



2016 ANNUAL REPORT

THE GENEVA ACADEMY A JOINT CENTER OF



INSTITUT DE HAUTES
ETUDES INTERNATIONALES
ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT
GRADUATE INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL AND
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**
FACULTY OF LAW

FOREWORD

2016 has been an odd and, in several respects, a pivotal year for international law and especially international human rights law (IHRL). Never in recent decades has one of the strategic objectives of the Geneva Academy – strengthening human rights protection – been so relevant. Even though the debate has been far less spectacular and present in the media, 2016 has also been an important year for those who aspire to a better implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL). In this turbulent environment our role deserves relentless reflection, which accelerated by the end of 2016 and will continue in 2017.

The year was marked by important milestones for our institution: the launch of a new Master of Advanced Studies in Transitional Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law (MTJ); the complete revamping of two flagship projects – the online database Rule of Law in Armed Conflicts (RULAC) and the War Report - innovative research and a series of public events and private expert meetings on contemporary hot topics in IHL and IHRL. We have also proudly welcomed the appointment of our Swiss Human Rights Chair, Professor Nils Melzer, as UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

This annual report includes a look at our first MTJ class as well as the fields of research we have explored, ranging from the protection of persons with disabilities during armed conflicts to the current challenges to the universality of human rights, a theme of particular relevance in the present period. Our role as a platform has expanded, as have our partnerships with Geneva-based missions and institutions (the International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and NGOs) in organizing events or expert meetings.

All these activities will continue in 2017 and will nurture the opening reflection of this foreword on the vocation and the mission of an academic institution in a time of fundamental challenges to the very basis of human rights and even IHL. For sure, it will not be business as usual. Training to be specialists and undertaking good research are certainly essential and will continue. But we are also reflecting on how to enrich our mission and adapt it to a quickly – and scarily – changing world.



Robert Roth
Professor of International Criminal Law
Director of the Geneva Academy

FORWORD	3	EXPERTISE	20
2016 HIGHLIGHTS	6	CLARIFYING INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW	20
NEW MASTER OF ADVANCED STUDIES IN TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW	7	STRENGTHENING HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION	24
GENEVA ACADEMY TEAM WINS THE 2016 JEAN-PICTET COMPETITION	7	HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW IN TRANSITIONAL PROCESSES	32
IHL TALKS	7	DEVELOPING AREAS OF COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS	33
SWISS HUMAN RIGHTS CHAIR APPOINTED UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON TORTURE	7	PUBLICATIONS	36
UNIVERSALITY IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL	8	EVENTS	40
ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL	9	ABOUT US	50
NEW WEBSITE AND VISUAL IDENTITY	9	OUR MISSION	50
2016 IN FIGURES	10	HOW WE WORK	51
MASTER'S PROGRAMMES	12	OUR PEOPLE	52
LLM IN INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS	12	THE BOARD	52
MASTER OF ADVANCED STUDIES IN TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW	16	FACULTY	52
EXECUTIVE MASTER IN INTERNATIONAL LAW IN ARMED CONFLICT	18	THE TEAM	56



NEW MASTER OF ADVANCED STUDIES IN TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW

In September 2016, we launched our Master of Advanced Studies in Transitional Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law (MTJ). The first class comprises 27 students from a variety of backgrounds and countries, many of which have a recent history of political oppression or armed conflict. Organized around a vibrant, intimate and multicultural community of talented students, leading professors and key experts, the MTJ is already a point of reference for those wanting to gain a solid theoretical and practical legal background in the field of transitional justice.

GENEVA ACADEMY TEAM WINS THE 2016 JEAN-PICTET COMPETITION

The Geneva Academy, represented by our LLM students Sarah Gale, Annelies Nachtergaele and Clementine Rendle, won the 2016 prestigious Jean-Pictet Competition in which 112 teams from 48 countries took part. While our teams often reach the final and semi-final stages, this was our first win in this prominent moot court!

IHL TALKS

This new series of events, launched in 2016, addresses current issues and topics in international humanitarian law. Every two months, at lunchtime, academic experts, practitioners, policy-makers and journalists discuss burning humanitarian issues and their regulation under international law, such as the legal and human challenges raised by the refugee crisis, or violence against healthcare and humanitarian workers.

SWISS HUMAN RIGHTS CHAIR APPOINTED UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON TORTURE

On 1 November 2016, Nils Melzer, Swiss Human Rights Chair at the Geneva Academy, became the new UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment. Throughout his career, Dr Melzer has promoted international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law, both in the field and in academic settings. He has authored numerous works on these issues, including the new handbook of the International Committee of the Red Cross on IHL, *International Humanitarian Law: A Comprehensive Introduction*.

UNIVERSALITY IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Ten years after the establishment of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), our research project analyses the current challenges to universality in this major forum for human rights diplomacy. The Research Brief *Universality in the Human Rights Council: Challenges and Achievements* outlines the meanings that have been given to universality by the HRC and its members, analyses whether these have changed during the first decade of the institution's existence, and discusses how universality articulates with other foundational principles contained in the mandate of the HRC, such as equality, respect for cultural diversity, and the indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights.



UN Photo | Jean-Marc Ferré



ICRC

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

As armed non-state actors (ANSAs) play a crucial role in contemporary situations of armed violence, the HRC, its special procedures and commissions of inquiry have increasingly examined their activities and accountability. Our new In-Brief, *Human Rights Obligations of Armed Non-State Actors: An Exploration of the Practice of the UN Human Rights Council*, describes the current legal framework applicable to ANSAs. It explores the practice of the HRC and makes recommendations that may be of interest to states, NGOs and other stakeholders, including when they negotiate resolutions at the HRC.

NEW WEBSITE AND VISUAL IDENTITY

At the end of 2016, we launched our new visual identity and website. The new website, accessible to persons with disabilities, boasts a modern and colourful design, improved functionalities like online registration for our masters, training, short courses and events, as well as an entirely revised section on our research.

2016 IN FIGURES

3 Master's programmes

12 Short courses and training

More than 90 students from 49 countries

20 Research projects

More than 50 events, seminars, conferences and expert meetings



MASTER'S PROGRAMMES

As a leading education and research institution in international humanitarian law, human rights and transitional justice, we offer three distinctive master's programmes in these fields. These are taught by highly experienced academics and practitioners and attract some of the most experienced and academically qualified students from around the world. Students share their expertise, discuss pressing concerns of the international community and reflect on the application of international law to the particular contexts they are concerned with.

LLM IN INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Our LLM in International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, introduced in 2003, is a full-time, one-year postgraduate degree course (60 ECTS credits). It provides advanced, comprehensive and practical training in international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL) as well as an understanding of the interplay between them.

A core output of the LLM is a paper on a specific issue addressed by the programme. This gives students the opportunity to investigate a subject of special interest to them and deepen their knowledge and expertise through research as well as exchanges with experts, scholars and practitioners.

Our LLM is also profoundly committed to developing the transferable skills necessary to succeed in the professional world and take up responsibilities in the humanitarian and human rights fields. To this end, internships with leading actors and participation in moot courts provide a solid exposure to practical work and allow students to expand their network.

The LLM exceeded my expectations. It is a complete programme, which integrates various branches of international law and shows its implementation from different mindsets and angles. This not only serves to satisfy the interests of all students, who come from different backgrounds, but more importantly, allows us to have an integral and practical outlook when analysing diverse situations in armed conflict or different scenarios of violence.

Laura Baron-Mendoza, 2016-2017 LLM student

The programme allows students to tailor their studies according to their particular interests. Core courses provide a firm grounding in public international law, IHL, IHRL, international refugee law and international criminal law. Optional courses cover more specific issues such as the protection of children in armed conflict and post-conflict, counter-terrorism, armed non-state actors, transitional justice, the rules governing the conduct of hostilities, or the work of international courts and tribunals.

2016-2017 LLM CLASS

The 2016-2017 LLM class has 42 students from 25 countries: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Ethiopia, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Madagascar, Nepal, New Zealand, Palestine, the Philippines, Romania, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Uganda, Ukraine and the United States of America.

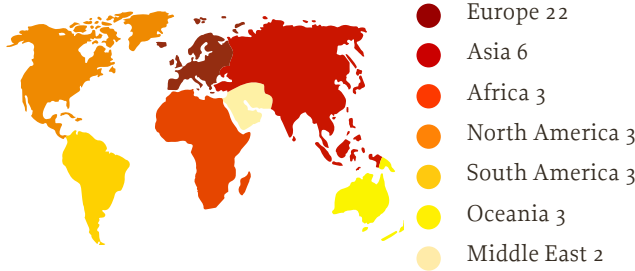
Thirteen of these students received a partial or full scholarship thanks to the continued generous support of the Hans Wilsdorf Foundation, Ms Irene and Mr Jenö Staehelin and the International Bar Association. For the second year, thanks to support from our alumni, we were also able to offer an Alumni Scholarship.

These scholarships are allocated through a highly competitive process based on academic merit, extra-curricular achievements and the candidate's financial needs. They allow talented young people with limited means, especially from the global South, to come to Geneva to study the international law applying to armed conflict and crisis situations.

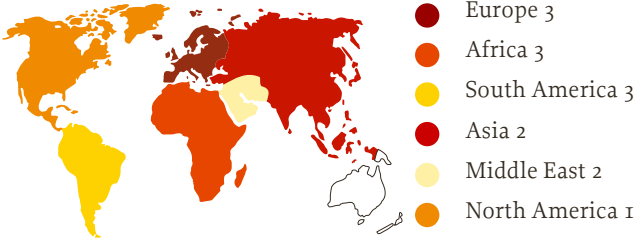


Geneva Academy | Olivier Chamard

GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION



SCHOLARSHIPS



GENDER REPRESENTATION





2015-2016 LLM CLASS

All 41 students of the 2015–2016 LLM class successfully completed the programme. Twenty-eight participated in the internship programme during the second semester, working with leading human rights and humanitarian actors including the International Law Commission, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Association for the Prevention of Torture.

The Geneva Academy team – Sarah Gale, Annelies Nachtergaele and Clementine Rendle – won the 2016 prestigious Jean-Pictet Competition. This was the Geneva Academy's first win in this prominent IHL moot court.

The programme definitely meets my expectations. I particularly appreciate the opportunity we get to learn directly from leading experts in their respective fields. In addition, the internships allow us to apply some of the knowledge we build, by working with an NGO or an international organization for a few months.

Alexis Comminos, 2016–2017 LLM student

For their study trip, the students went to Belgrade, Srebrenica and Sarajevo. This was a great opportunity to discover the region and speak with several institutions involved in human rights protection, transitional justice and humanitarian work, including the Humanitarian Law Centre, the OSCE Mission in Belgrade and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Around 120 guests, including graduates' families, attended the 2016 graduation ceremony at the Maison de la Paix (Graduate Institute) on 27 October 2016. Professor William Schabas delivered the keynote speech. Roger Durand, President of the Henry Dunant Prize Foundation, spoke alongside Mourgue D'Algue, a descendant of Henry Dunant, when awarding the Henry Dunant Prize to Sabrina Henry for her LLM paper 'Transposition de la notion de "fonction de combat continue" dans les conflits armés internationaux et son application aux forces armées gouvernementales dans les conflits armés non internationaux'. Vanessa Murphy won the Best LLM Paper Award for her thesis 'Transitional Justice, Business-Related Human Rights Violations and The State's Obligation to Provide Access to Remedy Against Corporate-Wrongdoers: What does Does International Law Say?'

MASTER OF ADVANCED STUDIES IN TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW

Our new Master of Advance Studies in Transitional Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law (MTJ) started in September 2016.

This full-time, one-year postgraduate degree course (60 ECTS credits) is a unique and innovative programme that combines high-level academic education and real-world practice. One of the very few courses on this subject in Europe, it focuses on an expanding field where there is a strong need for well-trained professionals.

The programme manages to strike a great balance between theoretical studies and practical training. It is a must for every practitioner in the area of transitional justice, human rights and rule of law! The programme has met my expectations as it seeks to mould an all-round professional who is not only able to function as a practitioner, but also comprehend and articulate the conceptual intricacies of the complex nexus interlinking transitional justice as a field, human rights and the rule of law. The lectures conducted by world-renowned academics and leading practitioners are stimulating, enriching and enjoyable!

Tafadzwa Christmas, 2016–2017 MTJ student

The programme allows students to gain comprehensive theoretical expertise and practical perspectives in the fields of transitional justice, human rights and the rule of law. The courses provide a solid legal foundation and also address contemporary issues and challenges such as gender in transitional justice, the legal protection of children in post-conflict societies, constitution-making and the theory and functions of criminal justice in transitional contexts.

The MTJ Spring School, a special one-week course open to external participants, discusses cutting-edge issues in transitional justice like the responsibilities of non-state actors in the aftermath of large-scale human rights violations or the largely unexplored field of cultural interventions in post-conflict societies.

A core output of the MTJ is a paper on a specific topic related to transitional justice, written under the guidance of a faculty member. This gives students an opportunity to investigate a subject of special interest to them, deepening their knowledge and expertise through research as well as exchanges with experts, scholars and practitioners. Students are encouraged to concentrate on specific case studies, legal frameworks or problems of immediate relevance to transitional justice.

Designed as a gateway to careers in the growing transitional justice sector, our MTJ also focuses on developing practical skills through a year of clinical work consisting of research internships with leading transitional justice actors, seminars on specific topics with leading experts and practitioners and participation in moot courts.

We are fortunate enough to be taught by leading experts in the field of transitional justice. We also have the opportunity to be surrounded by students from different countries who can give us a personal opinion on how their countries underwent transition. An aspect that I particularly enjoy is the cross-disciplinary approach to teaching, combining law, philosophy, history and political science.

Firouzeh Mitchell, 2016–2017 MTJ student

2016–2017 MTJ CLASS

The 2016–2017 MTJ class has 27 students from 22 countries: Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Colombia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Iran, Kenya, Mexico, Portugal, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Zimbabwe.

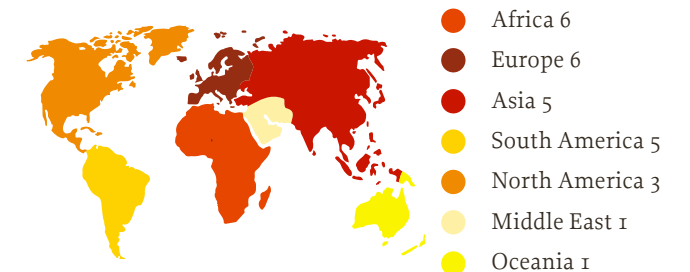
Thirteen students – almost half of the class – received a partial or full scholarship thanks to the generous support of the Hans Wilsdorf Foundation and the Republic and State of Geneva's International Solidarity Service.

These scholarships are allocated through a highly competitive process based on academic merit, extra-curricular achievements and the candidate's financial needs. They allow talented young people with limited means, especially from the global South, to come to Geneva to deepen their expertise in transitional justice, human rights and the rule of law.

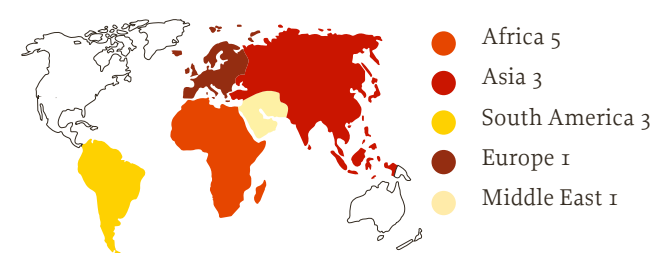


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GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION



SCHOLARSHIPS



GENDER REPRESENTATION



EXECUTIVE MASTER IN INTERNATIONAL LAW IN ARMED CONFLICT

Our Executive Master/Master of Advanced Studies in International Law in Armed Conflict (60 ECTS credits, equivalent to a LLM) was introduced in 2011.

The Executive Master equipped me with feasible and meaningful legal arguments to facilitate humanitarian action in and outside the ongoing battlefields.

Fumiko Yasuda, ICRC Delegate

One of the few part-time, innovative and intellectually challenging programmes in international humanitarian law and human rights offered today, it is designed for professionals with demanding jobs and responsibilities: diplomats, lawyers, legal advisers, judges, NGO staff, human rights advocates, media specialists, professionals working in emergency situations, UN staff and staff from other international organizations. It provides strong theoretical and practical knowledge and responds to the growing need for specialists to address complex humanitarian challenges.

Based in Geneva, this executive programme runs for nine months (October–June). Six to nine additional months are needed to complete a master's thesis and defend it before a jury.

Courses take place on Thursday evenings and Friday afternoons at our headquarters, Villa Moynier. They cover the law of armed conflict, international human rights law and international criminal law. They also address current issues and challenges including the repression of terrorism, peacekeeping and international refugee law.

Taught by world-renowned law experts and professors, the programme enables participants to gain specialized knowledge directly applicable to professional work. It also responds to the growing need for specialists to address complex situations – in Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere – and challenging processes such as criminal proceedings, international negotiations and humanitarian interventions.

Mastering the appropriate legal framework that applies to these contexts is recognized as a key asset by international organizations, NGOs and governments. Enabling this, the Executive Master allows professionals to advance their career via a renowned diploma.

The Executive Master in International Law in Armed Conflict was an excellent and enriching executive learning experience!

Gladice Pickering, Diplomat, Permanent Mission of Namibia to the UN in Geneva

SHORT COURSES

Professionals who are not enrolled in the Executive Master can take short courses offered in the programme to deepen their expertise in a specific issue like international refugee law, the International Criminal Court, the classification of armed conflicts, or peacebuilding in post-conflict and fragile situations. Attending these courses enables participants to draw on the comprehensive expertise of the faculty, meet key experts and practitioners and interact with Executive Master candidates. Each course consists of five weekly classes held on Thursday evening and/or Friday afternoon.

2016–2018 EXECUTIVE MASTER CLASS

The 2016–2018 Executive Master class has 22 students from 17 countries: Afghanistan, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Czech Republic, Germany, Ivory Coast, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Switzerland and the United States of America. Professionally, they hold positions in NGOs, international organizations and governments.



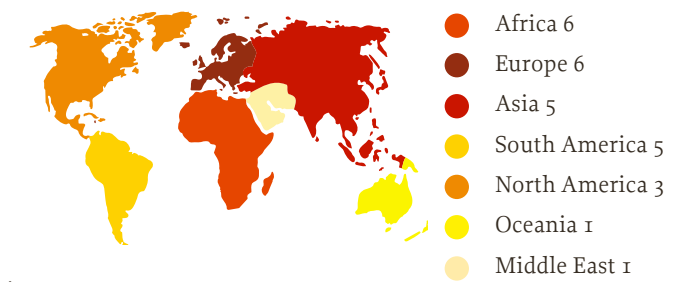
GENDER REPRESENTATION



PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND



GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION



2015–2017 EXECUTIVE MASTER CLASS

The 15 participants in the 2015–2017 Executive Master class are currently working on their thesis and will graduate in October 2017.

2014–2016 EXECUTIVE MASTER CLASS

Of the 17 participants in the 2014–2016 Executive Master class, eight successfully completed the programme and nine postponed their graduation until October 2017 due to professional commitments.

CLARIFYING INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

THE WAR REPORT

As an annual publication, *The War Report* provides an overview of current armed conflicts, including key international humanitarian law (IHL) and policy issues that have arisen and require attention.

A new version was developed in 2016 and is published and available online. It details all the situations of armed violence in 2016 that amounted to armed conflicts according to IHL and international criminal law, and analyses certain key events and developments.

RULE OF LAW IN ARMED CONFLICTS (RULAC)

Finalized in December 2016, the updated version of the Rule of Law in Armed Conflicts (RULAC) portal went online in January 2017 (www.rulac.org). It covers all the situations of ongoing armed violence that have emerged over the last five years - and are still ongoing - that amount to an armed conflict under IHL.

Via multiple filters, an interactive map allows visitors to search over a dozen international armed conflicts, non-international armed conflicts and military occupations, and the state parties to these conflicts.

For each armed conflict, RULAC provides the factual and methodological basis for its classification, and identifies the parties and the applicable international law. The portal also includes sections on the legal framework governing armed conflicts and the classification of armed conflicts under IHL.

New entries on situations of armed conflict that started before 2011 will be added in 2017, and the existing entries will be regularly updated in partnership with the Human Rights Centre at the University of Essex.





Medical Aid for Palestinians | Ezz Al Zanoon

IMPROVING THE PROTECTION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES DURING ARMED CONFLICT

Approximately 500 million people with disabilities live in states affected by armed conflict. Conflict not only renders a person disabled directly, it also inflicts indirect harm since persons with disabilities may face physical and/or communication barriers to accessing emergency information and humanitarian assistance. This renders them more vulnerable to harm and potentially exacerbates a pre-existing impairment. Persons with disabilities are also at higher risk of injury or death during periods of armed conflict, either as specific targets or due to insufficient support to enable them to flee the violence.

Despite the high number of persons with disabilities affected by armed conflict and the particular support they need, they are too often the forgotten victims. This project aims to ensure better protection of persons with disabilities in situations of armed conflict and its immediate aftermath by identifying the legal obligations to protect and assist them.

The project has been awarded a research grant from the Swiss Network for International Studies and is being undertaken in partnership with Handicap International, the Institute for Biomedical Ethics at the University of Basel, Psychiatric University Clinics Basel and the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities.

Activities in 2016 included developing the methodology for this interdisciplinary research, formulating field research questions and undertaking field research in Palestine and Ukraine.

THE DUTY TO INVESTIGATE UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW

The investigation of death and harm during situations of armed conflict and high-intensity violence is a key area of concern for international human rights law and the law of armed conflict. Investigations are a critical mechanism to verify what happened in situations of armed conflict, which in turn also facilitates accountability. Usually, however, the duty to investigate is implied but not mentioned directly in international law sources. States tend to rely on domestic standards, but there is no uniform practice and an absence of detailed international standards for assessing domestic procedures.

States and international organizations clearly need clarification in this area of law. Clearer rules are also required in several areas, including the circumstances that should trigger investigations, the form investigations should take and the standards they should meet.

This project, initiated by the Swiss IHL Chair, Professor Noam Lubell, intends to identify, via expert meetings and research, a set of best practices that states should apply when they investigate or examine alleged violations or misconduct in situations of armed conflict.

MODES OF LIABILITY FOR INTERNATIONAL CRIMES

Currently, international law does not set out clearly the different forms of responsibility for international crimes.

This research intends to clarify the sources and conditions of accountability for international crimes. Findings will be published in 2017 in the form of a manual for practitioners and a book. These will constitute essential references for national courts and international tribunals, as well as ministries of justice and foreign affairs, international organizations, fact-finding missions and commissions of inquiry, UN treaty bodies and special procedures, judges and academics.

Most chapters of the manual and the book were drafted and reviewed in 2016, notably during an expert seminar with leading experts in the field.

2016 ANNUAL SEMINAR ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW FOR DIPLOMATS ACCREDITED TO THE UNITED NATIONS IN GENEVA

This one-day seminar for diplomats, co-organized with the International Committee of the Red Cross, focused on current IHL issues, including the outcomes of the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, armed non-state actors, means and methods of warfare and IHL and terrorism.

STRENGTHENING HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION

'FOREIGN FIGHTERS', FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY

This research project assessed the impact of measures taken to stem the flow of 'foreign fighters' on the right to privacy and freedom of expression, against the broader background of countering violent extremism and terrorism online.

The findings supported a study by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on safeguarding freedom of expression and the right to privacy while countering violent extremism and terrorism online. Together with OHCHR, the Geneva Academy hosted a meeting to discuss the research project's results and the forthcoming study.

Throughout 2016, the Geneva Academy continued to participate in a series of policy and academic events to disseminate the results of its research and raise awareness of the legal challenges raised by measures taken to prevent violent extremism, and the conflation of armed conflict and terrorism.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

In 2016 the Geneva Academy expanded its cooperation with the University of Essex on their Human Rights, Big Data and Technology research project. Our input focused on the possibilities and challenges of applying the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to big data.

In addition to desk research, we connected the project with activities in Geneva. This included participating in a panel at the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights to discuss the leverage of the business sector in strengthening human rights in the digital era.

CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS CHALLENGES

Via annual expert seminars, this project discusses and identifies current human rights challenges. Topics are selected on the basis of an identified need for expert discussion and clarification.

In 2016, the project focused on current challenges and opportunities in relation to the right to life, as well as some cutting-edge developments in the field.

In the first annual expert seminar on the right to life, co-organized with the Institute for International and Comparative Law in Africa, leading experts, diplomats, human rights and humanitarian practitioners addressed key issues related to the right to life, such as regulation in armed conflict situations and in the context of law



Philippe Leroyer

enforcement, the role of investigations, new weapon technologies, the mandatory death penalty and the responsibility of non-state actors.

The Geneva Academy In-Brief *Use of Force in Law Enforcement and the Right to Life: The Role of the Human Rights Council* draws on the discussions of the seminar. It examines how the right to life is affected by law enforcement agencies' use of force and identifies how the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) could further promote respect for international standards governing policing.

The publication also serves as a background to the 2017 expert seminar, which will focus on the rights potentially affected by the use of force in law enforcement, particularly during the policing of assemblies.

HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO COMBAT CORRUPTION

The Geneva Academy, in collaboration with OHCHR, compiled the material for what could become a practitioners' guide to a human rights-based approach to combat corruption. This will clarify the conceptual relationship between human rights, good governance and anti-corruption, demonstrate the negative impact of corruption on human rights, and provide guidance and practical recommendations for effectively integrating human rights into anti-corruption efforts.

This project was presented in June 2016 at an HRC side event organized by Switzerland in cooperation with Austria, Brazil, Poland and the United Kingdom.

TRAINING ON THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

In March 2016, we launched our five-day training course on the protection of human rights and the environment. The course explored emerging issues in the field, particularly the impacts of climate change on the enjoyment of human rights, the plea of environmental migrants and defenders and the risks posed by the contamination and depletion of natural resources to the very existence of human life.

The course included contributions from renowned experts in the field as well as the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and environment. It was attended by 18 participants from different countries and backgrounds, including 12 Greenpeace staff members as well as members of other international NGOs, government officers and academics.



ICRC

UN HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

UNIVERSALITY IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

This project examines different concepts of universality, maps contemporary challenges to this principle in the context of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) and discusses the HRC's role in the promotion and protection of universally guaranteed human rights.

Published in December 2016, the Research Brief *Universality in the Human Rights Council: Challenges and Achievements* summarizes the meanings that have been given to universality by the HRC and its members, analyses whether these have changed during the first decade of the institution's existence and discusses how universality articulates with other foundational principles contained in the HRC mandate, such as equality, respect for cultural diversity, and the indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights. The Research Brief also outlines the challenges and opportunities that discussions around the concept of universality within the HRC present for the universal implementation of all human rights for all people. The final publication is scheduled for presentation in 2017.

TREATY BODY MEMBERS PLATFORM

The Treaty Body Members Platform connects experts from UN treaty bodies with each other as well as with Geneva-based practitioners, academics and diplomats to share expertise, exchange views on topical questions and develop synergies.

In 2016, the Platform enabled experts from the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination

Against Women, the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee against Torture and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to discuss a range of issues among themselves as well as with external experts and practitioners. These issues included human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the right to life and enforced disappearances, implementation and remedies, and treaty bodies' inquiry procedures.

ACADEMIC PLATFORM ON TREATY BODY REVIEW 2020

In the context of the 2020 treaty body review by the UN General Assembly (GA), the Geneva Academy has set up and is coordinating the academic input to this review via the creation of an academic network of independent researchers, a call for papers, a series of regional workshops and annual conferences in Geneva, as well as ongoing interactions with key stakeholders (states, UN treaty bodies, national human rights institutions, civil society, UN entities and OHCHR).

The network gained momentum in 2016 and grew significantly to include leading academics in the field and a dozen partner academic institutions, including University College Dublin, the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights, the Institute of Legislation and Comparative Law under the Government of the Russian Federation, and Columbia University.

Three regional consultations – for Western Europe, Eastern Europe and South America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean – brought together

academic institutions and academics from these regions, as well as observers from governments and civil society. Participants discussed many aspects of the treaty body system including its current strengths and deficiencies.

A global annual conference took place in Geneva on 8–9 November to compile inputs from the regional consultations and identify gaps and areas needing further research. In parallel, key stakeholders, including states, NGOs and all treaty bodies were briefed on the Platform and its key developments in 2016.

COOPERATION WITH UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS

Throughout 2016, we continued to collaborate closely with numerous UN Special Rapporteurs, including the Special Rapporteur (SR) on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, who is hosted at the Geneva Academy, the SR on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions on the gender aspects of her mandate, the SR on the rights of

persons with disabilities on the protection of persons with disabilities during armed conflict, and mandate holders on economic, social and cultural rights on the SDGs.

TRAINING COURSE ON LEADING IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Preparing for intense and high-level engagement at the HRC requires a deep understanding of HRC rules, functioning and practice. The ability to negotiate, advocate, lobby and push for issues in such a complex environment also requires a sound knowledge of the different actors and dynamics at play, as well as strong communication skills.

This five-day training course, which took place ahead of the main HRC session, allowed participants – diplomats, experts from diplomatic missions and foreign affairs ministries, staff of international organizations and NGOs – to develop their network and acquire the necessary skills to lead and perform effectively in this main forum for human rights diplomacy.



ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

TWO RESEARCH PROJECTS ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD

The Geneva Academy coordinates the human rights component of two six-year research projects on the right to food funded by the Swiss Programme for Research on Global Issues for Development (r4d programme), a joint initiative of the Swiss National Science Foundation and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

The first project, Land Commercialization, Gendered Agrarian Transformation and the Right to Food (DEMETER), examines the degree to which the right to food and gender equality play complementary roles in ensuring food security in the context of land commercialization in Cambodia and Ghana. The second project, Towards Food Sustainability: Reshaping the Coexistence of Different Food Systems in South America and Africa, is developing a framework for assessing the sustainability of food systems on the basis of five pillars: the realization of the right to food, food security, the reduction of poverty and inequality, environmental integrity and socio-ecological resilience, with a focus on Bolivia and Kenya.

Field research was carried out in 2016 in Ghana, Kenya, Bolivia and Cambodia on the right to food and equality guarantees. Working with interdisciplinary teams based in the study countries and in Switzerland, our researchers contributed to the elaboration of quantitative and qualitative survey instruments and indicators as well as to the application of different theoretical models to explain processes of change.

DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

For at least the past 20 years, the UN has underlined the need to adopt a human rights-based approach to development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to eradicate poverty and to guarantee equal access to social security, food, healthcare, education, housing, water and sanitation, incorporate most of the core elements of economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) as articulated in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Activities in 2016 aimed at highlighting the role that UN human rights mechanisms can play in monitoring the SDGs that seek to realize ESCR, notably through research on the links between human rights and development, lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals period, and how to promote participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment, the rule of law and solidarity in the implementation of the SDGs.

An expert seminar, co-organized with the International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in June 2016, brought together Special Rapporteurs dealing with ESCR and cross-cutting issues and members of UN treaty bodies to discuss their approaches to the SDGs, their role in supporting the implementation of the SDGs, and the interrelationship between human rights, the SDGs and economic and fiscal policies.



TRAINING COURSES ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Two training courses on ESCR took place in 2016. An introductory course in French focused on the substantive content of ESCR, the mechanisms to protect these rights and emerging issues and challenges. An advanced course in English addressed techniques to monitor ESCR, including human rights indicators, budget analysis, human rights impact assessments, domestic and regional litigation, and UN mechanisms for tracking realization.

THE RIGHTS OF PEASANTS

In September 2012, the HRC created an open-ended working group to prepare a UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas (UN Declaration). The Geneva Academy is providing expert support to states and other stakeholders engaged in this exercise.

We presented a legal analysis on the right to seeds and intellectual property rights in May 2016 during the third session of the open-ended working group. By highlighting the core elements of the right to seeds, our analysis offered guidance to negotiators regarding the integration of this right in the UN Declaration, with some of the language proposed in the study being subsequently included in the article on the right to seeds in the UN Declaration.

In November 2016, an expert seminar on the right to land and other natural resources allowed more than 60 participants – leading experts, state representatives, academics and civil society representatives – to discuss the integration of this right in the UN Declaration. The results of the discussion will feed into the 4th session of the open-ended working group (15–19 May 2017).

TRAINING COURSE ON THE RIGHTS OF PEASANTS

This training course, attended by government representatives, staff of OHCHR, NGOs and social movements as well as academics, from Africa, Latin America, North America and Europe, deepened participants' understanding of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas, and provided up-to-date information on the negotiation of the UN Declaration.



HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW IN TRANSITIONAL PROCESSES

THE UNITED NATIONS PRINCIPLES TO COMBAT IMPUNITY: A COMMENTARY

Originally drafted by Louis Joinet and updated by Diane Orentlicher in 2005, the United Nations Set of Principles for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights Through Action to Combat Impunity (UN Principles) are today widely accepted as a milestone in the fight against impunity for gross human rights and serious international humanitarian law violations. However, while an essential reference point for theory and practice, the UN

Principles have never received a systematic, principle-by-principle treatment. The present project aims to fill this gap by providing a multi-authored academic commentary.

Launched in 2013, this project is now in its final stage. The volume is expected to be published by Oxford University Press in the second half of 2017. The project involves more than 30 established experts in the various fields touched upon by the UN Principles.



DEVELOPING AREAS OF COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Published in December 2016, the In-Brief *Human Rights Obligations of Armed Non-State Actors: An Exploration of the Practice of the UN Human Rights Council* describes the current legal framework applicable to armed non-state actors (ANSAs). It also explores the practice of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) and makes recommendations that may be of interest to states, NGOs and other stakeholders, including when they negotiate resolutions at the HRC.

The publication notably recommends not using the distinction between the terms 'abuses' v. 'violations' when assessing or denouncing the behaviour of ANSAs with regard to human rights, thereby avoiding giving any impression that all categories of ANSAs, including de facto authorities, might be free of human rights obligations. It also recommends that the HRC avoids branding ANSAs as 'terrorist', regardless of their nature and motivation, as this all-encompassing denomination may create difficulties and dilemmas on both legal and policy levels. Finally, it suggests that more research is needed to develop a shared and more comprehensive understanding of the notion of de facto authorities, and to identify the content of human rights norms that might be binding on ANSAs.



WEAPONS LAW

AUTONOMOUS WEAPON SYSTEMS UNDER INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

This project examines the legal requirements that the use of autonomous weapon systems (AWS), also called ‘killer robots’, would need to comply with in a number of scenarios envisaged by proponents of increasing autonomy in weapon systems.

The research examines whether the use of weapon systems that can detect, select and fire at targets without human intervention would comply with international legal standards for the protection of the human person, and if so, under what circumstances. Drawing on case law dealing with other weapon technologies and autonomous systems, it also asks where and when AWS may be used, and what the procedural legal requirements are in terms of the planning, conduct and aftermath of AWS use. The research thus looks beyond compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL) rules on targeting and also examines other rules of IHL and international human rights law, including standards on the use of force for law enforcement purposes.

THE WEAPONS LAW ENCYCLOPEDIA

The Weapons Law Encyclopedia (WLE), a unique online legal reference tool (www.weaponslaw.org), provides experts, practitioners and non-specialists with essential information on the technical characteristics of a range of weapon technologies, their intended uses, their humanitarian impacts in practice, and their regulation under international law, in the form of short, open-access entries.

The project aims to raise awareness among multilateral policy-makers, legal and humanitarian professionals, the media and the general public of the ways in which various bodies of international law contribute to the regulation of weapons and their use.

2016 updates include a revised history of the use of incendiary weapons and the integration of cases of the International Criminal Court involving explosive weapons.



In-Brief N°7
Human Rights Obligations of Armed Non-State Actors:
An Exploration of the Practice of the UN Human
Rights Council

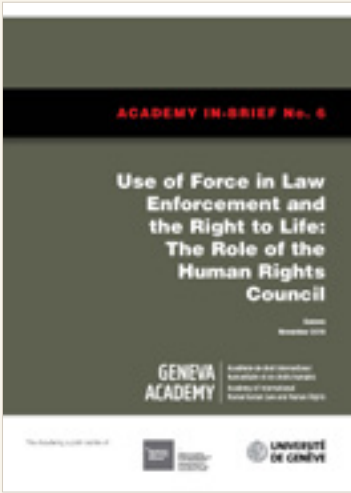
December 2016

Annyssa Bellal



Research Brief
Universality in the Human Rights Council:
Challenges and Achievements

December 2016



In-Brief N°6
Use of Force in Law Enforcement and the Right to Life:
The Role of the Human Rights Council

November 2016

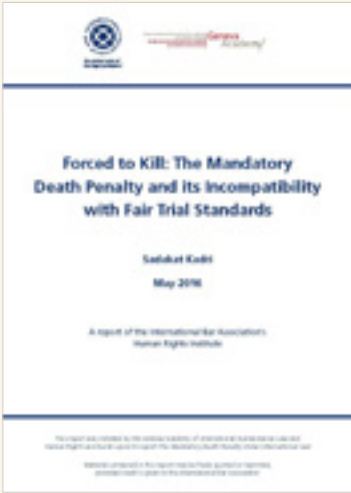
Stuart Casey-Maslen



The Right to Seeds and Intellectual Property Rights

May 2016

Christophe Golay



Forced to Kill: The Mandatory Death Penalty and its
Incompatibility with Fair Trial Standards

May 2016

Sadakat Kadri, Alice Priddy



EVENTS

Expert meetings, seminars, conferences and public events are a key part of our activities. In 2016, we ran more than 50 private and public events, providing a critical and scholarly forum for experts and practitioners to discuss and debate topical issues in international humanitarian law, human rights and transitional justice. Via the recording and publication of videos on our website and YouTube channel, interested audiences outside Geneva are also able to follow important public debates and discussions.



DATE	EVENT	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PARTNER(S)
21 January	Reparations Discourses and Policies on Behalf of Victims of Nazism in Western Europe	Transitional Justice Roundtable	Dr Regula Ludi, University of Zurich, discussed the reparations discourses and policies on behalf of victims of Nazism in Western Europe. Her presentation was based on her book <i>Reparations for Nazi Victims in Postwar Europe</i> .	
27 January	Transitional Justice in the Post-Soviet Space	Geneva Academy Wednesday	Ilya Nuzov, Teaching Assistant at the Geneva Academy, presented the latest results of his PhD research on 'Transitional Justice in the Post-Soviet Space: Russia's Creeping Decommunization'.	
24 February		Treaty Body Members Platform	At this private meeting, members of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women discussed the issue of sex work/prostitution with invited experts.	
29 February	Destruction of Cultural Heritage	Side Event at the 31 st Session of the UN Human Rights Council	Panelists looked at the human rights aspect of the destruction of cultural heritage, with a view to prevention or mitigation.	Permanent Missions of Brazil, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Greece, Iraq, Ireland, Poland, Serbia and Switzerland to the UN in Geneva
3 March	Reparations for Past Mass Crimes	Expert Panel	Panelists discussed and debated the current challenges regarding reparations for past mass crimes, the role of the International Criminal Court, the European Court of Human Rights or national jurisdictions. They also addressed challenges related to the identification of claims submitted to domestic and international courts, the identification of victims, available remedies, as well as the gathering of evidence of injuries and damages.	Human Rights Research Centre, Université Paris 2 Panthéon Assas
4 March	Mass Crimes and Reparations: Focus on Reparations for the Mass Crimes against Armenian Ottoman Citizens (1915-1923)	Expert Seminar	This closed expert seminar looked at the issue of mass crimes and reparations, with a special focus on mass crimes against Armenian Ottoman citizens.	Human Rights Research Centre, Université Paris 2 Panthéon Assas
23 March	The Right to Life: Current Trends and Challenges – The Perspective of the Human Rights Committee	Geneva Academy Wednesday	In the context of the Human Rights Committee's update of its General Comment on the right to life, the panelists, both members of the Committee, shared their views, interpretations and understanding of the right to life and its protection.	

DATE	EVENT	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PARTNER(S)
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6 April	Burundi: No Peace Without Justice?	Geneva Academy Wednesday	Panelists discussed previous and ongoing attempts to establish effective transitional justice mechanisms in Burundi to address the legacy of the civil war, challenges for transitional justice, the response of the international community to the recent violence, and lessons learnt to avert genocide or other mass atrocities.	
19 April	Human Shields and the Regulation of Armed Conflict: Key Issues and Challenges	Expert Panel	The phenomenon of human shields has long been one of the most controversial topics in the regulation of armed conflict. Panelists presented their analyses and views on issues like: which party – the attacker or the defender – has the greater responsibility to avoid civilian casualties? Is the distinction between voluntary and involuntary human shields practically realistic and legally relevant? How is the proportionality rule affected by the use of human shields?	Swiss Chair of International Humanitarian Law at the Geneva Academy
21–22 April	2016 Annual Seminar on International Humanitarian Law for Diplomats Accredited to the United Nations in Geneva	Expert Seminar	This one-day seminar for diplomats focused on current issues in international humanitarian law (IHL), including the outcomes of the 32 nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, armed non-state actors, means and methods of warfare and IHL and terrorism.	International Committee of the Red Cross
26 April	Legitimacy and Drones: Cross-Border Counterterrorism withUCAVs	Conference Proceedings	Panelists explored the question of legitimacy through the conceptual lenses of legality, morality and efficacy, as well as the policy proposal of creating a 'Drone Court'.	University of Geneva Law Faculty and Global Studies Institute; Société Académique de Genève
28 April	The International Criminal Courts and Tribunals: Institutional and Procedural Challenges	Guest Lecture by Christopher Gosnell	Christopher Gosnell has been representing several high-profile accused before international courts, including Charles Taylor, Goran Hadzic and Ljubomir Borovcanin. He also worked in the past with the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the Office of Public Counsel for Victims at the International Criminal Court. He presented his analysis and views on current challenges related to the international criminal system, followed by a question and answer session with the audience.	
4 May	Abolishing Nuclear Weapons: What Role for International Law(yers)?	Geneva Academy Wednesday	As the UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Taking Forward Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations was meeting in Geneva, panelists discussed the legacy of the 1996 International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion on Nuclear Weapons, the humanitarian reframing of the nuclear disarmament debate and what (not) to expect of the UN OEWG and the pending Marshall Islands cases before the ICJ.	

DATE	EVENT	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PARTNER(S)
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7 May	The Summer 2014 Gaza Conflict	Public Pleadings	In the framework of the LLM course on international humanitarian law, students pleaded on the IHL questions that arose from the Summer 2014 Gaza conflict. They addressed questions such as the classification of the conflict and applicable law, the classification of persons and territory, compliance with the rules on the conduct of hostilities and the treatment of persons.	
11–13 May	Current Human Rights Challenges: The Right to Life	Expert Seminar	This closed expert seminar brought together leading experts to address current developments and key issues related to the right to life, such as its regulation in armed conflict situations as well as in the context of law enforcement, the role of investigations in the protection of the right to life, the issue of new weapons technologies, the mandatory death penalty and the responsibility of non-state actors.	UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; Institute for International and Comparative Law in Africa, University of Pretoria; Swiss Human Rights Chair at the Geneva Academy
12 May	Casting New Light on the Supreme Right: Emerging General Comments on the Right to Life	Expert Panel	This panel of experts and diplomats explored current challenges and new developments concerning the right to life in normative instruments, jurisprudence, law and practice at national, regional and international levels. Panelists also addressed the recent adoption by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights of a General Comment on the right to life, as well as the development of a General Comment on the same topic by the UN Human Rights Committee.	
21 May	The South Ossetian Conflict	Public Pleadings	In the framework of the LLM course on international humanitarian law, students participated in public pleadings on the 2008 South Ossetian conflict. Representing Russia or Georgia, they notably addressed the classification of the conflict and applicable law, the classification of persons and territory, the killing and destruction of property of ethnic Georgians, the use of weapons, the targeting of persons, or the detention of prisoners by Georgian and by South Ossetian forces.	
21 May	The Draft Convention on Crimes Against Humanity	Expert Seminar	This closed expert seminar enabled representatives from international and Geneva-based NGOs to discuss and express their opinions in a safe environment on the ongoing International Law Commission (ILC) project of a Crimes Against Humanity Convention with Professor Sean D. Murphy (George Washington University Law School), the ILC Special Rapporteur on the topic.	Amnesty International

DATE EVENT TYPE DESCRIPTION PARTNER(S)

25 May	Protecting the Rights to Freedom of Expression and Privacy while Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism Online	Expert Seminar	This closed expert seminar served to validate the findings of the study by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to which the Geneva Academy had contributed background research.	OHCHR
6 June	Human Rights and Sustainable Development Goals	Expert Seminar	This closed expert seminar brought together 20 UN Special Rapporteurs and members of UN treaty bodies to discuss their approaches to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in relation to economic, social and cultural rights. It focused on the role of UN special procedures and treaty bodies in supporting the implementation of SDGs, as well as on human rights, SDGs and economic and fiscal policies.	Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung; International Bar Association Human Rights Institute
8 June	Crimes against Humanity: Do we Need a New Global Treaty?	Geneva Academy Wednesday	Professor Sean D. Murphy of George Washington University and Member of the UN International Law Commission (ILC) where he serves as Special Rapporteur on the topic of 'Crimes against Humanity' discussed the current drafting by the ILC of provisions of what could become a Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity.	
10 June	Executive Master in International Law in Armed Conflict	Open House	This Open House allowed professionals interested in the Executive Master in International Law in Armed Conflict to meet and exchange with staff, students and alumni, learn more about this programme and discuss career opportunities.	
15 June	What Does it Take to be a Human Rights Defender?	Expert Panel	Panelists discussed the role of human rights defenders and their place in the work of the UN Human Rights Council.	Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies; European Union Delegation to the UN in Geneva
24 June	Human Rights-Based Approach to Combat Corruption	Side Event at the 32 nd Session of the UN Human Rights Council	This event discussed the project of a practitioners' guide on a human rights-based approach to combat corruption that clarifies the conceptual relationship between human rights, good governance and anti-corruption, demonstrates the negative impact of corruption on human rights, and provides guidance and practical recommendations for effectively integrating human rights into anti-corruption efforts.	Permanent Missions of Austria, Brazil, Poland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom to the UN in Geneva
7 July	What are ETOs?	Expert Panel	Panelists explored extraterritorial obligations (ETOs) and their role in the protection of human rights worldwide.	ETOs; FIAN International

DATE EVENT TYPE DESCRIPTION PARTNER(S)

7-8 July	Regional Consultation for Western Europe (Dublin)	Academic Network on Treaty Body Review 2020	This regional consultation brought together academics and experts from the western European region as well as observers from governments and civil society. It aimed to provide material for the Academic Network on Treaty Body Review 2020 project and solicit input from academics of the region.	University College Dublin
19 September	Dealing with the Past in Tunisia: Challenges Ahead	Inaugural Lecture of the 2016-2017 Academic Year	To mark the start of the academic year and the launch of the new Master of Advanced Studies in Transitional Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law, Sihem Bensedrine, a prominent figure in Tunisia's democratic transition, discussed key challenges of addressing past abuses in the aftermath of Tunisia's Arab Spring.	
21 September	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Armed Conflict	Expert Panel	Panelists discuss how violations of economic, social and cultural rights are both causes and consequences of armed conflict, notably in light of a new report on this issue by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.	
28 September	Corruption and Human Rights	Expert Seminar	This closed seminar discussed the possible creation of a group of organizations interested in the development of a practitioners' guide on a human rights approach to countering corruption. The substantive elements for such a guide had been developed in a joint project by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Geneva Academy to inform a Human Rights Council Side Event organized by Switzerland.	
29 September	Armed Non-State Actors and the Human Rights Council	Expert Seminar	This closed seminar served to validate the findings of Geneva Academy research on armed non-state actors and the UN Human Rights Council. Participants included representatives from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Committee of the Red Cross, academia, NGOs and the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs.	
29 September	Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Transitional Justice	Expert Panel	Panelists discussed whether transitional justice should address questions of poverty, systematic inequality and discrimination, or whether it should be limited to political and civil rights violations, such as enforced disappearances and torture. They also addressed the challenges that may arise when the rights to food, health, housing, education or water are implemented in post-conflict or post-authoritarian situations.	

DATE	EVENT	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PARTNER(S)
3 October		Treaty Body Members Platform	This meeting enabled members of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to discuss informally their approach to the Sustainable Development Goals. A member of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and an academic expert contributed to the discussion.	
5 October	Refugees and Migrants: Legal and Human Challenges	IHL Talk	For this first IHL Talk, panelists discussed how international organizations are dealing with the operational, legal and human challenges of the current, unprecedented scale of movement of populations across borders.	Global Migration Centre, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies
6-7 October		Treaty Body Members Platform	This meeting brought together members from all UN human rights treaty bodies that have an inquiry procedure. It aimed to identify the potential for harmonization of their inquiry procedures and enabled mutual learning and the sharing of experiences. The outcomes will be considered by the Chairpersons' meeting in 2017.	
10 October	East West Street: On the Origins of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity	Guest Lecture by Philippe Sands, Professor of Law, University College London	Philippe Sands presented his new book <i>East West Street: On the Origins of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity</i> .	University of Geneva Law Faculty
13 October		Treaty Body Members Platform	This meeting between experts of the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances and the UN Human Rights Committee informed the forthcoming General Comment by the Human Rights Committee on the right to life on aspects relating to enforced disappearances.	
26 October	Military Organization and Operational Decision-Making	Military Briefing	This first Military Briefing looked at military organization and operational decision-making, including the structure of armed forces, responsibilities of staff officers, where legal advisers are usually located within the chain of command and what an 'OPO' is.	
31 October	On the Road to Transitional Justice: Memorialization in Russia and the Balkans	Expert Seminar	This closed seminar brought together Geneva Academy students, civil society representatives and two Right Livelihood Award Laureates from Croatia and Russia to discuss key issues and challenges related to transitional justice and memorialization in the region.	The Right Livelihood Award Foundation

DATE	EVENT	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PARTNER(S)
8-9 November	Global Annual Conference	Academic Network on Treaty Body Review 2020	This global annual conference enabled the compilation of inputs from the regional consultations and the identification of gaps and areas needing further research. In parallel, key stakeholders, including states, NGOs and all treaty bodies were briefed on the platform and its key developments in 2016.	
14 November	Big Data and Human Rights	Breakfast Meeting	This breakfast meeting facilitated a discussion between diplomats and the workstream leaders of the University of Essex's Big Data and Human Rights project. The Geneva Academy, as the Geneva-based partner of the project, organized this discussion, which explored the relevance of the project to a number of current Human Rights Council resolutions.	University of Essex
15 November	Using New Technologies to Enhance Protection During Armed Conflict	Expert Seminar	This seminar looked at the use of new technologies to enhance protection during armed conflict, including the collection of data in social media, the mapping of areas in need, or using aerial drones for search and rescue operations.	Swiss Chair of International Humanitarian Law at the Geneva Academy
16 November	Leadership, Leverage and the Special Challenges of Big Data	Panel Event at the UN Forum on Business and Human Rights	Panelists discussed human rights aspects of big data in relation to private corporations.	University of Essex; Institute for Human Rights and Business
17 November	The Right to Land and other Natural Resources	Expert Seminar	More than 60 participants – leading experts, state representatives, academics and civil society representatives – discussed whether the UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas (UN Declaration) should include a right to land and other natural resources, whether this right would include individual and/or collective entitlements and if there was an agreed language available to define this right in the UN Declaration.	Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs; Permanent Mission of Bolivia to the UN in Geneva; Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung
18-19 November	Regional Consultation for Eastern Europe (Moscow)	Academic Network on Treaty Body Review 2020	This regional consultation brought together academic institutions and academics from the Eastern European region as well as observers from governments and civil society. It aimed to provide material for the Academic Network on Treaty Body Review 2020 project and solicit input from academics of the region.	Institute of Legislation and Comparative Law under the Government of the Russian Federation

DATE	EVENT	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PARTNER(S)
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19–20 November	Regional Consultation for Central and South America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean (San José)	Academic Network on Treaty Body Review 2020	This regional consultation brought together academics and experts from the region, as well as observers from governments and civil society. It aimed to provide material for the Academic Network on Treaty Body Review 2020 project and solicit input from academics of the region.	Inter-American Institute for Human Rights; Inter-American Social Responsibility and Human Rights Institute; Columbia University
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24 November	Violence Against Healthcare and Humanitarian Workers	IHL Talk	Panelists reflected on the reasons why healthcare and humanitarian workers are being targeted despite their protection under international humanitarian law, and what policy tools can be elaborated to implement and ensure better respect for the law by the different parties in armed conflicts.	International Committee of the Red Cross
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30 November	International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law in the Fight Against Terrorism: Bush, Obama and Trump	Geneva Academy Wednesday	Guest speaker Gabor Rona, Visiting Professor of Law at Cardozo Law School, discussed whether and to what extent US counter-terrorism policies have changed from the Bush to the Obama administration, what to expect from the Trump administration, how US counter-terrorism policies affect the traditional understanding of IHL and IHRL, and their relationship, as well as the role played by 'US exceptionalism' in US counter-terrorism policies.	
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1 December	The Military Legal Adviser and Challenges of Modern Combat Operations	Military Briefing	This Military Briefing looked at who legal advisers are and how they are trained, where they are located in the command structure, what type of legal advice they provide during operation planning and combat, and how they can support the commander while setting limits to his/her actions.	
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1 December	Does Torture Prevention Work?	Expert Panel	Panelists discussed the main findings and policy implications of the first independent, in-depth global study of the impact of torture prevention measures.	Association for the Prevention of Torture
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2 December	The Worth of the Arms Trade Treaty? Let's Debate!	Expert Panel	Adopted in 2013, entered into force in 2014, with conferences of states parties in 2015 and 2016 and a legal commentary published in 2016, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the first treaty to regulate the conventional arms trade, has an impressive record. The authors of the recently published ATT Commentary took part in a presidential-style debate on a range of issues about the treaty and its implementation.	Geneva Centre for Security Policy
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DATE	EVENT	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PARTNER(S)
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7 December	The International Criminal Court – At a Turning Point?	Geneva Academy Wednesday	Numerous states have expressed their disappointment and enmity toward the International Criminal Court (ICC), announcing their withdrawal or nullifying their signature on the Rome Statute that established the Court. Panelists discussed the impact of these events on the ICC's future, how to address criticism of the ICC, how the ICC and the states supporting it respond to this, and what measures should be adopted in order to prevent a contagious effect?	
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8–9 December	Coordination Meeting	Academic Network on Treaty Body Review 2020	Based on the regional consultations and to take stock of the work carried out throughout the year, this coordination meeting enabled exchanges between researchers from different geographic regions who are involved in the project. It also served to connect the academic process with diplomatic and NGO discussions in Geneva, via specific briefings given at the UN.	Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung
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9 December	Universality in the Human Rights Council	Expert Panel	To commemorate Human Rights Day and the 10th Anniversary of the UN Human Rights Council, panelists explored how the HRC has developed the concept of universality and responded to contemporary challenges to the universal application of international human rights law.	
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12 December	The Promotion of Human Rights through Education and Training	Geneva Workshop	While a number of different Geneva-based (academic and NGO) actors provide human rights education and training, there is no coordination in place. This workshop discussed methodologies and common challenges, including those resulting from increasing restrictions on funding and visas. At the request of participants, the meeting will evolve into a loose discussion group, meeting twice a year, to try to bring about better coordination between actors in terms of methodologies and practices.	International Training Centre for Human Rights and Peace Teaching
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14 December	Humanitarian Assistance and Armed Groups: Current Challenges and Possible Solutions	Geneva Academy Wednesday	Panelists considered the legal and policy issues that arise when looking at the obligation of state actors and armed groups to consent to and facilitate humanitarian relief, including in territories controlled by armed groups.	
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OUR MISSION

The Geneva Academy provides postgraduate education, conducts academic legal research and policy studies, and organizes training courses and expert meetings. We concentrate on branches of international law that relate to situations of armed conflict, protracted violence, and the protection of human rights.

Established in 2007 by the University of Geneva Faculty of Law and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, the Geneva Academy has acquired a global reputation for excellent teaching and research, and it attracts highly qualified students to its master's and training programmes. Our graduates, numbering close to 700, are employed around the world, promoting and protecting international humanitarian law (IHL) and human rights in governments, NGOs, international organizations and academic institutions. The Geneva Academy thus contributes to the dissemination of legal knowledge in these crucial sectors.

Our scientific research focuses on clarifying IHL, strengthening human rights protection, and developing the areas of complementarity between IHL and international human rights law. In these areas, the Geneva Academy makes a specific contribution to policy development and debate, in government and among scholars and practitioners.

The Geneva Academy is a cosmopolitan community located in the heart of Geneva, an international city and a humanitarian hub. Through close interaction with international organizations, NGOs, experts and governments, we actively participate in global discussions of IHL, human rights, international criminal law and transitional justice.

HOW WE WORK

TRAINING EXPERTS AND PRACTITIONERS

Our three master's programmes and various training and short courses disseminate legal knowledge in international humanitarian law (IHL), international human rights law and transitional justice. Our teaching enables specialists to apply these legal frameworks to complex situations – Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia, Iraq, Syria – and challenging processes such as criminal proceedings, political transitions, international negotiations and humanitarian interventions.

INFORMING POLICY

Our research examines issues that are under-explored, need clarification or are unconventional, experimental or challenging. It thus advances understanding and stimulates debate in the academic community and in policy-making institutions and government. The findings of our research regularly inform policy recommendations and support practitioners working on issues such as IHL, human rights or transitional justice.

OUR CONVENING POWER

The Geneva Academy regularly convenes expert meetings, seminars, conferences and events. This provides a critical and scholarly forum for experts and practitioners to discuss and debate topical issues in IHL, human rights and transitional justice. For example, the right to life, the duty to investigate, reparations for past mass crimes, new trends and developments in international law in armed conflict, or the work of UN human rights mechanisms.

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Andrea Bianchi

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Noam Lubell is Professor of Public International Law and Head of the School of Law at the University of Essex, and also the Rapporteur of the International Law Association's Committee on the Use of Force. He has been the Swiss Chair of International Humanitarian Law (IHL Chair) since 2013.

As IHL Chair, he initiated a research project in 2014 on The Duty to Investigate Under International Law. This project aims to identify standards that states should apply when they investigate or examine alleged violations or misconduct in situations that involve combat, conflict or use of force.

The IHL Chair develops and promotes Geneva Academy expertise in IHL via policy work, cutting-edge research, expert meetings, the development of partnerships and teaching.

SWISS HUMAN RIGHTS CHAIR

Nils Melzer has been the Swiss Human Rights Chair (HR Chair) at the Geneva Academy since March 2016.

As HR Chair he develops and promotes Geneva Academy expertise in human rights via policy work, cutting-edge research, expert meetings, the development of partnerships and teaching.

In November 2016, Nils Melzer was appointed the new UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment.

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IMPRESSUM

Photo on the Cover page: ICRC
 Design: SO2DESIGN, so2design.ch
 Editing: Munizha Ahmad-Cooke

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