

# Annual Report 2023



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# FOREWORD



As I write, the war in Ukraine enters its third year and Gaza is the theatre of untold human suffering. Numerous other conflicts persist worldwide, with civilians bearing the brunt. While conflicts become protracted, their victims are progressively forgotten. The international community fails to prevent atrocities, making the United Nations’ vision of a peaceful world where human rights are upheld increasingly elusive. In this context, public trust in the effectiveness and legitimacy of the existing international architecture, as well as in the promised protections of international human rights law and international humanitarian law (IHL), wanes.



In a tense geopolitical climate, we must uphold our shared values and reaffirm the importance of fulfilling international legal obligations. As we commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, let us recall the moral imperative for all belligerent parties to adhere to these universal rules. Respecting and ensuring respect for IHL are legal obligations, as are respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights. Rebuilding societies after atrocities and delivering justice for victims are vital steps toward achieving lasting peace, which should remain the international community’s central objective, if not a right.

While the task may appear daunting, every step in the right direction matters. The Geneva Academy contributes to this collective effort through three principal activities: educating the next generation of IHL and human rights lawyers, along with specialists in transitional justice; conducting cutting-edge academic research with policy implications in our fields of expertise; and fostering connec-

tions and collaboration between academics, practitioners, policymakers, diplomats and private entities, amongst others.

Our impact is demonstrated by the achievements of our 1,310 alumni, who work in various capacities for states, academia, international organizations and NGOs, showcasing their readiness to tackle contemporary challenges and protect the most vulnerable. Our students’ innovative thinking and dynamism, supported by the robust education they acquire in our master’s programmes, provides a continual source of hope for the future.

I am deeply convinced that in these troubled times, we need, more than ever, independent and academic voices like those of our researchers and experts to analyse current challenges, identify gaps, devise solutions and accompany the needed changes. In 2023, our research tackled new and complex issues like the impact of neurotechnology on human rights, the digitalization of armed conflicts or the relationship between conflict, security and the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. Our agile Geneva Human Rights Platform continues to propose solid and concrete solutions to ensure that the UN human rights system is relevant and fit for purpose in addressing today’s human rights challenges.

Throughout the year, we have shed light – via events, podcasts and expert advice – on the many legal challenges raised by the war in Ukraine, the conflict in Israel and Palestine and the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, to cite a few examples. Our third-party intervention before the European Court of Human Rights in the case *Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia* is, in this respect, a case in point.

Seeing our esteemed faculty and committed colleagues fills me with confidence that together we can uphold the continued relevance of the international legal frameworks we specialize in. With the support of our parent institutions – the University of Geneva and the Geneva Graduate Institute – as well as the growing list of essential donors and invaluable partners, we are actively addressing this challenge of our times.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gloria Gaggioli".

**Gloria Gaggioli**  
*Associate Professor,  
University of Geneva Law Faculty  
Director, Geneva Academy*



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# Institution

## A Platform to Debate Topical IHL and Human Rights Questions

Our public events were marked throughout the year by the ongoing war in Ukraine – addressing key legal questions like the creation of a tribunal for the crime of aggression – as well as by the recent escalation of violence in Israel and Palestine. They also discussed topical issues like youth associated with armed groups, domestic justice versus international tribunals, armed groups, freedom of expression as well as missing and forcibly disappeared migrants.

## Our Experts and Resources on Israel and Palestine

The ongoing crisis in the Middle East has intensified with the Al-Aqsa Flood attack by Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, followed by Israel’s Iron Sword operation. Since this surge in violence, our experts, faculty, research, and events have focused on illuminating the legal issues and challenges associated with this conflict. Articles and interviews featuring expert views are regularly updated on a dedicated page on the Geneva Academy website, complementing a similar page covering the war in Ukraine.

## An Inspiring Conversation with Peter Maurer

In an intimate setting, our Director Professor Gloria Gaggioli engaged in an inspiring conversation with the former President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Peter Maurer. They delved into various topical issues and addressed the relevance of humanitarian principles in contemporary armed conflicts, current challenges, and the role and relevance of international humanitarian law – based on Peter Maurer’s wide experience and insights from his ICRC leadership position.

# Masters

## Dr Clotilde Pégrier Joins the Geneva Academy as the New Head of Education

In April, Dr Clotilde Pégrier became our new Head of Education, overseeing our three master’s programs, executive education, and heading our Student Office. With previous experience as a law lecturer at the University of Essex, where she co-directed an international double degree programme, Dr Pégrier brings valuable expertise in directing and managing masters programmes. Her background also includes substantial knowledge in international criminal law, human rights, transitional justice, and interdisciplinary studies at the intersection of law and the arts.

# Research

## Training Academics and Policy Makers in IHL

We organized throughout the year several executive education courses, including the 15th Advanced IHL Seminar for academics and policy-makers with the International Committee of the Red Cross. This course offered a unique opportunity for academics and policy-makers to upgrade their knowledge of IHL and the many challenges related to its respect in contemporary armed conflicts.

## New Award for our Executive Master in International Law in Armed Conflicts

A new prize, the best Executive Master Paper Prize, complements since the 2023 graduation ceremony our series of unique graduation awards that distinguish outstanding academic achievements: the Henry Dunant Research Prize, the Best LLM Paper Prize and the Best MTJ Paper Prize.

This inaugural prize was presented to Katherine Sixt for her outstanding work on the normative legal order within the scientific community and its impact on research and warfare developments.

## Third-Party Intervention in the European Court of Human Rights in the Case *Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia*

We are intervening as a third party in the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) case *Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia* along with 26 governments. Our third-party intervention reflects on salience of this case and focuses on major IHL questions that the Court will need to address. These encompass the extraterritorial application of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in an international armed conflict, the relationship between the ECHR and international legal norms governing recourse to armed force between states (jus ad bellum), and the interplay between the ECHR and IHL.

## New Research on Neurotechnology and Human Rights

Our novel research project explores the intersection of neurotechnology and human rights and examines the implications arising from the commercial, non-therapeutic use of neurotechnology. Conducted in collaboration with the University of Geneva Neurocentre and the UN Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, it is a key component of our broader focus on digitalization and new technologies.

Terrorism NY

Our Head of Research and Policy Studies Dr Harper participated in the Third United Nations Counter-Terrorism Week in New York and spoke at a panel on violent extremism, families and the protection of children’s best interests. She addressed the issue of repatriation and reintegration of children and youth living in camps in Syria and Iraq and focused on how some states have skirted international legal obligations due to security concerns around terrorism, to the detriment of longer term peace and security.

Geneva Human Rights Platform

Unpacking the Potential of Digital Human Rights Tracking Tools and Databases

Targeted research, exchanges among experts and a dedicated directory – all launched in 2023 – aim at unpacking and developing the potential of new digital human rights tracking tools and databases to ensure human rights implementation at the national level. By identifying good practices, addressing questions of accessibility or interoperability, this initiative of our Geneva Human Rights Platform aims at accompanying the development of these tools and unpacking their potential for human rights monitoring and implementation.

Moving to New York for a Human Rights Week at UN Headquarters

Following four editions in Geneva, this year’s annual flagship event of our Geneva Human Rights Platform took place in New York. It focused, via a series of panel discussions, on the need to bridge the gap between Geneva-based human rights mechanisms and the UN headquarters and explored concrete avenues to do so notably in relation to UN accountability mechanisms and the protection of children during armed conflicts.

Travelling to the Pacific for the Last UN Treaty Bodies Follow-Up Review Pilot

Following the UN human rights treaty body (TB) follow-up reviews in Sierra Leone and Grenada, a third and concluding pilot review occurred in December in Fiji with the participation of three Pacific Small Island Developing States: Fiji, Tonga, and Vanuatu. The objective of these pilots was to assess a novel follow-up format to TB recommendations at the national or regional levels, aiming to make the system more pertinent, responsive, and closely connected to rights holders and duty bearers. Co-organized in collaboration with the Pacific Community and the Commonwealth Secretariat, and with the backing of the Government of Fiji, this final trial concentrated on the implementation of the latest recommendations from the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

2023 in Figures

- 37 staff
- 37 professors and lecturers
- 1 Chair
- 3 master’s programmes
- 115 students from 53 countries
- 29 scholarships
- More than 1,300 alumni
- 25 training and short courses attended by more than 300 participants
- 11 research projects around 4 priority areas
- 14 publications
- 10 initiatives of the Geneva Human Rights Platform
- More than 80 events
- More than 60 partnerships





# MASTER'S PROGRAMMES

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Our two full-time master’s of Advanced Studies programmes – LLM in International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Human Rights and Master in Transitional Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law – attract some of the most experienced and academically qualified students from around the world.

Organized into small and intimate learning communities, our students share their expertise, discuss pressing humanitarian and human rights challenges and reflect on the application of international law to them.

Our faculty showcases world-renowned professors, scholars and practitioners of IHL, international human rights law (IHRL), international criminal law and transitional justice. Through interactive and participative approaches, they share their expertise with our students, promote critical thinking and build constant bridges between theory and practice.

The diversity of our student body – geographical, cultural, social and gender – is at the core of our programmes and enriches the experience immensely. Our scholarships – allocated thanks to the support of our generous donors – allow us, year after year, not only to ensure such diversity in our master’s programmes but also, looking to the future, in the humanitarian, human rights and transitional justice fields.

2023 was, again, a dynamic and productive year. On the management side, we welcomed our new Head of Education, Dr Clotilde Pégorier, who joined us in April and brings valuable expertise in directing and managing master’s programmes. On the programmes side, almost all students carried out an internship during the second semester – allowing them to get a first-hand professional experience with leading IHL, human rights and transitional justice actors. Rich and diverse extracurricular activities, career sessions and exchanges with alumni complemented the curricula and allowed students to broaden their horizons, expand their network and prepare their entry in the job market after graduation. And last but not least, a new prize – the best Executive Master Paper Prize – complemented the three prizes awarded at the Graduation Ceremony that recognized students’ exceptional academic work.

*Dr Clotilde Pégorier*  
Head of Education

*‘In their forthcoming professional endeavours, our students will confront an increasingly intricate world, grappling with formidable challenges such as the impact of climate change, shifts in multilateralism, and escalating complexities in conflicts, along with the ensuing challenges of establishing enduring peace. Through our master’s programmes, we not only equip them with the necessary legal tools to navigate these issues but also cultivate their critical thinking to guide them through these intricate processes.’*

# LLM in International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

Our LLM is one of the most innovative and intellectually challenging programmes in IHL and human rights offered today. It focuses primarily on all rules applicable to armed conflicts, and their interaction, and promotes both academic excellence and independent critical thinking.

*Anastasiya Dziubanava*  
2023–2024 Class

*‘I like that this programme allows you to significantly expand your theoretical knowledge (the level of deepening exceeded all my expectations!), and trains in the application of law, solving complex legal problems and looking for answers to controversial questions. I am especially pleased that we are learning from real-world cases because this not only increases my professional competencies but also significantly broadens my horizons.’*

# Master of Advanced Studies in Transitional Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law

One of the very few programmes on this subject worldwide, our Master of Advanced Studies in Transitional Justice, Human Rights and the Rule of Law (MTJ) combines theoretical and practice-oriented perspectives. It equips students with the knowledge, tools and critical mindset to assist countries, societies and victims emerging from periods of conflict and repression and address complex transitional justice issues.

*Cynthia Ayaa Komakec*  
2023–2024 Class

*‘I chose this programme because of its focus and the breadth of the courses covered – from introductions to transitional justice to more specific transitional justice issues. Overall, the programme is developing our skills to make actual positive change in the world using not only legal frameworks but also political science, anthropology or history.’*

# 2023–2024 Academic Year

## LLM Class

The 40 students enrolled in the LLM for the 2023–2024 academic year come from the following 25 countries: Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Botswana, Colombia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, France, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, India, Italy, Lebanon, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, United Kingdom and Zambia

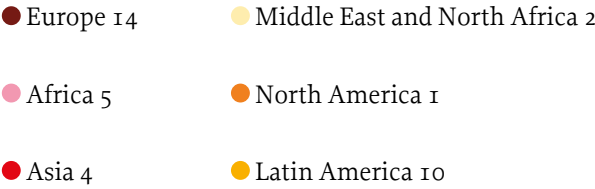
### Geographical Representation



## 2023–2024 MTJ Class

The 36 students enrolled in the MTJ for the 2023–2024 academic year come from the following 26 countries: Algeria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, France, Gambia, Germany, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United States

### Geographical Representation



## Scholarships

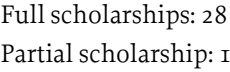
Scholarships allow talented students with limited means and resources to pursue our LLM and MTJ and, subsequently, a career in the human rights, humanitarian and justice sectors. They also bring diversity to our student body and therefore enrich the experience immensely. Looking to the future, scholarships also ensure such diversity in the humanitarian, human rights and transitional justice fields.

For the 2023–2024 academic year, we allocated 28 full scholarships – covering the tuition fee and living expenses in Geneva – and one partial scholarship – covering the tuition fee – across these two programmes. These were allocated thanks to the generous support of a Geneva-based private foundation, the Fondation Ernst et Lucie Schmidheiny, Mr Jenö Staehelin and the International Bar Association’s Human Rights Institute.

Following graduation, scholarship recipients generally go back to their country or regions where they work in the judiciary, NGOs, international organizations and governmental agencies, addressing human rights, IHL, transitional justice and rule of law issues.

Scholarship alumni, once engaged in professional life, also become key ambassadors for international Geneva and its humanitarian, human rights and peace values.

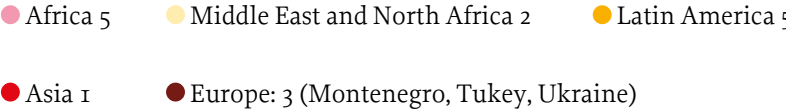
### Total Scholarships: 29



### LLM: 13 Scholarships



### MTJ: 16 Scholarships





# 2022–2023 Academic Year

## Preparing Students for their Careers

Both programmes – the LLM and the MTJ – aim, beside their strong academic focus, at developing the transferable skills necessary to succeed in the professional world and take up responsibilities in the humanitarian and human rights fields. Students have therefore various opportunities – throughout the academic year – to put theory into practice.

66 students from our 2022–2023 cohort (32 LLM and 34 MTJ) carried out a research internship during the spring of 2023 with institutions like Civitas Maxima, Geneva Call, the International Bar Association, the International Center for Transitional Justice, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Justice Rapid Response and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. These internships, which form an integral part of both programmes, allow students to gain first-hand experience with leading human rights, humanitarian and transitional justice actors.

All students also benefited, throughout the year, from one-to-one career advice and counselling, group sessions that offer general advice on seeking employment and planning a career, exchange sessions with alumni about career paths in international organizations, NGOs, government or academia, access to job offers, as well as soft-skills training.

*Emma Sitland*  
2022–2023 LLM Student

*‘During my internship with TRIAL International, I learned how to use open-source intelligence to investigate allegations of international crimes, and how NGOs are using the principles of universal and extraterritorial jurisdiction to hold perpetrators of international crimes accountable. Having the opportunity to contribute to this work and learn from the experts at TRIAL was an incredibly enriching and valuable experience.’*

*Arbenita Imeri*  
2022–2023 MTJ Student

*‘My internship with Justice Rapid Response was a journey of discovery and impact. It allowed me to unlock the gates of knowledge, delve into the complexities of transitional justice, and ignite a passion for making a difference in the world.’*

## Diverse Extracurricular Activities and Optional Courses

Students from our 2022–2023 academic year benefited from a renewed offer of more than 10 optional courses that address topical or emerging issues like contemporary and future challenges regarding the military uses of cyber technologies and operations, gender and international crimes, or cultural-heritage in post-conflict situations. Organized around small discussion groups and open to both LLM and MTJ students, the courses allow for in-depth discussions with leading experts and practitioners in these areas.

Extracurricular activities also enrich both our LLM and MTJ programmes by widening our students’ perspectives and knowledge of the law and its implementation.

The Military Briefings series aims to improve our students’ knowledge of military actors and operations via exchanges with military guests around issues like legal challenges facing NATO in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine conflict or the challenges related to the operationalization of protection of civilians within military.

The Transitional Justice Voices from the Ground series provides a platform for our LLM and MTJ students to interact with practitioners and activists who contribute to transitional justice (TJ). Guest speakers from the Basque Country, Colombia, Nepal and Sierra Leone have shared their experiences in setting up, running, working in or resisting various TJ mechanisms and processes.

*Wahida Omari*  
2022–2023 MTJ Student

*“This series offered us a unique chance to interact with and learn directly from experts who have been integral to TJ processes in their respective countries.”*

## Taking the Law Out of the Books: Participation in the Jean-Pictet Competition

Benjamin Greenacre, Anamika Pillai and Rodanthi Violaki – enrolled Enrolled in our LLM and MTJ in 2022–2023 – represented the Geneva Academy at the 40th Edition of the Jean-Pictet Competition that took place from 25 February to 4 March 2023 in Durrës, Albania. During the competition, they acted as legal advisers, ICRC delegates or armed groups’ representatives and reached the semi-finals.

*Rodanthi Violaki*  
2022–2023 LLM Student

*‘The preparation for the competition constitutes an amazing learning experience itself. Thanks to the dedication of our coach, we are becoming every week more confident and equipped with extensive knowledge and critical thinking on substantive matters of IHL. We have been introduced to a new dimension of IHL that takes the law out of the books and allows us to see through different layers of interpretation. Undoubtedly, knowing the law in depth, but applying it in a simple and efficient manner has been the most challenging but also most enjoyable part.’*

# 2023 Graduation Ceremony

32 LLM students and 35 MTJ students successfully completed their respective programmes and graduated in October 2023. Every year at the Graduation Ceremony, three prizes – the Henry Dunant Research Prize, the Best LLM Paper Prize and the Best MTJ Paper Prize – are awarded to graduating students for their exceptional academic work.



## Two LLM Students Awarded the Henry Dunant Research Prize for Outstanding Papers on Contemporary Humanitarian Issues

The jury of the Henry Dunant Research Prize – awarded with the Foundation Prix Henry Dunant – honoured the work of two LLM students, instead of one, due to the quality of the papers selected for this award: Edward Madziwa and Rodanthi Violaki.

Edward Madziwa’s paper, titled ‘*Advancing Honour and Dignity in Death for Victims of Armed Conflicts: Exploring the Challenges and Opportunities of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in Humanitarian Forensic Action under International Humanitarian Law*’ investigates the potential and risks associated with utilizing new technologies to locate missing persons and identify remains and offers normative and operational recommendations to harness the potential while mitigating associated risks.

Rodanthi Violaki’s paper, ‘*The Erosion of the Right to Asylum in Europe: Strategic Litigation for Victims of Harmful Practices before the European Court of Human Rights in their Pursuit of Asylum*’ analyses the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and provides strategic alternatives for asylum-related cases.

## LLM Paper Prize: A Feminist Perspective of the ‘Any Civilian Population’ Requirement in Crimes against Humanity

Belen Guerrero Romero received the 2023 Best LLM Paper Prize for her LLM paper ‘*Inter-Party Sexual and Reproductive Violence within Non-State Armed Groups – Questioning the Meaning of the Requirement ‘Any Civilian Population’ in the Definition of Crimes against Humanity*’. Her paper delves into a multifaceted domain encompassing human rights and international criminal law and introduce a gender-focused and feminist perspective of the ‘any civilian population’ requirement in crimes against humanity.

## MTJ Paper Prize: Co-Winners on Timely Transitional Justice Questions

Also for the first time, the Best MTJ Paper Prize was awarded to two MTJ students for their remarkable academic work: Alice Langton for her paper titled ‘*Conceptualizing Structural Violence and Colonialism as a Turning Point in Transitional Justice: The Case of Australia*’ and Tong Li for his paper ‘*Abusing transitional justice*’ - *Reflection on the holistic approach of transitional justice*.

In their respective papers, both students tackled intricate and timely transitional justice issues, offering innovative approaches and solutions. Their work was underpinned by thorough research, extensive review of jurisprudence and innovative proposals and recommendations.

# IHL Podcast Continues with Alumni Guests

Launched in October 2022, *In and Around War(s)* addresses contemporary legal issues related to wars via conversations with our alumni, the new generation of experts and practitioners who use the law as a powerful shield to protect peace, human dignity and non-discrimination, and bring justice and alleviate human suffering during conflicts.

Following a successful first season, the second season’s four episodes present in-depth conversations with alumni on engaging with armed groups, data protection in war, hunger and war, and war and the cyberspace.





# EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

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Addressed to diplomats, humanitarians, human rights advocates, lawyers, NGO staff, professionals working in emergency and post-conflict situations and journalists, our executive education aims to equip professionals with the legal tools to address contemporary humanitarian and human rights challenges.

Our offer includes a diversity of formats: an online part-time Executive Master in International Law in Armed Conflict, short courses on international law in armed conflict and customized courses.

# Online Executive Master in International Law in Armed Conflict

The part-time Executive Master in International Law in Armed Conflict is one of the few innovative and intellectually challenging programmes on international law in armed conflict offered online today.

Designed for professionals with demanding jobs and responsibilities, it provides them with a solid legal background to address the multiple challenges that arise in contemporary armed conflicts.

By providing the necessary tools to apply the international legal framework in complex contemporary conflicts, it equips high-level professionals wanting to acquire additional responsibilities or move their careers forward.

**Giada Rubino**  
*Human Rights Associate at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Colombia*

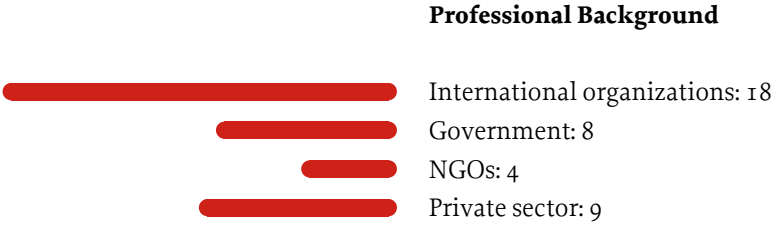
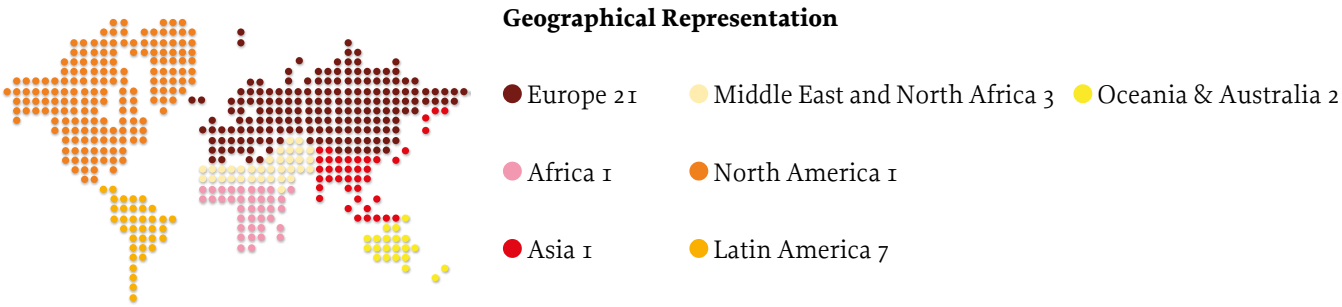
*‘I particularly enjoy when we work in groups as this allows me to interact with other participants and debate specific cases. In addition, understanding the interplay of public international law, IHL, IHRL, and international criminal law is fascinating and expands my understanding of the legal frameworks applying to armed conflicts.*

**Myriam Haddad**  
*Legal Adviser at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Libya*

*‘The programme will reinforce my knowledge of the international legal framework that applies in armed conflicts and enable me to advance in my professional career.’*

## 2023–2025 Class

The 2023–2025 class has 39 participants coming from 26 countries: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Colombia, Croatia, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Lebanon, Malta, Mexico, Myanmar, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Senegal, Spain, United Kingdom, United States and Venezuela



## 2022–2024 Class

The 29 participants are currently working on their thesis and will graduate in October 2024.

# 2023 Graduation: The First best Executive Master Paper Prize

51 Executive Master participants graduated in October 2023. For the first time this year, we awarded the Best Executive Master Paper Prize that distinguishes a graduating participant for a master’s paper of exceptional academic quality.

Katherine Sixt was awarded this prize for her outstanding work on the normative legal order within the scientific community and its impact on research and warfare development.

In her paper, *‘The Evolution of the Normative Legal Order of the Scientific Community and Its Impact on Research and Warfare Development’*, Katherine Sixt skillfully employs the notion of a legal order within the ‘community of scientists,’ merging her extensive professional background as the Principal Director for Biotechnology in the Office of the US Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering with the legal principles she gained during her studies in the Executive Master in International Law in Armed Conflict.

# Online Short Courses on International Law in Armed Conflict

Our online short courses – six sessions of two hours each – allow participants to deepen their legal knowledge and expertise on a specific issue or branch of international law relevant to armed conflicts. They range from introductory courses on international humanitarian law (IHL), international human rights law (IHRL) and international criminal law to addressing more specific issues and topics like international refugee law, the responsibility to protect, preventing and combating terrorism or accountability for atrocity crimes. Participants can either choose one specific course or follow several, starting with the introductory courses and then moving on to more specific ones. As we offer these courses every year, this can be spread over several years.

In 2023, 55 practitioners – from Geneva and in the field – participated in one or more of our 16 online short courses and acquired the necessary skills to address the multiple legal questions and challenges they face in their daily work.

## Online Short Courses in 2024



# Customized Courses

We organize customized training courses for international organizations, NGOs, governments, national human rights institutions, judges and lawyers on issues related to IHL, IHRL, transitional justice and international criminal law.

Provided by our experts, they are tailored to the needs of our partners. They can run from one day to a full week and take place at our headquarters Villa Moynier, at the partner’s location or online.

## Annual Seminar on IHL for Diplomats Accredited to the UN in Geneva

Co-organized with the ICRC, this annual seminar for Geneva-based diplomats addressed the main concepts and contemporary challenges of IHL, IHL in the digital era, as well as specific IHL questions that arise during armed conflicts like the international legal obligations of non-State armed groups or counterterrorism and sanctions.

## Advanced IHL Seminar for Academics and Policymakers

Co-organized with the ICRC, this advanced seminar for academics and policy-makers aimed to enhance the capacity of academics to teach and research IHL and contemporary issues arising during armed conflict, while also equipping policymakers with an in-depth understanding of ongoing legal debates and their relevance to decision-making.

The 16th edition addressed specific issues related to the application of IHL in current armed conflicts – like counterterrorism, sanctions or humanitarian access – but also related to IHL teaching, research and dissemination.



## Cyberspace, International Law, and Its Relevance in Geneva

The Geneva Academy hosted with the Permanent Missions of Canada and the United Kingdom to the UN in Geneva a day-long learning event on cyberspace and international law to facilitate diplomats’ understanding of the application of international law to cyberspace and to highlight Geneva’s role.

Six sessions, led by a range of experts with legal, policy, and humanitarian expertise, tackled pivotal aspects of the intricate relationship between cyberspace and international law and allowed for productive exchanges on the prevailing cyber challenges and the relevance of international law to address them.





# RESEARCH

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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 circles, government and the private sector.

We currently focus on four priority areas – digitalization and new technologies, non-state actors, implementation and accountability and sustainable development – which all raise crucial legal, policy and protection questions.

*Dr Erica Harper*  
*Head of Research and Policy Studies*

*Our research agenda is addressing topical challenges in the human rights and humanitarian field and aims at providing guidance to policy makers and practitioners to address them. In 2023, we started innovative research on neurotechnology and human rights, the human rights impact of digital military technologies and aimed at unpacking the relationship between conflict, security and the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.*

# Digitalization and New Technologies

New technologies, digitalization and big data are reshaping our societies and the way they organize. While technological advancements present tremendous opportunities and promises, rapid developments in artificial intelligence (AI), automation or robotics raise a series of questions about their impact in times of peace and war.

Our research in this domain explores whether these new developments are compatible with existing rules and whether international human rights law (IHRL) and international humanitarian law (IHL) continue to provide the level of protection they are meant to ensure.

## The Digitalization of Armed Conflicts

New military technologies are transforming the nature of modern warfare, raising a legitimate concern that existing laws and regulations will be ‘outpaced’ by technological advancement, widening the scope for rights abuses and impunity.

Under the leadership of our Swiss IHL Chair, Professor Marco Roscini, our research aims to identify specific humanitarian threats and legal lacunae resulting from new military technologies and develop pragmatic law and policy responses.

The joint initiative on humanitarian impact and protection needs caused by the digitalization of armed conflicts, carried out with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), assesses the continued relevance of IHL in a digitalization context in order to develop law and policy recommendations aimed at mitigating the

identified risks and addressing new protection needs. In this context, and following the initial findings of the initiative in 2022, we co-organized with the ICRC a 1.5-day expert workshop to discuss how IHL regulates the growing involvement of civilians in cyber and other digital operations during armed conflicts. A report summarizing the outcomes of the discussion and research carried out on this issue will be published.

We also organized in collaboration with the Permanent Missions of Canada and the United Kingdom a 1-day event on cyberspace and international law targeting Geneva-based diplomats. This event offered participants a comprehensive overview of the key international law concepts, exposed some of the legal uncertainties generated by the nature of cyberspace, and emphasized the evolving landscape of national positions over the past decade in this area. Moreover, our Swiss IHL Chair, Professor Marco Roscini, also gave public lectures, including on *The Principle of Non-Intervention: The Rubik’s Cube of International Law* at Saint Louis University School of Law, on *The application of international humanitarian law to cyber operations* at the Regional Conference of European National Committees on International Humanitarian Law in Vienna, and on *International humanitarian law and critical infrastructures* at the first thematic meeting of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Security Committee in Vienna.

Parallel research on disruptive military technologies assesses the impact – and related protection needs – of the military applications of AI systems, with a current focus on the military applications of AI-based decision support systems. In 2022, our research team co-organized with the ICRC a two-day expert workshop to increase our understanding of the role of military applications of AI-based decision support systems in decision-making on the use of force. As part of our present research on the subject, our researcher, Ms Anna Rosalie Greipl delivered an address at the DILEMA Conference 2023 in The Hague, on human-machine interaction in military decision-making. Ultimately, these discussions and present research aim to identify recommendations for the responsible use of AI systems in military operations.

Finally, in light of the disruptive power of nuclear weapons, we hosted an IHL Talk on ‘Changing the Rules of the (Nuclear) Game: Voices from the Humanitarian, Technological, Strategic and Legal Fields’. To offer a multi-disciplinary approach to the subject, we invited speakers from the ICRC, the Geneva Center for Security Policy, and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). The recording of the event is available on the Geneva Academy’s website.

## Neurotechnology and Human Rights

The past decade has seen a major transformation in the development, utility and availability of neurotechnology. Progress in brain mapping tools and machine learning has expanded its application beyond the medicine sphere, reaching the entertainment and lifestyle sectors. In large part, this has been facilitated by corporate actors entering the neurotechnology research, development and production space. This raises myriad concerns regarding possible misuse, emphasizing the necessity of suitable legal regulation. From a human rights perspective, particular

concerns include the right to privacy, data protection, as well as employee rights and non-discrimination.

This new research, launched in 2023, addresses the human rights implications stemming from the development of neurotechnology for commercial, non-therapeutic ends. It is supported by the Swiss Network for International Studies (SNIS) and is carried out in partnership with the Geneva University Neurocentre and the UN Human Rights Council Advisory Committee.

Released in 2023, the Research Brief *The Evolving Neurotechnology Landscape: Examining the Role and Importance of Human Rights in Regulation* provides a comprehensive background analysis of the complexities of regulating neurotechnology and the role of human rights in this process. The paper traces the evolution of neurotechnology, highlighting the involvement of the corporate sector, and the role played by machine learning. It examines four spheres of neurotechnology advancement —neuro-marketing, neuro-enhancement, brain monitoring, and weaponized neurotechnology— including their limitations, potential and possible externalities for human rights, social cohesion and conflict. The final section considers emerging questions around regulation and the potential role of human rights in this context.

Human Rights in a Digitalized World: Mapping Risk, Strengthening Regulation and Promoting the Development of International Human Rights Law

Advancements in digital technology have created both opportunities and risks for the promotion, expansion and application of human rights. Among the most topical challenges is the advent of artificial intelligence (AI), and the possibility that such technologies will grow and disperse without taking into potential account human rights externalities – and in the absence of a robust regulatory framework.



To unpack these challenges, this research, launched in 2023, targets emerging and under-researched areas: digital military technologies and neurotechnology (see above).

In this context, our Head of Research and Policy Studies Dr Erica Harper addressed the UN Human Rights Council Advisory Group in the context of its study on the human rights implications of new and emerging technologies in the military domain. In her intervention, Dr Harper shed light on military technologies’ potential impact on human rights and addressed the risks associated with the cross application of these technologies and the related need for regulation.

A two-day expert workshop on the application and potential misuse of new and emerging digital technologies in law enforcement and the management of peaceful assemblies – organized with the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, the Queen Mary University of London and the University of Essex – addressed how best human rights can be protected in this context. Workshop participants delved into issues related to the collection, processing and retention of personal data by law enforcement, as well as the misuse of video and online surveillance.

Non-State Actors

Non-state actors – whether armed groups or large multinational business companies – are important players in contemporary international relations. Most armed conflicts today are of a non-international character, involving numerous armed groups who can control a territory or a population, and thus raising issues about the suitability of the existing protection framework afforded by IHRL and IHL. Similar challenges arise in relation to the activities of businesses or transnational companies, notably when they operate in conflict zones or situations of armed violence.

Our research in this domain explores the extent to which these actors are bound by international law, asks whether the existing legal framework provides adequate protection and proposes concrete solutions to address these contemporary challenges.

Counter-Terror Project: A Legal-Empirical Approach

Led by Professor Gloria Gaggioli at the University of Geneva, this project – funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation – seeks to develop an interdisciplinary, legal-empirical approach to the prevention and combatting of terrorism. It does so by addressing two major topics: the effectiveness and legality of counterterrorism police measures (‘administrative measures’); and the phenomenon of ‘coalitions’ formed between designated terrorist groups involved in armed conflicts.

In 2023, the research team produced several articles and book chapters that provide novel analysis of various counterterrorism measures under international humanitarian law and international human rights law and examine the psychology of radicalization. These include: the book chapter ‘Detention of Suspected Terror-

ists in Connection with Armed Conflict: A Focus on Release and Repatriation’ by Dr Pavle Kilibarda and Professor Gaggioli in the new Lieber Studies Volume on *Prisoners of War in Contemporary Conflict*; the chapter by Ilya Sobol and Professor Gaggioli ‘Proscription and Group Membership in Counterterrorism and Armed Conflict: Areas of Tensions Between Criminal Law and International Humanitarian Law’ in the edited volume *Armed Groups in International Law: In the Shadowland of Legality and Illegality*; and three articles by Dr Michael Moncrieff and Professor Pierre Lienard focusing on radicalization in the journals *Evolutionary Psychological Science*, *Frontiers in Psychology*, and the *Journal of Cognition and Culture*. A working paper, *Exploring Counterterrorism Effectiveness and Human Rights Law*, written by Ilya Sobol, Dr Moncrieff and Professor Gaggioli was published by the Geneva Academy. Dr Moncrieff and Dr Kilibarda also contributed to the Global Study on the Impact of Counter-Terrorism Measures on Civil Society and Civil Space by the UN Special Rapporteur on Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights through the Geneva Academy’s IHL Expert Pool. Additional research focused on the legal and practical challenges in analysing terrorist networks and understanding armed group relationships, the phenomenon of pledging allegiance to designated terrorist groups, and the cumulative impact of administrative measures aimed to prevent terrorism.

In December, an expert meeting on armed group coalitions organized at Villa Moynier brought together over twenty experts in various fields to discuss the concept, causes, dynamics, and possible legal implications of coalitions of organized armed groups in armed conflict. To ensure a comprehensive and interdisciplinary understanding of this phenomenon, the participants came from various fields and included legal experts, social scientists, security experts, and humanitarian practitioners. The substance of the discussions at the two-day meeting will inform a working paper on the topic of armed group coalitions that will be published in 2024.

## Implementation and Accountability

Although different in substance and varying in terms of compliance mechanisms, all international law frameworks – IHL, IHRL, international criminal law and transitional justice – raise challenges in terms of implementation and accountability.

The proliferation of international, regional and domestic human rights standards has led to a multitude of actors and procedures dedicated to their implementation. In turn, this has crowded existing regulatory regimes. For IHL on the other hand, dedicated monitoring mechanisms are rare and many are either not used or otherwise ineffective. International criminal law courts and tribunals provide partial solutions as they focus on individual criminal responsibility. Our research in this domain aims to accompany existing mechanisms and their stakeholders, ongoing policy discussions, negotiations, reforms and new developments in order to ensure the ongoing relevance of the international legal framework for the most vulnerable, along with accountability and redress for victims.

### The IHL Expert Pool

The IHL Expert Pool – composed of thematically and geographically representative IHL experts – works to strengthen the capacity of human rights mechanisms to incorporate IHL into their work by providing advice on priority IHL themes on a solicited and non-solicited basis.



In 2023, the IHL Expert Pool continued to support the work of human rights bodies confronted with the application of IHL. Having been granted leave to intervene in the case *Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia* before the European Court of Human Rights, Dr Francesco Romani and Professor Gloria Gaggioli submitted a third-party intervention on behalf of the Geneva Academy. Reflecting the salience of this case, the intervention focused on the extraterritorial application of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in an international armed conflict, the relationship between the ECHR and international legal norms governing recourse to armed force between States (*jus ad bellum*), and the interplay between the ECHR and IHL. The main points of this submission have been summarized in a blog post on *EJIL:Talk!* that also compares them with those contained in the brief by the Human Rights Law Centre of the University of Nottingham in the same case.

Experts from the IHL Expert Pool also contributed via targeted submissions, inputs and advice to several UN human rights bodies. Mr Edward Millett and Dr Francesco Romani wrote a submission for the thematic study on *New Technologies and Enforced Disappearances* of the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. Having assessed the value of open source information (OSI) for the different purposes of searching for the disappeared and holding the perpetrators



to account, the submission offered three case-studies from recent practice where OSI has been deployed in an armed-conflict setting, and highlighted that the use of OSI entails balancing competing rights and obligations which, unless properly risk-assessed, can in turn lead to unintended rights violations. Dr Marta Bo also contributed an input for a study on *Human Rights Implications of New and Emerging Technologies in the Military Domain* by the Advisory Committee of the UN Human Rights Council. In her brief, she looked at key implications of the deployment of new technologies in armed conflict, highlighting extant debates and entry points on topics such as human agency and control, the scope and content of the obligations of proportionality and precautions in attack, the duty to respect and ensure respect for IHL, and the legal review of new weapons.

Furthermore, Ms Chiara Gabriele submitted a public comment to the Oversight Board of Meta in relation to a case concerning the *Armenian Prisoners of War Video*. In her brief, she analysed several IHL provisions to be taken into account when deciding whether to remove or leave online a Facebook post documenting alleged mistreatment of prisoners of war, reviewed Meta’s policies and provided recommendations to ensure that their interpretation and application comply with relevant IHL obligations.

States and human rights bodies have also consulted the IHL Expert Pool on different occasions throughout the year, notably when devising policy initiatives and carrying out activities with an IHL dimension.

Promoting and Protecting the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association and Civic Space Worldwide

This project provides substantive support to the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, Clément Voule. By hosting Clément Voule at the Geneva Academy in our research team, we work with him to address emerging issues, respond to the global attacks against civic space and develop tools and materials to allow various stakeholders – states, civil society organizations, lawyers and human rights defenders – to promote, preserve and defend these fundamental freedoms.

We provided support and expertise to the Special Rapporteur for both his report on ‘Advancing accountability and ending impunity for serious human rights violations related to the exercise of peaceful assembly and association’ and on ‘Protecting the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association to advance sustainable peace and democratic transitions’, as well as in the dissemination of the reports’ findings.

Following our engagement in 2022, where we supported Clément Voule in bringing together all the regional mechanisms to enhance their collaboration efforts around the promotion and protection of the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, we continued this support in 2023 by helping him organize key meetings which led to the development of a ‘Framework for Joint Action’. This document provides a framework for future actions and events aimed at advancing

the protection and expansion of civic space around the world, and for improved information sharing, collaboration and synergies between the mechanisms.

Sustainable Development

Human rights and sustainable development are intrinsically linked and mutually reinforcing. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – which aim to eradicate poverty, protect the environment and reduce all forms of violence – incorporate most of the core elements of civil and political, as well as economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR). The degradation of the environment and environmental factors can also be at the origin of conflicts or human rights violations, which in turn cause severe setbacks for sustainable development.

Our research in this domain aims to explore the linkages between sustainable development, the protection of the environment, climate change and the branches of international law that protect the rights of the most vulnerable. It also focuses on those who are left behind – including peasants and other people working in rural areas, who represent 80 percent of the world’s hungry and 70 percent of people living in extreme poverty – and their specific rights.

Understanding the Relationship between Conflict, Security and the Human Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment

This new research, launched in 2023, will develop guidance to inform security, human rights and environmental debates on the linkages between environmental rights and conflict, and how their better management can serve as a tool in conflict prevention, resilience and early warning. Homing in on six country hotspots for environmental conflict spillovers, we will also identify entry points for engaging at the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) and UN Security Council (UNSC), as well as strategies to overcome challenges to policy uptake.

In 2023, the research team produced two papers that set the scene of the project. *Environmental Human Rights as a Tool in Early Warning and Conflict Prevention: The Role of the Human Rights Council* explores the HRC potential role as an actor in the prevention of climate-related conflicts, alongside other multilateral efforts within the UN system. The paper considers this question against the evolving notion of environmental human rights as component elements of climate security. Specifically, it examines whether the HRC’s monitoring of environmental human rights can serve as an early warning tool to prevent these situations from spilling over into conflict.

*Climate Change in the Security Council: Obstacles, Opportunities, and Options* identifies entry points for engaging on environmental and climate security issues at the UNSC and provides policymakers in the environmental, human rights and security sectors and UN member states with a clear and realistic roadmap for the 2023–2024 period.

Unpacking the Human Right to a Healthy Environment: Definition, Implementation and Impact

The second phase of this research, which started in 2023, aims at clarifying the definition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment (R2HE), its content – including substantive and procedural aspects –, states’ obligations, interconnections with other human rights, and the impact of this global recognition at national level.

At an expert meeting – that marked the launch of the second phase – the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment, representatives of the UN Environment Programme, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the European Court on Human Rights, civil society and academia identified the main challenges in R2HE’s implementation at national level. These notably include a lack of consensus among states on the definition of the R2HE at international level; the lack of legal recognition of the R2HE in more than 30 countries; and a lack of coordination and coherence between and within government agencies and departments in countries that recognized the R2HE in their domestic laws.

Building on this expert seminar, the research team is working on a publication – to be released in 2024 – that will clarify the R2HE’s content and definition, its links with other human rights and related states’ obligations.

The Rights of Peasants

In 2023, we continued our efforts to advance the implementation of the UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas (UNDROP) by providing guidance and expert advice to relevant stakeholders in-



cluding civil society organizations, state representatives, peasants organizations and experts, with a focus on countries from the Global South.

The Briefing *The Right to Seeds in Africa* provides needed guidance on the steps that the African Union and African States shall take to better protect the right to seed, using UNDROP as a basis and reference. Its key findings and recommendations – developed for policy-makers – are summarized in a dedicated Research Brief available in both English and French.

Our research team participated in several events and conferences to present the main findings and outcomes of our research, including at the UN Committee on World Food Security in Rome, and at the UN Human Rights Council in relation to the creation of a UN Working Group on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas.

The Right to Seeds in Europe

This research project delves into safeguarding and promoting peasants’ seed systems in Europe amidst the European Union’s revision of its legislation on seed marketing. Through targeted publications, specialized expertise, strategic event participation, and fostering dialogues with diverse stakeholders, the project aims to raise awareness regarding the significance of leveraging the rights to seeds and food enshrined in UNDROP to advocate for changes in European laws and policies.

Our Senior Research Fellow Dr Christophe Golay briefed the European Parliament on the compatibility of the draft law on seed marketing proposed by the European Commission with the international legal framework protecting the right to food and peasants’ rights. Our staff also organized key discussions on this topic with various European stakeholders, including in a series of events addressing the implications of this reform process at the national level – Germany, Belgium and Croatia.

We also gave expert advice on the inclusion of the right to food in the Geneva Constitution and in legislative and policy frameworks on sustainable food systems in Europe.

The Rule of Law in Armed Conflict Online Portal

The Rule of Law in Armed Conflict (RULAC) portal is the only independent global classification of armed conflicts under international law.

For each conflict, this unique online resource details the factual and methodological basis for its classification and identifies the parties and the applicable international law. The portal also includes sections on the definition and categories of armed conflict under IHL and the legal framework governing armed conflicts, and highlights contemporary challenges for classification.

By the end of 2023, the portal was monitoring more than 110 armed conflicts involving at least 55 states and more than 70 ANSAs.

New and Updated Armed Conflicts

The research team classified five new conflicts in 2023 – the international armed conflict (IAC) between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda; the IAC between Afghanistan and Pakistan; the non-international armed conflict (NIAC) between Boko Haram and Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP) in Nigeria, the NIAC between Kenya and al-Shabab; and the NIAC between the Rapid Support Forces and Sudan.

In addition, each conflict analysed on RULAC has been regularly updated throughout the year to incorporate recent developments including peace negotiations or agreements, as well as clashes between the parties or criminal proceedings before national and international courts.

A particular focus – given the 7th October Al-Aqsa Flood attack conducted by Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and the subsequent Israeli operation ‘Iron Swords’ – has been on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, paying attention to the classification of hostilities between Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Israel and the interplay between siege and occupation. Our conclusion was that recent events unfolded since 7 October did not affect our classification according to which the Gaza strip is occupied by Israel and that Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad are fighting against Israel in the framework of an IAC, because of their belonging to Palestine. In addition, we assessed that the clashes between Israel and Hezbollah amount to a NIAC and that, because of the use of force by Israel against the territory of Lebanon and Syria, two IACs take place between Israel and, respectively, Lebanon and Syria.

Armed Conflicts that Ended in 2023

A number of conflicts have terminated in 2023 and have therefore been declassified.

As the international coalition led by the United States and involved in air-strikes against the Islamic State group in Iraq shifted into an advisory and assistance role late 2022, we declassified the NIAC opposing the Coalition to the Islamic State group in Iraq.

In addition, the following two NIACs ended in 2023: the NIAC between Mozambique and the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) splinter groups came to an end due to the cessation of hostilities resulting from the implementation of a reintegration and demobilization programme; and the NIAC between the Sudanese armed forces and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in Darfur due to the decrease of violence since 2018 and the signature of the Juba Agreement for Peace in Sudan in 2020, to which the JEM recommitted in February 2023.

Monitoring Armed Violence Situations

Because it is crucial that our interpretation of IHL continues to reflect realities on the ground, the research team also closely monitored other situations of armed violence to assess whether they could amount to an armed conflict according to IHL criteria. This notably concerned the following theatres:

- Tensions at the Belarus border with Poland and Lithuania, linked to Belarusian military exercises and the flight of members of the Wagner group to Belarus
- A series of jihadist attacks conducted in Benin against state forces
- Armed violence between Turkish armed forces and the TAK (a Kurdish youth organization and a splinter group of the PKK)
- Armed violence between criminal organizations and armed forces in El Salvador, Honduras, and Haiti
- Deadly attacks carried out in Northern Togo by Al-Qaeda-affiliated jihadists groups
- Violent clashes between Somaliland armed forces and local militias
- The involvement of mercenaries and private military companies in armed conflict

Targeted Advice

Throughout the year, the research team provided expert and ad-hoc advice to governments, businesses and NGOs on specific conflict situations and clarified complex legal questions related to the classification of armed conflicts.

Via participation in conferences, media interviews and the publication of articles and blog posts, the research team also contributed to ongoing discussions about specific conflicts and classification challenges.

The 2023 Current Issues in Armed Conflict Conference

The Current Issues in Armed Conflict Conference (CIAC) – co-organized with the University of Essex Armed Conflict Hub – builds on RULAC and aims to tackle complex issues and questions related to the classification of armed conflicts.

As an annual encounter, it provides a space for experts and practitioners, diplomats, academics and civil society representatives to discuss the legal and policy issues that have arisen in relation to armed conflicts situations.

The 2023 conference addressed contemporary issues of IHL, accountability, victims and their protection, and transitional justice.





# GENEVA HUMAN RIGHTS PLATFORM

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The Geneva Human Rights Platform (GHRP) provides impartial and dynamic forum of interaction in Geneva for all stakeholders in the field of human rights – experts, practitioners, diplomats and civil society – to debate topical issues and challenges related to the functioning of the Geneva-based human rights system. Relying on academic research and findings, it works to enable various actors to be better connected, break down silos and, hence, advance human rights.

In 2023, the GHRP further developed its activities in Geneva, but also in New York and in the field, where human rights are implemented. By focusing on a selected number of strategic initiatives, the platform makes a difference and provides concrete solutions to current human rights challenges and implementation hurdles. Its training hub, that keeps on expanding, also ensures that relevant stakeholders are equipped to address key human rights issues and have the tools to bring them before the relevant UN human rights mechanisms.

**Felix Kirchmeier**  
Executive Director of the Geneva Human

*‘The Geneva Human Rights Platform is, today, a major and trusted actor in the human rights landscape, in Geneva but also beyond. By working with all the stakeholders that interact with the UN human rights system, we can develop concrete, innovative and convincing proposal to ensure that this system is fit for purpose.’*



# A Mechanisms Lab

In 2023, the GHRP further developed its key supportive role – as a ‘mechanisms lab’ – to Geneva-based human rights mechanisms via a series of targeted initiatives.

From public events to behind-the-scenes meetings, targeted initiatives and research, the GHRP continued to accompany the work of UN human rights mechanisms – UN treaty bodies (TBs), UN special procedures and the UN Human Rights Council. By holding its annual conference in New York, it also opened new avenues of cooperation between these two hubs around human rights, peace and security issues.

## Linking Human Rights Debates in Geneva and New York

The 2023 GHRP Annual Conference successfully took place in New York from 21 to 24 October 2023. This GHRP landmark event focused on the need to bridge the gap between Geneva-based human rights mechanisms and the United Nations in New York, based on the interrelated nature of human rights issues across both cities.

Four distinct panel discussions – organized with a broad range of partners – focused on connectivity of the human rights debates that take place in both cities to strengthen the toolbox for networked multilateralism, and a strengthened role for human rights in the UN peace and security architecture. These addressed the practice and role of UN treaty bodies in international law making, cooperation between Geneva and New York for the protection of children in armed conflict and from other forms of violence, UN accountability mechanisms, and the connectivity between the UN Human Rights Council and UN General Assembly third Committee.

These were complemented by an informal briefing to members of the UN Security Council on the links between Geneva-based UN human rights mechanisms and the UN peace and security architecture, focusing on the substantive inputs that the human rights system can provide to NYC-centered debates.

## Completing the Pilot Project of UN Treaty Bodies Follow-Up Reviews at Regional Level

Pilot follow-up reviews allow the testing of the potential contours of a new format in UN treaty bodies (TBs) reporting cycle that would bring TBs closer to the field and national realities.

In December 2023, and after Sierra Leone and Grenada, the GHRP conducted its final pilot in collaboration with the Pacific Community and the Commonwealth Secretariat. Contrary to earlier pilots, this one took a regional approach. Hosted in Fiji, the UN’s sub-regional hub for the Pacific, it focused on the latest recommendations issued by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Participating states included Fiji, Vanuatu and



Tonga and were all represented with governmental and non-governmental delegations. In-situ visits preceded the discussion and helped contextualize the exchanges for TB members, and also allowed for peer learning among the delegations involved.

This final pilot showed the benefits that regional-level follow-up reviews could bring to the work of UN TBs and the implementation of human rights in countries, as well as the possible format these should take.

Connecting Experts in UN Treaty Bodies and Beyond

Via its Treaty Body Members Platform (TBMP), the GHRP connects TB members with each other as well as with Geneva-based practitioners, UN special procedures, academics and diplomats, providing a unique space to share expertise, exchange views on topical questions and develop synergies and cooperation.

The 11 meetings held in 2023 at Villa Moynier allowed TB members to exchange their approaches to various thematic issues with their peers, UN Special Procedures, regional human rights mechanisms, experts and other UN institutions, including sexual and reproductive rights, economic, social and cultural rights in conflicts, and approaches to enforced disappearances.

The TBMP also accompanied the drafting of two General Comments by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – on Article 11 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that deals with the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters – and by the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances – focusing on disappearances in the context of migration.

Addressing Topical Human Rights Questions

Via its series of Human Rights Conversations, the GHRP addresses contemporary issues and challenges related to the promotion and protection of human rights in Geneva and beyond.

The four Human Rights Conversations held in 2023 addressed child participation in the work of UN Human Rights Mechanisms, religious symbols and women’s rights, neurotechnology and human rights and the Meta oversight board and the future of online freedom of expression.

Digital Human Rights Tracking Tools and Databases for National Implementation

The GHRP continued its work on the implementation of international human rights norms at the local level with a focus on the emergence of digital human rights tracking tools and databases (DHRTTDs), introduced to facilitate a more holistic approach to the monitoring and implementation of international human rights recommendations.

A tow-day expert conference – with the participation of over 30 DHRTTDs developers and two users representing different permanent missions, national ministries, international and regional organizations, national human rights insti-



tutions, civil society organizations and academia – delved into the transformation digital tools bring to the human rights landscape, including opportunities and challenges. The outcome of this meeting, along with the results of a broader research on DHRTTDs will be presented in a dedicated publication in the first quarter of 2024.

Under this initiative, the GHRP also created an online directory, which provides the international community with the most up-to-date overview of these online tools and databases.

This dedicated space on the GHRP website is regularly updated with new and innovative DHRTTDs, making them easily accessible to all stakeholders. The directory features specific pages for each tool – providing an in-depth analysis of each tool’s primary functions, developers, users, and a direct link to the tool itself.

The Training Hub: Building Capacity in the International Human Rights System

In 2023, the Training Hub expanded its offer of regular courses with two new courses on the international human rights standards and system, and on business and human rights.

66 participants from all over the world attended the four regular courses with a diversity of backgrounds – from government representatives, civil society, business sector, staff of international organizations and national human rights institutions, and academia – which tremendously enriched the discussions during the sessions. The deliberate choice to limit the number of participants in each course



also ensured meaningful exchanges in each group and with the Geneva-based experts and practitioners who intervene in the sessions.

The Training Hub also conducted four customized courses in 2023. Beyond the MENA-focused training on the human rights system and mechanisms, specifically designed for academics and human rights defenders in the Middle-East and organized in partnership with the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, the Training Hub also organized a workshop for legal advisors on the pandemic treaty and its human rights implications, a course on women’s rights and a workshop tailored for human rights defenders, with a focus on strategies to resort to UN human rights mechanisms.

The Training Hub implements its various activities with the support of many partners, including UPR Info, the Danish Institute for Human Rights, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights and the Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR Centre). The new design of the Environment course will confirm the partnership with Earthjustice and the Center for International Environmental Law.

**Felix Kirchmeier**  
Executive Director  
of the Geneva Human Rights Platform

*‘Requests to our Training Hub are rapidly increasing. This shows the need and interest of various stakeholders to engage with the UN human rights system, and confirms the need, quality and specific design of our training courses.’*

Courses in 2023: 9



Attendance: 114



The International Human Rights Standards and System: Monitoring and Implementation Strategies at the National Level

This new training course introduced in 2023 delved into the means and mechanisms through which national actors can best coordinate their human rights monitoring and implementation efforts, enabling them to strategically navigate the UN human rights system and use the various mechanisms available in their day-to-day work.

**Ahmed Badr**  
Human Rights Adviser at the Danish Institute  
for Human Rights

*‘Attending the one-week training course has been an invaluable experience for my role as a Human Rights Adviser at the Danish Institute for Human Rights. This programme’s comprehensive and practical approach, featuring experts from OHCHR, UN agencies, civil society, National Human Rights Institutions, and UN treaty bodies provided a well-rounded view of the international human rights system.’*

Business and Human Rights

This new training course introduced in 2023 examined how the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights have been utilized to advance business respect for human rights throughout the UN system, the impact of these Guiding Principles on other international organizations, as well as the impact of standards and guidance developed by these different bodies.

**Margarita Lysenkova**  
Senior Manager, International Policy at the Global  
Reporting Initiative

*‘Completing the course will help me to be regarded as a skillful professional in business and human rights when engaging with policy makers and multilateral organizations.’*



Protecting Human Rights and the Environment

This course, which could be attended in Geneva or online, provided participants – from NGOs, UN agencies, governments and academic institutions – with practical insights into the different UN human rights mechanisms pertinent to advancing environmental issues and protecting environmental human rights defenders.

**Sanjukta Mukherjee**  
Founder Trustee at the Sustainable Design  
Research Consortium

*‘This is the best course that I have attended in the field of rights, law and environment in the last decade. I would highly recommend it to every practitioner working in the energy, environment, human rights and humanitarian fields.’*

The Universal Periodic Review and the UN Human Rights System:  
Raising the Bar on Accountability

This training course co-organized with UPR Info – online and in Geneva – explored the origin and evolution of the Universal Periodic Review and its functioning. Using examples of different stages of implementation, it provided participants – from NGOs, UN agencies, governments and academic institutions – with the tools to use this mechanism for human rights implementation at the national level.

Breaking Down Silos,  
Strengthening Universality

The GHRP activities not only facilitate exchanges among human rights actors in Geneva and beyond, but also with other fields of practice relevant to the promotion and protection of human rights, including public health, the environment, climate change, disaster risk reduction, the humanitarian sector and the fight against corruption.

In light of the ongoing negotiations on a new pandemic treaty under the auspices of the World Health Organization, the GHRP facilitated exchanges among delegations on human rights aspects of the draft text of the treaty, and prepared written input to a compilation published by the Graduate Institute’s Global Health Center.

To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the GHRP teamed up with Amnesty International for a public event, including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Secretary General of Amnesty International. The event explored how the international community can ensure that the UDHR continues to serve us for another 75 years, retaining its universality and reclaiming its role as the major international normative framework on human rights to ensure a better future.

The GHRP also further developed its network of key partners as well as its audience – which now extend well beyond the human rights domain, creating new synergies, exchanges, outcomes and opportunities for collaboration.

In fulfilling its mandate, the GHRP collaborated closely with more than 50 governments, NGOs, UN human rights bodies and academic institutions. These include: OHCHR, UN Development Programme, UN Environment Programme, UN-Habitat, International Law Association, Geneva Cities Hub, Geneva Environment Network, Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, Association of Human Rights Institutes, CCPR Centre, Child Rights Connect, Center of International Environmental Law, Centre for Sport and Human Rights, Commonwealth Secretariat, Danish Institute for Human Rights, Earthjustice, FIAN International, Franciscans International, Friedrich-Ebert-

Stiftung, Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, HURIDOCS, International Disability Alliance, International Service for Human Rights, International Commission of Jurists, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, Paris Human Rights Centre, Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict, Raoul Wallenberg Institute, Watchlist, TB-Net, Universal Rights Group, UPR Info, Quaker UN Office, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Human Rights Measurement Initiative, SADATA, Plan International, SIMORE as well as a number of permanent missions in Geneva.

Key Facts and Figures

- 36 Events
- 10 Initiatives
- 9 Training courses attended by more than 110 participants
- 1 Annual conference
- 1 Advisory board
- More than 50 partners



# PUBLICATIONS

p. 57 Briefings

p. 57 Working Papers

p. 58 Research Briefs

p. 59 Others

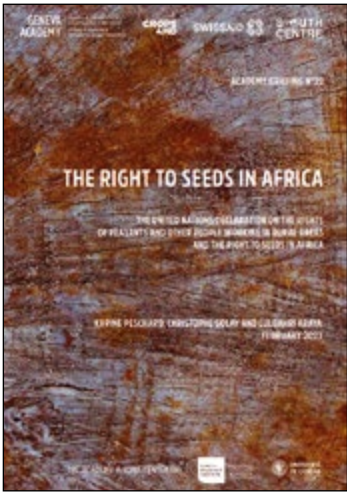


Our publications address current issues and challenges and stimulate debates in the academic community and in policy-making institutions and governments. They mainly come under four distinct series:

- Books – published by major editors, these are the outcome of fundamental research carried out at the Geneva Academy
- Briefings – elaborate policy advice with academic depth and rigour
- Research Briefs – give targeted policy advice in a short and accessible format on on-going projects and summarize the main messages of longer academic publications
- Working Papers – discussion pieces that can develop into further publications, these contribute to the debate in their field.

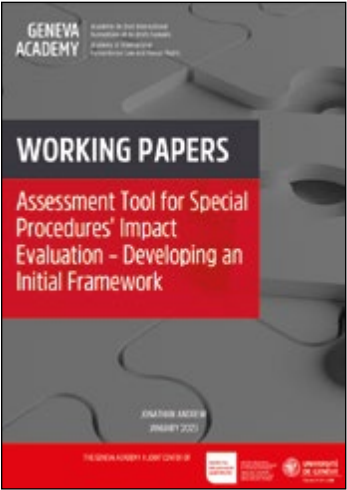


Briefings

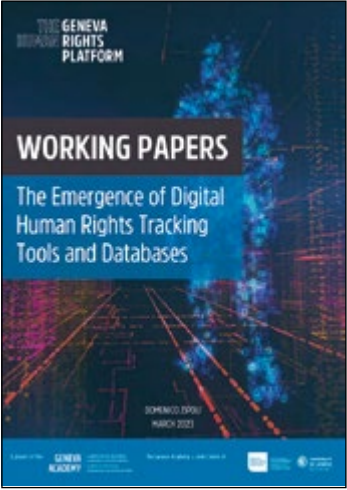


*The Right to Seeds in Africa*  
February 2023  
Christophe Golay, Karine Peschard,  
Lulbahri Araya

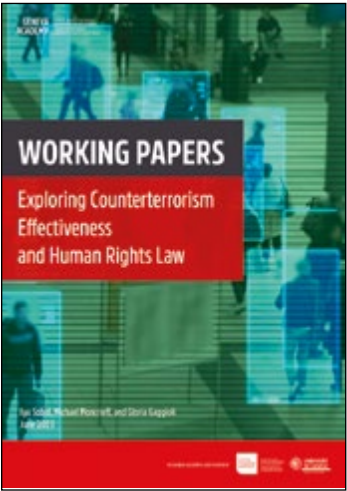
Working Papers



*Assessment Tool for Special Procedures' Impact Evaluation – Developing an Initial Framework*  
January 2023  
Jonathan Andrew



*The Emergence of Digital Human Rights Tracking Tools and Databases*  
March 2023  
Domenico Zipoli



*Exploring Counterterrorism Effectiveness and Human Rights Law*  
September 2023  
Gloria Gaggioli, Michael Moncrieff, Ilya Sobol



*International Treaty-Based Reporting Practices Review Report*  
November 2023  
Felix Kirchmeier, Claire Callejon, Domenico Zipoli



# Research Briefs



*Climate Change in the Security Council: Obstacles, Opportunities, and Options*  
May 2023  
Erica Harper, Adam Day



*The Right to Seeds in Africa*  
June 2023  
Christophe Golay, Karine Peschard



*Le Droit aux Semences en Afrique*  
June 2024  
Christophe Golay, Karine Peschard



*The Committee on Enforced Disappearances: General Comment on Enforced Disappearance in the Context of Migration*  
December 2023  
Lene Guercke



*The Evolving Neurotechnology Landscape: Examining the Role and Importance of Human Rights in Regulation*  
December 2023  
Erica Harper

# Others



*Youth Associated with Non-State Armed Groups: Building an Evidence Base on Disengagement Pathways and Reintegration Challenges*  
September 2023  
Erica Harper, Yosuke Nagai



*Delivering the Right to Peace: Towards a Reinforced Role of the Human Rights Council in the UN's Peace and Security Framework*  
October 2023  
Erica Harper, Adam Day



*Parameters for a Global Helpdesk on Business & Human Rights*  
November 2023  
Stefania Di Stefanò



*Third-Party Intervention: Ukraine and the Netherlands V. Russia*  
April 2023  
Submitted by Gloria Gaggioli, Francesco Romani



# EVENTS

p. 62 Our Dedicated Series

p. 64 Events in 2023



Our events – expert seminars, conferences and public lectures – form a key part of our activities. They provide a critical and scholarly forum for experts, practitioners and policy-makers to discuss and debate topical human rights and humanitarian issues, as well as the outcomes and content of our research.

Our series – IHL Talks, Human Rights Conversations, Women’s Careers in International Law, Military Briefings and PhD Forums – are key references in their respective fields and attract an ever-increasing audience.

In 2023, we ran more than 50 private and public events. Topics reflected both key humanitarian, IHL and human rights concerns, as well as the many legal challenges related to the ongoing war in Ukraine and the recent upsurge of violence in Israel and Palestine. Taking place at Villa Moynier, they allowed for fruitful exchanges with a record attendance by our students, experts, policy-makers and practitioners.

Our staff also participated in high-level conferences throughout the year to address key accountability and implementation challenges in the field of international humanitarian and human rights law.

*Nathalie Mivelaz Tirabosco*  
*Head of Communication and External relations*

*‘Our public events allow practitioners, experts, diplomats and students to exchange around current human rights challenges and topical legal questions that arise in contemporary armed conflicts. Their high attendance shows the need for such fora and the key role that the Geneva Academy plays as a convener for such discussions.’*

# Our Dedicated Series

## IHL Talks

The IHL Talks are a series of events on international humanitarian law (IHL) and current humanitarian topics. Aimed at academic experts, practitioners and policy-makers, they discuss burning humanitarian issues and their regulation under international law.

The five IHL Talks organized in 2023 addressed the humanitarian, technological, strategic and legal questions related to the use of nuclear weapons, the creation of a special tribunal for aggression in relation to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, enforced disappearances in the context of migration, legal and humanitarian challenges related to the upsurge of violence in Israel and Palestine, and the legal and practical implications of the *Al Hassan Case* before the International Criminal Court of Justice.

## Human Rights Conversations

The Human Rights Conversations are a series convened by our Geneva Human Rights Platform on contemporary issues and challenges related to the promotion and protection of human rights in Geneva and beyond.

Aimed at diplomats, policy-makers, experts, civil society representatives and staff from the UN and other international organizations, the four Human Rights

Conversations held in 2023 addressed child participation in the work of UN Human Rights Mechanisms, religious symbols and women’s rights, neurotechnology and human rights and the Meta oversight board and the future of online freedom of expression.

## Women's Perspectives on a Career in International Law

Co-organized with the Geneva branch of ATLAS Network, this series of events feature women who share their experience and advice regarding a career in international law. The two events organized in 2023 enabled open and intimate discussions with six women with various profiles who have pursued a career in international law around subjects like conducting human rights advocacy work or conducting academic research.

## Military Briefings

This unique series of events relating to military institutions and the law aim to improve knowledge of military actors and operations and build bridges between the military and civilian worlds. The two briefings held in 2023 discussed – with military guests – legal challenges facing NATO in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine conflict as well as the military and legal challenges related to the operationalization of protection of civilians military frameworks.

## PhD Forums

The Geneva Academy PhD Forums bring together PhD researchers and experts – in Geneva and beyond – who work in our scientific focus areas: IHL, international human rights law, international criminal law, transitional justice, international refugee law and selected public international law topics. The three PhD forums held in 2023 provided PhD students with a space to share their ideas with colleagues in an informal, respectful and enjoyable setting, and benefit from constructive feedback and discussions.

# Events in 2023

## Geneva Academy

Date	Event	Type	Partner(s)
20 February	Changing the Rules of the (Nuclear) Game: Voices from the Humanitarian, Technological, Strategic and Legal Fields	IHL Talk	
22 February	The Whistleblower	Film Screening	
23 February	Equal and Inclusive Representation of Women in Decision-Making Systems: CEDAW’s Next General Recommendation	Panel Discussion	GQUAL, University of Bern, Swiss National Science Foundation, World Trade Institute
23 February	Women’s Perspectives on a Career in International Law	Panel Discussion	ATLAS Network, GQUAL
1 March	Cultural Heritage and Mass Atrocities	Book Launch	University of Geneva Law Faculty, UNESCO Chair in the International Law of the Protection of Cultural Heritage at the University of Geneva, Getty Publications
1 March	The Whistleblower	Film Screening	
1 March	Litigating the Conduct of Armed Hostilities Before the European Court of Human Rights	PhD Forum	
6 March	Causes and Consequences: Conflict as Re-affirmations of Social and Economic Constructs and Gendered Descents into Violent Conflict	Opening Lecture of the Spring Semester	
14 March	Addressing the Situation of All individuals Detained in North-East Syria	Panel Discussion	UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism
15 March	Armenian Genocide and Sexual Violence: Survival and Testimony	Film Screening and Panel Discussion	21st International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights (FIFDH), University of Geneva Law Faculty

Date	Event	Type	Partner(s)
15 March	Respecting, Protecting And Fulfilling the Rights of Peasants and Other Rural Workers – A Clever Move in Times of Multiple Crises	Panel Discussion	Permanent Missions of the Pluri-national State of Bolivia, Honduras, Cuba, South Africa and the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg to the UN in Geneva, South Centre, La Via Campesina, Centre Europe-Tiers Monde (CETIM), FIAN International
16 March	Génocidaire(s): Au Cœur de la Justice Internationale Pénale	Book Launch	
21 March	The French Bataclan Trial: What Lessons for the Prosecution of Mass Crimes at the ICC?	Public Lecture	
22 March	Legal Challenges Facing NATO in the Wake of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict	Military Briefings	
22 March	Insurgent justice and the ne bis in idem Principle Before the International Criminal Court	PhD Forum	
23 March	UNDROP and the EU Seed Marketing Reform: Perspectives from Germany	Panel Discussion	
29 March	Special Tribunal for Aggression: Worth the Risk(s)?	IHL Talk	
31 March	Taking Stock of Five Years of Work at the Special Jurisdiction for Peace: Challenges and Achievements	Panel Discussion	Permanent Mission of Colombia to the UN in Geneva
3 April	UNDROP and the EU Seed Marketing Reform: Perspectives from Belgium	Panel Discussion	
17 April	UNDROP Alive and Kicking: Peasants rights into practice–A regional perspective	Panel Discussion	
18 April	International Law Responses to Russia’s Aggression – Building an International Reparation Mechanism for Ukraine	Public Lecture	Geneva LLM in International Dispute Settlement (MIDS)

Date	Event	Type	Partner(s)
27 April	Tackling Conflict Related Sexual Violence in Ukraine	Panel Discussion	Global Survivors Fund
3 May	The Nationality of Individuals in International Law	PhD Forum	
8 May	Hidden Horrors of Armed Conflicts: Missing and Forcibly Disappeared Migrants	IHL Talk	
9 May	Les mécanismes onusiens de protection des droits humains et la situation au Pérou	Panel Discussion	
10 May	Atrocity Crimes, Children and International Criminal Courts	Book Launch	
11 May	Duties to One's Own Population and Combatants in War: Is there an 'Internal' Jus in Bello?	Public Lecture	Geneva Graduate Institute Law Department
12 May	Taking Stock: Women's Rights and Gender-Based Discrimination under Scrutiny at the International Level	Book Launch	
15 May	Electric Shock Belts, Spiked Batons, and Pepper Spray: Regulating the Trade in Torture Tools	Panel Discussion	Geneva Graduate Institute
26 May	Book Launch – Returning foreign fighters: Responses, legal challenges and ways forward	Book Launch	T.M.C. Asser Institute
6 June	A Conversation with Peter Maurer	A Conversation with	
12 June	UNDROP and the EU Seed Marketing Reform: Perspectives from Croatia	Panel Discussion	
20 June	Le droit aux semences en Afrique	Panel Discussion	Swissaid, CROPS4HD, South Centre
30 June	Breaking the Cycle of Repression Against Activists and Protesters Through Accountability	Panel Discussion	UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute, CIVICUS, Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the UN in Geneva

Date	Event	Type	Partner(s)
4 July	The Executive Master in International Law in Armed Conflict	Open House	
19 September	The New Resolution on UNDROP Implementation at the UN Human Rights Council	Panel Discussion	Permanent Mission of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, The Gambia and Cuba to the UN in Geneva, La Via Campesina, CETIM, FIAN International, Rosa Luxembourg Foundation, RAISE project, Friends of the Declaration Switzerland, Friends of the Declaration Luxembourg
20 September	Peasants', Rural Workers' and Other Rural Peoples' Key Role in Safeguarding the Environment	Panel Discussion	FIAN International, La Via Campesina, CETIM, Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung
9 October	International Human Rights Courts and Armed Conflicts	Opening Lecture of the Academic Year	
10 October	Armed Groups and International Law: A Legal Shadowland	Book Launch	
11 October	Civic Space and Sustainable Peace: The Critical Role of the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association In Advancing Sustainable Peace and Democratic Transitions	Panel Discussion	UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, CIVICUS, International Service for Human Rights, Permanent Missions of Switzerland and Austria to the UN in New York
16 October	The Complementary Turn: Domestic Justice in the Shadow of International Criminal Tribunals	Book Launch	
20 October	2023 Graduation Ceremony		
23 October	First International Symposium on Youth Associated with Non-State Armed Groups	Conference	Accept International
26 October	2023 Current Issues in Armed Conflict Conference	Conference	Conflict and Crisis Hub at the University of Essex
28 October	Women's Perspectives on a Career in International Law: Navigating Human Rights Advocacy	Panel Discussion	ATLAS Network



Date	Event	Type	Partner(s)
1 November	A Rights-Based Approach to Conflict Prevention	Panel Discussion	2023 Geneva Peace Week, UN University Centre for Policy Research, Geneva Centre for Security Policy
7–8 November	The Use of Technology in Law Enforcement Facilitation of Peaceful Assemblies	Expert Workshop	Queen Mary University of London, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
8 November	Pathways to Equitable Fossil Fuel Supply Management	Panel Discussion	
2–24 November	The 2023 Human Rights Week		University of Geneva, Geneva Graduate Institute, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Republic and State of Geneva, Geneva International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights, Les Créatives, Martin Ennals Award, Foraus, Amnesty International UNIGE, AESPRI, FIDH, LICRA, Permanent Mission of France to the UN in Geneva
21 November	Strangers in Peace	Film Screening	
22 November	The Operationalization of Protection of Civilians Military Frameworks: Military and Legal Challenges	Military Briefing	
24 November	Al-Aqsa Flood and Iron Sword: Legal and Humanitarian Challenges	IHL Talk	
27 November	How Human Rights Risks Translate to Financially Material Risks for Companies and their Shareholders	Side Event at the Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights	Heartland Initiative
28 November	Just Transitions	Side Event at the Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights	Institute for Human Rights and Business
28 November	Alpha in Adversity	Panel Discussion	Heartland Initiative, Schroders, Wespath Benefits & Investments

Date	Event	Type	Partner(s)
7 December	Aggregation, Governance and Nexus: The Legal and Practical Implications of the ICC's Al Hassan Case	IHL Talk	
7–8 December	Armed Group Coalitions in Armed Conflict and Counterterrorism	Expert Meeting	University of Geneva, Swiss National Science Foundation

# Events in 2023

## Geneva Human Rights Platform

Date	Event	Type	Partner(s)
27 January	<a href="#">Mayors, Human Rights and the United Nations Universal Periodic Review</a>	Panel Discussion	UPR-Info, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN-Habitat, Geneva Cities Hub
6 February	<a href="#">Child Participation in the Work of UN Human Rights Mechanisms</a>	Human Rights Conversation	Child Rights Connect
8 February	<a href="#">Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights</a>	Treaty Body Members Platform	
1 March	<a href="#">Mitigation of Climate Change</a>	Treaty Body Members Platform	Center for International Environmental Law
7 March	<a href="#">To Ban or not to Ban: Religious Symbols and Women’s Rights</a>	Human Rights Conversation	
8 March	<a href="#">A Helpdesk on Business and Human Rights</a>	Expert Consultation	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
13–17 March	<a href="#">Enforced Disappearances in the Context of Migration</a>	Treaty Body Members Platform	OHCHR, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
15 March	<a href="#">Persons with Disabilities in Situations of Risk and Humanitarian Emergencies</a>	Treaty Body Members Platform	
18 March	<a href="#">UN Treaty Bodies’ Individual Communications</a>	Treaty Body Members Platform	Paris Human Rights Center, OHCHR
17 May	<a href="#">Screening of Documentary ‘I am Chance’ by Marc-Henri Wajnberg</a>	Film Screening	Permanent Mission of Belgium to the UN in Geneva, OHCHR, the Centre for Children’s Rights Studies of the University of Geneva, Defence for Children International, Dynamo International, the Consortium of Street Children, Wajnbrosse Productions
24 May	<a href="#">Gender Identity</a>	Treaty Body Members Platform	OHCHR

Date	Event	Type	Partner(s)
6 June	<a href="#">Neurotechnology and Human Rights</a>	Human Rights Conversation	Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA)
8 June	<a href="#">Localizing SDGs and human rights through the UN Universal Periodic Review</a>	Panel Discussion	Geneva Cities Hub, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, UN-Habitat, UPR Info, OHCHR
12 June	<a href="#">Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 75: Reimagining Protection for a World in Turmoil</a>	Panel Discussion	Amnesty International
12 June	<a href="#">Annual Retreat of UN Special Procedures</a>	Treaty Body Members Platform	OHCHR
13 June	<a href="#">UN Special Rapporteurs’ Discussion on Common Goods</a>	Brown Bag Lunch	OHCHR
15 June	<a href="#">The Roles of NGOs in the International Human Rights System</a>	Book Launch	Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN in Geneva, Republic and State of Geneva
15 June	<a href="#">Climate Change</a>	Treaty Body Members Platform	CIEL, UN Special Rapporteur on Climate Change
20 June	<a href="#">Corruption and Human Rights – The Ways Forward for Prevention and Realization</a>	Panel Discussion	Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, Basel Institute on Governance, OHCHR
23 June	<a href="#">Working lunch on Common Criteria for Effective National Mechanisms for Implementation, Reporting and Follow-up</a>	Expert Consultation	
27 June	<a href="#">Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Conflict</a>	Treaty Body Members Platform	
5 July	<a href="#">Feminist Foreign Policy</a>	Panel Discussion	GQUAL, UN Women, Geneva Gender Champions, Permanent Mission of Chile to the UN in Geneva
12 July	<a href="#">Ensuring Human Rights in the Face of Current Global Challenges</a>	Panel Discussion	
14–15 September	<a href="#">Digital Human Rights Tracking Tools and Databases (DHRTTDs)</a>	Expert Roundtable	OHCHR

Date	Event	Type	Partner(s)
19–20 September	<a href="#">Overcoming crises and using opportunities in a changing world by placing parity at its core</a> Thematic Meeting on CEDAW GR 40	Expert Consultation	OHCHR, UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, Women at the Table
25 September	<a href="#">Informal Discussion on Short-Term Enforced Disappearances</a>	Treaty Body Members Platform	
3–4 October	<a href="#">Human Rights Approaches to Sustainable Social Services</a>	Expert Consultations	Global Initiative for Economic, ocial and Cultural Rights (GI-ESCR)
3 October	<a href="#">Interaction between Global and Regional Human Rights Mechanisms in the Field of Public Services and Fair Fiscal Policies</a>	Treaty Body Members Platform	Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (GI-ESCR)
18 October	<a href="#">A New Human Rights Tribunal in Town? The Oversight Board and the Future of Online Freedom of Expression</a>	Human Rights Conversation	
21–24 October	<a href="#">2023 Annual Conference: Connecting Geneva and New York for Enhanced Human Rights Protection</a>	Annual Conference	Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, Albanian branch of the International Law Association, American Branch of the International Law Association, Permanent Missions of Switzerland and Uruguay to the UN in New York, OHCHR, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, Child Rights Connect, Co-Chairs of the Human Rights Caucus Germany and Switzerland, International Commission of Jurists, University of Oxford, Amnesty International, International Service for Human Rights, Rosa Luxembourg Stiftung New York Office, Universal Rights Group
21 October	<a href="#">The Practice of the UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies: Beyond International Law?</a>	Annual Conference	Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, Albanian Branch of the International Law Association, American Branch of the International Law Association
23 October	<a href="#">Enhancing cooperation between New York and Geneva for the protection of Children in Armed Conflict and from other Forms of Violence</a>	Annual Conference	Permanent Missions of Switzerland and Uruguay to the UN in New York, OHCHR, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, Child Rights Connect

Date	Event	Type	Partner(s)
24 October	<a href="#">Geneva Meets New York: Workshop for Small Delegations at the 3rd Committee</a>	Annual Conference	Amnesty International, International Service for Human Rights, Rosa Luxembourg Stiftung New York Office, Universal Rights Group
24 October	<a href="#">UN Accountability Mechanisms</a>	Annual Conference	Co-Chairs of the Human Rights Caucus Germany and Switzerland, International Commission of Jurists, University of Oxford
28–30 November	<a href="#">Third UN Treaty Body Follow-up Review: Fiji, Vanuatu and Tonga</a>	Follow-up Review Pilot	Pacific Community (SPC), Commonwealth Secretariat
13 December	<a href="#">Transparency in Nominations and Elections to UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies: Towards a New Vetting System?</a>	Panel Discussion	GQUAL, TB-Net, International Service for Human Rights, International Disability Alliance, Permanent Missions of Mexico and Switzerland to the UN in Geneva





# RESOURCES

p. 76 Expenditure

p. 77 Income

p. 78 Donors

Ensuring our financial sustainability is a high priority and a constant challenge. We closed the year with a positive financial result of 567,199 Swiss Francs. With an initial 2023 budget of 5.3 million, we attained a total operational result of 6.5 million at the end of the year following the implementation of our activities.



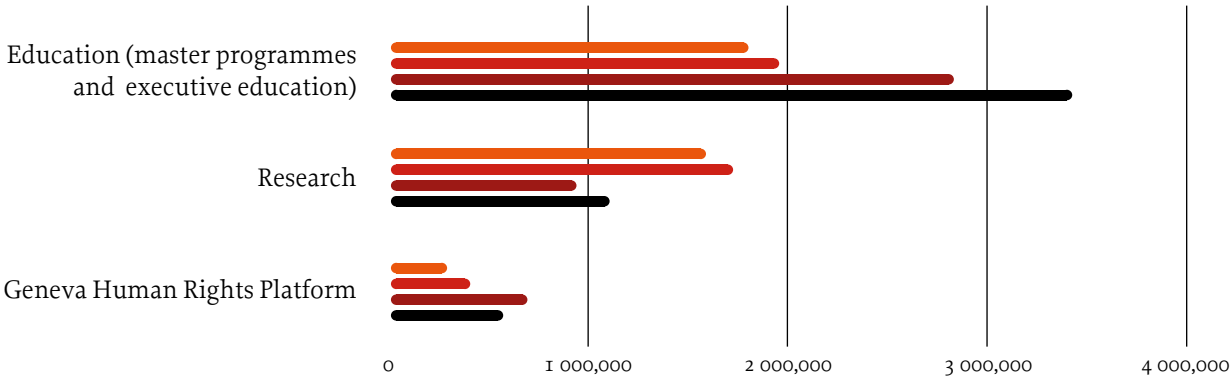
Expenditure

Our expenditure for 2023 increased to 6.5 million Swiss Francs, compared to 5.1 million in 2022. As illustrated by the diagram below, our education programmes and research activities remain the two main pillars of our institution.

Proportion of Expenditure Per Activity



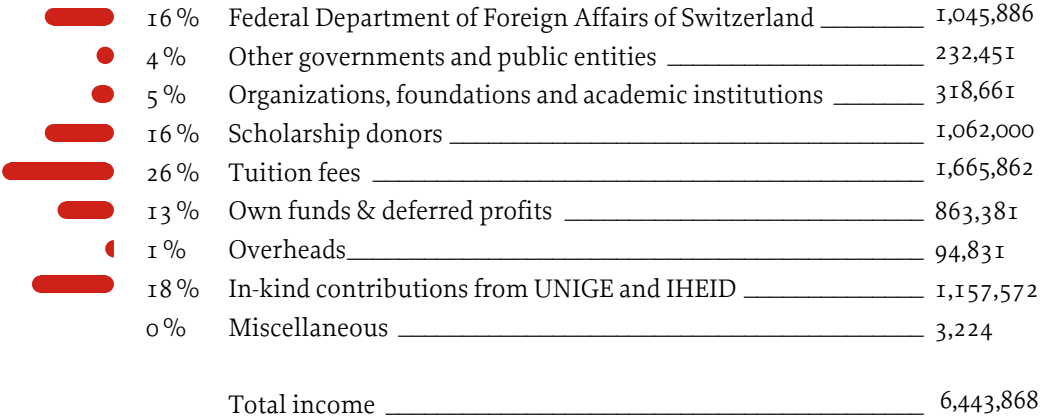
Evolution of Expenditures per Activity 2020 2021 2022 2023

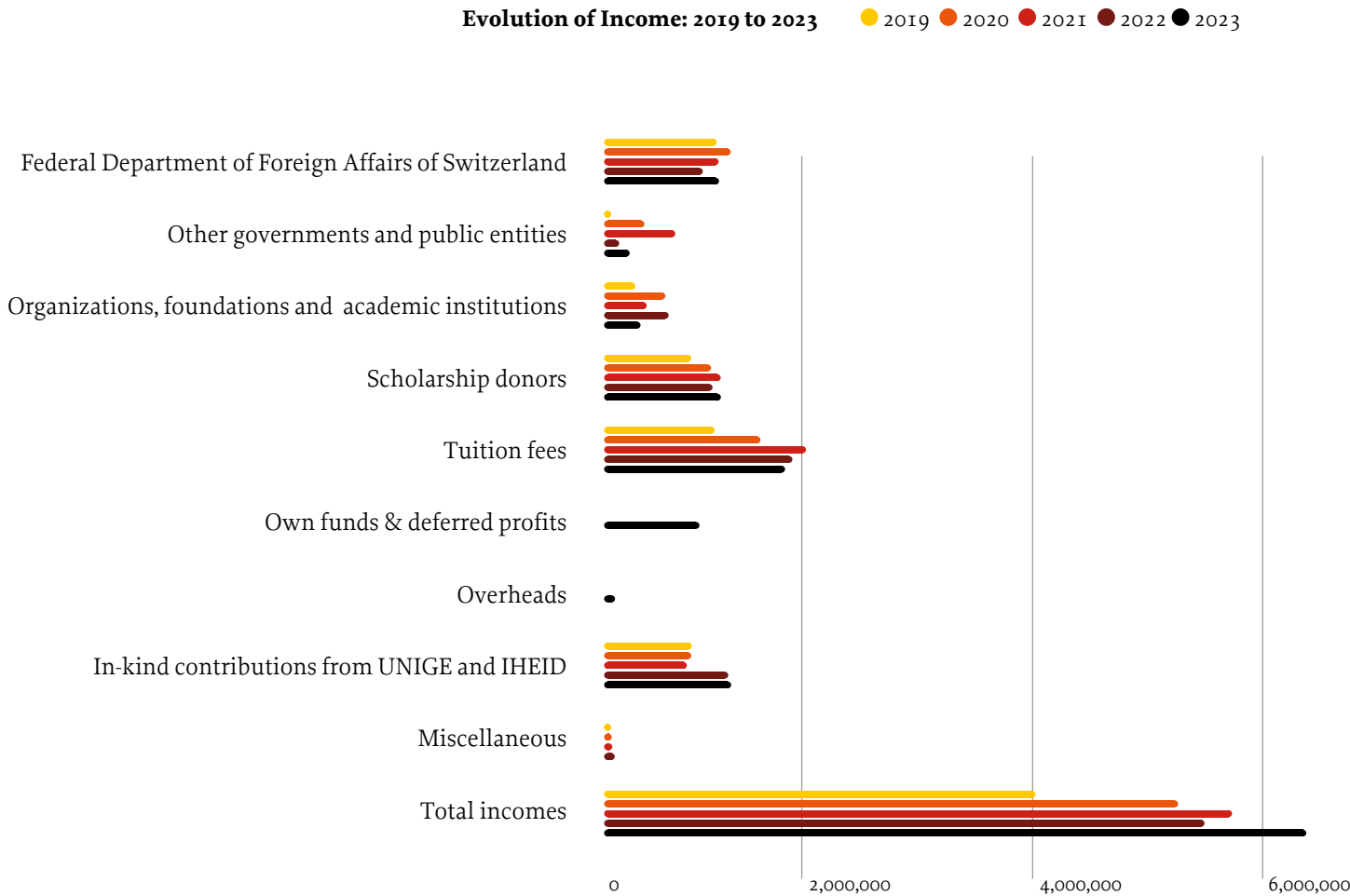


Income

In 2023, the Geneva Academy’s total income was 6.4 million Swiss Francs, compared to 5.5 million in 2022.

Income in 2023





# Donors

The Geneva Academy is deeply grateful to all the donors who generously supported our work in 2023. Thanks to their contributions and commitment, we were able to promote, through our research and education, better respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

**Institutional Donors**

- Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Switzerland, in particular:
  - Directorate of Public International Law
  - Peace and Human Rights Division
  - UN Division
- International Labour Office
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (in kind)
- Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United Nations Office and other international organizations - Geneva

- Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- Republic and Canton of Geneva
- UN-Habitat

**Other Organizations and Academic Institutes**

- CETIM
- International Bar Association
- Norwegian Centre for Human Rights
- Oxfam Intermon
- Solidarity Center
- Swiss Network for International Studies
- Société académique de Genève

**Private Foundations**

- Action de Carême
- Fondation Ernst et Lucie Schmidheiny
- Geneva based private fondation
- Fondation Salvia
- Ford Foundation
- Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
- Rosa-Luxemburg- Stiftung
- Women Win

**Private Donors**

- Jenö Staehelin





# ABOUT US

p. 82 Our Mission

p. 82 How we Work

# 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 protection of human rights.

Established in 2007 by the Faculty of Law of the University of Geneva 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 exceptional students to its master’s and training programmes. Our graduates 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 (IHRL). 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 humanitarian hub. Through close interaction with international organizations, NGOs, experts, governments and the private sector, we actively participate in global discussions on IHL, human rights, international criminal law and transitional justice.

# How We Work

## Training Professionals and the Next Generation of Humanitarian and Human Rights Experts and Practitioners

Our three master’s programmes and various training and short courses disseminate legal knowledge in IHL, IHRL 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 institu-

tions 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.

## Promoting Diversity

We are committed to promoting diversity in all respects: cultural diversity, diversity in the geographical origin of students, staff and speakers, as well as gender socioeconomic diversity. This is implemented through all kinds of measures: our pursuit of diversity in recruitment and invitations to guest speakers, the selection of students (including maintaining a significant number of scholarships), and our adoption of a social policy aimed, in particular, at assisting young parents. We also promote diversity in the events we convene. In particular, we will not convene or participate in the organization of events where none of the speakers are women.



# OUR PEOPLE

- p. 86 Supervisory Committee
- p. 86 Board
- p. 86 Master's Committee
- p. 87 Faculty
- p. 88 Swiss Chair of International Humanitarian Law
- p. 89 Team



# Supervisory Committee

The Supervisory Committee is our main supervisory body. It nominates the Geneva Academy’s Director, approves our annual budget as well as all decisions related to the financing of the institution. It is made of the Rector of UNIGE, the Director of the Geneva Graduate Institute and professors from both parent institutions.

**Yves Flückiger**  
Rector, University of Geneva

**Marie Laure Salles**  
Director, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies

# The Board

The Board is composed of independent individuals representing our founding institutions – the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and the University of Geneva – and main partners. Major management decisions and the Geneva Academy’s strategy are discussed with, and approved by, the Board.

**Vincent Chetail**  
President of the Board; Professor of International Law, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies; Director, Global Migration Centre

**Alexis Keller**  
Professor, University of Geneva Law Faculty

**Etienne Kuster**  
Senior Adviser for Relations with Academic Circles, International Committee of the Red Cross

**Andrea Bianchi**  
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**Joost Pauwelyn**  
Professor of International Law, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies

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Professor of International Law, University of Lausanne

**Madeline Garlick**  
Chief, Protection Policy and Legal Advice Section, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

**Maya Hertig Randall**  
Professor of Constitutional Law and Vice-Dean, University of Geneva Law Faculty

# Master's Committee

The Master’s Committee overseas our three master’s programmes, including study plans and the faculty. It is presided by our Director, Professor Gloria Gaggioli.

**Gloria Gaggioli**  
Associate/Swiss National Science Foundation Professor, University of Geneva Law Faculty; Director, Geneva Academy

**Vincent Chetail**  
President of the Board; Professor of International Law, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies; Director, Global Migration Centre

**Maya Hertig Randall**  
Professor of Constitutional Law and Vice-Dean, University of Geneva Law Faculty

**Andrea Bianchi**  
Professor of International Law, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (substitute member)

**Robert Kolb**  
Professor of International Law, University of Geneva (substitute member)

# Faculty

## Resident Faculty

Resident faculty for the 2022–2023 and 2024–2025 academic years:

**Andrea Bianchi**  
Professor of International Law, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies

**Andrew Clapham**  
Professor of International Law, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies

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**Alessandro Chechi**  
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**Vincent Chetail**  
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**Neus Torbisco Casals**  
Visiting Professor, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies

## Visiting Professors and Lecturers

Visiting professors and lecturers for the 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 academic years:

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Legal Adviser for Islamic Law and Jurisprudence, International Committee of the Red Cross

**Lindsey Cameron**  
Head of Thematic Legal Advisers, Legal Division, International Committee of the Red Cross

**Giovanni Distefano**  
Professor of International Law, University of Neuchâtel

**Cécile Aptel**  
Deputy Director, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

**Alessandro Chechi**  
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**Tarcisio Gazzini**  
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Professor of International Human Rights Law, University of Milano-Bicocca

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Professor and John Hume and Thomas P. O'Neill Chair in Peace, Ulster University

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**Sandra Krähenmann**  
Senior Policy and Legal Adviser, Geneva Call

**Vincent Bernard**  
Senior Policy Advisor, International Code of Conduct Association

**Jérôme De Hemptinne**  
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**Fionnuala Ní Aoláin**  
Regents Professor and Robina Professor of Law, Public Policy and Society, University of Minnesota Law School; Professor of Law, Queens University

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**Marco Roscini**  
Swiss IHL Chair, Geneva Academy; Professor  
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**Jamie Williamson**  
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**Tafadzwa Christmas**  
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Swiss Chair of International Humanitarian Law

Professor *Marco Roscini* has been our Swiss Chair of International Humanitarian Law (Swiss IHL Chair) since early 2022. In this position, he develops and promotes our expertise in IHL via policy work, cutting-edge research, expert meetings, the development of partnerships and teaching.

He also pursues research projects on disruptive military technologies and the digitalization of armed conflicts, with a particular focus on the legal and ethical challenges raised by cyberwarfare and AI-supported decision-making in military affairs.

The Team

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Impressum

SO2DESIGN, so2design.ch  
Design

Munizha Ahmad-Cooke  
Editing





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