



Ambassador Anu Saarela has been serving as the Ambassador of Finland to Iraq since 2023. Her previous ambassadorial posts include Israel (2016-2018) and Cyprus (2012-2016). Ambassador Saarela has also held several other foreign postings in the German Democratic Republic, Nigeria, the United States, Sweden and Japan.

A lawyer by education, Ambassador Saarela has held managerial positions in the Legal Service at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. From 2019 to 2023, she served as the Deputy Director-General of the Legal Service. She has represented Finland in various forums, particularly in the fields of international law and international criminal law. From 2019 to 2023, she was the Chairperson of the Finnish National IHL Committee. Between 2009 and 2012, she headed the Unit for Public International Law at the Legal Service. Throughout her career, Ambassador Saarela has also served in various other departments at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, handling political affairs, disarmament, Middle Eastern affairs, and multilateral work with a focus on international law. She has been active in promoting a rules-based international system and human rights.

Ambassador Saarela holds a Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree from the University of Helsinki and a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Business Administration from Vaasa School of Economics. She is married and has two children and one grandchild. In her free time, she enjoys renovating and spending time at an old farmhouse in Southern Finland, reading, and taking walks in nature to pick berries and mushrooms.