

HUMAN RIGHTS WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Newsletter, Issue No. 2 2019

DIVERSITY



TABLE OF CONTENTS

2

Promoting a value-driven human rights system on the principles of justice and solidarity

6

Words of Wisdom from panel debates organized by the Geneva Centre

7

Publication alerts



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE
مركز جنيف لحقوق الإنسان والحوار العالمي
CENTRE DE GENÈVE POUR LA PROMOTION DES DROITS DE L'HOMME ET LE DIALOGUE GLOBAL

In Special Consultative Status with the United Nations

ذو مركز استشاري خاص لدى الأمم المتحدة

Doté du statut consultatif auprès des Nations Unies

PROMOTING A VALUE-DRIVEN HUMAN RIGHTS SYSTEM ON THE PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY



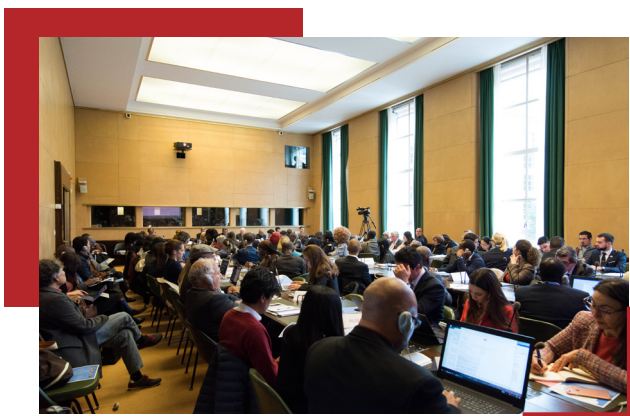
International conference in Vienna: Successful societies are those that manage diversity and stimulate empathy towards the Other

On 19 June, the Baku International Centre for Interfaith and Inter-Civilizational Cooperation (BCIC), the KAICIID International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, the Geneva Centre and the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Republic of Austria held in Vienna an international conference on the theme of "From Interfaith And Inter-Civilizational Cooperation To Human Solidarity". Representatives from more than 30

countries were present at the conference. A message of support to the co-organizers of the conference was sent by the President of Azerbaijan HE Ilham Aliyev. The aim of the conference was to demonstrate a common stand of representatives of different cultures, civilizations and religions against challenges to peace and prosperity, especially conflicts on religious grounds. At the conclusion of the event, the participants adopted the Vienna Declaration "From Interfaith And Inter-Civilizational Cooperation To Human Solidarity".



Find out more at: <https://www.gchragd.org/en/article/press-release-interfaith-and-inter-civilizational-cooperation-human-solidarity>



Emergency Assembly on the Rise of Global Racism: Providing new impetus to the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA)

As a new and deadly tidal wave of violence, hate speech and exclusion sweeps across the world, it is now high time for the international community to adopt a unified stance

against racism, racial discrimination and intolerance and to address the fundamental, structural root causes of these scourges through the implementation of the DDPA. This was the underlying theme of the "Emergency Assembly on the Rise of Global Racism" held on 9 May at the United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG). The Assembly was organized jointly by the Geneva Centre, the World Against Racism Network and the Global Coalition for the International Decade for People of African Descent. High-level panellists at this event included representatives from the African Union, the City of Geneva, the NGO Committee for the Elimination of Racism, Aphrophia & Colorism, the National Forum Civil Society of People of African Descent in the Netherlands, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, the World Council of Churches (WCC), the United Methodist Church and the Group of Independent Eminent Experts on the DDPA.



Find out more at: <https://www.gchragd.org/en/article/implementation-durban-declaration-and-programme-action-ddpa-key-encourage-sustained>



Fifth World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue: Societies must work together to build more tolerant, peaceful and coexisting societies through equal citizenship rights

In times when religions have been considered as a source of hatred and division, harnessing its collective energy in the pursuit of equal citizenship rights is needed more than ever, concluded a group of eminent experts on inter-faith dialogue during a panel debate. The conference entitled *"Greater Spiritual Convergence for Equal Citizenship Rights"* was organized on 3 May by the Geneva Centre as a breakout session of the Fifth World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue held from 2-3 May in Baku, Azerbaijan. Speakers at this event included

representatives from the State Committee on Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures, the Institute for Policy, Advocacy and Governance, UNFPA and WCC.



Read more at: <https://www.gchragd.org/en/article/fifth-world-forum-intercultural-dialogue-societies-must-work-together-build-more-tolerant>

The Geneva Centre organized a panel debate-book presentation on Migration and Human Solidarity, benefitting from the presence of panellists with first-hand experience in humanitarian rescue operations in the Mediterranean Sea

The current massive displacement of people worldwide has turned into a politicized crisis of solidarity, with closed border policies and the rise of xenophobic, populist trends. The blocking and harassment of search and rescue ships and of NGOs that legally attempt to pursue their activities compromises all efforts to save the lives of persons in distress in the Mediterranean Sea. These were the main conclusions of a debate organized on 25 April by the Geneva Centre at UNOG. The conference served as an opportunity to officially launch the Centre's



publication on *"The Unprecedented Rise of People on the Move in the 21st Century."* Panellists at the debate included representatives from Pilotes Volontaires, the International Catholic Migration Commission, the Geneva Centre and journalists from Le Temps and l'Illustré.



Find out more at: <https://www.gchragd.org/en/article/geneva-centre-organized-panel-debate-book-presentation-migration-and-human-solidarity>



Geneva Centre on the status of the Human Rights Council: Enhance status only with universal membership but enhance effectiveness and complementarity of UN human rights mechanisms

On 28 March, the Geneva Centre was invited by the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council to participate in the first informal exchange of views on the issue of the 2021/2026 status review. In its statement, the Geneva Centre recommended that the Council continue to remain a subsidiary body of the UN General Assembly as the elevation of its status to a main body would have adverse impacts on the functioning of the Council. The Geneva Centre likewise suggested to the President of the Council that a review of UN human rights mechanisms' methods of work and functioning could take place during 2021.



Read more at: <https://www.gchragd.org/en/article/geneva-centre-status-human-rights-council-enhance-status-only-universal-membership-enhance>

'We must all work together to defeat hatred and xenophobic discourse against the Other and nurture acceptance and empathy,' say eminent panellists in a conference held at the UN

The rise of exclusionary politics and xenophobic discourses can only be addressed by embracing diversity and promoting empathy between people, it was concluded in a panel debate held on 21 March at UNOG. The meeting "*Celebration of diversity: beyond tolerance, the path towards empathy*" was organized on the margins of the 40th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council by the Geneva Centre and the Permanent Mission of the UAE to UN in Geneva. The members of the panel included representatives from UNITAR, the Sovereign Order of Malta, the Spiritual Advisor to the Court of the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, the WCC and the Geneva Centre. HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan delivered a message of support to the co-organizers.



Find out more at: <https://www.gchragd.org/en/article/%E2%80%98we-must-all-work-together-defeat-hatred-and-xenophobic-discourse-against-other-and-nurture>

A delegation of officials and graduate students from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) visits the Geneva Centre as part of the UNITAR – Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University International Leadership Programme

On 29 March, the Geneva Centre welcomed a delegation of officials and graduate students from the United Arab Emirates at its premises. The visit took place in the context of the "*International Leadership Programme*" jointly organized by UNITAR and the Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University in which students from the UAE visit non-governmental organizations and UN entities to deepen their knowledge on human rights issues of



جامعة حمدان بن محمد الذكية
Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University

relevance to the Arab region. The delegation from the UAE was welcomed by staff of the Geneva Centre who gave a presentation of the Centre's recent initiatives to promote and advance human rights in the Arab region.



Read more about the outcome of the visit at: <https://www.gchragd.org/en/article/delegation-officials-and-graduate-students-uae-visits-geneva-centre-part-unitar-%E2%80%93-hamdan-bin>



The Geneva Centre presents oral statements on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) outcomes of Saudi Arabia and Jordan

At the 40th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council, the Geneva Centre presented on 14 March statements with regard to Saudi Arabia and Jordan. In its statement on Saudi Arabia, the Geneva Centre commended the various steps that the Kingdom had taken towards strengthening the protection and promotion of human rights which reflected a number of important recommendations contained in the report of the Working Group on the UPR. With regard to

Jordan, the Geneva Centre welcomed the endeavours made by Amman to enhance the improvement of its own human rights situation, and to implement the remaining recommendations in particular with regard to strengthening the independence of the judiciary system.



Read more at: <https://www.gchragd.org/en/article/geneva-centre-presents-oral-statements-upr-outcomes-saudi-arabia-and-jordan>



The Geneva Centre co-organizes a UN Library Event on Leadership in Modern Multilateralism

On 12 March, the Geneva Centre and UN Library jointly organized a conference on "Leadership in Modern Multilateralism" at UNOG. The debate explored the principles and ideas underpinning multilateralism against a complex background of climate change, the rise of technology and the future of the global economy. In their statements, the panellists underscored the role of eminent personalities who shaped international affairs and the changes in the nature of leadership in the 21st century. Speakers at the event included representatives from UNOG, Inter Press Service, the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives to UN in Geneva and the Geneva Centre.



Find out more about the outcome of the conference at: <https://www.gchragd.org/en/article/geneva-centre-co-organizes-un-library-event-leadership-modern-multilateralism>



The Geneva Centre celebrated International Women's Day with a debate and book presentation on Muslim women between stereotypes and reality: an objective narrative

No country in the world has a perfect record on women's rights and gender equality and there is a felt need for cooperation and joint endeavours in order to reach the common goal of empowering women and putting an end to gender inequality. These were the main conclusions of a debate and book presentation organized by the Geneva Centre on the eve of 2019 International Women's Day. The debate, entitled "Muslim women between stereotypes and reality: an objective narrative" was held on 7 March, as a side-event to the 40th Session of the UN Human Rights Council. The members of the panel included representatives from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the University of Geneva, the University of Fribourg and the Geneva Centre.



Find out more at: <https://www.gchragd.org/en/article/geneva-centre-celebrated-international-women%E2%80%99s-day-debate-and-book-presentation-muslim-women/>

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM THE GENEVA CENTRE'S PANEL DEBATES

Emergency Assembly on the Rise of Global Racism, 09 May 2019



HE Ajay Kumar Bramdeo

Ambassador and Permanent Observer of the African Union to UN in Geneva

"We must all recognise that no country can claim to be free of racism, that racism is a global concern, and that tackling it should be a universal effort."



Mr Remy Pagani

Executive Councillor of the Executive Council of the city of Geneva

"We must express our belief convincingly that it is possible to live together in diversity and respect for the Other. This is precisely what the city of Geneva actively supports."



Mr Jan Lonn

Secretary at the World Against Racism Network and Secretary-General of the International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations

"We are living in a time beyond warning with the escalation of racism which is rooted in the global, social and economic crisis."

Migration and Human Solidarity, 25 April 2019



Monsignor Robert J. Vitillo

Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission

"The International Catholic Migration Commission strives to take the Teaching of HH Pope Francis and all his predecessors since our founding in 1951 and put them into everyday practical action by welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating uprooted people in all parts of the world."



Mr José Benavente

President of the French Association Pilotes Volontaires

"The Mediterranean Sea has become the largest cemetery of exiles in the world. More than 20,000 people have lost their lives in the last four years."



Mr Adrià Budry Carbó

Journalist at Le Temps

"We were part of one of the last rotations of Aquarius. We embarked at the end of April just before Europe decided to definitely turn its back on these high-sea rescuers."

Celebration of Diversity, Beyond Tolerance the Path Towards Empathy, 21 March 2019



Prince El Hassan bin Talal

of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
(message of support)

"Terrorism has no nationality and religion but is an aberration that can be stimulated by irresponsible political discourse thousands of miles away."



HE Obaid Salem Al Zaabi

Permanent Representative of the UAE to UN in Geneva

"I am proud to recall that this year is declared by the UAE as the Year of Tolerance in order to further the principles of coexistence and harmony between the 200 nationalities and many religious communities living peacefully in my country."



Mr Alexander Mejia

Director, Division for People and Social Inclusion, UNITAR

"I hope that we can find concrete ways to tap into the immense mobilizing potential of religion and implement effective programmes that allow us to restore tolerance and live in a celebration of diversity."

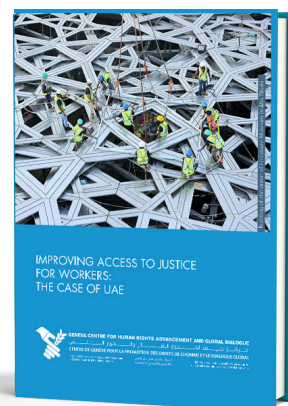
PUBLICATION ALERTS

A: New publications

As part of the Geneva Centre's endeavours to promote mutual understanding and cooperative relations between people and to promote a depoliticized view of human rights issues from the viewpoints of the Global South and of the Arab region, the following publications have been issued by the Geneva Centre:

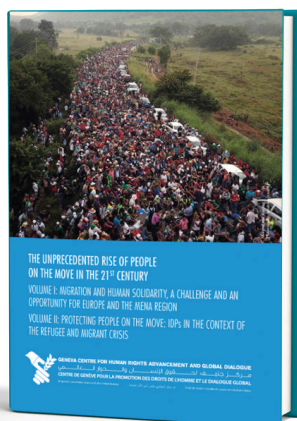
Improving Access to Justice for Workers: The Case of the UAE (2019)

The aim of this publication is to review the progress achieved in the UAE to enhance access to justice for workers and to identify areas of possible improvement. The review was intended to assess the most innovative features of labour reforms and their possible replication in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. UAE was chosen as a case study for this review in view of the fact that the country has the highest proportion of international migrants in the world and that the country has recently implemented numerous innovative measures to enhance access to justice for migrant workers.

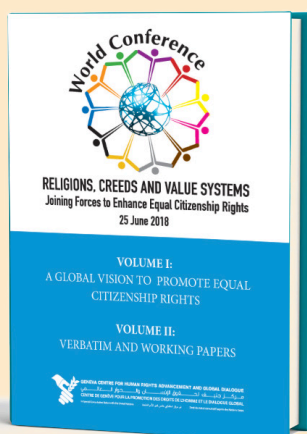


Migration and Human Solidarity (2019)

In April 2019, the Geneva Centre organized a panel discussion as a book-launch event for its latest publication *"The Unprecedented Rise of People on the Move in the 21st Century"*. The panel included experts in the field of migration, journalists who accompanied rescue operations in the Mediterranean and an operative in aerial reconnaissance missions to support these. The present brochure contains a summary of the rich and moving presentations and discussions that took place during the panel event, with vivid, first-hand accounts of experiences and difficulties encountered in rescue operations in the Mediterranean Sea.



B: Upcoming publications



Title: 25 June 2018 World Conference Outcome Publication:

- Volume I: A Global Vision to Promote Equal Citizenship Rights
- Volume II: Verbatim and Working Papers

About the Geneva Centre

The Geneva Centre (www.gchragd.org), an organization with special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, is a think tank dedicated to the promotion of human rights through cross-cultural, religious and civilizational dialogue between the Global North and Global South, and through training of the upcoming generations of stakeholders in the Arab region. The Centre works towards a value-driven human rights system, steering clear of politicization and building bridges between different narratives thereon of the Global North and of the Global South. Its aim is to act as a platform for dialogue between a variety of stakeholders involved in the promotion and protection of human rights.



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