



Permanent Mission of Switzerland  
to the United Nations organisations in Rome



## Not A Target: Working together to protect humanitarian personnel

Side event on the margins of the annual session of the Executive Board, 2025

Tuesday, 24 June 2025, 13:30–14:30

*Aula Delegatis 1, WFP headquarters*

### Context

2024 was the deadliest year on record for humanitarian personnel, with more than 360 aid workers killed across 20 countries. Violent conflicts are growing in number, intensity and complexity. Respect for international humanitarian law is being severely undermined. Calls for compliance are not being heard.

As the world's largest humanitarian organization, and the provider of logistics to many others, no United Nations organization understands this deadly trend more than WFP. In 2024, WFP's Security Division recorded the highest-ever number of security incidents affecting WFP operations, surpassing 2023's figures which were worst on record until that point. WFP's leadership have responded with determination and an ongoing commitment to support and protect their global team. This included the introduction of WFP's first ever corporate duty of care accountability and governance framework.

During the June 2025 annual session, WFP's Executive Board will consider WFP's 2024 [security report](#) (WFP/EB.A/2025/8-G) and WFP's efforts to strengthen duty of care. This side event will

expand the discussion, building greater awareness of the deteriorating threat environment and global political initiatives underway to catalyse systemic change.

These initiatives include the Ministerial Group for the Protection of Humanitarian Personnel formed by Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Sierra Leone, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in September 2024.

The Group is pursuing a new Declaration which will support the United Nations Secretary-General in his endeavours to improve the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, including in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolution 2730. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has also launched a global initiative aimed at galvanizing political commitment to international humanitarian law, joined by numerous states.

Now is the time for WFP, its Member States and humanitarian partners to consider their role and contribution. Working together, we can – and must – reverse the deadly trajectory.

## Objectives

This side event will shine a light on the personal experiences of WFP and cooperating partner staff, particularly women and national staff, operating in complex environments around the world. It will examine the context of the increase in security incidents, and organizational responses to keep staff safe. Most importantly, the event will raise awareness of opportunities for the humanitarian sector and WFP Member States to take action.

Members States will be able to apply their insights to the discussion of WFP's 2024 security report during the annual session of the Board. They will also be equipped to navigate future opportunities to engage with international humanitarian law initiatives.

## Agenda

13:00–13:30 **Buffet lunch**

13:30–13:32 **Welcome remarks** by Ms Cindy McCain, Executive Director, WFP

13:33–13:35 **Voices of WFP and cooperating partner staff from the field [video]** sharing their personal stories of working as humanitarians at a time of unprecedented risk

13:36–14:26 **Panel discussion and audience Q&A**

*Moderator:* H.E. Ms Elissa Golberg, President of the Executive Board and Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Canada

*Panel:*

- Mr Jean-Martin Bauer, Director, Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Service, and former Country Director, Haiti, WFP
- Ms Tara Yip-Bannicq Ward, Global Roving Security Advisor, Plan International
- Mr Hichem Khadhraoui, Executive Director, Centre for Civilians in Conflict

14:27–14:30 **Closing remarks** by H.E. Ms Julianne Cowley, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia