6. Place of birth:** Athens, Greece |
| **3. Other name, if any:** N/A | **7. Nationality (please indicate the nationality that will appear on the public list of candidates):** Greek |
| **4. Gender:** Female | **8. Any other nationality:** N/A |

**II. MANDATE-SPECIFIC COMPETENCE / QUALIFICATIONS / KNOWLEDGE**

**NOTE: Please describe why the candidate’s competence / qualifications / knowledge is relevant in relation to the specific mandate:**

1. **QUALIFICATIONS** (200 words limit)

**Relevant educational qualifications or equivalent professional experience in the field of human rights; good communication skills (i.e. orally and in writing) in one of the six official languages of the United Nations (i.e. Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish.)**

I obtained a Degree in Law from the University of Athens and an LLM in ‘History, Law and Human Rights’, from the University of Grenoble-Alpes.   
My PhD in Human Rights law/ International law was awarded from the University of Grenoble in 2011. My doctoral thesis, written in French (696 pages) and co-supervised by Prof.Chabot, and Prof. Sicilianos, Judge and current President of the ECtHR, discussed the topic of religious sensibilities and artistic freedom under human rights law. It achieved the highest possible distinction in France (‘very honourable with the felicitations of the jury’).

Although I have worked in the UK / Qatar since 2011, I am also a qualified lawyer in Greece, admitted to the Greek Bar Association in 2005 (practicing mainly between 2006-2009). I have also passed the French 'concours de qualification' to become 'Maitre de Conference' in France (2015).  
  
In addition to my legal scholarship, I have studied painting/visual arts at graduate level and have also participated in a number of exhibitions and music performances (2002-2016). I have also published books as a children's books author / illustrator (eg.https://www.patakis.gr/product/498753/vivlia-paidika--efhvika-paidikh-neanikh-logotexnia/To-taksidi-tou-Foth-sth-Xora-ton-Xromaton/).  
  
I am fluent in English, French and Greek. I speak some Spanish, and also read, write and understand basic Arabic.

1. **RELEVANT EXPERTISE** (200 words limit)

**Knowledge of international human rights instruments, norms and principles. (Please state how this was acquired.)**

**Knowledge of institutional mandates related to the United Nations or other international or regional organizations’ work in the area of human rights and particularly in the area of the mandate. (Please state how this was acquired.)**

**Proven work experience in the field of human rights and particularly in the area of the mandate. (Please state years of experience.)**

I have been teaching human rights law courses for the past nine years in Universities in the UK, France and Qatar, as well as courses that require a good understanding of interactions between culture, religion and human rights law, such as 'Global legal systems' and; 'Islamic law and human rights law'. I have been teaching 'Advanced Human Rights' and 'Media law and Cultural endowment' at Hamad bin Khalifa University for the past three years; also, 'Contemporary Human Rights' (at Georgetown University) for the past two years, and 'Arts, Media and Cultural Politics' this year. I also have experience working with NGOs in the area of cultural rights / freedom of speech, and refugee rights. For instance, I have worked with, advised, or written reports for the Greek Council for Refugees; the International Press Institute (IPI); Article19; and Freemuse.

I also have excellent expertise in cultural rights. My research draws heavily on cultural studies, religious studies, as well as art history. In December 2019 I was awarded a Honorary Senior Research Fellowship at University College London (UCL) on the topic of 'Arts and cultural heritage in the Islamic legal tradition: understanding Islamic iconoclasms' and in March 2020 I was invited at Harvard University to work on a project on human rights, religion and disability as a visiting Fellow (cancelled due to Covid19).

1. **ESTABLISHED** **COMPETENCE** (200 words limit)

**Nationally, regionally or internationally recognized competence related to human rights. (Please explain how such competence was acquired.)**

My competence in human rights was acquired by working and studying, and is evidenced by the quality of my scholarly work, which includes publications in leading international academic journals such as the Human Rights Law Review, the Fordham Journal of International Law, the Canadian Journal of Human Rights Law, German Yearbook of International law and the Leiden Journal of International law.

My monograph on the topic of 'Artistic freedom in International law', under contract with Cambridge University Press (forthcoming in 2022) is a unique contribution to the field of art and cultural law.

My competence in human rights however goes beyond my specialization in artistic and cultural matters. This is evidenced by the range of topics I have been working on, more recently:   
- 'Covid-19 Vaccines and the question of Informed Consent: obligations of States and pharmaceutical companies' (with Prof.Yousef Haik, Hastings Science and Technology Law J forthc.2021);   
- Activism and the right to protest (see, e.g. 'Expressing dissent: ‘gag laws’, human rights activism and the right to protest' (Florida J of Int Law, forthc. 2021);

- Human rights in the Muslim world ( e.g.‘Human rights in the six States of the GCC: from Vision to Reality’ (2020) 3 Cardozo Int. & Comp. Policy & Ethics L Rev 929 ;   
also,  
- LGBT Rights (e.g. https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2020/05/18/same-sex-narratives-and-lgbt).

1. **PUBLICATIONS OR PUBLIC STATEMENTS**

**Please list significant and relevant published books, articles, journals and reports that the candidate has written or public statements, or pronouncements that the candidate has made or events participated in relation to the mandate.**

* 1. **Enter three publications in relation to the mandate applied for, in the order of relevance:**

**1. Title of publication:** Cultural rights in the Case-Law of the International Court of Justice

**Journal/Publisher:**  Leiden Journal of International Law

**Date of publication:** 2014

**Web link, if available:** https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/leiden-journal-of-international-law/article/abs/cultural-rights-in-the-case-law-of-the-international-court

**2. Title of publication:** Does one swallow make a spring? Artistic Freedom at the European Court of Human Rights

**Journal/Publisher:** Human Rights Law Review

**Date of publication:** 2016

**Web link, if available:** https://academic.oup.com/hrlr/article/16/3/511/2452827

**3. Title of publication:**  Indigenous Cultural Heritage and Artistic Expressions: “Localizing” Intellectual Property Rights and UNESCO Claims

**Journal/Publisher:** Canadian Journal of Human Rights

**Date of publication:** 2017

**Web link, if available:** https://cjhr.ca/articles/vol-6-no-1-2017/indigenous-cultural-heritage-and-artistic-expressions-localizing-intellectual-property-rights-and-unesco-claims/

**If more than three publications, kindly summarize** (200 words limit):  
I am currently completing a monograph on the topic of 'Artistic freedom in International law' (Cambridge University Press 2022).

Other relevant publications include:  
-an article on 'Artistic Freedom, Cultural Heritage And Islamic Extremism’ published in 2015 by Rutgers Journal of Law and Religion;   
- an article on ‘Arts, Censorship and the Greek Law: Blasphemy v Hate Speech’ pubished in 2017 by the International Human Rights Law Review ;   
- a chapter on ‘Cultural and linguistic identity of persons with disabilities, including sign languages and Deaf culture’ (published in: CRPD Commentary, Bantekas and Stein eds., Oxford University Press 2018);   
- two entries in the Max Planck Encyclopedia of Comparative Constitutional Law (Oxford University Press) on ‘Freedom of Art’ (2017) and 'Censorship' (2019);   
- a book chapter on 'Cultural rights in times of disasters’ (published in: Human rights in times of disasters, Giustiniani et al eds., Routledge Handbook, 2017);  
I have also submitted for publication the following two pieces:   
- 'The concept of “cultural diversity” under human rights law, WTO rules and UNESCO norms' (provisional acceptance by the Santander Art & Law Journal - to be revised by July 2021);   
- 'Caliphs, Jinns and Sufi Shrines: the Protection of Cultural Heritage and Cultural Rights under Islamic law' (under review by the Yale Journal of Law & Humanities).

* 1. **Enter three public statements or pronouncements made or events that the candidate may have participated in relation to the mandate applied for, in the order of relevance:**

**1. Platform/occasion/event on which public statement/pronouncement made:** La Convention de l'UNESCO de 2005, les politiques culturelles et l'intégration des migrants, Deuxième journée d'étude

**Event organizer:** UNESCO Chair on diversity of cultural expressions (Université du Laval, Québec), UNESCO Chair for Human Rights and democracy, Observatory of Cultural Rights and CELAT

**Date on which public statement/pronouncement made:** May 2021

**Web link, if available:** http://www.celat.ulaval.ca/activites/journee-etude/

**2. Platform/occasion/event on which public statement/pronouncement made:**

Series of webinars on 'Cultural heritage and international security'

**Event organizer:** Hellenic Committee of the Blue Shield

**Date on which public statement/pronouncement made:** February 2021

**Web link, if available:** https://theblueshield.org/hellenic-committee-seminars/

**3. Platform/occasion/event on which public statement/pronouncement made:** Addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

**Event organizer:** Voicing voices/ Doha Women Forum

**Date on which public statement/pronouncement made:**  March 2021

**Web link, if available:** https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\_fbid=2762683410646919&id=1562995587282380

**If more than three, kindly summarize** (200 words limit):

I have made a number of other public statements pertaining to media freedom, journalistic freedom, cultural rights and freedom of the art.   
By way of example:

- in Feb.2021 I wrote a piece on the impact of Covid-19 on cultural rights and heritage, arts and global justice, in : Al Ma'arifa Newsletter, Qatar Foundation;

- in March 2019, I discussed the topic of 'Targeted killings and the safety of journalists' as a crime against free speech (GU-Qatar);

https://www.hbku.edu.qa/en/academic-events/targeted-political-killings;  
- in Sept. 2016, I reacted to restrictive trends on artistic freedom in Greece and wrote a statement on artistic freedom in Greece (published by IHRL review) as well as a piece for Freemuse (https://freemuse.org/news/greece-artistic-freedom-at-stake/);   
- in March 2016, I reacted to Indonesia’s strict laws on banning certain types of expression (http://www.e-ir.info/2016/03/10/sexualities-lgbt-rights-and-the-ban-of-gay-emoticons-in-indonesia/);   
- in June 2015, I drafted two expert reports for the International Press Institute(IPI) on Freedom of the Press in Greece and Police violence against journalists and photoreporters (http://legaldb.freemedia.at/legal-database/greece/)  
- in 2015, I organized a seminar series funded by Brunel University, UK, on ‘Culture on the move: migration, living traditions and cultural heritage protection’.

1. **flexibility/readiness and AVAILABILITY of time** (200 words limit)

**to perform effectively the functions of the mandate and to respond to its requirements, including participating in Human Rights Council (HRC) sessions in Geneva and General Assembly sessions in New York, travelling on two country visits per year, drafting reports according to established deadlines, organizing and participating in consultations and meetings, addressing allegations of human rights violations with all concerned, providing advice to States and other stakeholders on issues related to their mandate and engaging with a variety of stakeholders. Kindly indicate whether the candidate can dedicate an estimated time of four to six months per year to the work of a mandate depending on its workload.**

**Please note that the work of mandate holders is unpaid. Those appointed as mandate holders serve in their personal capacities. They are not United Nations staff members, they are not based in United Nations offices in Geneva or at another United Nations location, and they do not receive salary or other financial compensation, except for travel expenses and daily subsistence allowance of “experts on mission”.**

I am currently employed by Hamad Bin Khalifa University, College of Law (Qatar Foundation). I can dedicate an estimated time of 4-6 months per year to the work of mandate.   
My research work is flexible in terms of working hours. This enables me to serve the mandate in an appropriate way.

1. **NOMINATION FOR THE MANDATE**

**Indicate whether the candidate has been nominated by (check all that apply):**

**Individual nominations (indicate this if the candidate is self-nominating)**

**Governments**

**Regional groups operating within the United Nations human rights systems**

**International organizations or their offices**

**Non-governmental organizations**

**National human rights institutions**

**Other human rights bodies**

**Name of the nominating entity and additional information about the nomination (use if applicable, for third-party nominations only)** (200 words limit)**:**

**III. Motivation Letter, INCLUDING YOUR VISION OF THE MANDATE**(600 word limit. Must be typed in the space below and not sent in a separate email or as an attachment. To be drafted and signed (i.e. with a typed signature) by the candidate himself/herself even if nominated by another entity.)

My research and scholarly work focuses primarily on culture, arts, and religion, as well as human rights activism. Moreover, for at least twenty years (1997-2016) I have been involved with the artworlds, displayed own work in exhibitions and participated in music performances, and have had the chance to meet a variety of artists: creatives amazingly qualified and living in extremely poor conditions; electro-pop musicians experimenting with traditional music to keep the 1920s and 1930s alive; political cartoonists striving to work under censorship or self-censorship; graffiti artists whose illegal work carried political messages stronger than the press; talented women not able to receive art education because their father disagreed; perfomers wondering whether if it is 'ok' to tear a flag or mock religious beliefs as part of a performance.

Here is my vision about the mandate.

The first is the need for delineation / redefinition of cultural rights as part of the human rights ensemble. In the new millennium the right to participate in cultural life is increasingly perceived as a right with a collective dimension, which embraces also immaterial heritage, cultural identities and traditional know-how used in the making of artworks. This is an amazing development, given that cultural rights have been neglected for years, and it is important to maintain this direction. This however should happen without blurring the content of cultural rights, neither potential for efficient protection and justiciability. A fresh approach to typologies of cultural rights can contribute to making accountability mechanisms more effective, both in member States and in the context of international/ regional organizations.

Secondly, in the past two decades incidents of destruction of heritage by terrorist groups such as ISIS have been extremely mediatized and widely discussed. Cultural rights have acquired substantial momentum: a case involving a jihadi destroying cultural heritage in Mali has already been considered by the ICC, and a number of resolutions relevant to both cultural rights and cultural heritage have been passed by the UN Human Rights Council and even the Security council. As a result, the link between cultural heritage and cultural rights has been gradually getting stronger. The emphasis on the right to access cultural heritage is surely beneficial at the level of cultural policy, enabling communities who have been affected by cultural damage, destruction and looting to bring forward their claims. It is important however to continue clarifying the right-owners of all types of cultural rights, as well as the responsibilities of States for their violations.   
In this respect, it is also important for the international community to maintain a firm stance in ostracising extremist practices as not being part of cultural rights, nor indeed religion. An approach to extremism based on better understanding of cultural rights will enhance interreligious dialogue and will also contribute to combatting hate speech, especially against minorities, migrants, refugees and other vulnerable groups.

Thirdly, the current Special Rapporteur has started an important and inspiring project, emphasizing the rights of cultural defenders, as well as the linkages between gender and cultural rights. It is important to continue her work, and take it further, considering also other vulnerable groups, ethnic groups, indigenous peoples, and visible and invisible minorities. Equality and non-discrimination obligations should be constantly reminded to States that violate the principle of gender equality. Persistent discrimination against women as it is the case with male guardianship for example, have an impact on the equal enjoyment for cultural rights and prevent women from meanigfully participating in cultural life, especially from becoming artists and performers. Societies that discriminate among citizens not only have cultural life that is less rich and diverse, they also violate their human rights obligations.

Eleni Polymenopoulou   
Doha, 2 June 2021

**IV. LANGUAGES (READ / WRITTEN / SPOKEN)**

**Please indicate all language skills below.**

**1. Mother tongue:** **Greek**

**2. Knowledge of the official languages of the United Nations:**

**Arabic:** Yes or no: **YES** If yes,

**Read:** Easily orNot easily: **not easily**  
**Write:** Easily or Not easily: **not easily  
Speak:** Easily or Not easily: **not easily**

**Chinese:** Yes or no: **NO** If yes,

**Read:** Easily or not easily: **Write:** Easily or not easily: **Speak:** Easily or not easily:

**English:** Yes or no: **YES** If yes,

**Read:** Easily or not easily: **easily   
Write:** Easily or not easily: **easily   
Speak:** Easily or not easily: **easily**

**French:** Yes or no: **YES** If yes,

**Read:** Easily or not easily: **easily   
Write:** Easily or not easily: **easily   
Speak:** Easily or not easily: **easily**

**Russian:** Yes or no: **NO** If yes,

**Read:** Easily or not easily: **Write:** Easily or not easily: **Speak:** Easily or not easily:

**Spanish:** Yes or no: **YES** If yes,

**Read:** Easily or not easily: **easily  
Write:** Easily or not easily: **not easily  
Speak:** Easily or not easily: **not easily**

**V. EDUCATIONAL RECORD**

**NOTE: Please list the candidate’s academic qualifications (university level and higher, indicating the type of degree and field of study, and whether full- or part-time; for example, *Masters in Law, University of XXX, part-time, 1975-1977, city and country)*. If space in the table is insufficient, more than one degree may be listed in a single cell below, separating them by a blank line.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of degree, field of study and name of academic institution, full or part-time:** | **Years of attendance**  (provide a range from-to, for example 1999-2003;  for ongoing education, please put e.g. 2018-present): | **Place and country:** |
| Doctorate/ PhD in Human Righs law, University of Grenoble Alpes, co-tutelle with the University of Athens, part-time | 2006-2011 | Grenoble, France |
| Masters in Law, University of Grenoble Alpes (UGA), full-time | 2003-2004 | Grenoble, France |
| Degree in Law, Kapodistrian National University of Greece, full-time | 1997- 2001 | Athens, Greece |
| Diploma in Applied Arts (comics, illustration and visual arts), Ornerakis Applied Arts School | 1997-1999, 2001-2 | Athens, Greece |
|  |  |  |

**VI. EMPLOYMENT RECORD**

**NOTE: Please briefly list ALL RELEVANT professional positions held in the area of human rights, beginning with the candidate’s current (most recent) occupation.** **Also, indicate whether positions held were full-time or part-time. If space in the table is insufficient, more than one position may be listed in a single cell below, separating them by a blank line.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of employer,**  **functional title,**  **main functions of position, full- or part-time:** | **Years of work** (provide a range from-to, for example 1999-2005;  for ongoing activities, please put e.g. 2018-present): | **Place  and country:** |
| Assistant Professor, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, College of Law, full time | 2018-present | Doha, Qatar |
| Adjunct Assistant Professor, Georgetown University, Edmund A Walsh School of Foreign Service | 2020-present | Doha, Qatar |
| Honorary Senior Research Fellow at University College London, UCL | 2019 | Doha, Qatar |
| Lecturer in Law, Brunel Law School, Brunel University, UK | 2012-2018 | London, UK |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**VII. COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY PROVISIONS   
(of Human Rights Council resolution 5/1)  
*To be completed by the candidate or by the nominating entity on the candidate’s behalf.***

**1. To your knowledge, does the candidate have any official, professional, personal, or financial relationships that might cause the candidate to limit the extent of inquiries, to limit disclosure, or to weaken or slant findings in any way? If yes, please explain.**

no

**2. Are there any factors that could either directly or indirectly influence, pressure, threaten, or otherwise affect the candidate’s ability to act independently in discharging the mandate? If yes, please explain:**

no

**3. Is there any reason, currently or in the past, that could call into question the candidate’s moral authority and credibility or does the candidate hold any views or opinions that could prejudice the manner in which the candidate discharges the mandate? If yes, please explain:**

no

**4. Does the candidate comply with the provisions in paragraph 44 and 46 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1? (Please answer YES if the candidate complies, NO if the candidate does not comply, together with an explanation.)**

***Para. 44: The principle of non-accumulation of human rights functions at a time shall be respected.***

***Para. 46: Individuals holding decision-making positions in Government or in any other organization or entity which may give rise to a conflict of interest with the responsibilities inherent to the mandate shall be excluded. Mandate holders will act in their personal capacity.***

yes

**5. Should the candidate be appointed as a mandate holder, the candidate will have to take measures to comply with paragraphs 44 and 46 of the annex to Council resolution 5/1. In the event that the current occupation or activity, even if unpaid, of the candidate may give rise to a conflict of interest (e.g. if a candidate holds a decision-making position in Government) and/or there is an accumulation of human rights functions (e.g. as a member of another human rights mechanism at the international, regional or national level), necessary measures could include relinquishing positions, occupations or activities. If applicable, please indicate the measures the candidate will take.**

n/a

**VIII. CERTIFY AND SUBMIT APPLICATION  
*To be completed by the candidate. The candidate’s name below should match how it is entered on the first page of the form and in the online survey.***

**I hereby certify that all of the statements made in this application are true, complete and are made in good faith. I understand that falsifying or intentionally withholding information will be grounds for not being selected or appointed or the withdrawal of any proposed appointment or, if an appointment has been made and accepted, for its immediate cancellation or termination.  
  
Kindly note that whilst no changes can be made after this application form has been submitted and the deadline for applications has expired, any relevant change of current occupation, employment, or position, or any other relevant fact or circumstance should be brought to the attention of the secretariat by   
email (**[**hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org**](mailto:hrcspecialprocedures@ohchr.org)**).**

**Please review the application before you insert your name and date to indicate your agreement.**

**Name:** Eleni Polymenopoulou

**Date:** 1 June 2021

\*\*\*\*

1. The short **online survey** is used to collect information for statistical purposes such as personal data (i.e. name, gender, nationality), contact details, mandate applying for and, if appropriate, nominating entity. The same name, gender and nationality must be used both in the online survey and in the Word application form. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The **application form in Word format** includes a motivation letter of maximum 600 words (section III of the form). The application form should be completed in English or French only, the two working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. The application form will be used as received to prepare the public list of eligible candidates who applied for the vacancy. The application forms of eligible candidates will also be posted as received on the OHCHR public web page for the selection process. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)