

Secretary of State announces the appointment of new Commissioner to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

Press release

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Right Honourable Shailesh Vara MP, has announced the appointment of Justin Kouame to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.



Mr Kouame will take up the appointment with effect from 1 September 2022.

Mr Kouame was formerly Chair of the Northern Ireland Community of Refugees and Asylum Seekers and member of the Northern Ireland Race Equality Sub-Group and Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities.

Background

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (the 'NIHRC') was created by the Northern Ireland Act 1998, as part of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement.

The NIHRC was established in 1999 and operates as an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Northern Ireland Office.

Its powers and duties are set out in legislation, and it operates in compliance with UN General Assembly resolution 48/134 (the 'Paris Principles') on National Human Rights Institutions. The NIHRC's functions include keeping under review the adequacy and effectiveness in Northern Ireland of law and practice relating to the protection of human rights and promoting understanding and awareness of the importance of human rights in Northern Ireland.

Further information about the work of the Commission can be found [here](#).

Terms of appointment

- This position is part-time for a period of three years ending on 31 August 2025.
- The position receives a fixed annual remuneration of £7,500.
- The position is not pensionable.

Political Activity

All appointments are made on merit and with regards to the statutory requirements. Political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity in defined categories to be made public.

Mr Kouame has declared that he has not been politically active in the last five years.

Regulation

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointment (OCPA) regulates appointments to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

Statutory Requirements

The Secretary of State makes appointments to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in accordance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

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