



**GENEVA CENTRE  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
ADVANCEMENT AND  
GLOBAL DIALOGUE**

**ISSUE N°9**

**JANUARY - APRIL 2022**

# **NEWSLETTER**

**Human Rights Without Prejudice**



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The Geneva Centre began the year with the additional enthusiasm conferred by the long-awaited near end of the pandemic. Consequently, it adopted an increasingly intensive annual workplan to fulfil its mandate in the domains of human rights research and publication, training, advocacy and global dialogue.

The activities during the January-April period included extensive reporting on the 49th session of the Human Rights Council, a pilot training session on Cybersecurity and Human Rights, the organisation, in collaboration with the European Public Law Organization (EPLO), of an international panel on promoting women's equal rights and empowerment in peace building, whose publication contained an analysis of the lessons learned and recommendations for ways forward.

In parallel, advocacy efforts continued with the publication of our Annual Report 2021 in January, as well as several videos and posts put out on our social media platforms, on selected commemorative days and significant developments in human rights promotion.

We are pleased to announce that the coming months will continue with more activities and projects, including a 2 week human rights training programme in June in collaboration with Webster University Geneva, in-depth reporting on the 50th session of the HR Council, the organization of an international panel on environmental damage caused by armed conflicts and the consequences for human rights, a 3 day course on Cybersecurity and human rights, among others. These will be described in our next Newsletter in autumn.

The Geneva Centre appreciates your interest in following its activities and your support towards combined efforts to promote human rights world-wide.

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# PROMOTING EQUAL RIGHTS AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION TOWARDS PEACE

PANEL EVENT 23 MARCH 2022

The Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue organized an online panel event on “**Promoting equal rights and women’s participation towards peace**” in collaboration with the **European Public Law Organization (EPLO)**. The event marked the month of the international women's day, celebrated on 8 March, and the 49th session of the Human Rights Council.

The event brought together 5 experts from academia and organizations working in the field around the world, among them a Nobel Peace Prize nominee, with the goal of sharing their unique experience and to identify best practices, highlight innovative initiatives and reflect on the existing partnerships both local and international, that reinforce women’s meaningful participation in conflict prevention, protection and peace building.

Among the crucial and challenging issues discussed were innovative ways to promote gender equality in different societal contexts and ways to reinforce participation of women in various decision and peace-making processes. The myriad of root causes of violence and extremism were addressed, and the importance of engaging women, of fostering inter-cultural and interfaith dialogue, and building capacity across all levels of society were highlighted.

## Highlights from the panel



The panel was moderated by **Dr. Umesh Palwankar**, Executive Director of the Geneva Centre.

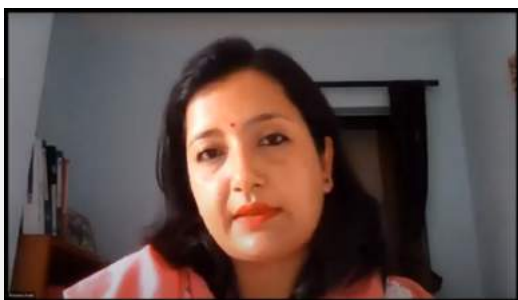


**Dr. George Papadatos**, Ambassador and Head of Delegation of EPLO Geneva delivered a keynote speech, analysing the impact that COVID-19 has had on the challenges and problems women are facing globally and examined possible ways forward. He highlighted the importance of turning our attention to women’s political representation.



**Professor Dr. Noreen Naseer** from the Department of Political Science, University of Peshawar shared her sharp analysis of the challenges tribal women in conflict areas face, and particularly the role of the traditional culture and societal norms hindering their participation in peace processes and in society as a whole.

**Ms. Kawkab Al-Thaibani**, Gender and Communication Expert and co-founder of Women4Yemen shared her experiences in the context of Yemen. Among the recommendations made by Al-Thaibani were vigorously promoting a bottoms-up approach and support for women-led organizations, in order to influence a change from within.



**Ms. Visaka Dharmadasa**, Founder and Chair of the Association of War Affected Women spoke of her experience on bringing women together across the lines of conflict to work for peace, and trust as the most vital ingredient of peace building: *"The journey towards peace is a journey of trust."*



**Ms. Prasansa Karki**, Program Development Coordinator at Nagarik Aawaz, a peace-building organization in Nepal offered an analytical description of the work of engaging women in community level peace processes.

**Ms. Saba Ismail**, Co-Founder of Aware Girls a young women-led organization working in Pakistan and Afghanistan to counter women's exclusion from the peace and security agenda, shared her experience from working with thousands of young women and empowering and inspiring them to become citizens with equal rights and responsibilities.

Watch the full recording of the panel event [here](#).



# CYBERSECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

ONLINE TRAINING SESSION 30 MARCH 2022

The Geneva Centre organized a pilot course on "Cybersecurity and Human Rights", conducted by Cybersecurity Consultant and Trainer **Mr. Kamal Sedra**. The course was a pilot, which will be re-conducted in September in a more extensive form.

In this one-day online training course, participants examined various digital risks specific to people working in human rights. The course provided participants with the understanding of how to deal with such risks and the knowledge and skills needed to ensure basic protection against privacy violations and the protection of communications and sensitive data.

Participants from six countries, including Germany, Greece, Iraq, the Netherlands, the Philippines and Switzerland joined the training.



## COURSE TOPICS

### 1: Cyber Security Risk Assessment:

- Understanding the risk.
- Understanding your adversaries.
- Analysing your personal and organizational vulnerabilities.
- Best practice; before, during and after cyber attacks.

### 2: Secure Digital Communications:

- Messaging tools.
- Encrypted emails.

### 3: Internet Browsing Security and Privacy:

- Privacy and Anonymity.
- Digital account security.
- Cyber-Smart Traveling.

### 4: Data Protection

- Accessibility.
- Encryption.
- Backups.
- Data physical security.
- Devices security checklist.



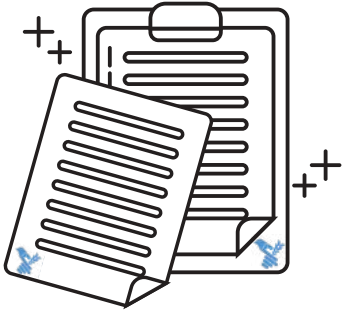
*"I would also like to thank you and the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue for giving me the opportunity to partake in such an interesting course"*

*- Melissa, participant*

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# HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL REPORTING INITIATIVE

HRC49 (28 FEBRUARY - 1 APRIL 2022)



The Geneva Centre continued its unique monitoring initiative following closely and providing summary reports on some of the key meetings during the **49th regular session of the Human Rights Council** (HRC). The 49th regular session - the longest in history - concluded with the adoption of 35 Resolutions and the appointment of 11 Special Procedures Mandate Holders.

Among the meetings covered were the Urgent debate on the "Situation of Human Rights in Ukraine Stemming from the Russian Aggression", General debates 2, 3 and 4, and the three-day High-Level Segment with a focus on the MENA region. Additionally, the Geneva Centre produced reports on several Interactive Dialogues, Oral updates, Panels, a Weekly Overview Report, and a final detailed report in table form of the adopted resolutions. A total of 25 reports were prepared during the 49th session.

The 50th regular session of the Human Rights Council will be held between 13 June - 8 July 2022. Read all our HRC49 reports and subscribe to our unique HRC Newsletter [here](#).



***"We must move together the main machinery created by the international community for the promotion and protection of human rights the world over."***

*- Federico Villegas, President of the Human Rights Council*



Alliance of Civilizations Room, Palais de Nations

# RAISING AWARENESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

## PRODUCING VIDEOS AND POSTS

Short videos and social media posts are an important medium to raise awareness and bring attention to different topics and developments in human rights. Between January and April 2022, the Geneva Centre produced several videos and posts related to human rights. In addition to raising awareness on human rights issues, with our communications we participate in global dialogue and give our support to the celebration of numerous international days.



Zero Discrimination Day 2022



World Day of Social Justice 2022



International Day of Human Fraternity 2022

### International Days celebrated Jan-April

- 4 February: **UN International Day of Human Fraternity**
- 6 February: **International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation**
- 20 February: **World Day of Social Justice**
- 1 March: **Zero Discrimination Day**
- 8 March: **International Women's Day**
- 21 March: **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**
- 31 March: **World Entrepreneurs Investment Forum**
- 07 April: **World Health Day**
- 24 April: **International Day of Multilateralism**



*Social justice can only be achieved through collective awareness, by ensuring equal opportunities for each, eliminating all forms of systemic obstacles and discrimination, and ensuring everyone's human rights are respected and protected.*

Access our short videos [here](#).



# SOCIAL MEDIA

## FACTS AND FIGURES

During the first four months of the year 2022, the Geneva Centre was active in all of its main social media platforms, increasing the number of followers and engagements. We share news, create visual content, and exchange with our partners via our Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and YouTube channels, on which we have **45,988 followers** in total.



**10,642**

Tweet impressions  
6,594 profile visits  
4,628 followers  
@GCHRCGD



**23,652**

Followers  
+4,836 new since  
Oct. 2021



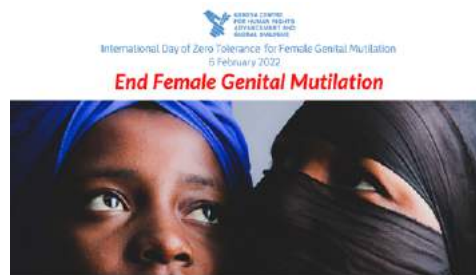
**11,364**

Followers  
@the.gchrcgd



**8**

Videos produced  
330 subscribers



The Geneva Centre appeals for intensified, collective efforts to ban FGM, called for in SDG 3, as this practice is a gross violation of human rights of women and girls, a cruel manifestation of gender inequality and is not demanded by any religion



Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue  
International Day of Multilateralism  
24 April 2022  
There is an even greater need in this post-Covid era of exacerbated inequalities and unabated violations of basic human rights to strengthen the bedrock of multilateralism, to re-invent and reinforce international solidarity and thus promote peace and dignity



Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue  
This bank holding special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council  
#HRC49: the 49th regular session of the #UN Human Rights Council has just started!  
Follow the #GenevaCentre's HRC49 Reporting for the detailed updates on the latest meetings and reports presentations.  
Subscribe to our Mailing List: <https://lnkd.in/dWYJ9vef>  
Check our Week 1 Overview Report: <https://lnkd.in/d9hRtaXB>





## OTHER ACTIVITIES IN SHORT

The Geneva Centre published its Annual Report 2021 in January, with an overview of the main events and activities of the previous year.

You can **access our Annual Reports [here](#)**.



The **Human Rights Recognition Awards** (HRRAs) speeches were shared on the Geneva Centre's YouTube Channel. The HRRAs - held for the first time in December 2021 - is an exciting new initiative of the Geneva Centre, giving recognition to four individuals for their efforts to enhance human rights on the community level across the globe. The HRRAs will be given again in 2022.

The first **publication** of the year was issued in April on the proceedings of the March panel event. The book includes a summary of the panellists' presentations, the panel discussions and an analytical "Lessons Learned and Ways Forward" chapter.

[READ THE PUBLICATION](#)



# WHAT'S NEXT?

EVENTS - TRAININGS - HRC REPORTING

## Upcoming events

The Geneva Centre will organize a **panel event** on "*Impact of Armed Conflict on Human Rights through Environmental Destruction*" on **June 8**. The focus of the panel discussion will be on how the widespread patterns of environmental degradation caused by armed conflicts result in adverse implications for the full realization of human rights in the affected regions.

The Geneva Centre will continue its **Human Rights Council Reporting Initiative** by following closely the upcoming 50th and 51st regular sessions starting respectively in June and September, and to produce high-quality reports on several important meetings.

Furthermore, the Centre's recently established activity, the **Scientific Café**, will continue in autumn 2022 with new themes to discuss with experts from different fields and regions.



## Capacity building

Trainings will continue throughout the year, with a 2-week training course in June directed for participants from the UAE, to be conducted in collaboration with Webster University. A 2-day course on "Cybersecurity and human rights" will be held in August, and later in the year a 1-week training in human rights.

## Human Rights Recognition Awards

The year will conclude with the **Human Rights Recognition Awards** (HRRRA) Ceremony in December 2022. The awards are given in recognition of the commendable services of the nominees in human rights defence and promotion.

***"We write our own stories and if we don't like them, we have the power to change them. Let's write our stories the way we want them to be, today and now!"***

- Ms. Hira Amjad, HRRRA Awardee 2021, Co-Founder and Director of 'DASTAK Foundation

*"Compassion, inclusiveness, respect  
and solidarity are the true gateways  
to just and peaceful societies."*

*- Dr. Umesh Palwankar, Executive  
Director of the Geneva Centre*



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**Follow us on**



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