



GENEVA CENTRE
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT AND
GLOBAL DIALOGUE



HUMAN RIGHTS
RECOGNITION
AWARDS



YOUTH IN HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT
2022



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Introduction

International Human Rights Day is celebrated annually to commemorate the adoption of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948. To contribute to the celebration of this commemorative day, in 2021, the Geneva Centre initiated its Human Rights Recognition Awards (HRRRA), which received widespread attention upon its inauguration. The Awards provide a unique opportunity for collaboration, greater visibility, and professional growth for their recipients. The awardees, who strive day after day to enhance the lives of others, thus benefit from the awards.

Theme for 2022 - Youth in Human Rights Advancement

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, speaking at the “*about Youth 2030: Achieving the SDGs*” event in April 2022 said:

“Young people are...at the forefront of our efforts to secure a more inclusive, peaceful, and prosperous future for all.”

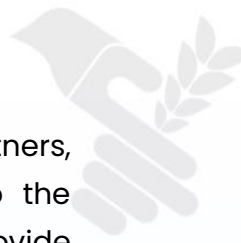
In honor of [Youth 2030](#) and in support of the UN’s special focus on Youth, the Human Rights Recognition Awards 2022 edition was dedicated to identify and acknowledge outstanding contributions and innovative projects undertaken by youth in their communities, where they have made a significant positive impact.

Selection Criteria and Nomination Process

The Human Rights Recognition Awards accepts applications in two ways: through public calls and through invitations. All applicants must fill out the application form on the Geneva Centre’s website. A renowned and impartial international jury selects the award recipients. Jury members include international experts and actors with extensive experience in human rights, together with one former HRRRA awardee.

A shortlist of nominees is submitted to the Awards jury based on a pre-selection by the Geneva Centre. The jury receives the applications and makes the selection of finalists based on the following criteria:

1. Nominee's work is consistent with the year's theme, and he/she has participated in the activities for at least for two years.
2. Evidence-based proof that the nominee’s work is beneficial to the local community. Nominees complete a Selection Form that requests external



documentation by reference and support material (issued by partners, beneficiaries, media, or any external stakeholder) attesting to the impact of their work. Additionally, the nominee will be asked to provide information about how the modest financial award will be used for their ongoing or new projects.

3. The nominee actively participates in affiliated initiatives and develops synergies with others.
4. The Geneva Centre seeks balanced geographic and gender representation among the selected awardees.

Award Categories

1. **Award of Youth Human Rights Champion:** A financial award of 1000 USD is offered to each of the three awardees.
2. **Award of Honor:** The Honorary Award is presented to one awardee (no monetary award included).

After the application deadline is over, the jury selects the four awardees. From there onwards, the process consists of:

1. Contacting the shortlisted nominees
2. Informing those selected to receive the 2022 Human Rights Recognition Awards at the beginning of December.

A Certificate of recognition is given to all awardees following the Award Ceremony.

Award Ceremony

The Human Rights Recognition Awards ceremony 2022 was held online on Friday 9 December and was attended by former HRRRA 2021 awardees, Permanent Mission representatives, Geneva-based and international partners, various international organizations, academic institutions, NGOs, and the general public.



Chairman's Address

Opening remarks by Ambassador Ghazi Jomaa, Chairman, Board of Management, Geneva Centre.

Excellencies, Dear Members of the Awards selection jury, Members of the Geneva Centre's Board and Staff, the human rights recognition awardees, dear colleagues and friends.



I have the pleasure to inaugurate the 2022 edition of the Geneva Centre's Human Rights Recognition Awards ceremony.

[International Human Rights Day](#) is celebrated annually to commemorate the adoption of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948. To contribute to the celebration of this commemorative day, [in 2021, the Geneva Centre initiated its Human Rights Recognition Awards](#), which received widespread attention upon its inauguration. The Geneva Centre's Awards for Human Rights recognition are given to individuals who work for the protection, promotion, and advancement of human rights. The Geneva Centre trusts that the awards are not only an opportunity to acknowledge and increase the visibility of the significant work of such individuals but also present an occasion to celebrate human rights achievements. This initiative falls within the framework of the Geneva Centre's mandate to promote human rights and encourage fieldwork in this regard.

Allow me here to briefly present our Centre. **The Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement & Global Dialogue** is an independent, human rights think-tank and advocacy institution, established in 2013 with its headquarters in Geneva. The Centre was granted special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in July 2017.

The Geneva Centre's mandate is based on the four pillars of research and publication on current human rights questions; training and national capacity building in human rights; advocacy through following and reporting on international human rights conferences, in particular the Human Rights Council, and significant developments in the field of human rights; and fourthly, the cross-cutting pillar of promotion of a global, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue on vital human rights issues, by organizing conferences and panel debates, with publication of their proceedings, to



promote human rights worldwide and foster mutual understanding, tolerance and the celebration of diversity among the different peoples and regions of the world.

The theme of this year's Awards is "Youth in Human Rights Advancement." United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, speaking at the *"About Youth 2030: Achieving the SDGs"* event in April 2022 said: *"Young people are...at the forefront of our efforts to secure a more inclusive, peaceful, and prosperous future for all"*.

In honor of [Youth 2030](#) and in support of the UN's special focus on Youth, the Geneva Centre's 2022 Human Rights Recognition Awards is dedicated to identify and acknowledge outstanding contributions and innovative projects undertaken by youth in their communities, where they have made a significant positive impact.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Awards selection jury President, Ms. Visaka Dharmadasa, Sri Lanka, and to the other jury members, Mr. Sayed Ahmed Fahim Massoumi, Afghanistan, and Mr. Alex Ayub, Kenya, for their high interest in these awards. They devoted considerable time and effort to the difficult process of selecting the awardees from among several deserving candidates. This bears testimony to their steadfast commitment to advance human rights and the role of youth.

With this, I open the Geneva Centre's Human Rights Awards 2022 edition.

Jury Chairperson's speech and announcement of Awardees

Visaka Dharmadasa, Founder Chair of Association of War Affected Women and Parents of Servicemen Missing in Action.

First of all, I wish to thank the Geneva Center for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue for giving me this wonderful opportunity, first to be a part of the esteemed jury of selection, and also to speak a few words today.



At the outset I want to reorganize and thank the fellow jury members, Mr. Alex Ayub from the Kenya Red Cross Society and Mr. Sayed Masoumi from Afghanistan for their support and expertise in selecting the Youth Human Rights Awardees this year.

As we all know, human rights play a crucial role in our lives, in making very small as well as big changes to how the world works and moves forward. More than ever before, it is very important today to protect the rights of all living beings including plants, if this planet is to be what we want it to be. We all know our most basic need is



food and air for our existence and protecting the plants which give us food and the air to breathe is an urgent need.

We also know, not only for us to exist, but also for all of us to live with dignity, justice is very important. We cannot call for equality without justice or for that matter we cannot protect the rights of anyone if there is no justice. Also, very importantly when there is no justice there is no Peace, this is why it is extremely important to work towards a just world where not only humans, but all can live with dignity.

I am very happy today because we are here to celebrate the work of youth who have dedicated their lives to making life better for thousands of others. It is also a happy day for the world because there is an assurance that young people are taking the lead in protecting and promoting rights not only for themselves but also for others in very difficult and challenging situations.

I therefore would like to announce the winners of this year's Human Rights Recognition Awards and wish to say that the decisions were taken unanimously, by the jury.

1. The first Human Rights defender we selected is **Ms. Stacy Dina** from Kenya, for her work on preventing female genital mutilation (FGM). As we all know, traditional practices combined with religion, however harmful for the individual, are very difficult for a community to agree on and for a society to accept. We also know that thousands of girls develop serious medical complications and sometimes die due to this practice. Working towards ending it in societies that believe in the practice, is difficult and challenging – we therefore selected Ms. Stacy for her hard work of protecting girls in her community and beyond.
2. The second winner is **Mr. Jose Adolfo Quisocala Condori** from Peru, for his innovative idea of a triple impact project using solid waste as an asset for generating money for providing food and education for children, and using the waste for recycling and reducing the usage of raw materials such as plant products and protecting the nature, which is the need of the day.
3. The third awardee is **Dr. Kirti Barti** from India, for her very challenging work on ending child marriages, especially their annulment. As we know, social practices dating thousands of years may have been established for reasons at the time but are even more harmful today. This practice inhibits the development of the individual, her education, wellbeing and most of all challenges her personality as a human being. Since this is also an over-generational practice, changing it is very challenging. Hence Dr. Barti is awarded for her courageous work and the innovation of ending child marriage.

Last but not least, our honorary awardee this year is:



Ms. Tamara Altibi, a lawyer by training, for her work on Women’s Peace and Security and Youth Peace and Security Agenda in a difficult area, and the hard work she does under challenging conditions.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the award winners and wish all of them good luck in their important work. I look forward to seeing and hearing about their inspirational work for years to come.

Thank you.

Jury Members

Visaka Dharmadasa, Founder Chair of Association of War Affected Women and Parents of Servicemen Missing in Action.

Struggling to end the civil war, Visaka was able to bring women together across the divide to work for peace. She was awarded the prestigious Humanitarian award for 2006 by Interaction of Washington DC and was nominated for a collective Nobel Peace Prize in 2005. Visaka was a Special Rapporteur team member to investigate the violence and the ceasefire violations and Consultation Taskforce on Reconciliation Mechanisms of Sri Lanka. She is a member of Women Waging Peace, Women’s Alliance for Security Leadership, Resolution to Act, Global Network of Women Peace builders, Women Mediators Across the Commonwealth. Visaka is the gender focal point for GPPAC in Sri Lanka and a former member of the Civil Society Advisory Group of UN Women. She holds degrees in negotiations and mediation skills and in women and security from Harvard.



Alex Ayub, National Youth Manager and Road Safety Focal Point, Kenya Red Cross Society

Alex is a strong voice in Kenya bringing along with him the mindset, attitude, knowledge and drive to see a more educated, empowered and enabled communities in Kenya. Alex serves as a Youth Leadership Board member at the Global Youth Coalition for Road Safety and a United Nations Road Safety Fund (UNRSF) Health and Road Safety Platform Member. Alex started his youth advocacy in 2013 as an advocate for Youth and Road Safety and has over the years acquired knowledge both nationally and internationally,





participating in a Youth Delegates Training Program in Finland (2016), Youth Road Safety Advocacy Training in South Africa (2018, 2019), Global Youth Summit in Norway (2019), International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Leadership Forum in Togo (2019), and has trained Youth Leaders from Finland, Zimbabwe, and Kenya (Finland 2019).

Sayed Ahmed Fahim Masoumi, Junior Research Analyst, UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)

Masoumi holds a master's degree in Sustainable Development Management from the Rhine Waal University of Applied Science. His background in SDGs and involvement with AIESEC enabled him to facilitate exchange programs between Afghans and youth from other partner countries. In 2018 he led exchange programs as Country Director and increased the number of exchanges with a high number of girls' engagement in various projects. In 2019 he joined VNDO, and with his colleagues designed Rural Women's Entrepreneurship project to support women with a new set of skills such as business development, marketing, social media, and product packaging. The project was funded by UN Women and was concluded with remarkable results in September 2020. The project was named *SDG Good Practice* by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.



Speeches of the Awardees

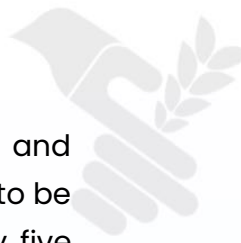
Stacy Dina Owino, Kenya

Stacy is the co-founder and team lead of Uncut Gems Anti-FGM Foundation, aimed to eradicate female genital mutilation in communities with the help of an app called iCut. With her background in tech and Mathematics, Stacy also mentors young high school girls in app development to spark their curiosity in tech as her input in closing the digital divide. Stacy hopes to create more sustainable community-catered solutions in the future.



Ms. Owino's speech

I would like to say thank you to The Geneva Center for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue and to the Human Rights Recognition Awards (HARRA) jury for honoring our work as one of the recipients for Youth Human Rights Champions 2022.



I would also like to thank them for the work they do every year to recognize and appreciate the efforts of human rights activists all over the world. I am honored to be receiving this award on behalf of the team. The foundation is co-founded by five young women who are passionate about using tech for social good. As a non-profit, our mission is to accelerate the fight against FGM, and we see a world where girls are;

1. Empowered;
2. free from all forms of gender-based violence especially female genital mutilation; and
3. a world where girls' voices are heard, enabling them to enjoy their rights and make informed choices of their lives.

We developed a mobile application called "iCut" that connects girls who are at risk of undergoing female genital mutilation to relevant authorities, hospitals, and rescue centers by calling or sending an SMS. In addition, we educated the general public on FGM and its effects. iCut is available for download on Play Store.

Throughout the application development stages, we have been able to pilot the application in different parts of Kenya - Narok and West Pokot counties. We have been able to dialogue with over thirty girls in high schools and community members. In addition, we have trained 17 community champions on how to use the mobile application and also create awareness on female genital mutilation. Receiving the Human Rights Award will allow us to carry out more community sensitization outreach, hopefully reaching out to more girls and community champions. We are very grateful to have the support of the Geneva Center for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue, and the international jury members. Once again, on behalf of my team at Uncut Gems Anti-FGM Foundation, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to receive this award.

Thank you.

[José Quisocala Condori, Peru](#)

At the age of seven, José created the first Eco Bank for children. In 2013, he won his first international award in Istanbul, and in 2014 a National Award for Volunteering by the Ministry for Women, Peru. In 2018 José was awarded the International Children's Climate Prize in Stockholm and in 2019 he was recognized as one of the 25 most innovative bankers in Latin America. Today he fights for the recognition of Peruvian children and adolescents as "Change Agents" by the authorities.





Mr. Condori's Speech

Currently in Peru we are experiencing a political crisis that affects, as always, the children and young people of the country; In fact, in Peru and in the region of the Latin America, we, the future of "our nations", are ignored and forgotten by our authorities, we do not have access to our basic rights, and this situation is not from now, this has happened for a long time. This was the sad reality that motivated me at the age of 7 to create a solution for all those children and young people in a state of vulnerability in my country, thus creating the ECO Student Bank where I seek to raise awareness about the climate crisis, make children and youth agents of change, to properly manage their money in order to achieve their dreams and include them within the financial system, offering them financial products that allow their personal and professional development, while saving our planet earth.

I currently have more than 10 years of experience leading this initiative rescuing 45 tons of solid waste per month and with a social, economic and environmental impact, from which more than 8 thousand children and young people in my country have directly benefited. The results of this effort are incredible. Seeing children have access to education, health, food and in general, a decent life, makes me happy, because we deserve it, and we cannot wait for any politician or adult to continue talking and pretending that they care about us.

I am grateful for this recognition of my work, which made it easier for me to create the Social Franchise, which allows my project to reach more children and young people in my country and the world, where a girl or boy wants to implement this experience and together make children and young people of the world people with economic independence and power to influence the climate.

Finally, I want to send a message to all the children and young people in the world, but above all to those children who believe that everything is lost and who have lost their hope and desire to fight for a better world. This is our home, we are not the future, we are the present, and we need to act now and show everyone that we can change the world without questioning, by following our hearts. It's time to act and not be afraid to raise your voice and shout out if it is necessary to make ourselves respected. We are not synonymous with weakness, we are synonymous with resilience and many good values, we are pure, without evil or our own ambition, we are Agents of Change and it is time to let us be the defenders of our own rights.

[Dr. Kriti Bharti, India](#)

Dr. Kriti Bharti is an Indian Rehabilitation Psychologist, Social Activist, Advocate and Managing Trustee of the Saarthi Trust. She has been included in the list of 100 inspiring

women by BBC Hindi, and USA based TAFFD Magazine has listed her into the World Top 10 Activists. Kriti has been given the title of "International Change Maker" by the organization "Girls Not Brides." Kriti is popularly known as Angel of Courage, Liberator Girl, Fairy Godmother, and Real Sherni of India.

Dr. Bharti's Speech

Khamma Ghani Sa... (a cultural Indian greeting) - I, daughter of India, Dr Kriti Bharti, am sending you these warm and colorful greetings with full of peace and love from my heart. A very warm respect to the distinguished members of the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue and the renowned jury members. Today is one of the remarkable days of my life. I am humbled and thankful to the Geneva Centre and jury



members that they have selected me for this precious award. This award belongs to my God, my maternal grandparents, my mother who has single handedly raised me, my close friends, my well-wishers. Without their support and wishes, this moment of recognition could not have happened.

Moreover, this award belongs to the survivors of child marriages who want to break the shackles of abuse and exploitation. This award notifies that now every type of abuse and exploitation is going to end soon. For me, we cannot achieve the implementation of human rights until we ensure children's and women's rights are established. And for the establishment of these human rights, I am working facing attacks, death and rape threats. I am working almost 16 to 18 hours, sometimes without food and sleep. But all of my efforts and sacrifices have given me the satisfaction of giving a new life to the victims.

Coming to my work front, I have annulled the first child marriage of India. Before this no one thought about the victims who are struggling in the shackles of child marriages. People here were only focused on prevention. Yes, prevention is important but curing the disease is more important. For me, child marriage is a disease and through the vaccine of Child Marriage Annulment I am just curing the victims from this life-threatening deadly disease. As it was the first time in India when a child marriage was annulled, it was recorded into World Records Limca Book of Records. Later the school board of India has also included my work into their curriculum. After this, different actions of my mission against child marriages were recorded into seven international and national record books. I have been honored many times at national and international level even from Bollywood - Hollywood and TV industry and also have been fortunate to represent my country at the international level in London and Colombo.



But if you really ask me what my great achievement is, then I would say that I have annulled the first child marriage of India, and since then I have annulled 47 child marriages – yes, I am going to hit my half century soon. Along with this, 1600 child marriages have been stopped from occurring, 15500 victims have been rehabilitated who were abused through different protection issues, and 25000 people have taken oath not to be a part of any child marriages.

I am not only working on the child marriage annulment of these survivors, but I am also working on their education and rehabilitation which includes shelter, livelihood, counseling, education, training, empowerment, and re-establishment. All in all, on one hand I am working for the justice of survivors and on the other hand I am working on their best rehabilitation, so that they can get a new life.

Coming to my personal life, I have learnt the definition of abuse and exploitation before learning the alphabet. My life was a struggle. My father abandoned me before my birth. My relatives did not want my mother to bring me on earth, they wanted to abort the child, but the medical duration of abortion was past. God wanted me come on this earth as "Jaako Rakhe Saiyan Maar sake na koi", an Indian phrase which means *the one who is protected by Almighty God*, no one can kill or harm that person.

After my birth no one accepted me. Everyone was there to abuse me verbally and physically. At the age of ten when I was in fourth standard, I was being poisoned. It affected each part of my body. I could not walk, sit or move and even became bedridden. All the available treatments in India like allopathic, Ayurveda and homeopathic therapy were tried, but nothing worked. After 2 years, I was cured by Reiki therapy. I learnt to crawl, sit, and walk again. After getting a new life, I literally started anew and took my first revolutionary step by changing my surname to Bharti. I have been decorated with this surname by my Guru dev, Bharti means "Daughter of India", allowing me to see beyond castes and patriarchy.

After this, I established another milestone by restarting my studies, which stopped due to the illness caused by poison. I had taken a huge jump from 4th standard to 10th standard, and restarted my studies again, now decorated with many higher degrees such as a Ph.D. Then I started to work with some organizations, and after continuously working with many NGOs I established my own, called the Saarthi Trust (2011-12) so that I could reach to the root levels and change the scenario.

In this last decade I have changed the scenario for children and women. There was nobody to save me but here I am, the elder sister of these survivors who will save them till the last breath. Last but not least, my dream is that all victims, child marriages and every type of abuse should be seen only in one place that is – Text Books! And one



day we all will collectively say, *"once upon a time, there was a Child Marriage, once upon a time, there was abuse & exploitation!"*

I am pretty confident that this dream will come true.

Thank you for listening to me and thank you again for this precious Human Rights Award, which will ease my path of giving justice and rehabilitating victims.

Tamara Altibi, Palestine

Tamara Tibi is a Palestinian-based attorney who practices human rights and humanitarian law. Tamara has been devoted to working on gender equality, human rights, and the democratic process. She is an active member in the Civil Society Institute and Network, the Youth Advisory Panel (UN YAP Palestine). Tamara has worked as the main legal researcher on the Oversight of Juvenile Courts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip within the Sawasiya project.



Ms. Altibi's Speech

I am humbled that you have chosen me as the winner of the Honorary Prize for Human Rights for the year 2022. This means a lot to me and increases my passion to work on initiatives in the field of human rights. It will also be a source of inspiration for many young people to support the realization of human rights. This is the right time to give young people an opportunity to be leaders working on human rights issues. The opportunities that I got to refine my personality allowed me to be here today, giving me the skill of critical thinking and the ability to design human-centered initiatives. They also allowed me to become a defender of human rights and led me to design many initiatives, the latest of which is the study of the Palestinian juvenile courts to activate community accountability and promote democracy, good judgment, and to ensure that the courts adhere to international agreements ratified by the State of Palestine and ensure the enforcement and implementation of local laws, ensuring the optimal commitment of the justice sector to fair trial guarantees for juveniles.

I am now very excited to continue on this path. I am in the process of publishing a study on the reality of juvenile justice in Palestinian courts. The result of the study shows that there are still many human rights violations and lack of fair trial guarantees for juveniles during this period. Ultimately, I look forward to working with the target audience of judges, lawyers and other sectors to enhance fair trial guarantees and advance human rights issues in Palestine.



In conclusion, I promise you that this honorary award will increase my responsibility towards human rights issues in my society, to achieve a better future in which everyone enjoys their rights.

Concluding remarks by the Executive Director of the Geneva Centre, Dr Umesh Palwankar

Let me conclude by noting that Youth are indeed at the forefront of fighting injustice in society, they are at the horizon of fundamental reflections and innovative approaches to the complex set of problems and threats facing us. They represent the true forces of transformative change. They possess the unbound energy and motivation that the international community needs, as borne out by their activism in support of protecting the environment at the recent



COP27. And, at the beginning of the 15th edition, COP 15, of the UN Biodiversity Conference in Montreal earlier this week, the Global Youth Biodiversity Network held a side event, at which UN Secretary-General António Guterres called on youth leadership to push for justice and to restore the balance between humans and nature. To quote him; *“Youth leadership is the best signal of hope...youth are on the frontline of the battle to rescue humankind.”* Indeed, the future of world society lies largely in their hands, and the Geneva Centre, through this year’s awards, offers modest recognition of their invaluable contribution.

A huge thank you to all present for your active and rich participation, which enabled this event to be such a success. I once again warmly congratulate the awardees, with whom we will continue to interact. I am also sure their work will serve as an example to many others to promote and further respect for human rights the world over.

I close this ceremony with my best wishes to all for the New Year.