

# CONCEPT NOTE

## HUMAN RIGHTS CONNECTIVITY

## HIGH-LEVEL INTER-AGENCY PANEL ON HUMAN RIGHTS

2024 Annual Conference of the Geneva Human Rights  
Platform of the Geneva Academy of International  
Humanitarian Law and Human Rights (GHRP)

TUESDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2024, 1.30 – 3.00 PM, SALLE C1, PÉTALE 5,  
MAISON DE LA PAIX, GENEVA GRADUATE INSTITUTE

## Panelists

- **Nada Al-Nashif**, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR
- **Tomas Lamanauskas**, Deputy Secretary-General, ITU
- **Catharina Boehme**, Assistant Director-General, WHO
- **Agi Veres**, Director, UNDP Geneva Representation office
- **Arnold Kreilhuber**, Regional Director, Europe Office, UNEP
- Moderation: **Paola Gaeta**, Professor of International Law at the Geneva Graduate Institute and Director of the Geneva Academy and **Felix Kirchmeier**, Executive Director, GHRP, Geneva Academy

## Concept

**This panel discussion, co-organized with the Geneva Graduate Institute, closes the 2024 Annual Conference of the Geneva Human Rights Platform. High-level representatives of various UN agencies are invited to reflect upon where human rights are present in their mandates, policies and programs, and what further input and guidance they would welcome from the human rights system.**

The human rights system is currently facing unprecedented pressure. The deteriorating global situation is creating or intensifying human rights crises, while political support for human rights continues to wane, leading to a growing perception that the UN Human Rights System is failing to deliver on its promises in specific country contexts.

Despite the challenges, human rights remain the guiding principles that unite humanity and offer a path through the current crises, as recently emphasized by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. In these turbulent times, the interconnections between human rights and various policy areas are becoming increasingly evident, including global health, internet governance and new technologies, environmental issues, and climate change.

In the **Pact for the Future**, heads of states and governments “recognize that the multilateral system and its institutions, with the United Nations and its Charter at the centre, must be strengthened to keep pace with a changing world. They must be fit for the present and the future – effective and capable, prepared for the future, just, democratic, equitable and representative of today’s world, inclusive, interconnected and financially stable.” (A/79/L.2, para 6)

They further reaffirm the importance of the UDHR and state: ‘The implementation of the Pact will enhance the full enjoyment of human rights and dignity for all, which is a key goal. We will respect, protect, promote and fulfil all human rights, recognizing their universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness,...’ (A/79/L.2, para 13)

**Interconnectedness** is present throughout the document, when referring to the human rights in the chapters on development, security /conflict, terrorism or technology, social inclusion and climate change.

As human rights intersect with a wide range of policy domains, the 2024 Annual Conference of the Geneva Human Rights Platform will delve into these connections. The conference aims to explore how the strength and potential of human rights can be harnessed to benefit the work of other actors, even those who may not traditionally view human rights protection as their primary mission.

## 2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE GHRP

### Human Rights System under pressure: a reason to expand connectivity

This public event, aimed at the international community both within and beyond Geneva—including diplomats, experts, NGOs, UN agency staff, international organizations, National Human Rights Institutions, and academics—will focus on the pressing issues and challenges confronting Geneva-based actors in the field of human rights.

The 2024 edition will focus on the connectivity between the manifold policy areas addressed in Geneva, in their human rights dimensions. To this end, panels are co-organized with specific organizations on the human rights aspects in various policy areas.

The ‘Annual Conference of the Geneva Human Rights Platform’, was established in 2019 and is dedicated to the concept of connectivity in the field of human rights. Earlier conferences discussed the [connectivity among UN human rights mechanisms, connectivity between regional and UN human rights mechanisms \(2020\)](#) and [connectivity between national human rights actors and UN human rights mechanisms \(2021\)](#), the 2022 Annual Conference addressed the theme of [digital connectivity](#) while the 2023 Annual Conference addressed the [connectivity between the UN policy hubs of Geneva and New York](#), in terms of human rights policy, and was therefore organized exceptionally in New York.