

Contextual Background

The security environment across the Iran and the broader Middle East and the Gulf region has deteriorated rapidly following the escalation of hostilities that began on 28 February 2026 with coordinated military strikes against Iran. What began as targeted military action has quickly evolved into a region-wide crisis, characterized by cross-border missile and drone attacks, strikes on military, energy and civilian infrastructures, widespread airspace closures, and mounting humanitarian pressures across multiple countries. Within Iran, civilian infrastructure has been significantly destroyed, telecommunications are unstable, and large-scale displacement is underway from major urban centres, including Tehran. The crisis is also generating wider regional spillover effects, including maritime disruption in the Strait of Hormuz, security incidents across Gulf states, and severe constraints on civilian aviation and humanitarian logistics. The speed, geographic spread, and unpredictability of these developments are creating acute operational pressures for the United Nations, necessitating immediate, time-bound surge support to bolster existing capacities.

For the United Nations and the broader humanitarian community, this rapidly evolving environment presents major operational challenges. Humanitarian actors must continue delivering life-saving assistance while navigating a volatile security landscape characterized by shifting conflict dynamics, limited situational awareness, and complex civil-military interactions. In this context, the mandate of United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) as a system wide enabling function is central: effective security coordination, and advisory support are essential to ensuring that UN entities can remain operational, sustain access and deliver on their respective mandates. These functions are critical enablers of humanitarian programming and continuity of operations.

Operational Gap

In Iran, UN personnel are operating under severely degraded conditions, including limited analytical capacity, communications disruptions, and mobility constraints, at a time when the pace of military developments and the number of actors involved require constant monitoring. These challenges are compounded by significant constraints on deploying additional personnel into the country, including visa limitations, which restrict the feasibility of in-country surge support and necessitate the identification of alternative, regionally based solutions to reinforce capacity. Strengthening analytical capabilities to track escalation triggers, develop forward-looking scenarios, and support informed operational decision-making is essential to maintaining situational awareness and enabling the UN system to operate safely in an increasingly uncertain environment. These capacities also directly support the wider humanitarian community through the Saving Lives Together (SLT) framework, which enables UNDSS to share security information, risk analysis, and bolster coordination with NGO partners operating in this volatile context. Any shortfall in these capacities will have cascading effects beyond the UN, weakening the ability of the broader humanitarian system to operate safely and effectively.

Investments in analytical capacity, security coordination, and humanitarian liaison mechanisms are therefore urgent and non-discretionary. These capabilities represent a highly cost-effective enabler of humanitarian operational continuity, allowing humanitarian actors to maintain access and sustain operations in complex conflict environments where operational disruptions could otherwise significantly hinder assistance to affected populations.

What Support Will Enable

Partner support will enable UNDSS to strengthen critical security and analytical capacities that support both UN agencies and humanitarian partners. For Iran, gratis expert personnel will support the establishment of enhanced analytical and situational awareness capacity, expected to be embedded in OCHA Humanitarian Operations Cell in Jordan to monitor escalation triggers, track conflict dynamics, and develop forward-looking scenarios to inform operational decision-making. This capacity will enable earlier anticipation of risks for the UN system, adapt security measures, and maintain operational continuity despite rapidly evolving conflict conditions. This will reduce operational delays, strengthen the access and help manage exposure of humanitarian personnel to security risks.

This targeted investment will enhance situational awareness, operational coordination, and humanitarian access, enabling the United Nations and its partners to continue delivering life-saving assistance while safeguarding personnel and protecting humanitarian space. These surge measures are intended as crisis-specific, short to mid-term reinforcement and will be reviewed as conditions stabilize and usual coordination mechanisms can resume.

Terms of Reference

Request # UNDSS-SBP-2026-002: To support the rapidly escalating regional crisis in Iran with security risk management and coordination for UN and NGO operations.

Position Title: Expert Security Analyst

Post Location: Amman, Jordan

Duration: 6 months (with possibility of extension)

Summary

The rapidly escalating regional crisis triggered by coordinated military strikes on Iran has created severe operational pressures marked by widespread attacks, airspace closures, degraded infrastructure, disrupted communications, and growing humanitarian constraints. In Iran, UN personnel face severely limited situational awareness, high-tempo military developments, and mobility restrictions, making real-time security analysis essential to track escalation triggers, anticipate scenarios, and support critical operational decision-making. Strengthening analytical capacity through UNDSS is vital not only for the safety and continuity of UN operations but also for enabling coordinated information-sharing and risk analysis with humanitarian partners through the Saving Lives Together framework. Investing in a dedicated Security Analyst for Iran is therefore a cost-effective and urgent requirement to safeguard personnel, preserve humanitarian access, and maintain life-saving operations in an increasingly volatile and unpredictable environment.

Org. Setting and Reporting

The Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) is responsible for providing leadership, operational support and oversight of the United Nations security management system (UNSMS) globally. As a global leader in security risk management, UNDSS enables the delivery of United Nations programmes and activities in the most complex and challenging environments, while maximizing resources.

The position will be co-located within the OCHA Humanitarian Operations Cell in Amman, Jordan. The Expert will report to the UNDSS Chief Security Adviser for Jordan, in collaboration with the Security Adviser in Iran, with a technical reporting line to the Chief of Security Information Analysis Section. The Expert will work in close coordination with the UNDSS HQ Crisis Coordinator and collaborate with Security Advisers, UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, and NGOs and SLT partners across the region.

Responsibilities

- Provide conflict-sensitive, context-specific, strategic and actionable analysis to UN senior leadership to inform security decisions, integrating security and access implications for UN personnel, assets, and operations.
- Ensure shared situational awareness through close coordination with UNDSS and UN analysts, OCHA access teams, UN AFP security functions, SLT/NGO partners and other key counterparts, aligning threat and access assessments across the system.
- Lead the identification of information requirements and oversee the collection, validation, and dissemination of critical inputs and products to Designated Officials, SMTs, and operational leadership.
- Monitor and assess conflict dynamics, escalation indicators, and incident trends, providing timely alerts and forward-looking analysis on implications for security, humanitarian access and operational continuity.
- Support rapid security risk assessments, scenario planning, and operational decision-making, in close coordination with OCHA led access coordination mechanisms for Iran and the wider regional environment.
- Produce clear security advisories, analytical briefs, and leadership briefings to guide risk mitigation, movement planning, and operational posture.
- Maintain structured liaison with host government authorities, security services, diplomatic counterparts, and OCHA, validating information and informing principled access engagement.
- Contribute to regional and cross border threat and access analysis, ensuring spillover risks are reflected in preparedness and planning.
- Oversee and mentor security information analysts and national staff, ensuring analytical quality, consistency, and surge readiness.
- Provide on demand analytical and coordination support during crises or rapid escalations, as directed by senior security leadership, with a focus on sustaining humanitarian access.
- Prepare and regularly deliver comprehensive security analysis briefings (e.g., weekly and as required) to the Security Management Team (SMT), covering current and emerging threats, significant security incidents, and trends, in order to inform decision-making and support effective security risk management measures.

Work implies frequent interaction with the following counterparts and stakeholders

- UNDSS leadership and structures (country, regional, HQ) to ensure coherent security risk management, threat analysis, and operational alignment across the UNSMS.
- UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes (AFP) leadership and security focal points to integrate security and access analysis into programme delivery, movement coordination, and operational continuity.
- OCHA-led access and civil–military coordination mechanisms to align security risk analysis with humanitarian access strategies, scenario planning, and inter-agency decision-making.
- Saving Lives Together (SLT) partners, including international and national NGOs, to support shared situational awareness, coordinated risk analysis, and principled humanitarian access.
- Senior decision-makers and external counterparts (Designated Officials, SMTs, host-government authorities, and relevant diplomatic or regional interlocutors) to validate information, manage escalation risks, and inform security posture and access decisions.



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Work Experience

- A minimum of seven years of progressive responsible experience in political, security or intelligence analysis.
- Demonstrated experience in scenario planning and trend analysis.
- At least two years' experience and exposure at the international level.
- At least one year of experience in a conflict or post conflict environment.
- Experience in producing actionable analysis for senior-level audiences to advance decisions, strategies and executions on sensitive peace and security matters.
- Skills in data visualization, mapping and the preparation of analytical material.