

CURRICULUM VITAE

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Personal

Name **Alex (Lex) Takkenberg**
Permanent Address Vorgartenstraße 204/736
1020 Vienna, Austria
Secondary Address Ménusé de Catalan, Hameau de Laurine
31350 Péguilhan, France
Tel +43 660 1185463
E-mail l.takkenberg@gmail.com; l.takkenberg@project20s.eu
Date of Birth 24 November 1959
Nationality Dutch

Education

Elementary Michiel de Ruyter School, Amstelveen, The Netherlands.
High school Scholengemeenschap Casimir, Amstelveen, The Netherlands.
University University of Amsterdam, Bachelor of Law (1980).
University of Amsterdam, Masters of International Law (1983).
Specialisation: Public International Law.
University of Amsterdam, Masters of Law (1985). Specialisation:
Constitutional Law, Human Rights Law, and Immigration Law.
University of Nijmegen, Doctorate in Law (1997).

Employment

2020-present **Freelance lecturer, consultant, researcher and photographer; Project20s, Vienna.** In parallel, I am a senior advisor on Palestinian refugees and the unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict with Arab Renaissance for Development and Democracy and am a member of the Advisory Counsel of The Rights Forum. I am also working on two books – a memoir and an organizational ethics practice guide for personnel of multilateral organizations.

2009-2019 **Chief Ethics Officer, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, Headquarters (UNRWA), Amman.** Principal advisor to UNRWA's Commissioner-General in nurturing a culture of ethics, integrity and accountability, thereby enhancing the trust in, and credibility of UNRWA, both internally and externally. As the first incumbent of this position, I have been instrumental in developing UNRWA's ethics function under guidance from the Director of the United Nations Ethics Office and in close cooperation with the Ethics Officers of the other Funds and Programmes. Specific duties include standard setting and policy support; training, education, communication and outreach; advice and guidance; conflict of interest prevention through financial and outside interest disclosures; whistleblower protection; protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) of beneficiaries and prohibited conduct in the workplace. Key achievements to date include the development of a comprehensive ethics education programme comprising of a handbook and accompanying brochures, posters, etc, a mandatory e-learning course, and face-to-face training; development of a comprehensive anti-corruption strategy; extensive work on prevention and response to sexual misconduct. Member of the UN Ethics Panel since its establishment and its alternate chair from November 2018 until October 2019.

2007-2009 **General Counsel, UNRWA Headquarters, Jerusalem.** Principal legal adviser to the Commissioner-General and the Agency. Responsible for the leadership, management and administration of the Department of Legal Affairs and member of the Management

Committee and other senior-level advisory bodies established by the Commissioner-General. Responsible for ensuring efficiency, transparency and accountability in the work of the Department of Legal Affairs and leading the coordination of – and providing substantive direction to – the Agency’s legal officers and legal consultants. The General Counsel was also designated Ethics Officer for the Agency effective 1 January 2008.

- 2006-2007 **Director of Operations/Director of Operational Support, UNRWA Headquarters Amman.** This position was established at a time of major reform in UNRWA, referred to as the Organizational Development programme, with as one of its key purposes to firmly embed programme cycle management (PCM) in the Agency. Specific duties included overseeing the development of operational policy; planning and ensuring coherence in UNRWA’s programming; strengthening project management; developing monitoring and evaluation; coordinating emergency preparedness and response; performing functions related to programme advocacy, representation and support for external relations; and serving as the Agency’s Security Focal Point. In addition to these policy development and coordination roles, during 2006 I was also responsible for managing operations at UNRWA’s Headquarters in Amman, including HR, finance, general services and building management. I also served ex officio in the Agency’s senior management structures. Finally, I represented UNRWA at various high-level inter-agency forums, including HLCP, IASMN, and at high-level meetings with UNHCR and UNICEF.
- 2004-2006 **Director of UNRWA Affairs, Syria.** Responsible and accountable for the operations activities – related to both ongoing programme and time-bound projects – of the Syria Field, which provides education, health, microfinance, relief and social services to over 430,000 refugees and employs over 3,200 professional and support staff (2005 regular budget US\$31.3 million in addition to a project budget of US\$19.4 million). Principal representative of the Commissioner-General to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. Promoting Agency objectives and refugee programme services by developing and maintaining relations with the host government, diplomatic missions, other UN agencies, non-governmental organizations and the media. Member of the UN Country Team and UN Security Management Team. Managing the human and financial resources for the offices in the field. Regularly providing input to the Commissioner-General and to the Management Committee for the formulation of Agency policies and plans, as well as on political, social and economic developments in the region and their potential impact on Agency policies and programmes.
- 2000-2004 **Deputy Director of UNRWA Affairs, Syria & Chief, Field Relief & Social Services Programme.** Principal advisor to the Director on all operational matters concerning the activities of the Field, which provides education, health, relief and social services to over 400,000 refugees and employs over 2,900 professional and support staff (2002 regular budget US\$26 million). My scope of work included special responsibility for the relief & social services programme as well as contacts with the media, donor relations, security, and project co-ordination. I was also chairman of the Field Contracts Committee, the Field Property Survey Board and one of the chairmen of the International Staff Joint Appeals Board. Finally, I had overall responsibility for a major rehabilitation project aiming at improving the housing conditions of refugees who have been living for over 50 years at dilapidated army barracks at the Neirab refugee camp near Aleppo, in the north of Syria.
- 1997-2000 **Deputy Director of UNRWA Operations, Gaza Field Office,** Principal advisor to the Field Director who also holds an Agency-wide portfolio as Director of Operations (D2). Because of the Director’s dual responsibilities, I regularly advised him on general policy issues and on inter-Field matters, in addition to being to a large degree responsible for the day-to-day running of the Field. I headed a Staffing Review Task Force and was a member

of the HQ Project Review Board. In addition to supervising regular programme activities, I was responsible for the final stages of a 235-bed hospital project.

- 1994-1997 **Chief, Field Relief and Social Services Programme, UNRWA, Gaza.** Responsible for UNRWA's direct relief and developmental social services programmes (totalling US \$45 million in 1996-1997). I was instrumental in establishing a sound working relationship with relevant ministries of the newly created Palestinian Authority and responsible for adapting the Programme to the needs prompted by the introduction of Palestinian self-rule. In order to more effectively strengthen the programmes and institutional capacity of more than thirty UNRWA affiliated community centres and local NGOs providing services to women, the disabled, youth, and children, I established a new Social Services Division. I also had the overall supervision of the reconstruction of nearly 2,000 refugee shelters with special donor funding as part of the Agency's Shelter Rehabilitation Programme. Finally, in 1995-1996, I headed a number of UNRWA missions to several hundred Palestinians stranded at the Egyptian-Libyan border.
- 1992-1994 **Field Relief and Social Services Officer, UNRWA, Gaza (1992-1993) and Syria (1993-1994).** In both Fields I was responsible for the Relief and Social Services Programmes. In 1992, I headed an UNRWA mission to Kuwait, which collected detailed information on the situation of the remaining Palestinians in that country in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War. I was also responsible for the repatriation of refugees from the so-called Canada Camp in Egypt to the Gaza Strip.
- 1990-1992 **Deputy Field Relief and Social Services Officer, UNRWA, Gaza.** In this job I was responsible for the Agency's emergency welfare programmes providing food and financial support to families affected by Israeli measures in response to the Palestinian uprising or *intifada*. During and in the immediate aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War, when a blanket curfew was imposed on the Gaza Strip by the Israeli authorities, I planned, organised and supervised four large-scale emergency food distributions benefiting the entire Gaza Strip population. Finally, I developed several computerised management systems to provide better control over direct relief programmes, and trained its users.
- 1989-1990 **Refugee Affairs Officer, UNRWA, West Bank.** In my first job with UNRWA, I was member of a team of internationals and Palestinians specifically employed to provide a measure of human rights protection and general assistance to the refugee population exposed to harsh Israeli measures in response to the Palestinian uprising. During this period, I was also given a six months acting assignment as Assistant Field Supply and Transport Officer responsible for port operations and warehousing.
- 1983-1989 **Legal Officer, Protection Department, Dutch Refugee Council, Amsterdam.** I was responsible for legal counselling and training of lawyers, paralegal volunteers, and staff of the Dutch Refugee Council in respect of determination of refugee status and granting of asylum, prevention of *refoulement* or expulsion, prevention of abusive detention, issuance of identity and travel documents, facilitation of family reunion, ensuring the issuance of work permits as well as the benefits of other economic and social rights. I was secretary of the Legal Committee of the Dutch Refugee Council, which monitored changes in legislation and policies affecting the status of refugees, and of its Working Group on Legal Aid to Refugees. Finally, I established together with several European colleagues, the European Legal Network on Asylum (ELENA) under the auspices of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) and participated in a series of exchanges between asylum lawyers and practitioners in North America and Europe.

1981-1983 **Academic Assistant at the Institute of Public International Law and International Relations of the University of Amsterdam.** In addition to assisting the staff of the Institute with their research, I acted for the librarians of the United Nations Depository Library and the library of the Institute and organised several colloquia and an excursion to UN institutions in Geneva.

Other relevant activities

Frequent guest-lecturer/speaker at various universities and institutions, including the University of Oxford, the University of Amsterdam, the University of South Africa, University of Exeter, American University of Beirut, University of Jordan, Tel Aviv University, Bir Zeit University, the American University of Cairo, University of Bergen, University of Sokhumi, International Anti-Corruption Academy, Badil, Aidun, and the Royal Institute for International Affairs.

As appears from my employment record, I have worked and lived during the past 30 years at various locations in the Near East. In addition, I have travelled extensively in a great number of countries on all continents since the days I was a student.

I am in possession of a valid driver's license and have up-to-date Microsoft Office skills.

Professional and Managerial Training

In addition to various in-service training programmes, I attended the following courses:

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| 2012 | International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA), <i>International Anti-Corruption Summer Academy</i> , Second Session, Laxenburg, Austria. |
| 2009 | UN System Staff College, <i>UN Leadership Programme</i> , 2nd cohort: Ethics and Accountability. |
| 1997 | United Nations University, <i>First International Leadership Programme</i> , Amman, Jordan; intensive five-week programme designed to develop the skills of (future) international leaders by learning directly from some 50 distinguished leaders from all over the world. |
| 1989-present | UNRWA, in-service training courses on various subjects including basic supervisory skills, recruitment interviews, improving personal management skills, project cycle and project management, sustainable development of community centres, conflict resolution, security in the field, administrative investigations, performance management and various computer courses. |
| 1987 | Columbia University, University of Leiden, University of Amsterdam, <i>Leyden-Amsterdam-Colombia Summer Program in American Law</i> , Amsterdam Session; four-week introduction to the legal system of the USA. |
| 1982 | University of Thessaloniki, three-week summer course entitled <i>The Refugee Problem on Universal, Regional, and National Level</i> . |

Publications

Various publications in Dutch and English, the most important of which are:

'Internationale voedselveiligheid: internationale organisaties en het voedselvraagstuk [International Food Security: International Organizations and the Food Problem], 31 *Ars Aequi*, Nr. 7, Special issue: Noord-Zuid op zoek naar recht, pp. 389-394 (1982).

Nieuwsbrief Asiel- en Vluchtelingenrecht [Newsletter on Asylum and Refugee Law], Editor-in-Chief, volumes 1-4 (1985-88), Amsterdam, Dutch Refugee Council (approx. 600 pp. per vol.).

'Mass Migration of Asylum Seekers and State Responsibility', in *The Refugee Problem on Universal, Regional and National Level*, Thesaurus Acroasium, vol. 13, Thessaloniki, Institute of Public International Law and International Relations, 1987, pp. 787-802.

'Enkele recente ontwikkelingen in het vluchtelingen- en asielrecht' [Some Recent Developments in Refugee and Asylum Law], *Sociaal Recht*, pp. 119-24 (1987).

Vluchtelingenrecht: Een inleiding voor rechtsbulpverleners [Training Manual on Refugee Law], Amsterdam, Dutch Refugee Council, 1988 (272 pp.).

'UNRWA en de Palestijnse volksopstand' [UNRWA and the Palestinian Uprising], 2 *VN Forum* Nr. 3, pp. 24-28 (1989).

Alex Takkenberg and Christopher C. Tahbaz (Eds.), *The Collected Travaux Préparatoires of the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, volume I (438 pp.), volume II (244 pp.), volume III (704 pp.), Amsterdam, Dutch Refugee Council, under the auspices of the European Legal Network on Asylum, 1989.

'The Protection of Palestine Refugees in the Territories occupied by Israel', 3 *International Journal of Refugee Law* pp. 414-434 (1991).

'Detention and Other Restrictions on the Freedom of Movement of Refugees and Asylum Seekers: The European Perspective', in Bhabha, J. & Coll, G., *Asylum Law & Practice in Europe and North America: A Comparative Analysis by Leading Experts*, Washington, Federal Publications Inc., 1992, pp. 137-159.

The Status of Palestinian Refugees in International Law, Oxford, Clarendon Press/Oxford University Press, 1998. The Institute for Palestine Studies published an integral Arabic translation of the book in 2003.

'The Search for Durable Solutions for Palestinian Refugees', in Benvenisti, E., Gans, C., and Hanafi, S., *Israel and the Palestinian Refugees*, Heidelberg, Springer, pp. 373-386, 2007.

Riccardo Bocco and Lex Takkenberg (guest editors), 'UNRWA and the Palestinian Refugees 60 Years Later', *Refugee Survey Quarterly* Special Double Issue, Vol. 28, Issue 2-3, for introduction by Lex Takkenberg, see pp. 253-259, 2009.

Serving Ethically: Handbook on Ethics and the Standard of Conduct Applicable to UNRWA Personnel, Amman, UNRWA, 2013.

Sari Hanafi, Leila Hilal and Lex Takkenberg (editors), *UNRWA and Palestinian Refugees: From Relief and Works to Human Development*, Oxford, Routledge, 2014.

Francesca Albanese and Lex Takkenberg, *Palestinian Refugees in International Law*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2020.

Languages

Dutch	mother tongue	German	working knowledge
English	fluent	Arabic	basic knowledge
French	working knowledge		