QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
TENDER NO. 1967 – SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION

Below please find the questions from bidders and the answers from the Contracting Authority.

Question no.	Questions from tenderers	Answer from the Contracting Authority
1	**Certification requirements** Could you please clarify whether it is mandatory to hold ISO 18841, ISO 20108, or an equivalent certification in order to participate? Our company holds ISO certifications specifically related to translation and post-editing services, but not the above-mentioned interpreting standards. Would this affect our eligibility?	The certifications mentioned in section A.5 are not mandatory, and bidders can inform of other or similar accreditation. ISO certifications related to translation and post-editing services are also relevant. The certifications are not a minimum requirement, and no bidders will be declared ineligible. The Contracting authority is interested in knowing which accreditations the bidders have, if any.
2	**Distribution of assignments** In the event that several providers are awarded under the framework agreement, how will service requests be distributed among them? Will there be a ranking system, rotation mechanism, or mini-competition for each assignment?	If more framework contracts are concluded for the same service, they will be ranked. The bidder with the highest score will be ranked no. 1 and contacted first. Only if bidder no. 1 is unavailable to deliver, the contractor ranked as number 2, will be asked to deliver. We might also conclude contracts without ranking, where only one bidder has the highest score for a particular language.
3	**Onsite services** Is there a possibility that onsite interpreting services will be required? If so: • Could you indicate the expected number of onsite assignments? • What would be the service locations? • Should the same unit prices apply to both remote and onsite services?	We do not foresee onsite interpretation services. We do foresee hybrid interpretations for both AI and Human interpretation. However, the human interpreters will handle the interpretation remotely. Hybrid interpretation means that some participants will be present in the room physically and others will be present online.

4	**Subcontracting threshold** If subcontracting exceeds 30% of the total service volume, would we still be eligible to participate? As is standard practice in the interpreting industry, agencies typically collaborate with freelance interpreters. We would therefore appreciate clarification on how this threshold is calculated and applied.	We understand that the market also relies on freelancers to conduct interpretations, and we accept the use of freelancers if the quality meets our requirements. Please description the use of freelancers, if any.
5	**Sample task (page 4)** On page 4, a "sample task" is mentioned. Could you please clarify what this entails? In the case of human interpreting services, providing samples from past assignments is often not feasible due to confidentiality and data protection considerations.	Please refer to the Terms of Reference point 9, page 48 for a description.
6	**Negotiation rounds** Could you confirm how many rounds of negotiation are foreseen within this procedure?	We typically operate with one round of negotiations.
7	**Use of Microsoft Teams or other platforms** If services are to be delivered via Microsoft Teams mandatory, will the contracting authority provide access and cover the associated costs, or are tenderers expected to use and finance their own preferred platforms?	The Contracting Authority has the Microsoft Teams standard platform for the DCA organisation but not for external participants. We kindly reiterate that in the Terms of References 3.2, we state that the solution cannot include licenses for participants. This means, participants should be able to log in at no cost. All additional platform costs should be included in Annex 3 – Lots 2 Simultaneous Interpretation services / features to be paid for by the Contracting Authority.
8	**Lot 1 – pricing scope** Does the pricing for Lot 1 refer exclusively to remote services, or does it also include onsite services?	Please refer to the answer in question 3. No onsite service is required.

	As pricing structures differ significantly between remote and onsite interpreting, would it be possible to submit differentiated rates where applicable?	
9	**Duration of assignments exceeding 90 minutes** Are you aware that for interpreting assignments exceeding 90 minutes, it is industry standard to assign two interpreters in order to ensure adequate breaks and maintain quality standards? Should pricing therefore take into account the potential requirement for two interpreters in the two-hour sessions?	We are asking bidders to include their 1-hour and 2-hour price, which should cover the necessary number of interpreters according to industry standards.
10	Can you confirm if we need to present interpreter profiles as part of the proposal at this stage? If so, how many profiles would you like us to include?	As per A.5. d) If the Candidate offers human interpreters: A declaration guaranteeing that the Candidate will assign professional interpreters with relevant qualifications, experience, and professional fluency in the required language pairs should be submitted with your bid, please. Consequently, interpreter CVs and profiles are not required.
11	Regarding the platform requirements, we are considering using a third-party platform provider for the delivery of the service. Could you please confirm if this would be permitted under the tender requirements?	This is permitted under the same conditions as platform ownership by the Candidate and should conform to the conditions in the Request for Proposal including section 7 Data Processing Agreement in the Terms of Reference Annex 1 and Annex 4 Data Processing Agreement.
12	For hybrid events, would you be responsible for providing the technical equipment in the room to connect the remote service? Typically, this requires audio equipment, cameras, computers for the connections, and technical staff to supervise and manage the setup.	Yes, for hybrid events the Contracting Authority will provide the necessary in-room equipment to broadcast the Candidate's online simultaneous interpretation.

13	What is the cancellation policy if an event is cancelled after interpreters and all necessary parties have been confirmed and booked?	Please refer to General Terms and Conditions clause 22. Breach of Contract: *Either party commits a breach of contract where it fails to discharge any of its obligations under the contract.* *Where a breach of contract occurs, the party injured by the breach shall be entitled to the following remedies:* *a) liquidated damages; and/or* *b) termination of the contract.* *In any case where the Contracting Authority is entitled to damages, it may deduct such damages from any sums due to the Contractor or call on the appropriate guarantee.* *The Contracting Authority shall be entitled to compensation for any damage which comes to light after the contract is completed in accordance with the law governing the contract.*
14	Are there any contractual penalties or sanctions if the contractor is unable to fulfil a confirmed request?	Please refer to the answer in question 13 above. The Candidate is encouraged to provide the Contracting Authority with their comments to the below suggested elaboration of Clause 22 in the General Terms and Conditions: **Liquidated Damages** If the Contractor fails to deliver the agreed simultaneous interpreting service, including no-show, late arrival, or inability to perform, the Contracting Authority may apply liquidated damages equal to 100% of the fee for the affected assignment, plus any documented additional costs incurred to secure a replacement interpreter. If performance is materially deficient (e.g., inaccurate interpretation, lack of preparation, or technical failure attributable to the Contractor), the Contracting Authority may apply liquidated damages equal to 50% of the fee for the affected assignment.

		The parties agree that these amounts represent a genuine pre-estimate of the likely loss and are not a penalty.
15	**Technical meeting support** It would also be helpful to understand how DCA envisages the division of responsibilities for meeting management and technical hosting. For example, should the vendor expect to support elements such as platform setup, interpretation channel management and technical coordination, or will these aspects normally remain with the DCA organising team?	We would like onboarding in the platform set-up and use and please describe your service in Annex 2 Organisation and Methodology – "Support model". If an associated price, please include it under Lot 2 in Annex 3 – Proposal Submission Form. In addition, we have the requirements below as included in the ToR **4.5 Support Requirements** • Immediate access to live support in case any issues arise during scheduled interpreted meetings • Troubleshooting support for connectivity and channels • Staff proficient in spoken and written English • User support materials (guides, manuals, online tutorials)
16	**Language combinations** Would it be possible to share any indication of the most commonly required language combinations or regions represented in DCA meetings?	The English ↔ French combination is estimated for 4 meetings annually. The English ↔ Arabic combination is estimated for 4 meetings annually after year 1. Unfortunately, there is no estimate for the frequency of the remaining languages: English ↔ Swahili, English ↔ Amharic, English ↔ Burmese and English ↔ Ukrainian
17	**Meeting format** Could you please share any indication of the typical meeting formats anticipated under the framework (for example webinars, workshops, or multi-day	The need is a mix of webinars and workshops and for some a need for break-out rooms for discussions in smaller groups. All meeting formats will ensure interaction between participants. Meetings usually last between 1.5–2.5 hours.

	meetings)? This would help us ensure the most appropriate technical and interpreter setup.	
18	**Participation in individual lots** The documentation outlines two lots. Could you please confirm whether tenderers are able to submit a proposal for only one lot, if that reflects their core area of expertise?	Both lots must be submitted as one lot pertains to the languages and the other lot to the technical solution and services. Not all languages must be offered. Please refer to A.1. Scope of services for further details: **A.1. Scope of services** The Services required by the Contracting Authority are described in the Terms of Reference in Annex 1. Candidates may offer either AI-based or human-based interpretation or both. Candidates must, as a minimum, offer the below language pairs. Candidates offering only part of the required languages pairs will be rejected. Candidates may additionally offer one, several or all of the language pairs listed in the Terms of Reference. • English ↔ French • English ↔ Arabic (Iraqi, Lebanese, Libyan, Palestine, Syria, Sudanese & South Sudanese dialects required)
19	Regarding the possibility of sharing a demo video. Unfortunately, they are not able to provide one unless an agreement is already in place. However, we would be happy to organize a live demo session instead. Would that work for you?	As per the evaluation criteria, the demo video is a part of the evaluation of the proposal to show the core functionalities of the solution as well as the quality. May we suggest that you record a live demo session.
20	Regarding the AI functionality, we currently do not support Arabic into English. Would this represent an issue for your use case?	Please refer to the response to question 18. It is possible to offer human-based translations, only.
21	Could you please confirm whether MSA (Modern Standard Arabic) would be accepted by the client	We confirm that Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) will be accepted.

	for human interpretation? As you may know, MSA is commonly understood across Arabic-speaking countries. Local dialects vary significantly between regions and are not the same across all countries. Providing interpretation in specific dialects would require dedicated interpreter pairs for each dialect, which may not always be feasible.	
22	Could you please provide more details regarding the content and subject matter expected during the interpretation sessions? For example, whether the discussions will involve topics such as refugee matters, humanitarian topics, or other specific subject areas.	Please refer to the Terms of References, Annex 1 section **4.4 Thematic Understanding** The Contractor shall ensure that Human or AI-based interpreters demonstrate strong thematic understanding of terminology and concepts commonly used in humanitarian, development, and NGO contexts.
23	Could you please confirm whether it is possible to submit a bid only for LOT 1 (Human Interpretation Only Services)?	It is not. Under the Results to be achieved by the Contractor in the Terms of Reference section 2.1. it states in section A. that the Contractor shall deliver a Simultaneous interpretation platform.
24	If bidding only for LOT 1 is not possible, please note that we do not own a virtual interpretation platform. Our company specializes primarily in human interpretation services; however, we would be able to fully subcontract LOT 2 (virtual interpretation platform services) to a third-party provider. Could you please confirm whether full subcontracting of LOT 2 to a platform provider would be acceptable under the tender conditions?	Kindly refer to the answer in question number 11, above.
25	To help us ensure appropriate interpreter allocation and preparation, could you please provide additional context on how Arabic is typically used during the meetings? Specifically, are interventions	Arabic is used for speech. We confirm that Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) will be accepted.

	during structured portions generally delivered in Modern Standard Arabic, or are regional dialects more commonly used across presentations and discussions?	