



Geneva, 18 March 2026

Statement by the Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue

The Geneva Centre for Human Rights Advancement and Global Dialogue expresses deep concern over the ongoing and rapidly escalating hostilities in the Gulf region, involving direct military operations by the United States of America and Israel against the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the subsequent retaliatory strikes by Iranian forces across multiple Gulf States and against U.S. and allied military assets. These developments have disrupted the lives of millions and risk further destabilising an already fragile regional context. The impact of such developments on civilian populations and essential infrastructure raises serious concerns under international humanitarian and human rights law.

In particular the people of the Gulf have suffered an exceptional assault on their rights to peaceful existence. This has been as a result of unprovoked attacks by Iran upon their living environment despite their states having taken no part in any strikes against them.

At the heart of this moment lies the urgent need to reaffirm the universality and indivisibility of human rights. In times of heightened tension, the protection of human dignity must remain a constant priority, guiding all actions and responses. Respect for life, security, and the rule of law must be upheld without exception.

The current cycle of escalation underscores the importance of adherence by all actors to the fundamental principles of international law, including the prohibition of the unlawful use of force, respect for sovereignty, and the peaceful settlement of disputes. As highlighted by United Nations human rights experts, international law must be applied consistently and without selectivity.

In line with its commitment to neutrality and independence, the Geneva Centre calls on all actors to exercise maximum restraint, avoid further escalation, and prioritise dialogue and diplomatic engagement. Constructive, inclusive, and trust-based dialogue remains essential to prevent further harm and to ensure that the voices of those most affected are heard and respected.

The Geneva Centre believes that sustainable stability in the Gulf region and beyond can only be achieved through multilateral cooperation and a shared commitment to human rights as a common foundation. By fostering mutual understanding and bridging divides, the international community can contribute to de-escalation and to pathways that prioritise justice, dignity, and long-term peace.

The Geneva Centre remains committed to supporting efforts that promote accountability in a constructive manner and advance a vision of human rights that is inclusive, universal, and rooted in the dignity of every individual.