

Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian
Law and Human Rights
*Académie de droit international humanitaire
et de droits humains à Genève*

Geneva
Academy

Annual Report | 2015



The Academy, a joint centre of

THE
GRADUATE
INSTITUTE
GENEVA

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



**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**
FACULTÉ DE DROIT

FOREWORD

We are sometimes asked what the added value of the Geneva Academy is, in a busy and populated landscape of organizations dedicated to the advancement of human rights and the implementation of international humanitarian law.

The Geneva Academy's uniqueness lies in the synergy it deploys between education and research, and between fundamental and applied research. The capacities of its faculty, teaching assistants, and researchers are fully mobilized to achieve high quality teaching (probably the densest concentration of expertise in the world in its field) and research that is thorough, independent and sensitive to concrete needs and expectations. In every area of its achievements, the Geneva Academy exercises strict quality control.

In addition to its intrinsic qualities, the Geneva Academy benefits from its location in the heart of international Geneva, and its close links both with Geneva-based international agencies and important NGOs and with institutions that pursue similar and complementary goals, such as the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP). It shares this network with academic partners who also add unique expertise, in fields such as the right to life (University of Pretoria) or the protection of privacy in the era of big data (University of Essex).

The Geneva Academy's teaching and research strike a balance between its two main branches of activity and expertise: the international law of armed conflicts, and international human rights law. In 2015, among other publications, the first comprehensive academic Commentary on the Geneva Conventions was issued. For the third year a *War Report* has also been published, whose object and significance go beyond this title. In 2016 the publication will continue in a new format. The Geneva Academy also continues to contribute to the strengthening of the human rights protection mechanisms, notably through its work with the Human Rights Council and the UN human rights treaty bodies.

On the education side the LL.M. and the Executive Master both enjoyed a fruitful year, and students participated in numerous side events alongside Geneva's international community. Customized and proper trainings have been organized, with as a landmark event the biennial training week in IHL for professors of international law co-organized with the ICRC. These activities are further described in the following pages.

At the crossroads of IHL and IHRL transitional justice has progressively emerged at the Geneva Academy as a new field of education and research. The last summer school took place in July 2015, anticipating the new Master in Transitional Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law, which will start in September 2016. Excitement about this new challenge is building among both teachers and staff.

Two major appointments for new positions have taken place in 2015. Félix Kirchmeier became Manager of Policy Studies. He will expand the Geneva Academy's role as a platform for debates relevant to international Geneva, while strengthening its think-tank activities; his team will in particular prepare academically solid and policy-relevant background papers. Nathalie Mivelaz Tirabosco was appointed Communication Officer, tasked with ensuring that the Geneva Academy's work and values are understood by, and shared with the broad community of people and organizations active in the fields of human rights and humanitarian law.

FOREWORD

In a world that desperately needs orientation and legal and ethical guidelines, an institution like the Geneva Academy carries responsibilities that are heavy but exciting. Its mission is to bring immediate answers to acute contemporary concerns while developing and facilitating deep reflection on the long-term challenges we are all confronted with. The Geneva Academy will continue to work to fulfil its mission in 2016.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Roth', written in a cursive style.

Robert Roth

Professor of International Criminal Law
Director of the Geneva Academy

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HIGHLIGHTS

2015 HIGHLIGHTS

Addressing challenges to implementing international humanitarian law

Through cutting-edge scientific research, the Geneva Academy addresses central dilemmas and challenges to the implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL). The first academic Commentary on the Geneva Conventions, realized under the auspices of the Geneva Academy and edited by leading international law professors, provides an unmatched analysis of key contemporary IHL issues, including the transnational nature of conflicts and the geographical scope of the Conventions.

Educationally, the Geneva Academy trains students and professionals in the international law of armed conflict. In 2015, its IHL course for university lecturers, co-organized with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), brought together professors from 27 countries, including countries affected by armed conflict, to discuss topical IHL challenges and share teaching tools and methodologies.

HIGHLIGHTS

Furthering education in transitional justice, human rights and the rule of law

In November 2015, we announced that a new Master of Advanced Studies in Transitional Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law will be taught from September 2016. This unique one year programme will provide a comprehensive, in-depth training on the many aspects of transitional justice, including relevant legal frameworks. Reflecting the subject's inter-disciplinary nature, the programme will cover a range of perspectives, including development, institution building and security, and will address throughout the challenge of confronting conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence.

To facilitate dialogue and critical reflection on practical issues, a year-long clinic will combine regular seminars with internships in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and United Nations agencies that work in the field of transitional justice, enabling students to explore the links between theory and practice. The programme will also include the Geneva Spring School in Transitional Justice, a week of lectures and workshops at which participants debate themes of concern to transitional justice scholars and practitioners.



HIGHLIGHTS

Analyzing developments in weapons law

Through the Weapons Law Encyclopedia (WLE), an online analytical database (weaponslaw.org), the Geneva Academy provides accurate and up-to-date information on weapons, the effects of their use, and their regulation under international law, in a format accessible to non-specialists. This unique tool regularly integrates new information on case law, legal instruments, and weapons.

In 2015, the Geneva Academy looked closely at the use and impact of barrel bombs, and their legality under international law. Given the absence of an authoritative definition of 'barrel bomb' in international law, the research clarified how and when use of these weapons is prohibited.

Advancing economic, social and cultural rights

The Geneva Academy's project on economic, social and cultural rights, one of very few academic initiatives in this field, continued by means of fundamental and applied research and educational activities to assist legal negotiations, contribute to policy development, and train experts.

In 2015, the project involved partners from the global south and focused particularly on challenges to implementing the right to food, notably in the contexts of land commercialization, land grabbing, food insecurity, and poverty reduction.





OUR MISSION

The Geneva Academy provides post-graduate 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 protection of human rights.

Established in 2007, the Geneva Academy has acquired a global reputation for excellent teaching and research, and it attracts students of high quality to its masters and training programmes. Our more than 660 graduates are employed worldwide, promoting and protecting IHL and human rights in governments, NGOs, international organizations and academic institutions. The Geneva Academy thereby 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.

Jointly established by the Law Faculty of the University of Geneva and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, the Geneva Academy is a cosmopolitan community located in the heart of Geneva, an international city and 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.

THE BOARD

- Nicolas Michel** | President of the Board, Professor Emeritus at the Law Faculty of the University of Geneva and the Graduate Institute.
- Vincent Bernard** | representing the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).
- Andrea Bianchi** | Professor of International Law, the Graduate Institute.
- Christine Chappuis** | Dean of the Law Faculty, University of Geneva.
- Vincent Chetail** | Professor of International Law, the Graduate Institute.
- Jane Connors** | representing the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (until June 2015).
- Alice Edwards** | representing the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (succeeded by **Madeleine Garlick** from November 2015).
- Claude Wild** | Ambassador, Head of the Human Security Division, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (succeeded by **Jürg Lindenmann**, Ambassador, Directorate of International Law, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, from August 2015).
- Andreas Ziegler** | Professor of International Law, University of Lausanne.

MASTER PROGRAMMES

The Geneva Academy offers two post-graduate Master programmes in international law in armed conflict: the LL.M. in International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, and, for working professionals, the Executive Master in International Law in Armed Conflict.

From September 2016, we will also offer a new Master of Advanced Studies in Transitional Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law.

Faculty

Resident Faculty

The resident faculty is engaged in education, and fundamental and applied research at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and/or the University of Geneva.

Andrea Bianchi, Professor of International Law at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

Vincent Chetail, Professor of International Law at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and Director of the Programme for the Study of Global Migration.

Andrew Clapham, Professor of International Law at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

Paola Gaeta, Professor of International Law at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

Gloria Gaggioli, Assistant Professor and Grant Holder of Excellence at the University of Geneva.

Frank Haldemann, SNSF Professor of Transitional Justice at the Law Faculty of the University of Geneva.

Robert Kolb, Professor of International Law at the Law Faculty of the University of Geneva.

Robert Roth, Director of the Geneva Academy and Professor of International Criminal Law at the Law Faculty of the University of Geneva.

Marco Sassòli, Professor of International Law at the Law Faculty of the University of Geneva, Associate Professor of International Law at the Université du Québec and Associate Professor at the Université Laval.



MASTERS

The Swiss Chair of International Humanitarian Law

Noam Lubell, Professor in Public International Law and Head of the School of Law at the University of Essex, has been the Swiss Chair of International Humanitarian Law (Swiss IHL Chair) since mid- 2013.

The Swiss IHL Chair raises the Geneva Academy's profile and expertise in the IHL field and cooperates with the Swiss Government, the ICRC and Board members of the Geneva Academy to implement our mission.

Professor Lubell initiated in 2014 an intergovernmental and academic research process into investigations after military action. He continued this work in 2015 and also taught during the IHL training for university lecturers that we co-organized with the ICRC.

Visiting Professors and Lecturers

Cécile Aptel, Senior Legal Policy Adviser at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Associate Professor of International Law at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Gabriela Citroni, Professor of International Human Rights Law at the University of Milano-Bicocca.

Giovanni Distefano, Professor of International Law at the Law Faculty of the University of Neuchâtel.

Tarcisio Gazzini, Senior Researcher at the University of Lausanne.

Christophe Golay, Research Fellow and Coordinator of the Project on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at the Geneva Academy.

Jérôme de Hemptinne, Lecturer at the Universities of Louvain and Strasbourg.

Sandra Krähenmann, Research Fellow at the Geneva Academy.

Marko Milanovic, Associate Professor at the School of Law at the University of Nottingham.

Carsten Stahn, Professor of International Criminal Law and Global Justice at Leiden University, Programme Director of the Grotius Centre for International Legal Studies (The Hague) and Visiting Professor at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

William A. Schabas, Professor of International Law at Middlesex University, Professor of Human Rights Law and International Criminal Law at Leiden University and Emeritus Professor of Human Rights Law at the National University of Ireland, Galway.

Eric Steinmyller, Lawyer and Security Manager.

Gabriella Venturini, Professor Emeritus of International Law at the University of Milan.

MASTERS

LL.M. in International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

The Geneva Academy has offered a LL.M. in International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights since 2003. This full-time one year programme (60 ECTS) gives postgraduate students a unique opportunity to follow advanced courses and seminars in all branches of international law that apply to situations of armed conflict and to grasp fully the interplay between them.

Core courses cover all branches of international law applicable to armed conflicts. Optional courses cover more specific issues, such as the rules that govern the conduct of hostilities, the protection of children in armed conflicts, enforced disappearances, and the work of international criminal courts and tribunals.

Teaching is complemented by integrated professional activities, for which credits are awarded. During the spring semester, as an alternative to optional courses, students can acquire first-hand professional experience of working in Geneva-based international organizations. The partnerships which the Geneva Academy has developed with key actors in the humanitarian and human rights field, including with the ICRC, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), give the LL.M. a unique professional dimension.

A core output of the LL.M. is a thesis on a theme drawn from one of the programme's subject areas. It offers students the opportunity to investigate an issue of special interest to them, and deepen their knowledge and expertise through exchanges with experts, scholars and practitioners.

To me, the most amazing thing about the LL.M. programme is its human diversity: people from all over the globe come together to study at the cutting-edge of modern legal science.

Elem Khairullin, 2015-2016 LL.M. Student.

The Geneva Academy's LL.M. in International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights is a hands-on professional course being equally challenging and rewarding at the same time. On the one hand, the excellent Professors, demanding course schedules and diverse professionalizing activities make you push your limits, and on the other, the experience of studying in an international setting with people from over 25 nationalities is a personally enriching experience.

Kalika Metha, 2015-2016 LL.M. Student.

MASTERS

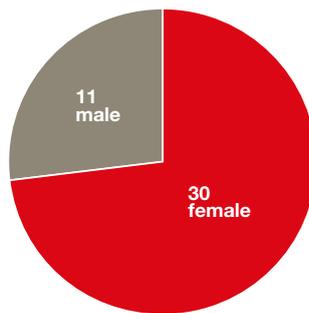
LL.M. 2015-2016

The 2015-2016 LL.M. class has 41 students from 25 countries: Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, France, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Russia, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Turkey, and the United States of America.

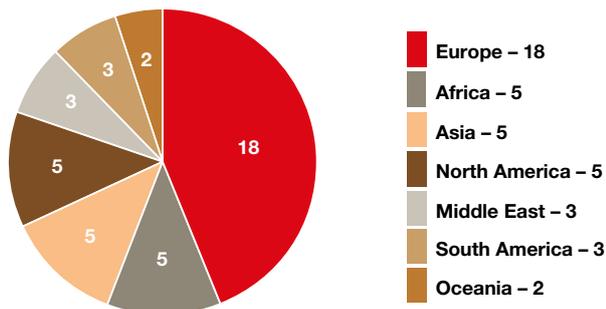
The diversity of our LL.M. students is achieved thanks to the generous support and continued funding of the Wilsdorf Foundation, Irene and Jeno Staehlin, the International Bar Association, and the Republic and State of Geneva's International Solidarity Service. 13 students received a partial or complete scholarship in 2015. An Alumni Scholarship was included for the first time.

These scholarships 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.

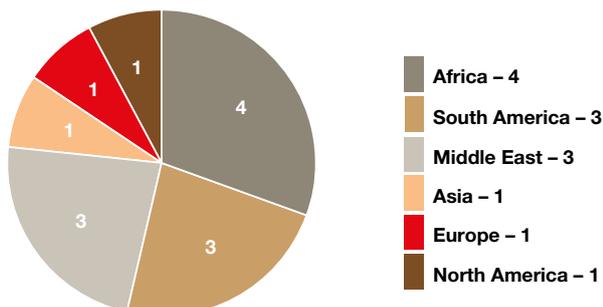
Gender representation



Geographical representation



Scholarships



MASTERS

LL.M. 2014-2015

All students of the 2014-2015 LL.M. class successfully completed the programme, except one who postponed graduation to October 2016. 24 students opted to participate in integrated professional activities during the second semester with a variety of Geneva-based institutions, including the International Law Commission (ILC), the ICRC, and the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ).

Highlights included the Jean-Pictet Competition, where the Geneva Academy's team were finalists, and a study trip to The Hague and Amsterdam, where students met defence counsel and staff from the Office of the Prosecutor, the Office of the Public Counsel for the Defence, and the Registry of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and the International Criminal Court (ICC). The visit provided a marvellous opportunity to understand the work of international courts and tribunals, meet staff and experts, and discuss issues of criminal and public international law.

Around 150 guests, including graduates' families, attended the 2015 graduation ceremony at the Maison de la Paix (Graduate Institute) on 30 October 2015. Cécile Aptel gave the keynote speech. Vaishali Sharma was awarded the Henry Dunant Prize for her LL.M. thesis, titled 'Exploring Transparency Requirements in International Humanitarian Law'. Roger Durand, President of the Henry Dunant Prize Foundation, spoke alongside Mourgue D'Algue, a descendant of Henry Dunant. Ilya Ivanov won the award for the best LL.M. paper, for his thesis titled 'Obligations of Unorganized Belligerents under Customary International Law'.

MASTERS

Executive Master in International Law in Armed Conflict

Since 2011, the Geneva Academy has offered an Executive Master/Master of Advanced Studies in International Law in Armed Conflict (60 ECTS). This part-time programme, taught in English, is designed for working professionals who want to acquire a thorough understanding of the international law that applies to situations of armed conflict.

The curriculum includes four modules, on international humanitarian law, human rights in armed conflict, public international law, and international criminal law. Courses cover specific issues, including international refugee law, the repression of terrorism, the International Criminal Court, the law of non-international armed conflicts, peacekeeping, and IHL challenges related to counter-terrorism operations.

The Executive Master responds to a growing need for specialists who can apply the laws of war to complex situations – Afghanistan, Colombia, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere – and challenging processes, including criminal proceedings, international negotiations, and humanitarian interventions.

During nine months (October to June), participants – diplomats, lawyers, legal advisers, judges, NGO staff, human rights advocates, media professionals, professionals working in emergency situations, United Nations staff, and staff from other international organizations – share their expertise, discuss pressing concerns of the international community, and reflect on the application of international law. Following the end of courses in June, participants complete a Master's thesis and defend it before a jury.

The Executive Masters was an ideal programme for me – academically and logistically – as it allowed me to attend all the courses while working at the same time and to be instructed by what are clearly the top professors in the field.

Victor Ullom, 2014-2015 Executive Master Student and Consultant with OHCHR

Individual courses

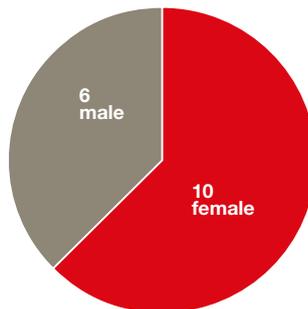
Working professionals who are not enrolled in the Executive Master can take individual courses throughout the programme to deepen their expertise on specific issues, including the protection of refugees and asylum seekers from conflict-affected countries, the repression of terrorism, and the protection of persons and property during armed conflicts. Those who participate can draw on the comprehensive expertise of the Executive Master's faculty, meet key experts and practitioners, and interact with other professionals who are enrolled on the Executive Master.

MASTERS

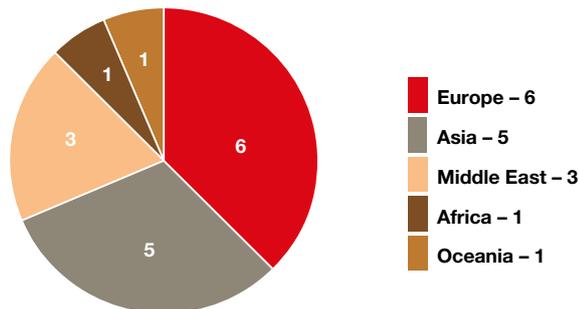
Executive Master 2015-2017

The 2015-2017 Executive Master class includes 16 students from Azerbaijan, Greece, Iran, Italy, Japan, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Syria, Togo, and the United Kingdom. Professionally, they hold positions in NGOs, international organizations, government, and the private sector.

Gender representation



Geographical representation



Executive Master 2014-2016

Participants in the 2014-2016 Executive Master class are currently working on their thesis and will graduate in October 2016.

Executive Master 2013-2015

Of the 19 Participants in the 2013-2015 Executive Master, 16 successfully completed the programme.

New Master

By September 2016, around 25 students, including 10 with full-scholarships and approximately 5 with half scholarships, will have enrolled in the Geneva Academy's new Master of Advanced Studies in Transitional Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law.

EXPERTISE

Through scientific research, trainings, conferences and expert meetings, the Geneva Academy clarifies IHL, strengthens human rights protection, and develops areas of complementarity between IHL and human rights.

Our research examines issues that are under-explored, need clarification, or are unconventional, experimental or challenging. It advances understanding and stimulates debate in the academic community and in policy-making institutions and governments.

In 2015, we conducted research on a range of topical issues, including the rule of law in armed conflict, the protection of persons with disability in armed conflict, the duty to investigate under international law, accountability for international crimes, foreign fighters, armed non-State actors, weapons law, and economic, social and cultural rights.

To complement this research, short training courses with condensed teaching formats enable external participants to increase their knowledge in specific fields. These courses meet a demand among professionals and academics for continuing education on issues such as IHL, weapons law, the Human Rights Council, and the rights of peasants. The Geneva Academy also provides customized training courses.

The meetings and seminars organized at the Villa Moynier enable experts and practitioners to discuss research subjects and findings in a neutral and positive environment and to build bridges and networks within the humanitarian and human rights community.

Acknowledgment

Our research would not be possible without continued support from our partners and donors. In addition to our principal supporter, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, other donors and partners include academic institutions, NGOs, inter-governmental organizations, private foundations, and other governments.



EXPERTISE

Clarifying international humanitarian law

The War Report: 2015 Edition

The War Report is the only independent and comprehensive global classification of armed conflicts under international law. The detailed information it provides on every armed conflict that occurred during the year, as well as on new legal developments and controversies, make it an essential global reference for professionals working on conflict and related concerns.

The 2015 edition analysed, *inter alia*, the increasing use of explosive weapons in highly populated areas, the rise of Islamic State and affiliated groups, and the exposed situation of refugees and asylum seekers from conflict-affected areas. It also highlighted a new trend: the extreme violence employed against civilians by certain unorganized armed groups, such as the anti-Balaka militia in the Central African Republic (CAR).

Published by Oxford University Press for the Geneva Academy and coordinated by Dr. Annyssa Bellal, the 2015 edition was launched at a special livestreamed panel event on 10 December 2015.

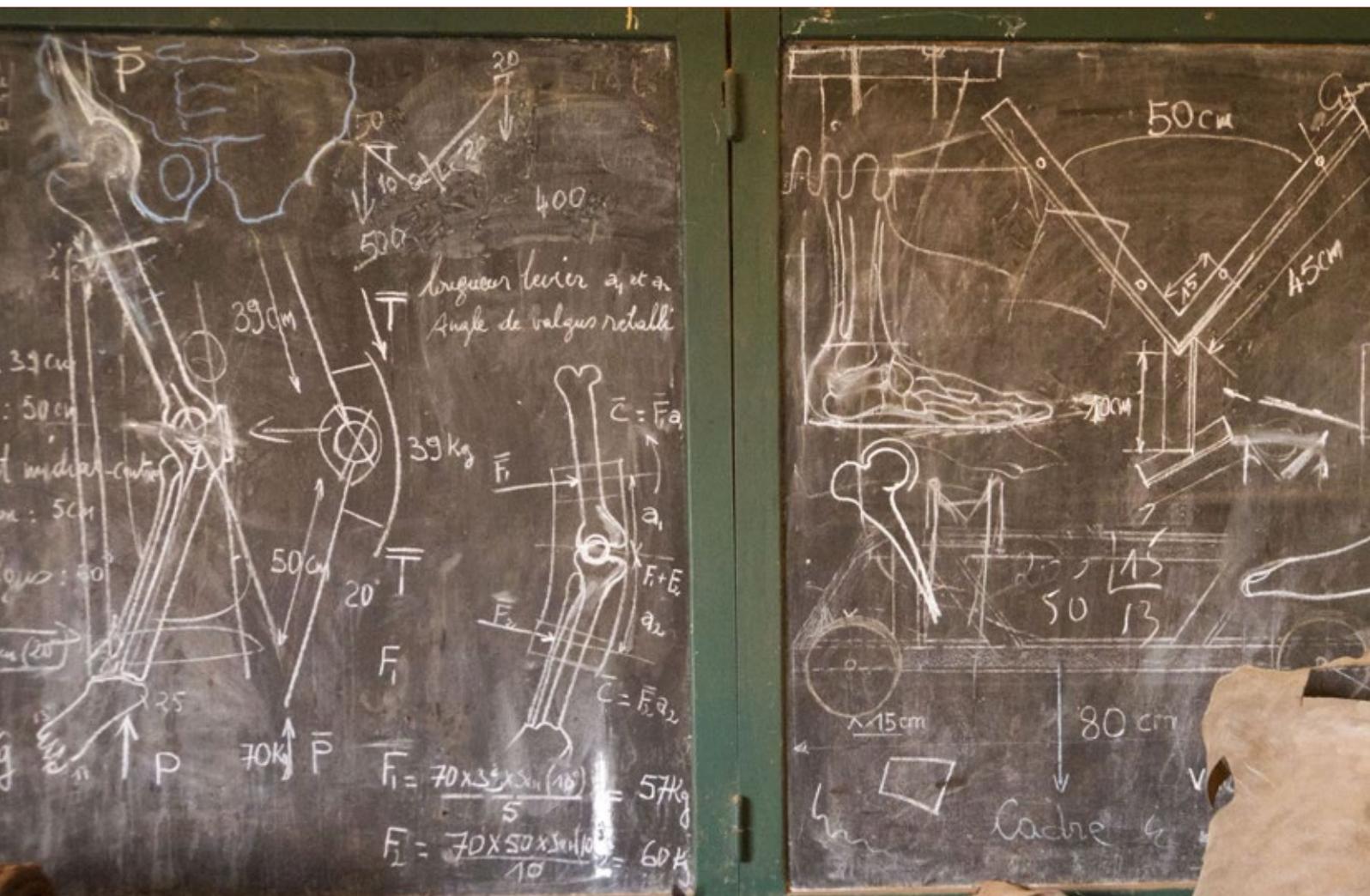
Rule of Law in Armed Conflict (RULAC) database

The Rule of Law in Armed Conflicts database (RULAC) (rulac.org), a global online portal that identifies and classifies all situations of armed violence that amount to armed conflicts under international law, is an essential reference for experts and practitioners working in the field.

A new online version was developed in 2015 and will be launched in 2016. It will provide up-to-date information on current armed conflicts, their contexts and causes, belligerents, alleged war crimes, and applicable international law.

The 1949 Geneva Conventions: A Commentary

Published by Oxford University Press, and edited by Professors Andrew Clapham, Paola Gaeta, and Marco Sassòli under the auspices of the Geneva Academy, this ground-breaking book is the first academic Commentary on the 1949 Geneva Conventions. Over sixty experts in international law collaborated to explain how the Geneva Conventions have been interpreted and how they are applied in practice. The book analyses the current meaning of the 1949 Geneva Conventions for the protection of the victims of war, integrating recent developments in human rights law and international criminal law. It is a key reference for those seeking to understand the Geneva Conventions and the law applicable in armed conflict more generally.



EXPERTISE

The protection of persons with disability during and following armed conflict

Over one billion people worldwide suffer from some form of disability, at least half of whom live in States affected by armed conflict. Article 11 of the 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requires States Parties to take all necessary measures to ensure their protection in situations of armed conflict.

This research analyses the meaning and scope of States' international legal obligations to protect and assist persons with disabilities during and after armed conflicts, and the laws, policies and practices required to fulfil these obligations.

The duty to investigate under international law

Through expert meetings and research, this project will 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 project is coordinated by the Swiss IHL Chair, Professor Noam Lubell.

In support of this project, the Geneva Academy organized an international expert meeting in September 2015 to discuss the production of a document on best practice. The document will notably cover reporting, record keeping and assessment, the evaluation of information and allegations, the types of incident that should trigger different forms of investigation, and the threshold for criminal and non-criminal investigations.

Accountability for international crimes

Currently, international law does not set out clearly the different forms of responsibility for international crimes. This research, started in 2015, will identify the sources and conditions of accountability for international crimes (including under international norms and precedents), and provide examples from national legislation.

The project will be completed in 2016 and its findings published in a book that will be an essential reference for law experts working in national and international courts, including judges, lawyers and legal counsel. A shorter manual for practitioners will be published in parallel.

Advanced training seminar in international humanitarian law for university lecturers

The Geneva Academy and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) co-organized the 11th advanced IHL training seminar for university lecturers in Geneva.

35 IHL lecturers from 27 countries, several of which are currently affected by armed conflicts, discussed cutting-edge IHL challenges and shared teaching tools and methodologies, through workshops, discussions, case studies, visits to places of scholarly interest, and a review of the tools available for teaching IHL.

Training seminar in international humanitarian law for diplomats

As in previous years, the Geneva Academy and the ICRC co-organized a one-day training for diplomats accredited to the UN in Geneva. Most of the participants worked in disarmament, human rights or humanitarian affairs. Issues discussed included the protection of persons deprived of their liberty in the context of non-international armed conflict, the territorial application of IHL, and the arms trade treaty.

EXPERTISE

Strengthening human rights protection

Support to United Nations human rights mechanisms

As a human rights hub, Geneva is home to all the United Nations (UN) human rights mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council (HRC) and the UN treaty bodies that oversee the implementation of UN human rights conventions. The Geneva Academy supports their work, through specific projects, by providing reflections on their functioning, and by offering a private space for discussion of current and future challenges for the system.

Universality in the Human Rights Council

The principle of universality is a cornerstone of international human rights law. Contemporary challenges to it generally invoke the need to protect particular interests, prevent specific forms of interference, or uphold modalities that determine how universal human rights should be exercised.

At global level, the HRC and its mechanisms are the main fora in which these important discussions take place. This project examines different concepts of universality, maps challenges to universality in the HRC, and evaluates related risks and opportunities.



EXPERTISE

Treaty Body Members Platform

The Treaty Body Members Platform, hosted by the Geneva Academy, connects experts in UN treaty bodies with Geneva-based practitioners, academics and diplomats to share expertise, exchange views on topical questions, and develop synergies.

In 2015, the Platform enabled experts from the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, to discuss a range of issues with external experts and practitioners. Subjects included the impact of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on women's rights; migration, human trafficking and enforced disappearances; public spending and the rights of the child; abortion and sexual and reproductive health and rights; and the links between CEDAW and the UN Women Peace and Security Agenda.

Academic Platform on Treaty Body Review 2020

Since the first UN Treaty Body was established in 1970, both treaty ratifications and the treaty body system have expanded significantly. While this expansion has enhanced human rights protection worldwide, it has also created complex challenges that affect the system and those who interact with it: States, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), UN entities, civil society organizations, individual complainants, and right-holders at large.

On 9 April 2014, the General Assembly (GA) adopted a landmark resolution (A/RES/68/268) which envisages a review of the system at GA level in 2020. To contribute to this review process, the Geneva Academy asked a small group of independent researchers to prepare a range of scenarios for the period leading up to 2020 and to define the parameters of an academic project that would generate innovative proposals and solutions without weakening international human rights protection.

The intersectionality of human rights violations and UN treaty bodies

Intersectional violations of human rights occur when an abuse simultaneously violates several different rights, or a person simultaneously suffers discrimination on several grounds. Their cumulative character means that they have a particularly devastating impact on victims.

Recognizing that the international human rights system needs to give more attention to such situations, the Geneva Academy supervised the legal aspects of a research project coordinated by the University of Fribourg that examined the record of UN treaty bodies with regard to intersectional violations, in order to formulate proposals that would improve institutional responses. The project was completed in 2015 and included eight case studies that described a variety of intersectional violations in different regions.

Leading in the Human Rights Council: skills for personal effectiveness

As the HRC approaches its 10th year, the Geneva Academy organized jointly with the Graduate Institute a new training course, designed for diplomats and experts from diplomatic missions and foreign ministries, staff of international and regional organizations working in the field of human rights, and NGO staff who are involved, or aspire to be involved, in multilateral diplomacy.

The training enabled the participants to deepen their understanding of the HRC's rules and procedures, develop relevant communication and negotiations skills, and gain first-hand insights and perspectives on the HRC through balanced and informal discussions with experienced practitioners, academics, and diplomats, including Ambassador Luis Alfonso de Alba (Mexico), the HRC's inaugural president.

Given the success of the course, and the positive feedback received, it will now take place each year before the main HRC session.

EXPERTISE

Economic, social and cultural rights

The Geneva Academy's project on economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) is a unique initiative that promotes the realization of ESCR through research, education, conferences, expert meetings, and the provision of advice to actors involved in their implementation. Fundamental and applied research into a range of issues, including the right to food and the rights of peasants, contributes to policy development, legal negotiations, and debates among scholars, practitioners and governments.

Right to food: two new research projects and a book on large-scale land acquisition

In 2015, the Geneva Academy started two research projects on the right to food. The first, titled '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 Ghana and Cambodia. The second, titled 'Towards food sustainability: Reshaping the coexistence of different food systems in South America and Africa', considers the relationships between the right to food, food security, the reduction of poverty and inequality, environmental integrity, and socio-ecological resilience, focusing on Bolivia and Kenya.

As a co-coordinator of both projects, the Geneva Academy supervises the legal aspects of the research, in partnership with economists, political scientists, anthropologists, and human geographers in Switzerland, Ghana, Kenya, Cambodia and Bolivia.

In 2015, Christophe Golay, Research Fellow at the Geneva Academy, co-edited with Christophe Gironde and Peter Messerli a book that examines the issue of 'land grabbing'. Using in-depth case studies that put the problem in its historical and institutional context, *Large-scale Land Acquisitions: Focus on South East Asia* (Brill 2015) provides a human rights analysis of the phenomenon and considers the degree to which human rights mechanisms are able to prevent or mitigate its negative effects.



EXPERTISE

Training courses on economic, social and cultural rights

The Geneva Academy organized three training courses on ESCR in 2015: two introductory courses (in English and in French) and an advanced course on monitoring techniques. The participants, from Africa, Asia, South America and Europe, included government officials and staff from UN agencies, NHRIs, NGOs, and trades unions, as well as journalists and academics.

The two introductory courses focused on the substantive content of ESCR and emerging issues and challenges, including the environment and the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. Participants also learned about the UN, regional and domestic mechanisms that protect ESCR. The advanced course addressed techniques to monitor ESCR, including human rights indicators, budget analysis, human rights impact assessments, domestic and regional litigation, and UN mechanisms for tracking their realization.

Coming from a peacebuilding and development background, the course was ideal for providing an introduction to ESCR. I have gained much insight into how ESCR could be used to strengthen peacebuilding work. The expertise of all the trainers and the experience of the participants created a rich learning environment.

Diane Hendrick, Representative for Peace and Disarmament, Quaker UN Office, Britain

My favourite part of the course was learning about the more practical aspects of the UN human rights system. Getting to see the UN Committee on ESCR in action was definitely useful and a great experience I never thought I would have.

Celeste Kauffman, Centro para el Estudio de Derecho, Justicia y Sociedad, Colombia

The rights of peasants: academic support to negotiations at the Human Rights Council

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 (the UN Declaration). The Geneva Academy is providing expert support to States and other stakeholders engaged in this exercise.

In 2015, the Geneva Academy published an In-Brief that described the history of the UN Declaration process and identified agreed language in international documents that could help negotiators to finalize it. It also organized an expert seminar on peasants' right to seeds and on intellectual property rights, one of the most contentious issues in the negotiations. The seminar looked for consensual options, building on legal rather than political considerations, and drew on other fora, including FAO discussions, to provide context.

A training course on the rights of peasants, attended by participants coming from Africa, Asia, Europe and South America, including government officials, staff of UN agencies, NGO staff, and academics, deepened understanding of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas, and provided up-to-date information on the negotiations.

EXPERTISE

Human rights and the rule of law in transitional processes

Summer School in Transitional Justice, Conflict and Human Rights

Participants with a variety of professional backgrounds, from South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan and various European countries, attended the Geneva Academy's Summer School in Transitional Justice, Conflict and Human Rights. The Summer School introduced them to the main themes of transitional justice and combined discussion of theoretical frameworks with practical exercises.

Key speakers included Fionnuala Ni Aolain, Professor at the University of Minnesota Law School and the University of Ulster's Transitional Justice Institute in Belfast, Dr. Rama Mani, Professor Robert Roth, Professor William Schabas, and Lucie Viersma, an expert in transitional justice working with OHCHR.



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Academic support to the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence

During 2015, the Geneva Academy continued to support the mandate of Pablo de Greiff, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, by seconding a researcher with key expertise in transitional justice to serve as his Special Adviser.

Based at the Geneva Academy, the Special Adviser provided legal and political advice in sensitive areas of the mandate and linked the Rapporteur to multilateral discussions and leading NGOs and international organizations in Geneva, including OHCHR. This support assisted the Special Rapporteur to complete successfully the critical first three years of his mandate.

EXPERTISE

Developing areas of complementarity between international humanitarian law and human rights

Armed non-state actors in the Human Rights Council

Since non-State actors play a crucial role in contemporary situations of armed violence, the HRC and its special procedures, as well as commissions of inquiry, have increasingly examined their activities and accountability. However, they do so inconsistently, mirroring the differences of view among legal scholars.

To provide guidance for a systematic approach at the HRC on this issue, the Geneva Academy initiated a study to identify whether, to what extent, and under what circumstances armed non-State actors incur obligations under international law.

Foreign fighters, the right to privacy, and freedom of expression

The Geneva Academy continued to work on legal issues associated with foreign fighters, links to terrorism, and national and international responses to both.

Amongst the measures taken to stem the flow of foreign fighters, efforts to address the use of information and communication technology for recruitment and incitement to terrorism gained traction in 2015 as part of the wider agenda to prevent violent extremism. Against that background, the Geneva Academy, in collaboration with the OHCHR, mapped such measures and their underlying assumptions, in particular with respect to the process of radicalization and the role played by ideology, and analysed their potentially adverse impact on the right to privacy and freedom of expression online.

The project also looked at the linkages between the two rights, such as for example the chilling effect of online surveillance on freedom of expression, which in turn contributes to the shrinking of free space for civil society. Setting out the human rights law parameters to evaluate such measures, the project aims to assist all relevant stakeholders, including policy makers and information and communication technology companies, to delimit and conceptualize such measures so that they respect human rights law and do not have any unintended negative consequences.





EXPERTISE

Weapons law

The Weapons Law Encyclopedia

The Weapons Law Encyclopedia (WLE), a unique online legal reference tool (weaponslaw.org), provides experts and practitioners with essential information on the regulation and use of weapons under international law.

In 2015, over 15 new entries were added to the database, including one on findings of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic that relate to weapons law. To ensure consistency, all the entries in the database were systematically revised, including the one on the 1977 Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions.

Training course on international weapons law

In partnership with the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), the Geneva Academy organized a training course on weapons law and the legal review of weapons. Attended by military legal advisers, diplomats and PhD candidates from 12 countries, it provided participants with the knowledge, tools and skills they require to ensure that a State is in compliance with international weapons law, and to design and conduct a legal review of any category of new weapon.

Areas covered in the training included the definition of weapons; means and methods of warfare; the evolution and sources of weapons law; unnecessary suffering and indiscriminate weapons; weapons and the environment; nuclear, biological and chemical weapons; missiles, bombs, firearms and bullets; and new weapons technologies.



EVENTS

Public events and expert seminars are a key part of the Geneva Academy's activities. In 2015, we ran various private and public events – conferences, workshops, seminars, roundtables – providing a critical and scholarly forum for discussion and debate around topical issues in the IHL and HR fields. The livestreaming of flagship events allowed audiences outside Geneva to follow the debates and participate via social media. Most public events can also be viewed afterwards via the Geneva Academy's Youtube channel.

Date	Event type	Title	Description	Partner
20 January	Transitional Justice Round Table	The interactions between traditional justice mechanisms and human rights	This round table discussed a controversial transitional justice issue, namely the interaction between traditional justice mechanisms and human rights law.	
28 January	Guest lecture by Professor Ido Rosenzweig	Combatants dressed as civilians? The legality of undercover units in international law	Prof. Rosenzweig discussed the use of undercover agents, focusing on the Mista'arvim - elite units of Israeli soldiers who operate in the West Bank and Gaza disguised as local Arabs. He analyzed the legality and implications under international law of using such units for law enforcement and combat operations.	
3 February	Expert panel	Enforced disappearances in Mexico	The panel examined enforced disappearances in Mexico and their transnational dimension, giving special attention to migrants.	
11 February	Geneva Academy Wednesdays (GAW)	Crimea and Eastern Ukraine	This event focused on Russia's intervention in Ukraine, including: the incorporation/annexation of the Crimea and its legal consequences; the classification and occupation issues arising out of Russia's involvement in Ukraine; and weapons, targeting, and extra-judicial killings in eastern Ukraine. The presentation was followed by a discussion with the audience.	
11 March	Guest lecture by Abdulhay Sayed	The Syria conflict and the impunity gap	On 20 February 2015, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria published its 9 th report (A/HRC/28/69) on human rights and IHL violations perpetrated between March 2011 and January 2015. The report emphasized the importance of addressing Syria's 'impunity gap'. Syrian lawyer Abdulhay Sayed contributed an insider's legal perspective. Two short films, produced by Abounaddara, a Syrian collective of anonymous filmmakers, bookended the event.	

EVENTS

Date	Event type	Title	Description	Partner
11 March	Expert panel	Ensuring the right to food through human rights impact assessments (HRIA)	Drawing on the results of 'Owning seeds, accessing food', a recent human rights impact assessment report, panellist discussed the strengths and shortcomings of HRIA and the degree to which the UN human rights system could strengthen HRIAs and support their application to policy development.	FIAN, Bern Declaration, FES
15 April	Guest lecture by Professor Cerone	The ICC and Palestinian consent	At the turn of the year, Mahmoud Abbas, leader of the Palestinian Authority, deposited an instrument of accession with the International Criminal Court (ICC), on behalf of the State of Palestine, and lodged a declaration of consent with the ICC Registrar, accepting the Court's jurisdiction retrospectively. Prof. Cerone explored the controversial and complex legal and political issues these actions raise.	
22 April	Geneva Academy Wednesdays (GAW)	The legal obligations and accountability of armed groups in the Central African Republic	Key issues discussed included the classification of conflicts in failing states, whether armed groups have human rights obligations, whether the violence in CAR can be classified as genocide, and accountability options.	
19 May	Launch event	A new application: mobile technology in the interest of law and the protection of civilians	'Fighter not Killer' is a mobile application developed by Geneva Call to promote respect for the Law of Armed Conflict, in particular its rules relating to the protection of civilians. The panellists, who included Professors Robert Roth and Marco Sassòli, discussed the role of international law in the protection of civilians.	Geneva Call
10 June	Geneva Academy Wednesdays (GAW)	International legal issues arising from the situation in Yemen	Debate revolved around interconnected <i>jus ad bellum</i> and <i>jus in bello</i> topics, prompting a lengthy and rich discussion.	
12 June	Expert panel	Human rights policy responses to the growth of private actors in education	Privatization often exacerbates wealth inequalities between those who can afford to pay for private education and those who cannot, as well as gender or ethnic exclusion. The panel discussed this topical issue and provided insights into how civil society can ensure that States abide by their core obligation to provide quality public education for all and safeguard education as a public good.	Global Initiative, Campaign for Education

EVENTS

Date	Event type	Title	Description	Partner
18 June	Side event at the 29th session of the Human Rights Council	Accountability mechanisms for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals	The speakers discussed how human rights standards, mechanisms and principles can inform accountability with respect to the SDGs. They reviewed practical experiences and working methods, and highlighted contributions that the UPR and treaty body reporting might make to national and global reporting processes that may be established in connection with the SDGs.	FES, OHCHR
29 June	Conference in honour of Prof. Nicolas Michel		Experts and scholars from many organizations and universities attended this conference in honour of Professor Nicolas Michel. The participants discussed a variety of topics, from the evolution of United Nations rights, to the right to protect, new cultures in international criminal justice, and changes in cultural rights.	University of Geneva, Graduate Institute, University of Fribourg, Swiss Confederation
3 July	Transitional Justice Round Table	The relation between transitional justice, the international fight against impunity, and economic, social and cultural rights	The roundtable discussed the relation between transitional justice, the international fight against impunity, and ESCR. Dr. Evelyne Schmid, University of Basel, introduced the discussion and presented her new book, <i>Taking Social, Economic and Cultural Rights Seriously in International Criminal Law</i> .	
15 July	Treaty Body Platform		This private meeting prepared a public side event with CEDAW on Connecting CEDAW and the UN Women Peace and Security Agenda.	
7-8 September	Policy meeting convened by Professor Noam Lubell, Swiss IHL Chair	The duty to investigate	One of a series of expert consultations on the duty to investigate.	
8 September	Treaty Body Platform	Migration, human trafficking and enforced disappearances	Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED) and Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW).	
24 September	Treaty Body Platform	Public spending and the rights of the child	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC).	

EVENTS

Date	Event type	Title	Description	Partner
25 September	Expert panel	The intersectionality of human rights violations and UN treaty bodies	The panel presented and discussed the results of a research project carried out by the University of Fribourg in collaboration with the Geneva Academy. The project examined intersectional human rights violations and multiple grounds of discrimination and the responses of UN treaty bodies to them, and formulated proposals for improving institutional responses.	University of Fribourg, SNIS
5 October	Geneva Academy Wednesdays (GAW)	The refugee crisis	The discussion focused on terminology and the legal regimes for migrants and refugees; interceptions and rescue at sea; legal and moral obligations when the safety of human life is at stake; opening and closing Schengen's internal and external borders; and the Dublin system (the qualification directive, removal procedures, the safe third country list, and readmission agreements).	
7 October	Round table on the occasion of Geneva Solidarity Day	The Sustainable Development Goals and the eradication of world hunger	This round table focused on the sustainable development goals, the right to food, and the eradication of world hunger.	City of Geneva, FGC, University of Bern, Programme on Gender and Global Change (Graduate Institute)
7 October	Conference by Auret van Heerden, former President of the Fair Labor Association	Business and human rights – a battle won and yet a war to win	Auret van Heerden argued that public goods such as health, labour inspection, safety at work, maternity protection, respect for environmental standards, and sustainable business practices are as vital to business as they are to workers and communities. Michael Posner (co-director of the Center for Business and Human Rights at the NYU Stern School of Business) and Marcelo Olarreaga (Professor at the Geneva School of Economics and Management, University of Geneva) then joined Auret van Heerden on a panel moderated by Lene Wendland, advisor at the OHCHR.	University of Geneva
6-9 October	Human Rights Week	Trade and human rights	The question of trade and human rights was central to the University of Geneva's third Human Rights Week.	University of Geneva, Global Studies Institute, Martin Ennals Foundation

EVENTS

Date	Event type	Title	Description	Partner
14-15 October	High-Level Policy Dialogue	Guarantees of non-recurrence: from aspiration to policy challenges and lessons learned in preventing mass violations	The UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, Pablo de Greiff, convened a high-level policy dialogue on the topic of guarantees of non-recurrence. Its purpose was to give content to the notion of 'non-recurrence' of mass violations, to promote the idea that it is possible to operationalize policies in this area, and to devise feasible avenues for action to strengthen the existing policy framework for preventing mass violations at national, regional and international level.	Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, United Nations, Antonio Cassese Initiative
16 October	Expert panel	Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals	The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development aims to create a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want. However, adopting the Agenda is one thing, delivering it another. The panellists discussed how to achieve the mutual accountability required to ensure that the Agenda realizes its ambition to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic growth for all.	OHCHR, FES, IDLO, Graduate Institute
22 October	Expert panel	Generating respect for the law: taking stock, moving forward	This event marked the opening of a new conference cycle on 'Generating respect for the law'.	ICRC
29 October	Expert panel	Children and climate change	This event, organized by the Project Director of Plan International (a former student at the Geneva Academy), examined the specific impact of climate change on children.	Plan International, Oak Foundation
29 October	Treaty Body Platform	Sexual and reproductive health and rights - the question of abortion	The Human Rights Committee and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).	
11 November	Expert panel	A perspective on the implementation of IHL	Lt. Col Dennis L. Hager II, Deputy Legal Counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S. Department of Defense, and Catherine Amirfar, Counselor on International Law, Office of the Legal Adviser, U.S. Department of State, discussed the implementation of IHL on the occasion of the publication of the new US Law of War Manual.	

EVENTS

Date	Event type	Title	Description	Partner
18 November	Guest lecture by Professor Carsten Stahn	The law and practice of the International Criminal Court	As its editor, Prof. Stahn presented a new book on the International Criminal Court, published by Oxford University Press. Based on a decade of Court work, it takes stock of the Court's record, comprehensively reviews its case law and practice, and assesses the Court's impact on impunity. Prof. Stahn then discussed with experts some of the specific issues the book addresses, including challenges to the Court and its overall contribution to international criminal law.	
19 November	Side event during the 62nd Session of CEDAW	Connecting CEDAW and the UN Women Peace and Security Agenda	This event was part of an event series on 'Women and Girls in Conflict, Crisis and Disaster', which the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs launched in 2014 to promote discussion of gender issues in conflict, crisis and disaster.	OHCHR, Swiss Federal Department for Foreign Affairs, Treaty Body Platform
2 December	Geneva Academy Wednesdays (GAW)	The peace agreement between Colombia and the FARC	This event explored the legal, political and historical dimensions of the recent peace agreement between Colombia and the FARC and whether it represents a new model of justice.	
4 December	Launch event	The 1949 Geneva Conventions: A Commentary	At a livestreamed launch event, the Commentary's three editors – Professors Andrew Clapham, Paola Gaeta and Marco Sassòli - discussed with experts and the public some of the issues the Commentary addresses, including the degree to which some Convention's rules can now be transposed to non-international armed conflicts, the relationship with other branches of international law (such as human rights law), and implementation of the Conventions, <i>inter alia</i> through international criminal courts.	Graduate Institute, University of Geneva
4 December	Nelson Mandela Moot Court		Together with the University of Pretoria and OHCHR, the Geneva Academy participated in and co-organized the 2015 international Geneva edition of the Nelson Mandela Moot Court. The event was attended by several international teams of students.	University of Pretoria, OHCHR
7 December	Launch event	Large-scale land acquisitions	As its editors, Geneva Academy Research Fellow Dr. Christophe Golay, Christophe Gironde and Peter Messerli presented <i>Large-scale Land Acquisition</i> (published by Brill) and discussed the impact of large land seizures in Indonesia, the Philippines, Cambodia and Laos.	Graduate Institute

EVENTS

Date	Event type	Title	Description	Partner
10 December	Launch event	The War Report 2014	The moderator of this event was Romaine Jean, Chief Editor at Swiss Television (RTS). The panel was composed of Annyssa Bellal, Editor of the <i>War Report 2014</i> , Christof Heyns, Professor of Human Rights Law at the University of Pretoria, Cordula Droeger, Head of the Operational Law Unit at the ICRC, and Cécile Aptel, Senior Legal Policy Adviser at OHCHR and Associate Professor of International Law at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. The panel discussed specific issues addressed by the <i>War Report 2014</i> , including the changing nature of internal armed conflicts, the conflict(s) in Ukraine, and the fight against impunity.	
14-15 December	Academic Friends of Treaty Bodies		This meeting brainstormed a proposal for a major research project in 2016-2018 relating to a UN General Assembly review in 2020 of the UN treaty body system.	FES
16 December	Guest lecture by Professor Marko Milanović	The War on Terror, Part II: international law after Paris	Marko Milanović, Associate Professor at the University of Nottingham and Visiting Professor at the Geneva Academy, explored legal issues and challenges arising from recent attacks by followers of Islamic State. He notably discussed the law on the use of force, IHL, human rights law in regard to terrorism; the geographic and temporal scope of IHL; and the law on the use of force, in the light of recent strikes by France, the UK and other countries on Syrian soil.	Graduate Institute

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The **Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights** provides post-graduate education, conducts academic legal research and policy studies, and organizes training courses and expert meetings. It concentrates on branches of international law that relate to situations of armed conflict, protracted violence, and protection of human rights.

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