PANTEION UNIVERSITY, ATHENS, GREECE

European Master's Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation
2013/14

THE RIGHT TO SAFE AND HEALTHY WORK CONDITION:
Humanitarian aid worker's mental health and legal obligations of humanitarian organisations.

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Abstract

Focus on mental health of humanitarian aid workers has been on the rise because of the mental health distress humanitarian workers face. Researches point to the nature of the work and environment itself contributes to the distress but stresses hiring organisations have a role to play. Despite this, many agencies lack internal policies and mechanisms to support staff well-being and have vague understanding of their obligations. This thesis presents protection of humanitarian aid workers is not limited to physical security but one that encompasses mental health and psychosocial wellbeing. International human rights instruments assert the holistic protection of physical and mental wellbeing of workers and the obligation of hiring organisations encompasses both these components, not either or. Because immunity in national courts, most organisations in the humanitarian sector have internal dispute mechanism to address issues arising from mental health distress but access to these tribunals are limited due to reasons addressed in this writing. Despite the tribunals, mental health distress is prevalent and measures to tackle the problem is lacking. This displays the needs for a comprehensive method which is proposed by the pyramid of care that addresses several factors that can improve the mental health of humanitarian aid workers.

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