



OUR
DNA



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UN GENEVA ANNUAL REPORT 2018

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FOREWORD

WHAT IS DNA? IT IS THE FUNDAMENTAL BUILDING BLOCK OF LIFE; ITS DOUBLE HELIX BEARS THE UNIQUE BIOLOGICAL INFORMATION OF EVERY LIVING ORGANISM. THE TERM DNA, HOWEVER, HAS SURPASSED THE BOUNDS OF SCIENCE, BECOMING A METAPHOR FOR THE FUNDAMENTAL QUALITIES THAT DEFINE SOMETHING. IT IS IN THIS LIGHT THAT WE SPEAK ABOUT THE DNA OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA (UN GENEVA), WHERE THE LEGACY OF MULTILATERALISM AND THE EMBRACE OF INNOVATION COME TOGETHER TO EMPOWER COLLECTIVE ACTION.



Michael Møller
Under-Secretary-General
Director-General of the
United Nations Office at Geneva
Secretary-General of the
Conference on Disarmament

For over 150 years, the world has met on the shores of Lake Geneva to resolve its most challenging problems. Geneva witnessed the birth of the humanitarian movement in 1863 and, in 1920, the creation of the first international organization tasked with maintaining world peace: the League of Nations. Such institutions, and the many others that followed, triggered a virtuous cycle as others came to Geneva to benefit from proximity to expertise

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Møller'.

and to those taking action. At the heart of this gathering of minds and nations is UN Geneva, where institutional know-how is preserved, personal skills are honed and quality services are offered.

In an ever-changing world, UN Geneva continues to be far more than a repository of acquired knowledge, by strengthening its foundations, embracing the spirit of reform, and recognizing that only by adapting can it continue to serve the international community effectively. UN Geneva is pioneering new ways to deliver its core services more efficiently. We are finding new ways to better communicate the messages of our clients and our Organization, and evolving working methods to become a more modern workplace.

Though often behind the scenes, UN Geneva provides indispensable support for collective action that impacts positively on the life of every person on Earth. UN Geneva administrators, conference and language specialists, security guards, communication experts, librarians and countless others make it possible for the initiatives of the United Nations and its partners to resonate far beyond Geneva.

These are the qualities found in the DNA of UN Geneva; they are also entwined in the make-up

of the global United Nations family. As home to leading international organizations, universities and research institutions, as well as private sector actors, Geneva is the international hub for many of the most vital issues of today and tomorrow. As we continue to serve the international community in the years to come, we look forward to deepening our collaboration with partners throughout International Geneva and beyond. It is in our DNA to continue evolving and adapting to a rapidly changing world in order to promote peace, rights and well-being for all of humanity.

2018 IN NUMBERS

UN Geneva is at the heart of International Geneva, bringing together a unique mix of actors and providing the critical support necessary for constructive dialogue, innovative thinking and concerted action.

Providing key infrastructure and support, UN Geneva contributes significantly to issues across the

UN agenda, such as international peace and security, disarmament, human rights, the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals, humanitarian relief, and much more.

These statistics offer a glimpse of the diverse range of activities that took place at UN Geneva in 2018.

THE UNITED NATIONS HAS ONE OF THE MOST DIVERSE WORKFORCES.

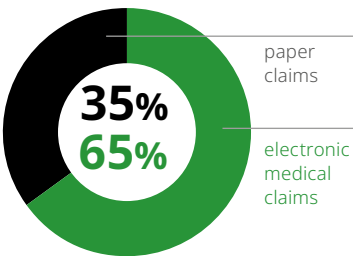
International Geneva is a global hub for capacity building, knowledge dissemination, advocacy and policy development for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2018, the **UN System in Geneva** had more than

10,464 staff members in the fields of health, labour, human rights, intellectual property, disarmament and more.



ON AVERAGE, UN GENEVA FINANCIAL RESOURCES PROCESSED

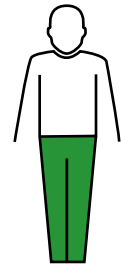
27,000 payments per month,



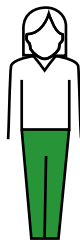
equivalent to about **238,000** invoices.

3,090 UN Secretariat staff in Geneva, from a wide range of professional backgrounds and with **171** nationalities, provided essential support to the international community.

48 Average male staff age at UN Geneva



46 Average female staff age at UN Geneva

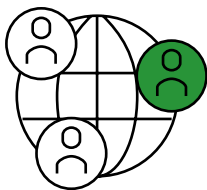


A wide range of administrative and common support services were provided to more than

23 UN entities in Geneva and Bonn and to

160 field offices in **94** countries, a **7% increase** from 2017. For example, UN Geneva Human Resources administered more than

4,360 staff in 94 countries.



IN ITS FIRST 2.5 MONTHS OF OPERATION, THE CLIENT SUPPORT CENTRE, A ONE-STOP SHOP FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES FOR CLIENTS.



Received around **6,400** visitors



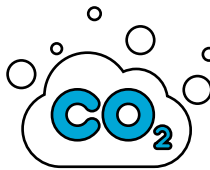
Fielded **4,500** phone calls



Resolved **650** online service requests

UN GENEVA IS CARBON NEUTRAL, WHICH MEANS A NET ZERO CARBON FOOTPRINT!

Its environmental impact without carbon offsets is:



Greenhouse gas emissions
3,127 tCO₂eq

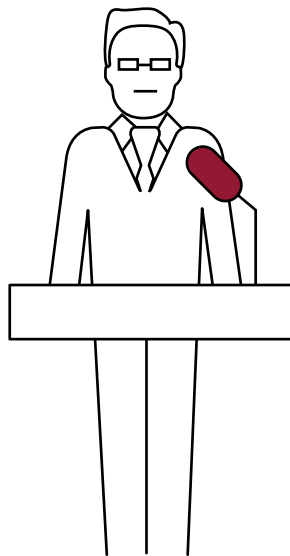


Waste production
864 T



Drinking water consumption
102,195 m³

DIRECTOR-GENERAL MICHAEL MØLLER



THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Delivered

165 speeches

Gave

20 interviews

Went on

24 missions to raise awareness about issues of global concern to the world community.



Tweeted

1,167 times in 2018, an increase of **24%** from 2017



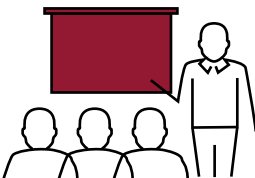
Signed

526 letters

Organized

10 luncheons, gathering almost **40**

heads of agencies, to promote collaboration, exchange ideas and build the partnerships needed to reach the SDGs.



Organized **28** Executive Briefings for the Geneva diplomatic community, with an average participation of

55 delegations per briefing, compared to 47 in 2017.



200 Heads of State and Government and Foreign Ministers were welcomed by the UN Geneva Protocol and Liaison Service and around

4,500 high-level officials flew into International Geneva.



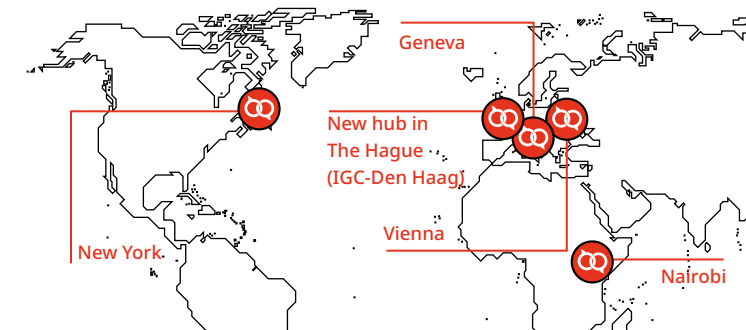
42 new permanent representatives presented their credentials and

5 new permanent observers presented their nomination letters to the Director-General. In the exercise of their functions, most of these permanent representatives also represented their country at the Conference on Disarmament.

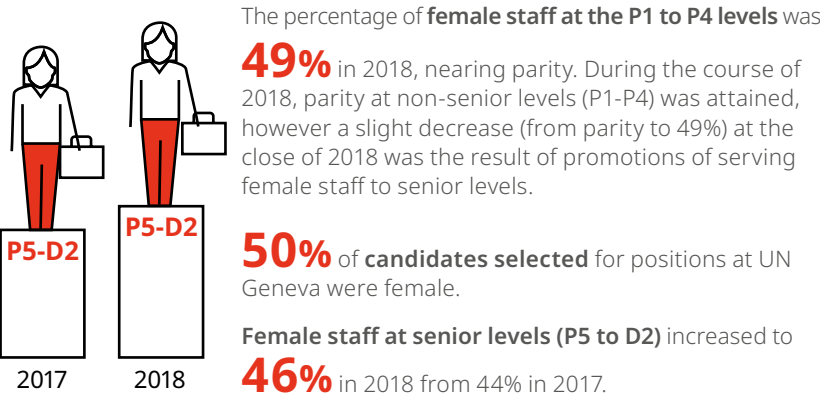
THE INTERNATIONAL GENDER CHAMPIONS NETWORK CONTINUED TO GROW IN 2018 AND IS NOW COMPRISED OF:



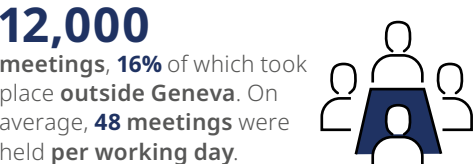
IGC IS NOW ESTABLISHED IN FIVE LOCATIONS AROUND THE WORLD:



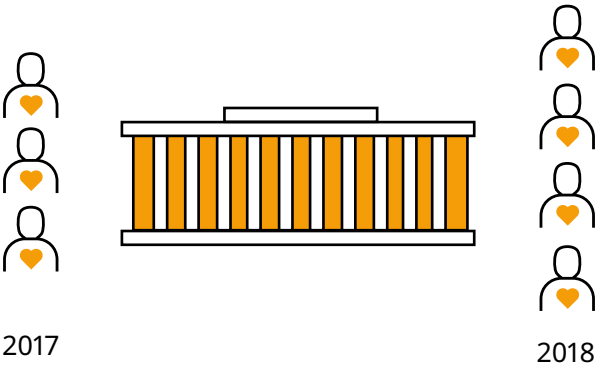
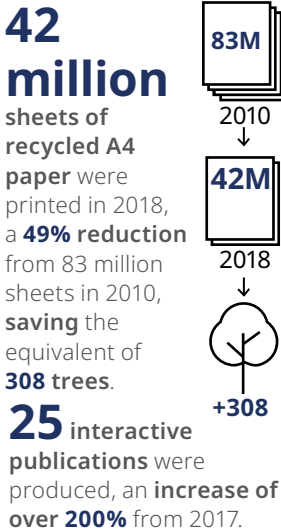
As an International Gender Champion, the Director-General successfully surpassed his commitment to increase the number of staff availing themselves of flexible working arrangements by **5%** as compared to 2017. 2018 indeed saw an **increase of 14%**.



UN GENEVA PROVIDED SERVICES TO OVER

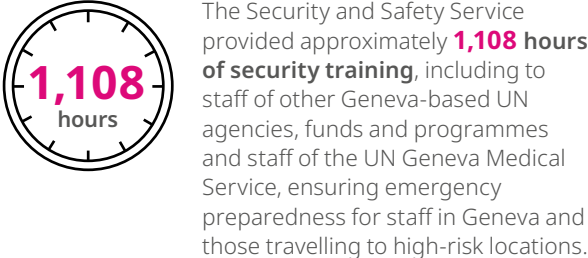
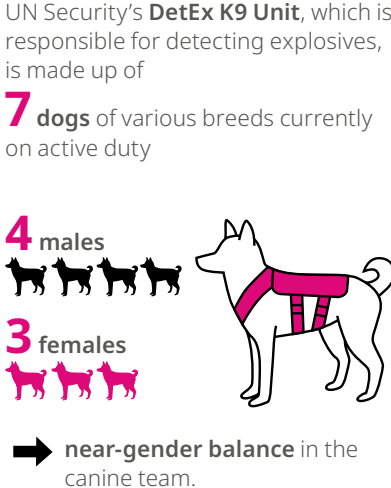
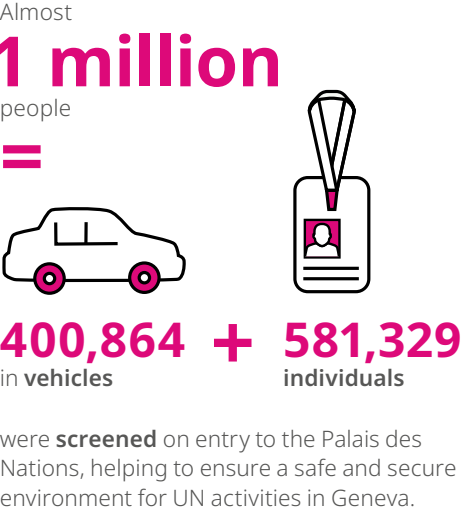


THE CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT TOOL INDICO WAS USED BY



4,801 representatives of **1,023** NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) were accredited to UN Geneva to take part in UN activities at the Palais des Nations. This represented an **increase of 4.3%** compared to 2017. 2018 was the first time the number of accredited NGOs tipped the **1,000** mark.

Nearly **60** NGO events were held in the Palais des Nations with the help of UN Geneva.



2018 was truly the year of **@UNGeneva** on social media platforms, with **660,000** people around the world following us on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook!



The public remains loyal to our Twitter account: our **327,000** followers (up **21%** from last year) interacted **1 million** times.

Over **5,500** tweets, which in turn have been seen **61 million** times!



There was a **27% increase** in the number of our Facebook page likes from 2017 and today **208,000** people follow our account.



But it was our Instagram account that marked 2018 with more than **double** the number of subscribers, from 60,000 in 2017 to **125,000** today, and an almost **ten-fold increase in video views** compared to 2017.

UN GENEVA WEBSITE AND FLICKR

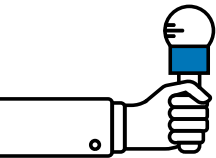
There were over **2.5 million** visits to the UN Geneva website.



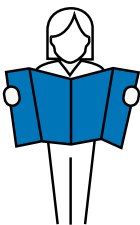
The Flickr account had almost **17 million** views since its creation and **5,203** photos were uploaded in 2018.



In 2018, **27** new **SDG Studio interviews** – with guests such as María Fernanda Espinosa, President of the UN General Assembly or football legend Luís Figo – have been added to the archives of this innovative method to spark meaningful conversations on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.



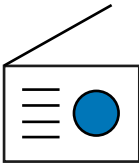
Since its launch in 2017, more than **267,700** people have viewed and shared the Studio's **56** films on social media.



Portuguese, Italian, German, Slovak, Bulgarian, and Romanian. **80%** of the groups were made up of youth.

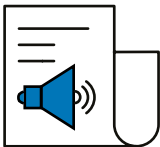
UN RADIO

UN Radio featured **853** reports, interviews and audio clips from UN Geneva, for dozens of partner radio stations broadcasting in English, French or other official UN languages.



THE INFORMATION SERVICE

Produced **1,006** press releases in English and in French, disseminating the work of UN Geneva around the world.



Delivered around **250** permanent and **800** temporary accreditations to member of the press to cover UN activities in Geneva for a diverse global audience.

Hosted **195** press conferences by UN officials, UN family in Geneva and the Member States.

Held **98** biweekly press briefings for accredited journalists.

Produced **2,455** webcast videos which were seen more than **430,000** times by viewers worldwide.



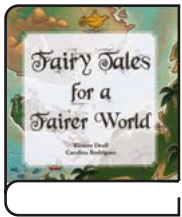
47 participants from **32** countries took part in the UN's oldest training activity, the **Graduate Study Programme**.



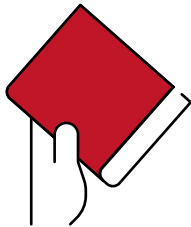
1,539 students and teachers from **17** countries attended **40** tailor-made information programmes on the Geneva-based UN agencies and organizations.



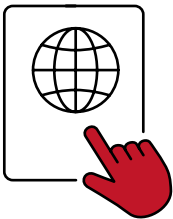
23,500 copies of the booklet **170 Daily Actions to Transform Our World** were distributed to the public in English, French, Spanish, Danish, German, Russian and Chinese.



Almost **4,500** copies of **Fairy Tales for a Fairer World** in English, French, Russian, Spanish, Arabic, and Chinese have exposed children and adults to the Sustainable Development Goals.



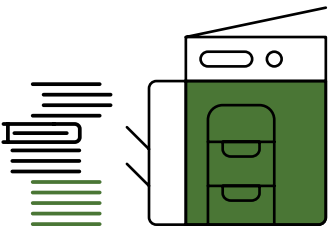
1,600 copies of "**170 jobs with a purpose**" were distributed to local students at Cité des Métiers in English and French.



Almost **600** people have subscribed to the monthly "**Impact Stories**" newsletter since it began in September 2018 with the aim of sharing the solutions and results produced in Geneva to improve lives around the world.



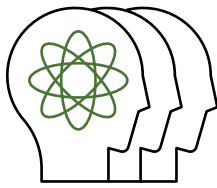
Out of the **130+** students who attended the 2018 **Young Reporters programme** at UN Geneva, **67.25%** of participants agree that the conferences improved their understanding of the work of the UN and its partners.



In 2018, the **UN Library Geneva** continued its large-scale project to **digitize the League of Nations Archives**. The initiative, called the Total Digital Access to the League of Nations Archives (LONTAD), digitized **2.7 million** out of **15 million** pages during the year.



The Library also held **80** cultural activities and library events in 2018, welcoming the public, UN staff and the diplomatic community to explore a range of ideas and cultures, and to foster dialogue and mutual understanding.



In addition, the Library and the Centre for Learning and Multilingualism, part of the Human Resources Management Service, launched the Knowledge and Learning Commons at UN Geneva, offering UN staff, interns and the diplomatic community **20** events and activities in 2018 on a range of topics relevant to **International Geneva**, with the aim of encouraging collaboration and knowledge-sharing across the UN system.

STRENGTHENING THE FOUNDATION

Laying down a strong foundation is crucial to building an effective and efficient workforce ready to make the ambitious goals of the United Nations a reality. Since 1929, when the foundation stone was first set, the Palais des Nations has not only witnessed the advancement of peace and the promotion of human rights, it has played an active role in their realization. Although it works largely behind the scenes, UN Geneva delivers the services that make it possible for the UN and its partners to impact our lives for the better. UN Geneva administrators, conference and language specialists, security guards, communication experts, librarians and countless others make it possible for the initiatives of the UN and its partners to resonate far beyond International Geneva.

200

Heads of State and Government and Foreign Ministers

were welcomed by the UN Geneva Protocol and Liaison Service and around **4,500** high-level officials flew into International Geneva in 2018. UN Geneva provided services to over **12,000** meetings, **16%** of which took place outside Geneva. On average, **48** meetings were held per working day.





UN Geneva at the heart of multilateral diplomacy

Having witnessed nearly 75 years of conferences, peace negotiations and events, UN Geneva remains at the heart of multilateral diplomacy. As one of the largest conference centres in the world, UN Geneva is the birthplace of crucial decisions that improve peace, rights and well-being worldwide.

In 2018, the Palais des Nations welcomed high-profile world leaders and hosted conferences, working groups and events whose decisions impact everyone, every day. These included some of the year's most important international conferences, such as the session of the Human Rights Council, the International Labour Conference, the World Health Assembly, the World Investment Forum, the UNHCR Executive Committee and many others.

In addition to providing the venue, UN Geneva supplies all essential organizational, administrative, security, logistical, technical and documentation support for conferences and events. Communications specialists, from UN journalists to tweeters, also work around the clock to bring the work of the United Nations and its partners to a global audience. In 2018, UN Geneva hosted more than 12,000 meetings, a number that has been steadily increasing as UN Geneva becomes the venue of choice for the international community and beyond.



Boris Johnson, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (right), visiting a "Luminarium" sculpture for Girls' Education in the Ariana Park on 18 June.



President of the Republic of Slovenia Borut Pahor (right) sits beside UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller (left) during the 38th session of the Human Rights Council on 20 June.



Photo, above
UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller (right) shakes hands with the President of the Republic of Botswana Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi (left), on 22 October.

Photo, right
Patrice Athanase Guillaume Talon, President of the Republic of Benin, during the International Conference on Access to Quality Medicines and Other Medical Products in Francophone Africa on 22 May.

Photo, below
Isabella Lövin, Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden and Minister for International Development Cooperation (left), addresses the journalists during the High-level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen organized in Geneva on 3 April.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

President of the Swiss Confederation Alain Berset (right) shakes hands with President of the Republic of Rwanda Paul Kagame (centre) during the 71st World Health Assembly on 21 May.



UN Photo: Elna Okic

President of the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly Miroslav Lajčák (centre) during the high-level segment of the Conference on Disarmament on 26 February.



UN Photo: Guillaume Briquet

Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia, signing the Golden Book of high-level visitors to the Palais des Nations during his official visit to Geneva on 24 October.



UN Photo: Violaine Martin

Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (foreground left), and Rula Ghani, First Lady of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (right), during the Geneva Conference on Afghanistan on 28 November.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Secretary-General António Guterres (left) and United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein (right) during the high-level segment of the 37th session of the Human Rights Council on 26 February. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein was succeeded by Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile, in September 2018.



UN Photo: Guillaume Briquet

Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland (foreground centre), and the First Lady of Poland (foreground right), during their official visit to the Palais des Nations on 8 October.



Mediation in the Capital of Peace

The number of countries with violent conflicts in 2018 was at its highest in the last 30 years. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, reaffirmed that “prevention is more necessary than ever, and the more difficult conflict resolution is, the more important prevention becomes.” Diplomatic action through the work of mediators and envoys dispatched to crisis areas encourage dialogue, compromise and the peaceful resolution of tensions and discourage the use of violence at critical moments.

New drivers of global conflict, such as climate change and migration, require more coordinated multilateral engagement and a wider range of specialized mediators. The United Nations has consistently filled this crucial role, helping mediate to prevent disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of crises when they occur, negotiate the conclusion of a conflict already underway, and work with parties on the implementation of peace agreements.

To alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people, reactivate the peace process, prepare the ground-work for formal negotiations and discuss confidence building measures, the newly appointed Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen Martin Griffiths ended a two-year pause in 2018 by convening consultations in Geneva. In line with two United Nations Security Council resolutions and the outcomes of the Yemeni National Dialogue Conference, which call for a 30% quota for women in public positions, as well as in negotiations delegations, the Yemeni Women’s Technical Advisory Group participated in the consultations as observers. Further consultations on Yemen continued later in the year in Stockholm, Sweden.

Working to find common ground amongst international players in support of a political settlement in Syria, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria Staffan de Mistura continued his diplomatic efforts in Geneva in 2018. Through consultations on finding the best path forward for implementing the Sochi Final Statement and establishing a Syrian-led and Syrian-owned constitutional committee, he engaged with Syrian civil society and sought the support, counsel and advice of women through a special advisory board. In late October, Secretary-General Guterres appointed Geir O. Pedersen of Norway as his new Special Envoy for Syria to replace Staffan de Mistura, who stepped down from the position at the end of December.



Secretary-General António Guterres (right) meets with Ayşe Cihan Sultanoğlu, United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions (left).

Staffan de Mistura, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria (right), greets the press after consultations with the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey on 18 December.



UN Photo: Violaine Martin



Photo, left
Members of the media waiting to enter the conference hall where the delegations of Egypt, France, Germany, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom and the United States are holding talks during the Intra-Syrian talks on 14 September.

Photos, below
Staffan de Mistura, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, briefs the press after the Joint Meeting on Syria on 18 December.

Khaled Hussein Alyemany, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Yemen, briefs the press on the Geneva Consultations on Yemen on 8 September.



UN Photo: Violaine Martin



UN Photo: Violaine Martin

During four rounds of the Geneva International Discussions, which in 2018 marked their 10th anniversary, participants demonstrated their commitment to the constructive approach towards security, stability and the return of internally displaced persons and refugees in Georgia. The Office of the United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions (UNRGID) continued to support the Geneva International Discussions and the joint Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM). In spite of lack of breakthroughs on key points of the agenda, the two platforms have contributed to the improvement of stability in the region. The newly appointed UN Representative to the GID, Ms. Ayşe Cihan Sultanoğlu of Turkey, co-chaired the last two rounds alongside representatives of the EU and OSCE.

An initial roundtable on Western Sahara was held in December 2018 at the Palais des Nations and attended by delegations from Morocco, the Frente Polisario, Algeria and Mauritania. Delegations used the opportunity to take stock of recent developments, address regional issues, and discuss the next steps in the political process on Western Sahara. The delegates will reconvene for a second roundtable meeting in the first quarter of 2019.

UN Geneva continued to play its role as the venue of choice for UN mediators engaging the parties to violent conflicts in complex negotiations. With its skilled staff and state-of-the-art facilities, UN Geneva hosted and facilitated these efforts. In the Office of the Director-General, a senior mediation officer supports the work of mediators and helps them connect with the rich and diverse “peace community”

based in Geneva. The partnership between the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, think tanks and the academic community has made additional specialized resources available in support of the ongoing work for peace.



Scan the QR code to listen to an exclusive interview with former Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria Staffan de Mistura.



Digital technology and mediation of armed conflicts

Technology has revolutionized every facet of our lives, including the way we handle relationships, defuse crises and mediate disputes. Conflicts are no longer restricted to being solely physical; digital technological developments continue to impact our societies and are affecting the way we conduct business in virtually every area, including peace-making. The United Nations must be “bold and creative” in harnessing the avenues and capacities available for mediation, Secretary-General António Guterres told the Security Council in 2018.

Advanced technologies, including those in the field of communications, do not radically change the practices of mediation, which remain a human-intensive endeavour. Yet, if leveraged properly, some of the technologies can bring significant efficiencies and opportunities to mediation efforts. Those same technologies can also be used negatively with the potential to complicate mediation processes.

With conflicts taking on more complex global dimensions, the Secretary-General tasked the [Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs](#) and the [Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue](#) (HD) to develop a toolkit on the role of digital technologies in armed conflict mediation. The Toolkit will focus on four priority thematic areas: conflict analysis, engagement with the conflict parties, inclusion and public/strategic communications, and should be published in 2019.

Exploring how digital technology affects mediation in preventing and resolving violent conflicts is also the focus of the #CyberMediation initiative, which was launched in Geneva in March 2018 by the [Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs](#), the [Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue](#), [DiploFoundation](#) and [Swisspeace](#).

The development of the Toolkit and the #CyberMediation initiative draws from the strengths of International Geneva, a global hub for action on innovation and cutting-edge issues, home to institutions like [CERN](#), the [International Telecommunication Union](#), the [Internet Governance Forum](#) and the [World Economic Forum](#). UN Geneva focuses on mediation by supporting the special envoys and representatives of the Secretary-General, as well as hosting talks on a variety of crises such as the conflicts in Syria, Yemen, Georgia and Western Sahara. Addressing the opportunities and challenges of advanced technologies in the field of mediation will require fresh thinking and new partnerships.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



Observance and action

On commemoration and international days, we set some time aside to remember the past and to reflect on the potential of future generations. UN Geneva honours the greatness of people whose lives and deeds have shaped the world we live in, and recalls the legacy of those events that shook the world and continue to resonate today. Each commemoration and international day we celebrate provides an opportunity to share our messages of peace and pass on UN values, promoting action towards a more inclusive, accepting, fair and just society.

International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust

27 January 2018

“You know, at 15 years old, you don’t want to die”, reminisced Holocaust survivor, Eva Schloss, while speaking at the Holocaust remembrance ceremony on 29 January in Geneva. Raising the alarm about the current refugee crisis in a discussion with 140 youth from local schools, Schloss said, *“The world as it is now hasn’t learned anything from the tragic events of the past. The Holocaust would have been much less destructive – or even avoided – had countries accepted Jewish refugees at the time.”* Her message comes from *Geneva Witness*, a new UN Geneva video series featuring interviews with memorable individuals who visit UN Geneva.

The “Let Me Be Myself” exhibition about Anne Frank, presented by the European Union and Switzerland in cooperation with the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, connected her story to experiences of discrimination and exclusion today. Based on interviews with a diverse group of youth, the exhibition transmitted Anne’s message of tolerance to today’s youth through peer-to-peer education.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

25 March 2018

Each year, in a poignant ceremony, UN Geneva remembers the 15 million people abducted from their homes in Africa and taken by force to the Americas, bought and sold, exploited, robbed of their dignity, and often killed. As racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance continue to affect societies around the globe every day, this year's commemoration on 20 March served, above all, as a call for all of us to strengthen our efforts to ensure a life of freedom and dignity for all.



International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, recalling also that Hutu and others who opposed it were killed

7 April 2018

After the lighting of candles of remembrance and a moment of silence, genocide survivors, the Permanent Representative of Rwanda François Xavier Ngarambe and Director-General Michael Møller shared their thoughts during a moving ceremony held on 10 April at the Palais des Nations. *"The only way to prevent genocide and other atrocities is to never forget to learn from history, to acknowledge shared responsibility, and commit to collectively act to protect those at risk,"* said the Director-General.

The annual ceremony brings together the international community in Geneva to pay tribute to the victims and to the survivors, to recognize the process of reconciliation and renewal in Rwanda, and to recommit to the collective responsibility of genocide prevention.

International Day of UN Peacekeepers

31 May 2018

"Peace operations should support the finding of political solutions, not replace them: offensive mandate missions can only find their raison d'être if they are subject to a clear political goal," said General Jean Baillaud, former Deputy Commander of the UN peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as Geneva commemorated the 70th anniversary of peacekeeping.

Over 100 former peacekeepers, UN staff and schoolchildren from Lyon, France, paid their respects to the more than one million men and women who have served in UN peacekeeping missions since 1948, as well as the 3,737 who have died in the line of duty. As part of the commemoration, Ciné-ONU screened the film, *Until there is peace: Documentary on UN peacekeeping operations in Democratic Republic of the Congo*. The documentary offered those gathered an opportunity for reflection and exchange on the challenges and opportunities of today's peacekeeping.



UN Photo: Violaine Martin



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Nelson Mandela International Day

18 July 2018

“Mandela’s legacy must show us the way”, said UN Secretary-General António Guterres, as the UN celebrated the centennial of Nelson Mandela’s birth on 18 July. At the ceremony held in Geneva, South African officials recalled Madiba’s belief in equal opportunities and justice for all, calling for people-driven change and a greater effort to finish the work he had started in fighting racism and promoting development.

“Nelson Mandela would have been gravely concerned at the troubling sight of humanity, which is being revealed by how migrants are being treated today. He would have been deeply troubled by the resurgence of traits that we thought had been banished to history,” stressed Nozipho Joyce Mxakato-Diseko, Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations Office at Geneva

The day of celebration ended with a musical tribute at the *Scène Ella Fitzgerald*, as part of the City of Geneva’s summer festival, *Musiques en été*. The audience of some 2,000 people were also shown a portion of Mandela’s historic speech to the UN in 1998.



UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

World Humanitarian Day

19 August 2018

This year’s World Humanitarian Day marked the 15th anniversary since the tragic attack on the Canal Hotel in Baghdad, Iraq, that killed 22 people. Those lost included the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello.

World Humanitarian Day, a General Assembly-mandated commemoration, seeks to bring the world together to rally support for people affected by humanitarian crises and to pay tribute to the humanitarian workers who help them.

The 2018 commemoration at UN Geneva, on 16 August, built on the momentum created by the 2017 #NotATarget campaign, which saw more than 2 million people take social actions calling for better protection of civilians and humanitarians by urging global leaders to protect civilians in conflict zones.

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

17 October 2018

Eradicating poverty in all its forms remains one of the greatest global challenges and a major priority for the United Nations. “Leaders in the fight against poverty, the floor is yours” was the motto of this year’s commemoration held at UN Geneva. The event included a public debate generating ideas on what could be done locally to reduce poverty. Held in the form of an interactive radio talk show, a series of guests presented their vision of a world where everyone’s human rights and dignity are respected, regardless of their personal circumstances. The debate, organized with ATD Fourth World, was accompanied with music by Geneva artist duo Pecho & Mandy.



UN Photo/Violaine Martin

“Mandela’s legacy must show us the way”
– UN SECRETARY-GENERAL ANTÓNIO GUTERRES



UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

World Toilet Day

19 November 2018

Toilets save lives, because human waste spreads killer diseases.

The world is not on track to reach Sustainable Development Goal 6: to ensure availability and sustainable management of sanitation and water for all by 2030.

The 2018 campaign was based on the narrative that when “nature calls”, we need a toilet. To draw attention to the global sanitation crisis, a 10-metre-tall inflatable toilet was installed at the Place des Nations.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

World Television Day

21 November 2018

In an ideal world, three notions would characterize public service broadcasters and define their value proposition to their audiences. *Trust*, in terms of being a trusted source of information and striving to counter the scourge of misinformation targeting hearts and minds. *Diversity*, because TV needs to be representative of its audience, as gender equality inches forward and recognition of the multicultural make-up of our societies improves. *Innovation*, since in order to remain relevant TV needs to keep up with the times and embrace a digital, multi-platform reality.

For UN Geneva and the European Broadcasting Union, World Television Day 2018 offered the opportunity to examine how TV was doing on these fronts through an event entitled, “Serving the peoples of the world: perspectives on the role of TV and the public interest.”



UN Photo

Human Rights Day

10 December 2018

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which turned 70 in 2018, establishes the equal dignity and worth of every person, and it is available online in 508 languages.

On 13 December, UN Geneva and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights celebrated the anniversary of this milestone declaration with youth from all over the world. You can read more about the celebration, which featured an international drawing competition, in chapter three, Empowering action.

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

29 November 2018

Permanent Missions and partner organizations gathered in the UN Geneva’s historic Council Chamber to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

At the commemoration, Daniela Zelaya Raudales of the World Young Women’s Christian Association, shared a message of hope from a young girl activist named Janna: “*We have no choice but to believe that peace will be a reality one day, and that young people are not a small part of that change to achieve freedom,*” adding that they are “*the whole change and the generation that can free the world.*”

Representatives of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People; the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories; the League of Arab States; the Organization of Islamic Cooperation; the Non-Aligned Movement; the African Union; non-governmental organizations accredited to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People; and Palestine also took the floor.



UN Photo: Volaine Martin



KOFI ANNAN – A HERO OF OUR TIME

Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, was many things: a great friend, a distinguished diplomat, a source of inspiration, a wise advisor and mentor to numerous people. However, he was more, so much more.

He was a moral voice for peace and the most vulnerable. In all that he undertook, in each of his decisions, he was motivated by unmovable compassion, exemplary integrity, and a deep moral sense.

In an increasingly fragmented world, where only those who shout the loudest are heard, the absence of his voice – soft and convincing – leaves a deafening silence. Despite the suffering and cruelty present in our world, he remained optimistic. Although he witnessed the darkest moments of recent decades, he refused to yield to cynicism. His optimism was not naive; it was rooted in an immutable faith in human beings, in their ability to move forward together, as evidenced by the unprecedented social, scientific, and economic progress that humanity today enjoys.

He embodied the spirit of the United Nations, the Organization he served for more than four decades. He was not only the first black African to lead this Organization, but also the first Secretary-General out of its ranks. That is why he knew better than anyone else the challenges facing the United Nations, but also the unique opportunities available to him, seizing them with skill and humility.

His legacy is immense, whether it is to integrate human rights into all our actions, to redouble our efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS, to defend the responsibility to protect, or to promote the Millennium Development Goals. There were also failures, of course. He was aware of the imperfections of our

Organization. Nevertheless, as he once said, “if the UN did not exist, it would have to be invented.”

Kofi Annan was a devoted and proud son of Africa, but also a citizen of Geneva and a great friend of Switzerland, whom he welcomed with open arms as the 190th Member State of the United Nations in 2002. He studied and worked here, setting up the Kofi Annan Foundation in 2007 and eventually chose to spend his last years in Switzerland.

To celebrate his life and pay homage to a great man – a hero of our time – hundreds of people gathered at the Palais des Nations on 27 September 2018, in the presence of his family, diplomats and Genevan dignitaries.

Scan the QR codes to watch the following videos.



Full ceremony on UNTV



“Remembering Kofi Annan”,
a video testimony from his colleagues



The life and work of Kofi Annan



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Photo, above
Saying goodbye to Kofi Annan, the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations, as his remains leave Geneva for the State funeral in Ghana.

Photo, right
UN Geneva Director-General Michael Moller delivering remarks during the “Celebration of the Life of Kofi Annan” event.

Photo, below
Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan speaks during the Geneva Peace Talks, in his capacity as founding chair of the Kofi Annan Foundation, on 21 September 2017.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



A world of words

Over fifty percent of the 7,000 languages in the world are likely to die out within a few generations. In other words, every two weeks another language disappears, forever. “*With every language that dies, traditions, memories, expressions, knowledge, and understanding are lost – and with them invaluable resources for ensuring our future will be as rich as our heritage*”, said UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller during International Mother Language Day on 21 February.

Language loss can cause both social and personal trauma, especially within indigenous communities. Philosopher Dr. Gabina Funegra asserts that the global community should aim to honour and rebuild indigenous identities around the world, a goal endorsed by the 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. UN Geneva marked International Mother Language Day in 2018 by screening Funegra’s documentary “Mother Tongue”, which focuses on preserving Quechua, a language spoken in communities found in several South American countries.

Language Days at the Palais des Nations

“*Celebrating the Chinese Language Day every year here in the Palais, the UN dedicates itself to promoting the Chinese language and culture, and more importantly, to encouraging cultural exchange,*” said Ambassador Yu Jianhua, Permanent Representative of the People’s Republic of China to the United Nations Office at Geneva during Chinese Language Day on 16 April 2018. Chinese is one of the world’s oldest languages and one of the most widely spoken, encompassing more than one billion native speakers. Organized in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of China, UN Geneva’s 2018 celebration of Chinese Language Day included an

interactive digital game, “Decoding the Chinese Characters,” a lecture on the history of Chinese characters and a calligraphy demonstration.

UN Geneva screened the film adaptation of Nobel Laureate Kazuo Ishiguro’s novel *The Remains of the Day* for English Language Day on 23 April. Participants played quiz games and colleagues read from the works of Nobel Laureates that showcased the English language. Traditional afternoon tea and cakes rounded out the event.

French is one of the few languages spoken on all five continents, and the official language in 29 Member States. In collaboration with the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, UN Geneva celebrated French Language Day, held annually on 20 March, with French tongue twisters, riddles, quizzes and a writing contest. Participants of this year’s celebration enjoyed an assortment of French food and the sneak preview of an upcoming French play by the United Nations Theatre Club.

A lively celebration of Russian culture was held at the UN Library Geneva in celebration of Russian Language Day, observed annually on 6 June. The renowned Moscow Cossack Choir performed traditional folk songs and dances and there was an exhibition of paintings by Russian artist Larissa Radevitch.



Russian Language Day

UN Photo



English Language Day

UN Photo: Marija Potocnik



Chinese Language Day

UN Photo: Pauline Grangette



French Language Day

UN Photo: Marija Potocnik

UN Geneva celebrated Spanish Language Day, observed on 23 April, with a week-long celebration in October, thanks to the support of Palabras +, a group of interpreters and translators from international organizations and to the generous contribution of several Spanish-speaking permanent missions. Highlights included an event on Violeta Parra in the iconic Room XX, in the form of a performance by the Chilean actress Michele Millner; an art exhibition about connecting cultures; a film, “La Montaña”, presented by the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic; and the offer by the Plurinational State of Bolivia of its 15 most important novels to the UN Library Geneva.



Spanish Language Day

UN Photo: María del Mar Moya

Arabic Language Day, observed on 18 December, was celebrated at UN Geneva on 15 January 2019. Participants listened to a presentation on the Arabic language and excerpts from Arabic literature while enjoying a beautiful lute accompaniment. Arabic calligraphy and a collection of manuscripts were exhibited.

In the effort to strengthen multilingualism throughout the Organization, UN Geneva launched a “UN Geneva Multilingualism Challenge” on 4 October to mark International Translation Day. As part of the campaign, all UN Geneva staff were encouraged to commit to doing just one thing, however modest, over the next twelve months to demonstrate their support for multilingualism. Examples of commitments included holding a meeting in a different UN language or taking language courses at UN Geneva’s Centre for Learning and Multilingualism.



Arabic Language Day

UN Photo: Adam Kane



Behind the scenes: the arrival of a new permanent representative

Accreditation of new representatives of Member States in Geneva is an important function of UN Geneva. The procedure leading to the presentation-of-credentials ceremony requires seamless planning and execution. The dignified ceremony, which takes place in the French Salon of the Palais des Nations, is the fruit of a close collaboration between the [Protocol and Liaison Service](#), the Permanent Mission of Switzerland—the host country, the respective mission of the country presenting its credentials and a team of UN Geneva communications specialists.

As decided by Member States, credentials must be issued by the Head of State or Government, or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and addressed to the Secretary-General. The Protocol and Liaison Service receives a copy of the letter in advance and liaises with the permanent mission to set a date for the incoming permanent representative to present his or her credentials to the Director-General.

The ceremony is less formal than the accreditation of bilateral Ambassadors by Member States. The Director-General accepts the original credentials letter on behalf of the Secretary-General from the new permanent representative, and the moment is immortalized by an official photographer. During the conversation that follows, the Director-General briefs the permanent representative on key issues. After the ceremony, the Protocol and Liaison Service informs the host country and UN Headquarters, while the United Nations Information Service issues a press release to inform International Geneva. The same procedure applies for the heads of Permanent Observer Offices, who present a letter of nomination signed by the head of their observer organization.

In 2018, 42 new permanent representatives presented their credentials and 5 new permanent observers presented their nomination letters to the Director-General. In the exercise of their functions, most of these permanent representatives also represented their country in the Conference on Disarmament.

Did you know that the United Nations is made up of 193 Member States, of which 179 permanent missions are accredited to UN Geneva?

Also, two non-member States and 17 observers are accredited to UN Geneva.



A glimpse of the French Salon, one of UN Geneva's high-level meeting rooms. This space is also used for presentation-of-credentials ceremonies.

UN Photo: Kris Terauds



International law: the true common language among nations

Despite differences of language or culture, international law is used as legal framework by all States for multilateral diplomacy. The principles of international law remain the common basis of discussion among States in international or multilateral organizations such as the United Nations. The framework of international law is used for negotiations, resettlements, trade and many other international actions. Having evolved for several hundred years, international law today has truly become a common language for dialogue among nations.

International law relies on specialized terminology in order to be accepted by all States. For instance, there are many anglophone countries, and while each of those countries has different national institutions and related sets of rules governing them, their counterparts in other countries operate by different rules. Concepts may vary among countries or languages and have different meanings. International law is used to harmonize such differences, creating universally understood concepts and languages.

There are also many concepts derived from international law that have entered into countries' national legal systems. This occurs once States have ratified international treaties, and thus adopt the terminology included in international legal instruments.

UN Geneva has hosted the [International Law Seminar](#) over the course of three weeks every year since 1965 in connection with the annual session of the [International Law Commission](#). More than 1,300 young professionals in the fields of international law have since participated in these sessions, which are designed for postgraduate students in international law, young scholars, government officials as well



The Legal and Political Reading Room in the UN Library Geneva

UN Photo

as young lawyers in the field of international law, to widen their knowledge of both the work of the International Law Commission and of the codification and progressive development of international law.

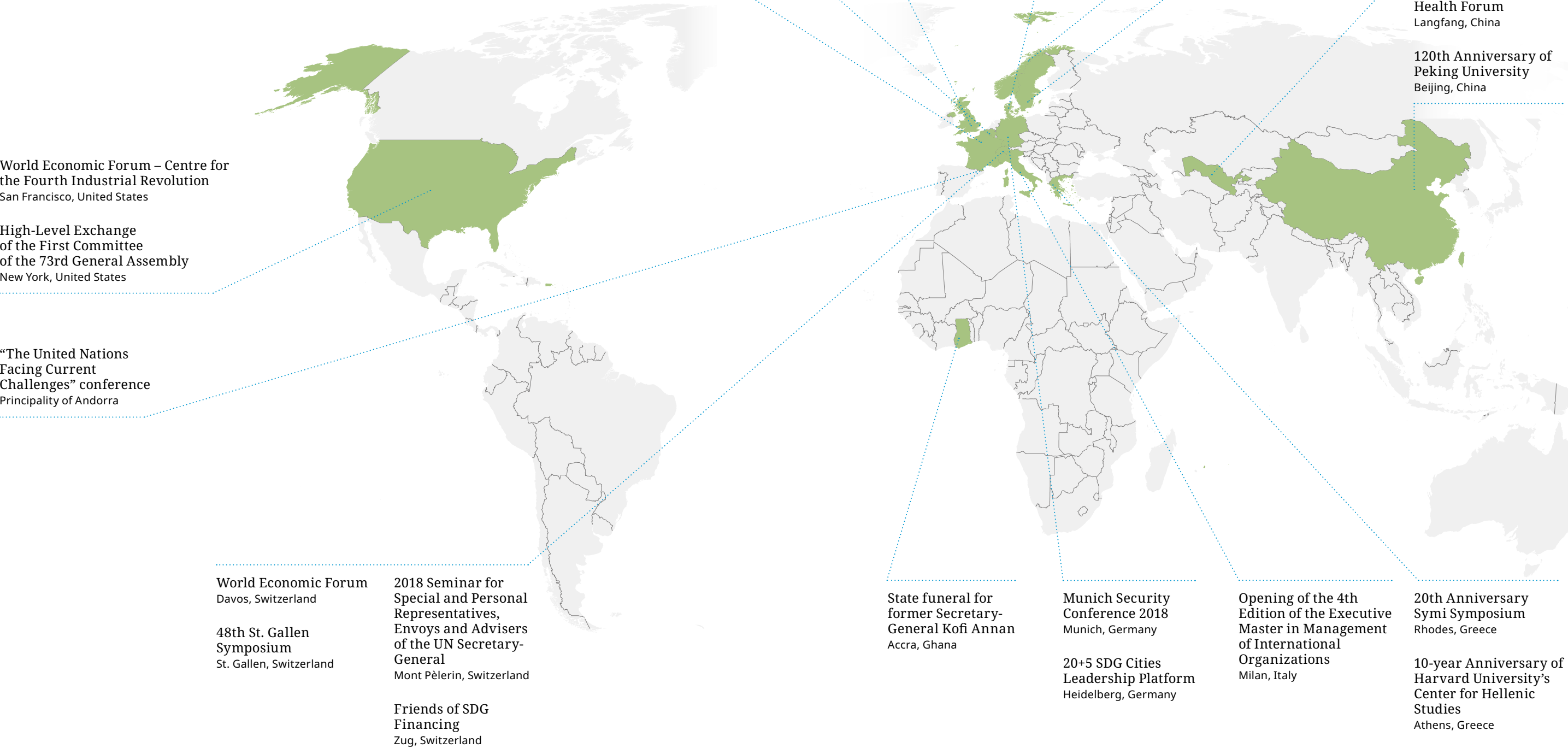
The Seminar provides an opportunity for lawyers coming from different legal systems and cultures to exchange views regarding items on the agenda of the Commission. The Seminar allows participants to travel to Geneva to observe the work of the Commission, to attend lectures and conferences, and to visit international organizations. Ideas are shared on international legal topics related to humanitarian affairs, human rights, labour law, trade, refugees, intellectual property, telecommunications and many other issues.

UN Geneva supports the International Law Seminar with interpretation services and other logistical services. To ensure equal regional representation, Governments often contribute to a trust fund for the Seminar, which awards fellowship stipends every year to participants, primarily from developing countries.

A number of participants in the International Law Seminar have gone on to become well-known international lawyers, university professors, ambassadors, judges and presidents of the International Court of Justice, and members of various United Nations commissions.



Director-General’s missions in 2018





Public service journalism fit for the 21st century

In 2018, UN Geneva and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the largest community of public service media organizations in the world, signed a Letter of Intent to strengthen their partnership. This agreement aims to enhance cooperation on quality journalism, constructive news, public service media, freedom of information and the safety of journalists.

“Public service broadcasters play a key role in our societies, promoting democracy, proposing a constructive approach to journalism and helping to fight disinformation,” said Director-General Michael Møller during the ceremony at the EBU, ahead of World Television Day on 21 November. He noted that this collaboration was even more important now, at a time when the United Nations was multiplying its efforts to promote the Sustainable Development Goals, to counter the negative narrative on migration and to urge people around the world to stand up for human rights.

Collaboration between the two Geneva-based entities goes back decades and has historically included the high-definition live coverage of events taking place at UN Geneva or elsewhere in Switzerland. In recent years, approximately 200 edited international news items have been distributed per year via EBU’s Eurovision News Exchange circuits. Permanent fibre links run between UN Geneva’s television studio and EBU, facilitating the high-definition broadcast of multilingual live events and news items.

The signing of this agreement serves not only to bolster the decades-long cooperation between the two organizations, but also to celebrate a shared public service mission and to explore how effective television can be in serving the public interest and in championing trust, diversity and innovation.

New areas for collaboration include EBU’s advisory participation in the development and validation of technical standards for broadcasting, training, production or live transmission of special events, and participation in the Eurovision Social Media Newswire, a mechanism set up by EBU to identify user-generated “eyewitness news”-type content for use by public service broadcasters.

The EBU operates the Eurovision and Euroradio networks and is the world’s largest community of public service media organizations, with 119 member organizations located in 56 countries.

Michael Møller, Director-General of UN Geneva (right), shakes hands with Noel Curran, Director General of the European Broadcasting Union (left), following the signing of the Letter of Intent to expand collaboration between UN Geneva and the European Broadcasting Union on 19 November.



UN Photo: Jean Marc Ferré



Oath ceremony highlights special bond between UN Geneva and its host city

As tradition dictates, newly elected Councillors of State of the Republic and Canton of Geneva are sworn into office in a ceremony harking back to ancient times. This was the case in May 2018 for the seven Councillors gathered in Cathédrale Saint-Pierre under the flags of Switzerland, the Republic and Canton of Geneva and the United Nations. Why the UN flag? Because just as Geneva is vital for the UN, so too does the UN play a central role in the daily life of the canton. A unique ecosystem of international actors continues to thrive in Geneva, with the UN at its core, working tirelessly to promote the collaboration and knowledge-sharing that are so important for the world today. The positive impacts that this community has made on humanity have been recognized over the years by the awarding of 18 Nobel Peace Prizes related to International Geneva, made up of international organizations, non-governmental organizations, governments, civil society, the private sector and academia.

While the UN and its partners benefit greatly from their presence in Geneva, International Geneva also contributes valuable assets to its host city and country. More than 40,000 international public servants and diplomats, together with their family members, live in Geneva and its surrounding communities, contributing significantly to the well-being of the local economy. The Republic and Canton of Geneva estimate that in 2017, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, permanent missions and consulates contributed 11.3% to the Canton of Geneva GDP, which totaled CHF 51.9 billion.

The President of the Council of State, Pierre Maudet, spoke about the significance of the organizations

based in Geneva. He emphasized that: “Our legacy is that International Geneva, which only five years ago we thought could fall apart, will benefit from a renewed partnership between the City, the Canton, the Confederation and the United Nations, thanks to which the principal buildings of international organizations are going to be restored. It is up to us to ensure that our legacy lives on, in line with sustainable development.”

The President’s speech demonstrated the continued commitment to support and reinforce Geneva as a neutral and inspiring location, essential to the collective ambitions of our Organization and partners, and towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.



Members of the Council of State at the oath of office ceremony of the Parliament of the Republic and Canton of Geneva, in Cathédrale Saint-Pierre on 31 May.



Strengthening the Sustainable Development Goals community in International Geneva

Collaboration between stakeholders is vital to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by the year 2030. International Geneva, unique in the world, is a healthy and supportive ecosystem that facilitates a successful collaborative approach between governments, the private sector, academia and civil society. UN Geneva continues to reach out to change-makers throughout International Geneva and beyond through the SDG Lab’s unique menu of services.

The SDG Lab’s outside-the-box initiatives include Innovation Sprints for pilot-level solutions to

Sustainable Development Goals challenges, the Transformation Series, and other special events which bring together the financial and development sides of Geneva to discuss financing ideas and investment opportunities for sustainable development. Lunch Trials match up stakeholders to share their work on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Empowering knowledge-sharing and new ways of thinking to achieve co-created solutions, UN Geneva continues to work together with International Geneva to capitalize on the power of diversity to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Learn more about the SDG Lab:
Website: www.sdglab.ch/
Email: SDG-Lab@un.org
Twitter: @SDGLab



Discussing gender equality, sustainable cities and communities at session 3 of the SDG Lab’s “So What?” series.

Photo: Gender and Security Division, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces



UN Geneva and civil society: how the engagement has evolved

“Make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence”, reads Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations. When the Charter was drafted in 1945, the importance of working hand in hand with civil society was recognized for its potential benefits on issues related to economic and social development. Article 71 paved the way for all future engagement between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the United Nations. Today, it is increasingly unlikely for civil society to be absent from the table when issues of global concern are being discussed.

For UN Geneva, engagement with the NGO community has been a priority and a practice for decades. Upon the arrival in 1976 of Raymonde Martineau, the first NGO Liaison Officer at UN Geneva, just over 400 NGOs were in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). At the time of her departure, twenty-five years later, that number had risen to over 2,000. During those two decades she witnessed a positive change in perception, both within United Nations entities and among Member States, towards the work of civil society.

Ricardo Espinosa, who succeeded Ms. Martineau in 2003, saw the number of NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC double during his decade in office. With approximately 4,000 NGOs already registered in 2014, the consistently growing interest from the civil society community was requiring innovative tools to manage engagement, and so an electronic database was created to record participation. Additionally, an NGO Resource

Centre was established at the Palais des Nations in 2007 as a space for NGOs to meet and work.

Today, there are about 5,000 NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC, and 1,023 of them are also accredited to UN Geneva. In this era of technological advances and increased interaction through electronic tools, UN Geneva strives to balance online and offline communication with NGO representatives to facilitate their engagement with the United Nations system. Four decades on, UN Geneva, through the current NGO Liaison Officer, Lidiya Grigoreva, and her team, continues to expand and promote civil society participation in UN activities to advance the Organization’s ideals and principles as engraved in the Charter. Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals can only be possible with the active engagement of non-State actors, including civil society.

To sustain the ties that bind the United Nations with NGOs, the UN Geneva Director-General meets regularly with civil society representatives and holds a dialogue twice yearly to discuss the Organization’s upcoming agenda and priorities. UN Geneva supported NGOs in their organization of nearly 60 events in 2018, most of which covered topics related to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In June 2018, UN Geneva also facilitated participation by NGOs in consultations with ECOSOC’s Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, held in New York, by video link. A first of its kind, this interactive hearing discussed how the contribution of NGOs could be further strengthened.



The Director of the Geneva Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, Anja Kaspersen, discusses disarmament matters at the Civil Society Dialogue on Frontier Issues on 17 August, with participants and presentations from both within and outside of the Palais des Nations.

UN Photo: Adam Kane



What will the intergovernmental meeting of the future look like?

Will remote participation affect intergovernmental meetings, and how will it change the dynamics of discussions, negotiations and accreditations?

Can you still have confidential meetings if a delegate tweets from the room?

How do you ensure that large conferences and summits with thousands of delegates from around the world are organized in an environmentally sustainable manner?

Can secretariats influence the composition of delegations so that they are gender-balanced? How do they ensure that large meetings and conferences are free from sexism and harassment?

How does the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development influence the direction of the governing bodies of UN agencies?

These were some of the questions and topics discussed between more than two dozen United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, along with other organizations, gathered for the tenth annual meeting of the United Nations Governing Bodies Secretariats, held at the Palais des Nations in June 2018.

The meeting was hosted by the UN Geneva and saw a record number of participants, including newcomers such as the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Organization for Migration and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Director-General Michael Møller highlighted this forum's special role in fostering cooperation, particularly among those sections of the secretariats

that work closely with Member States. He remarked that the networks' innovative, horizontal and collaborative approach made it more effective as a model for others to help realize the Sustainable Development Goals.

At a time when multilateralism continues to be challenged globally, and resources for meetings and negotiations are becoming increasingly scarce, facilitating effective decision-making by governing bodies remains vital. Against this background, the role of the United Nations Governing Bodies Secretariats in promoting cooperation and sustainable development has become more important than ever.

Participants listen attentively during a meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Competition Law and Policy organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. The event took place in the newly-renovated Emirates Room (Room XVII), generously donated by the Government of the United Arab Emirates in 2016.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



Disarmament for visitors: learning from Hiroshima

In Ariana Park surrounding the Palais des Nations grows a ginkgo sapling, a special gift presented to the United Nations by the [Mayors for Peace](#). The ginkgo planted in Geneva carries a symbolic and significant message for humanity. Descended from a mother tree which survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945, it represents hope and peace, as a never-ending witness of the horrific humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. It is a reminder that only through denuclearization and a total elimination of weapons of mass destruction can we achieve lasting peace.

“Disarmament is one of the greatest unfinished tasks we are passing on to future generations” says Director-General Michael Møller. In 2017, more than \$1.7 trillion were spent globally on weapons and militaries – the highest level since the end of the Cold War and around 80 times the amount needed for global humanitarian aid.

UN Geneva is not accepting this reality in silence. Disarmament features strongly in the guided tours of the Palais des Nations, home to the UN [Conference on Disarmament](#) and the [Institute for Disarmament Research](#). Visitors are told about the history of international action towards disarmament through visits to the historic [Council Chamber](#), where the Conference on Disarmament meets. Information on display at the permanent exhibition on the Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear bombings raise awareness of the massive humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and are intended to influence visitors – about 80 per cent of whom are youth – to become active advocates for peace.

In order to share rich and pertinent information with visitors, UN Geneva tour guides went to Japan to learn at the [Peace Memorial Museum](#) in Hiroshima.

Through personal testimonies of hibakusha, the survivors of the 1945 atomic bombings, and a series of lectures, seminars and site visits, tour guides learned about the multifarious effects and consequences of nuclear war and about the ongoing efforts for global nuclear disarmament. These teachings have already been incorporated into tours at UN Geneva.



UN Geneva tour guides visit the Atomic Bomb Dome, near the epicentre of the nuclear bombing in Hiroshima.

UN Photo



Library builds upon its historic role

The [League of Nations](#) – the forerunner to the United Nations – was established in 1919, as a forum for resolving international disputes in the aftermath of the First World War. Its creation was a massive undertaking leading towards a global institutionalization of international relations.

From the time that it began its work in Palais Wilson, on the shores of Lake Geneva, the League used a system to organize and archive the numerous communications and documents drafted by diplomats, officials and international civil servants. Founded in 1919 as the League of Nations Library, the archive continued this work during its move to the Palais des Nations in 1936. After the League of Nations was disbanded in 1946, the Library officially became the [Library of the United Nations Office at Geneva](#).

The Library has traversed the history of two important organizations, playing its part in facilitating the development of international multilateral diplomacy. Through its unique collections built up over a century, the Library attracts researchers from across the world. In 2009, the League of Nations Archives were inscribed in UNESCO’s [Memory of the World Register](#). This registration underlined the importance of the archives in Geneva as a global heritage as well as the responsibilities of UN Geneva as their owner. In 2018, the Library and Archives teams received more than 850 requests for physical access and welcomed 2,422 people taking guided tours.

As libraries worldwide continue to evolve and adapt to new technologies and ways of learning, the UN Library Geneva is maintaining its historic archival role while meeting the changing needs of its users. In 1927, John D. Rockefeller Jr. contributed \$2 million to endow the League of Nations with a

modern library suitable for the study of international relations. The Library is carrying on this vision today, preparing for the future needs of the United Nations and people worldwide.

In 2018, some public spaces in the Library were redeveloped, creating specialized areas to better facilitate group work and informal discussion. An integrated learning and collaboration service was created to respond to the requirements of diplomats and UN staff in Geneva, through its new Knowledge and Learning Commons.

New policies developed at UN Geneva are being put in place, which will, through reliance on the Library, make it easier for staff to work from wherever they are in the world using a variety of distance working and collaborative technologies.

Visitors to the Library will see the completely renovated Events Room. The renewed space is a more fitting venue for events to foster dialogue, exchange knowledge and build partnerships for sustainable development.

In 2019, UN Geneva will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Library and the League of Nations. The Library is strengthening its commitment to helping the knowledge and learning needs of diplomats and staff.



Amber Heard, a world-renowned actress and an outspoken advocate against discrimination, discusses her experiences on human rights during an event at the UN Library Geneva on 22 October.

UN Photo: Stjepan Slavkovic



Preserving a century of multilateral diplomacy

Amid the 1.5 million volumes, 4 million UN documents and 70,000 electronic journals housed at the UN Library Geneva lies a priceless treasure: the archives of the League of Nations.

The 15 million pages in the League of Nations archives document humanity’s first attempt at forging a multilateral organization to preserve global peace, foster development and protect human rights. Its shelves chronicle the successes and failures of an organization that faced many of the same challenges facing today’s leaders. The United Nations continues to learn from the legacy of the League of Nations, drawing lessons and inspiration from its predecessor as we move forward on the path to sustainable development.

Recognizing the immense value of the League of Nations archives, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization inscribed the League of Nations Archives on the Memory of the World Register in 2009.

In 2017, the UN Library Geneva launched an ambitious five-year project to digitize this collection and to make it available globally by 2022, through a state-of-the-art online platform. Already 2.7 million pages have been digitized in the Total Digital Access to the League of Nations Archives Project. Working in collaboration with the University of Geneva, the Library has also started a series of crowd-sourcing challenges to teach machines to index archives documents automatically and to accurately identify their language.

The project is made possible by a generous donation from a private Swiss foundation.



A team of people prepare the documents for scanning. Many of the historic files need to be carefully repaired. Staples and other items are removed from the documents by hand. In one day, a single person removes enough fasteners to fill a jar.



UN Photo: Elina Okic

UN Photo: Elina Okic

UN Photo: Elina Okic



15 million pages

Total content of the League of Nations Archives

2017

Start of project



Mont Blanc

4,800 m



3,000 m

If these pages stacked up, they would create a 3,000-metre-tall tower

2018

2.7 million pages digitized



2022

End of project

UN Photo: Elina Okic



Building UN Geneva sustainably

Construction of a new permanent building, Building H, as part of the UN Geneva Strategic Heritage Plan, is well under way and proceeding at a brisk pace. Located at the north end of the Palais des Nations campus, the “terraced landscape” of Building H is being woven into the natural topography of Ariana Park, creating a sustainable, harmonious and timeless piece of architecture. Organized around two courtyards, the building will provide an interconnected, collaborative workplace for its occupants, optimizing use of space and affording awe-inspiring views.

A sustainable building for a sustainable United Nations

With sustainability in mind, Building H was designed to meet the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold Standard, an internationally recognized environmental building certification and the most widely used “green” building rating system in the world, as well as the eco-friendly Swiss Minergie certification. A healthy, highly efficient workplace will be created using renewable energy, natural lighting and sustainable materials, and the building will feature a roof that is green in both senses of the word. Additionally, the Geneva-Lake-Nations closed-circuit cooling system is being installed, which will channel water from the lake through a heat exchanger and then return it to the lake, ensuring that the Palais des Nations is cooled by 100% renewable energy.

In harmony with nature

Both the look and the feel of Building H are designed to be sustainable and to blend into the natural surroundings. Numerous timber beams are

being incorporated into the building, instead of using precast concrete. Most of the building’s wooden features have been sourced from sustainably managed forests located within 350km of the construction site, reducing the carbon footprint.

Floor-to-ceiling glass will maximize natural daylight and make the most of the beautiful views, while an innovative automated shading system will respond to the sun’s movements to minimize solar heat gain and control glare throughout the day.

The green roof is also intended to integrate well with the surrounding parkland, encouraging wildlife to share the space and reducing the building’s heat island effect as well as rainwater run-off. Portions of the roof will remain accessible for informal gatherings in a natural setting.

Due to be completed in early 2020, the building will initially be used as swing space for staff during the complete renovation of the Palais des Nations. It will then become the permanent home for staff from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and UN Geneva’s Division of Administration. The new building is shaping up to be one of Switzerland’s greenest, inside and out, creating a welcoming and efficient place to work.



©Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLC / Burchard+Partner SA, 2018



The Celestial Sphere Restoration Project

The leaders of the world came together in 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference to bring a conclusion to the First World War. Horrified at the unprecedented death and destruction wrought by the war, they concluded that the world needed a “League of Nations” and established its headquarters at Geneva.

The Palais des Nations was completed in 1938. To commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the League of Nations, and to honour United States President Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924) for his leadership in establishing the League, the *Celestial Sphere* was gifted to the Palais des Nations.

The iconic outdoor sculpture, located in the Cour d’honneur, was donated by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation of New York and was the masterwork of American sculptor Paul H.anship (1885–1966). The *Celestial Sphere* depicts the heavens as seen from Earth, displaying 840 metal stars and 64 bronze statuettes of the figures from classical mythology representing the constellations.

As a prominent world-class work of art, the *Celestial Sphere* naturally became a symbol of the United Nations and International Geneva. An anonymous donation secured by the Director-General has enabled a much-needed restoration of the sculpture.

The *Celestial Sphere* Restoration Project began in mid-2017 with engineering, artistic and historical assessments. Detailed restoration strategies and plans developed in 2018 have allowed public bidding for the expert art conservation and mechanical engineering work. In 2019, expert contractors will disassemble the sculpture, replace its steel support structure, clean and regild bronze surfaces, and reassemble the Celestial Sphere, restoring it to its original beauty.

The restoration should conclude by 2020, in time to celebrate the centennial of the first meeting of the General Assembly of the League of Nations in Geneva. As we restore the sculpture physically as a work of art, we are also reviving a beloved symbol of the United Nations, International Geneva, and humanity’s enduring aspirations for world peace.



UN Photo: Elina Okic



UN Photo: Robert Enholm

The *Celestial Sphere*, as seen from above in January 2018, showing its deteriorated state.

The *Celestial Sphere* being assembled in 1939 at the Bruno Bearzi Fonderia in Florence, Italy.

The Celestial Sphere Restoration Project began in mid-2017 with engineering, artistic and historical assessments.



UN Photo: Robert Enholm

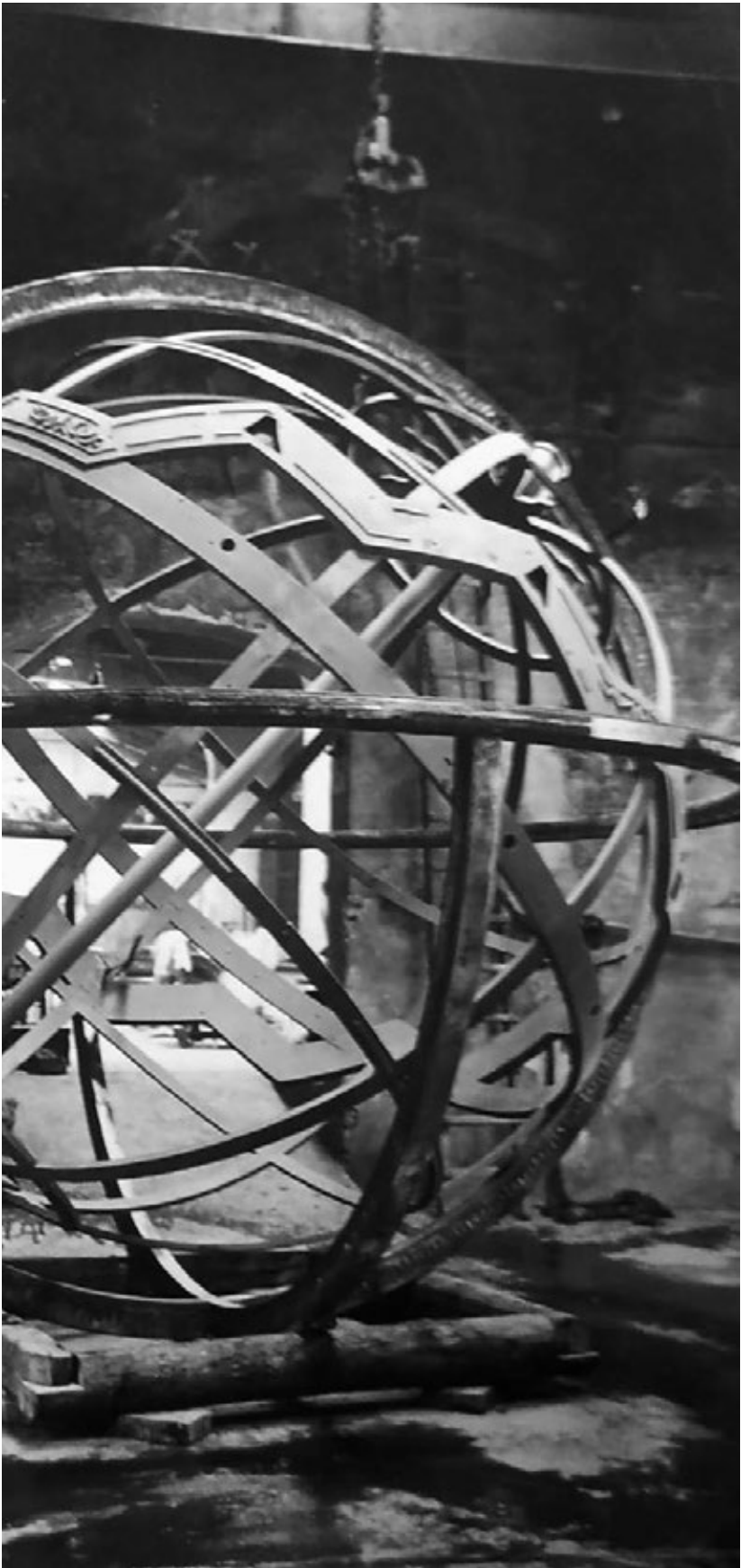


Photo: Paul Manship Family Archives



Efficient and client-oriented in times of change

How do we build a more efficient client-centred organization, giving staff more time to focus on their work? UN Geneva understands that the answer is to identify its clients’ needs and to respond quickly and appropriately to address them. This has been a key philosophy driving UN Geneva over the years, and in 2018 it inspired the creation of the Client Support Centre.

Clients had voiced concerns that it was inconvenient and confusing to have to visit multiple locations around the Palais des Nations, with an assortment of different opening hours, for administrative support. As a result of that feedback, UN Geneva set out to combine all the services in one easily accessible location. Workflows were also re-engineered to improve quality and response times for all services.

From day one, the Centre has provided staff with a range of administrative services. To make it even easier for clients, the Centre is open daily and has consistent opening hours for all services. All staff providing front-line services at the Centre are bilingual in French and English.

With this new approach of providing services in one location, UN Geneva is seizing the opportunity to enhance cooperation among administrative support staff while increasing process efficiencies. Working at the Centre alongside other support staff has given team members a greater understanding of the impact that their role has on other services. “This means that staff are better equipped to address the client’s concern at the first point of contact, which significantly increases customer satisfaction,” says the Director of the Division of Administration, Clemens Adams. Early reports from clients using the Centre have been positive and new services are being considered for future inclusion.

Services you can receive at the Client Support Centre

Human resources (contract administration, entitlements, time management, salary, work attestations, Umoja Employee Self-Service)

Onboarding and separation

Medical insurance issues (registration, insurance claims)

Diplomatic services (petrol cards, CD plates, VAT exemption)

Laissez-passer, UN certificate, or UN family certificate.

IT equipment (laptops, screens) and mobile phones

Banking details, payroll and travel expense reports

Issuance and renewal of personal and vehicle badges

Pension fund matters (on Tuesday mornings)

“This means that staff are better equipped to address the client’s concern at the first point of contact, which significantly increases customer satisfaction”



In its first two months of operation, the Client Support Centre received around 6,400 visitors and 4,500 phone calls, and resolved 650 online service requests.

UN Photo: Adam Kane



Increased transparency through administrative innovation

For activities outside of the UN regular budget, clients of UN Geneva administrative services can benefit from strengthened financial management through improved access to more detailed billing information. For the 30 United Nations entities whose financial management services are provided by UN Geneva, a newly implemented transparency tool will allow them to see more details on invoices, and service line unit prices.

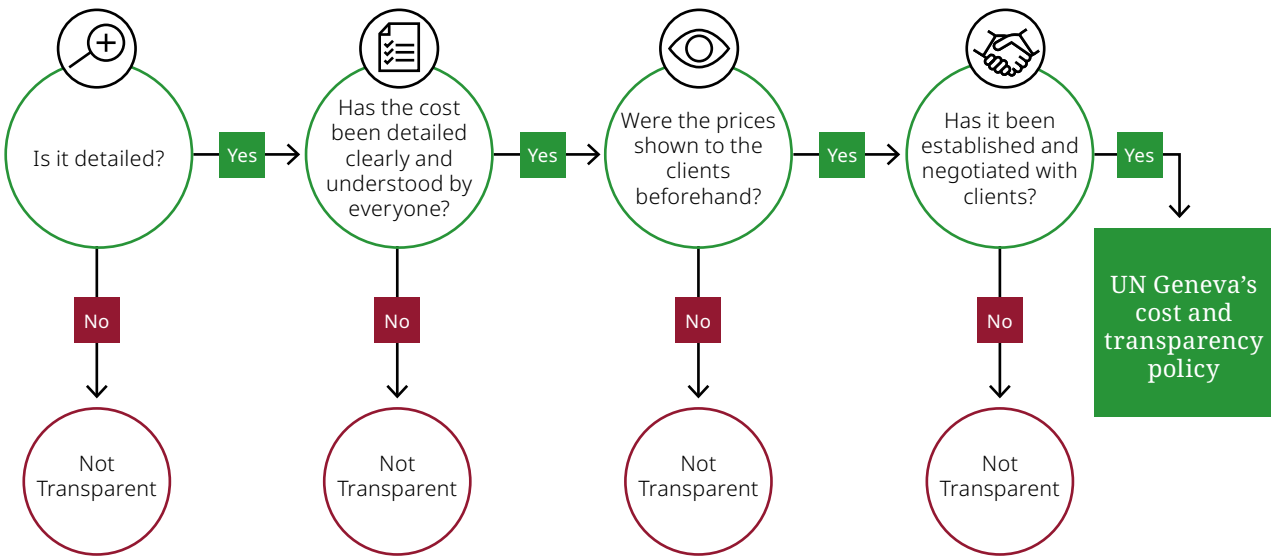
Administrative services have also become more efficient. New tools have been implemented to better capture the various costs related to workload, and regular feedback meetings with clients

have been instituted. These tools were developed to prevent the need to rewrite or review agreements multiple times.

Regularly updated, and transparent, service price lists are improving client satisfaction and the quality of exchange between UN Geneva and its clients.

UN Geneva provides more than 80 cost-effective services ranging from payroll and payments to staff contract administration and diplomatic privileges in a reliable and sustainable manner to numerous clients within the United Nations Secretariat and to United Nations entities in Geneva, Bonn, The Hague and 126 field office locations worldwide.

Transparency and cost recovery



UN Geneva administers services to UN entities in Geneva, Bonn, The Hague and 126 field office locations worldwide.

UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



Nurturing relationships with journalists

Dozens of journalists were killed worldwide in 2018, adding to the more than 1,000 killed in the past decade, while freedom of information remains under attack in a number of countries. Highlighting the need for Governments and the international community to protect journalists and create better conditions for them to do their work, Secretary-General António Guterres reminds us: *“Truth never dies. Neither must our commitment to the fundamental right to freedom of expression.”* When journalists are targeted, societies as a whole pay a price. UN Geneva recognizes the need to warmly welcome the press corps and ensure their freedom to disseminate the important messages of peace and development beyond the walls of the Palais des Nations.

“Being based in the Palais means that we have direct and easy access to press events and spokespeople, and this is priceless,” says Nina Larson, president of the United Nations Correspondents Association and a journalist with Agence France-Presse. Encouraged by those who speak powerfully on issues such as serious human rights abuses or violations of international law, Larson adds that “strong and clear comments in such cases is what moves issues forward and also what makes news”.

At any given time, there are numerous journalists working in the halls and conference rooms of the Palais des Nations, reporting the UN story and topics of interest to audiences around the globe. Some are permanent correspondents in the UN Geneva press corps, and others are accredited on a temporary basis, reporting on one or a number of the events that take place in Geneva.



The press is briefed on the Geneva Consultations on Yemen on 8 September.

UN Photo: Violaine Martin

UN Geneva delivered around 250 permanent media accreditations in 2018, as well as some 800 temporary media accreditations. Ninety-eight biweekly press briefings were held with accredited journalists, and 195 press conferences were held by the UN family in Geneva.

In recognition of the importance of journalists, the Secretary-General emphasizes that together we must “stand up for journalists, for truth and for justice”. UN Geneva provides a range of services to journalists, including accreditation, information-sharing, access to events, live feeds, and the use of facilities including office space and the television and radio studios. In contrast to a global shift towards restriction of media freedom, UN Geneva strives to ensure that events, press briefings and press conferences are spaces where journalists can freely ask questions without fear of being intimidated.



Staying informed with meetings coverage

“Civilians, civilians, civilians. Syrian civilians. Protection, humanitarian assistance, access, funding.” These were the top priorities listed by former UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura to a room of participants at the high-level event on Syria in September 2018.

These are powerful words, capable of making a real impact on the lives of many, and like numerous other statements made at the Palais des Nations, they were included in news clips produced by the UN Information Service Geneva. These words and messages are broadcast around the world, becoming references and focus for global discussion. As UN Geneva continues to host more conferences and events each year, the Service continues to broadcast special messages about the realities of work done by the United Nations to people everywhere.

Through its briefings, official statements, interviews and background documents, the Service conveys the official position of the United Nations on newsworthy matters. Daily, breaking news and in-depth multimedia materials often in French and English, are distributed to journalists and international media outlets. Raw and edited news materials are made accessible to the public through radio and TV broadcasts, webcasts, press releases and meeting summaries and increasingly through social media channels and other online platforms.

In 2018, UN Geneva produced 1,006 meeting summaries and 2,455 webcast videos which were seen more than 430,000 times by viewers world-wide. The Information Service covers activities at the Palais des Nations and around Geneva, ensuring that the messages of peace and security are heard around the world.



Voislav Šuc, President of the Human Rights Council (left), with Rolando Gómez, spokesperson of the Human Rights Council (right), during a press conference on 5 September.

UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



24 HOURS WITH UN GENEVA SECURITY

The UN Geneva security team ensures safety around the clock every day of the year. In 2018, the 203 officers who make up the security staff screened for entry around 600,000 individuals and 400,000 vehicles, accompanied visitors to the infirmary, detected suspicious objects, investigated possible theft and completed a number of other duties. This infographic illustrates what could be a typical day for security staff at the Palais des Nations.

3 a.m.

Officers are stationed at the Pregny gate 24/7, though the gate itself is closed on weekends. They redirect a non-UN-affiliated individual attempting to enter the Palais.

1 a.m.

Staff drive throughout the grounds to conduct surveillance of the park. They check an alarm set off by a raccoon.

10.45 p.m.

A piece of unattended luggage is located near the Chemin de Fer gate. The area is isolated and the DetEx K9 team called in to do a further search. As in most cases, it is a false alarm.



To watch a video showcasing 24 hours with UN Geneva security, scan the QR code.

6 a.m.

Tuesday morning...

5.15 a.m.

Dawn on Monday as the morning security shift enters the Palais. They change into their blue uniforms and bulletproof vests, retrieve their firearms from the armory, and prepare to begin their 6 a.m.–2 p.m. shift.

5.45 a.m.

Pregny Gate slowly opens and the night shift debriefs their colleagues on the evenings events. Instructions received, the new team is ready to begin another day keeping the Palais des Nations safe. A friendly crackle is heard over the radio as the operator sends a morning check to all stations.

3.45 p.m.

There is an altercation between two individuals, and security staff de-escalate the situation. One of the individuals will later be denied further access to the premises following a decision of the administration.

4 p.m.

A staff member reports a theft after negligently leaving his wallet at the café. The investigation team interviews him. They will later return it to him after finding it in the lost and found.

5-7 p.m.

Staff leave their offices. Traffic is regulated to facilitate departures.

9.45 p.m.

The incoming night team is briefed on the day's events. Their shift will be 10 p.m.–6 a.m. They are relieving the 2–10 p.m. shift.

23.30 p.m.

Security staff do rounds of the buildings and monitor the annexes. The building is quiet.

6 a.m.

Down the hill, the Chemin de Fer gate opens. A line of service-provider vehicles has formed as they wait to be inspected. The DetEx K9 team searches cargo areas and checks for explosives and unauthorized objects.

7 a.m.

Nations Gate opens. A few early tourists snap photos of the Broken Chair monument in Place des Nations before turning to admire the view beneath the twentieth-century architecture of the Palais des Nations – a long grass lawn lined with the flags of the 193 UN Member States and 2 observer States.

7.30 a.m.

A queue of pedestrians forms at Pregny Gate as they wait to pass their bags through the X-ray machine and receive their badges.

1 p.m.

The local Swiss police and members of the Palais security team do a joint simulation of an evacuation. Local authorities and Palais staff often collaborate when conducting such simulations.

11.30 a.m.

There is a demonstration of 50 people chanting and marching on the Place des Nations to protest a meeting happening at the Palais. Security officers at the Nations Gate monitor the situation but only interfere if the protestors attempt to enter the UN grounds.

10.45 a.m.

Two security officers accompany a visitor who is feeling ill to the infirmary. In severe cases, in addition to support from the UN Geneva medical staff, a local ambulance is called to transport the patient to the nearest hospital.

10 a.m.

An Italian student group follows their guide on a tour through the UN. The students are part of the approximately 110,000 visitors who tour the Palais des Nations each year. Their guide shows them the marbled Salle des pas perdus, the Council Chamber, the Assembly Hall, which is the largest room in the Palais, and other iconic places in the Palais.



Behind the scenes: the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to Geneva

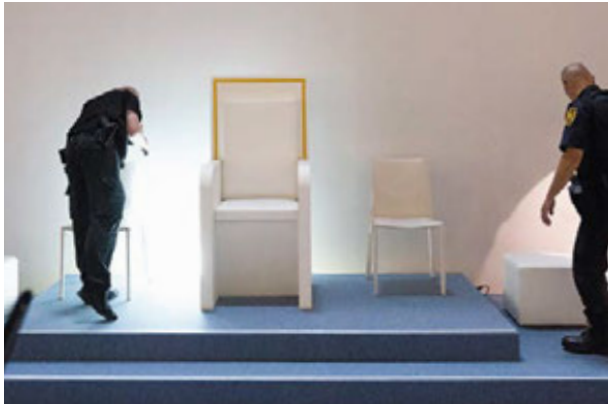
His Holiness Pope Francis paid a historic visit to Geneva on 21 June during the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the World Council of Churches. More than 37,000 people attended the pontifical high mass at the Palexpo exhibition and convention centre that evening. Before the event, the UN Geneva security team secured the scene under the direction of Swiss police forces.

Four specially trained dogs and their trainers from the United Nations DetEx K9 team in Geneva thoroughly searched Palexpo's 75,000 square metres and 70,000 seats for potential explosives. They worked alongside the Swiss explosive detection team and bomb squad from the day before until the next morning. This was the first time the two forces collaborated for such an event, opening the door to future collaboration for similar events.

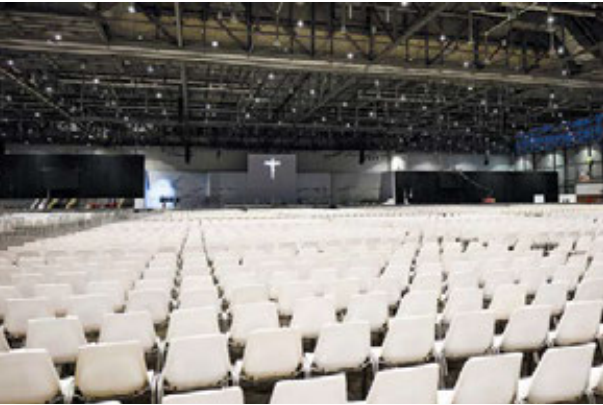
If you would like to learn more about the DetEx K9 Unit follow them on Twitter @DetexK9.



UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré



UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré



UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré



Scan the QR code to see how the DetEx K9 team searches for explosives at the Palais des Nations.



Leaving no one behind by creating inclusive UN workplaces

"We must strive to create a workplace that is safe, enabling every staff member to feel included and valued. Only through such an Organization can we hope to unlock the richly diverse potential of every single one of us and work together in order to forge a more peaceful and inclusive future."

– UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller

Diversity is a core value of the United Nations, and staff at UN Geneva should be aligned with this vision. With this in mind, no staff member should be discriminated against or harassed on the grounds of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics. The United Nations should lead by example, ensuring a discrimination- and harassment-free workplace.

UN Geneva has been working with UN GLOBE, the inter-agency group representing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) staff members of the UN system, to adapt and evolve the work culture in Geneva to support LGBTI employees. In early 2018, the Director-General appointed Luis Sarabia Utrilla as the UN GLOBE coordinator for UN Geneva. Mr. Sarabia Utrilla has been working to promote equality and improve the well-being of LGBTI staff members at UN Geneva.

UN Geneva has continued to champion LGBTI inclusion beyond the Palais des Nations. In June 2018, UN Geneva partnered with the City of Geneva to host an event on inclusion of the LGBTI community. That event brought together UN staff and members of the local community in a social setting to discuss and learn about these issues.



Members of UN GLOBE marching at Pride 2018 Lugano

Photo: UN GLOBE

10 COOL PLACES AT THE PALAIS DES NATIONS THAT ARE OFTEN OVERLOOKED

Almost 1,000,000 people come to the Palais des Nations every year. Some of the visitors are long-time employees, some come to participate in meetings or conferences, others might be first-time guests. Rooms evoke histories of diverse nations throughout this living museum that stretches across the 46-hectare Ariana Park. This is a list of 10 places unique to the Palais des Nations.



UN Photo: Adam Kane

1. Chalet de Montbovon

Somewhere high up in the mountains along the border between the cantons of Fribourg and Vaud, deep in the Gruyère Pays-d'Enhaut Regional Nature Park, a Swiss man once carved and painted flowery embellishments onto the wooden facade of his mountain home. The green, blue and yellow colours would have complemented the seasonal alpine flowers and natural grass growing around it. This was the humble beginnings for the 400-year-old chalet which is now a part of the UN Geneva campus, nestled in a discreet corner of Ariana Park.

The 17th century chalet was built in Montbovon in 1668 and transported to Geneva more than 200 years later for the 1896 Swiss National Exhibition. It was displayed as part of the reproduction of a typical Swiss village. When the exhibition ended, the Gustave Revilliod Foundation bought the chalet for a rumoured 50 Swiss Francs at auction and had it moved to the Ariana Park. The interior reveals inscriptions written in the 19th century Franco-Provençal dialect. Above windows and on the walls are words and symbols encouraging kindness and humility, possibly foreshadowing the chalet's future placement on the grounds of the world's leading promoter of peace, rights and well-being. Climbing the dark stairwell inside, visitors will find the remnants of a stove which kept its habitants warm on a cold alpine night. The chalet is empty except for its balcony, beautifully decorated with bright and lively flowers, kept fresh by the Park's gardeners.

2. The Russian Room

Hidden behind an intricately detailed double-door, visitors will find an exquisitely furnished salon. The room is the epitome of luxury, from the beautifully inlaid floors, finely upholstered seating and ornate wooden furniture to the hand painted artwork on the ceiling, and classical art on the walls. The Russian Federation refurbished this room for the first time in 1995, in honour of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, and again in 2015. Before 1995, the 24-square-metre space was an office with no special fittings. Situated between the French Salon and the Czech and Slovak Room near the Council Chamber, this room is used for hosting official visits and for high-level talks.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, during the inauguration of the renovated Russian Room at the Palais des Nations on 1 March 2016.

3. Best view in town

In order to really get a sense of where the Palais des Nations is situated in Geneva, delegates and staff can make their way to the 8th floor of the A Building, where they are treated to one of the best panoramic views of the city. Walk through the sliding doors and out onto the balcony to find magnificent views of the Ariana Park, the Botanical Gardens and even the *Jet d'eau*, Geneva's iconic landmark. On a clear day, visitors can also take in stunning views of the Mont Blanc, Europe's tallest mountain, and surrounding Alpine mountain range. From this vantage point, one can also see many of the headquarters of Geneva-based international organizations.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



UN Photo: Violaine Martin

4. The Printshop

Imagine a whirring hum, in a seemingly endless room of machinery, filled with the

smell of fresh ink and paper. Listen to the mechanical rhythms of printing, wrapping and stacking of the latest United Nations official documents, publications, reports and more. Staffed by innovative teams of graphic artists, printers, bookbinders, document distribution assistants and more, the labyrinth of the UN Geneva Printshop is the working hub where most of the printed material from the Organization and from International Geneva take physical shape. Among the rows of complex machines, instruments from both printing's early days and its future can be seen, including an Original Heidelberg letterpress and a pair of 3D printers. The printshop holds the top ISO environmental management system certification, attesting to its efficient and environmentally sustainable publishing.



UN Photo: Kimberly Kenny

5. Looking beyond the flags

Each day thousands of tourists in Geneva gather at the Place des Nations near the Nations Gate and point their cameras towards the majestic rows of flags stretching towards the Palais des Nations. At the end of the *Allée des Drapeaux*, under the emblem of the United Nations, is the office that serves as the backdrop for this iconic photo. In that building sits a team of hard-working staff. The United Nations has one of the most diverse workforces in the world. Over 3,000 UN Secretariat staff in Geneva, from a wide range of professional backgrounds and with 171 nationalities, provide essential support to the international community every day.

6. Kazakh Room

Though popcorn might be prohibited, thought-provoking films and discussions are always on the schedule of the Kazakh Room, also known as Cinema-Room XIV, at the Palais des Nations. This technologically state-of-the-art room was renovated and refurbished by the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2012. The Parisian interior designer Marc Simon adorned the 159-square-metre space with ash mouldings, mahogany beading and hessian wall coverings. Formerly a committee room, the space was transformed into a cinema after extensive alterations in 1972. Since its 2012 redesign, it has been used to hold movie screenings, press conferences, cultural performances, and intergovernmental meetings.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

H.E. Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, former Director-General of UN Geneva and current President of the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan (right) and H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, during the visit to the newly renovated Kazakh Room on 2 July 2013.

7. Turkmen Room

Visitors who exit through the north-facing bronze doors of the Council Chamber, will enter the square-shaped Room I, generally reserved for those participating in complex mediation and negotiations. It has no gallery and no interpreters' booths, which means it has virtually been preserved in the state in which it was originally built in the 1930s. The room's high ceiling and decorative elements – including elegant chandeliers, lamps, as well as the enormous and beautiful Turkmen rugs – creates a space to inspire productive discussions. Displayed on the wall opposite the door is the name Felix Jaray, the room's designer. The walls are fully panelled in African pear wood, and four large walnut tables are situated in the centre. The floor and the entire wall opposite the windows are covered in delicately woven rugs. A long



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Michael Møller, Director General of UN Geneva (right at podium) with Atageldi Haljanov, Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations Office at Geneva (left) at the inauguration of the Turkmen Room 1 December 2014.

burgundy couch curves around three of the four walls. This room stands out amongst the rest, thanks to the generous donation of Turkmenistan that contributed to its renovation and upgrade in 2013.



UN Photo: Adam Kane

8. Czech and Slovak Room

On the other side of the Council Chamber, opposite Room I, is the Czech and Slovak

Room. The decor and interior design work, as well as the furniture, were a gift from the Government of Czechoslovakia, presented to the League of Nations on 15 September 1937. The brass wire mural, displayed against a light blue background, depicts eight of the 12 signs of the Zodiac: Pisces, Capricorn, Scorpio, Libra, Virgo, Leo, Gemini and Sagittarius. The room was originally conceived as a replica of a musical theatre in the Art Deco style. In 1994–1995, the Czech and Slovak Governments collaborated to completely renovate the room. Although the former Czechoslovakia divided into two independent republics in 1993, the two new States recognized the importance of upholding the legacy of the United Nations and shared the renovation costs. The room now honours both countries.



A general view of participants during a meeting with The International Syria Support Group (ISSG) on 25 February 2016.

UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

9. Concordia

Concordia is primarily used for specific peace talks and mediation work. This means that for much of the year it is off limits to unauthorized visitors. Those who find their way down into Concordia will be greeted with a modern-designed café, numerous small and medium-sized meeting rooms, all renovated in 2016. And, in the centre of the foyer, well lit, under protective glass, lies the foundation stone and time capsule hidden below. In this unique setting, the stone continues to represent the foundation of global peace and security, as it always has, since being placed there on 7 September 1929.

10. Hungarian Salon

In any given year, the UN Geneva Director-General, meets hundreds of high-level dignitaries, Heads of State and Government, Ministers for Foreign Affairs, celebrities and many others. Visitors are often invited to wait in the Hungarian Salon. This beautifully decorated reception room of 36 square metres was once called the “ambassador’s lounge” and is still capable of serving that function today. On its walls hang numerous works of art, generously donated by Hungary in 1936. They represent some of the greatest Hungarian artists of their time.



UN Photo: Adam Kane

To see these rooms in virtual reality, scan the QR code.



INNOVATIVE EVOLUTION

As the Palais des Nations continues to be the preferred venue for multilateral discussions on peace, rights and wellbeing, UN Geneva and its staff must continue to evolve and adapt to the needs of today and of the future. With the vision of a fully renovated Palais des Nations just beyond the horizon and a new building rising steadily from the grounds of Ariana Park, incorporating new ways of working and encouraging modern approaches is essential. UN Geneva is growing physically and strengthening the range of support and services available to our clients. When the dust settles, and construction is completed at the Palais des Nations, we will be better equipped to meet the demands of a changing world.

There were over

2.5

million visits to the
UN Geneva website
in 2018. The Flickr account had
almost **17** million views since its
creation and **5,203** photos were
uploaded in 2018.





Telling the UN story with creativity, imagination and innovation

“It’s very important that every staff understand that this is not the job only of information people. This is the job of each and every staff. Each and every staff of UN Geneva is an ambassador of the UN message and everybody should communicate in such a way that our voice is heard all over the world.”

– **Alessandra Vellucci**, Director of the UN Geneva Information Service

As the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) are universal, success will depend on our ability to engage the broadest coalition possible on the Goals and to communicate their relevance to people in all walks of life. With those aims in mind, UN Geneva has developed innovative methods and structures to raise the level of awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals and other UN priorities worldwide. Our audiences now receive first-off-the-block information in French and English, on peace, humanitarian, health and human rights issues, and economic and social development. Adopting new communication technologies has strengthened our ability to engage deeply with the public, promoting the values of the [Charter of the United Nations](#), the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) and the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

Launched by the Director-General in 2014, the [Perception Change Project](#) (PCP) is a collective effort to show the relevance and impact of the work of Geneva-based entities. Through different publications and projects, PCP continues to broaden the overall understanding of International Geneva by using innovative communication methods. The project has managed to mobilize a network of over 100 change-makers who understand that business as usual is no longer a viable solution.

The United Nations Information Service also continued to tell the UN story with creativity. The [Geneva Witness](#) showcased new ways of engaging the public on key United Nations issues. These short videos feature memorable individuals who pass through UN Geneva – the Holocaust survivor, a victim of terrorism, a war surgeon, or a disabled dance troupe. As the new school year rolled in at the end of August, so did we in the studios of [Radio Lac Matin](#), where every Tuesday morning, our public information officer briefs some 40,000 Genevans on most pertinent activities and events at the Palais des Nations, for example on [Geneva Peace Week](#) or on the [Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health](#).

The impact of outreach and engagement efforts is already being seen. For instance, images on Twitter from the opening of the September 2018 session of the Human Rights Council were seen by nearly 500,000 people in one day. Today, 660,000 people follow the UN Geneva [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts, and pictures on [Flickr](#) had over 1 million views in 2018.

Committing resources to expanding the Organization’s digital presence and intensifying social media activities is helping audiences worldwide access important information more quickly. UN Geneva TV, Radio and Photo content is produced to share compelling stories of the work being done to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. These stories, along with those of our partners, are being strategically integrated into online platforms, as well as being posted and shared on social media. Additionally, videos and other digital products frequently include multilingual subtitles to make them more widely accessible.

The cycle of transformation and adaptation will never end, and creative and innovative methods of telling our stories will continue to be pursued by the Organization in an effort to engage existing and



Daniel Johnson of UN Radio interviews Monica Ferro, Director of UNFPA Geneva, during a presentation of the report “The State of World Population 2018” on 17 October.

new audiences, empowering them into action. UN Geneva is redeveloping its website, creating a more accessible, multilingual platform that highlights the work of the Organization, along with information, news and events, and showcases projects of, and collaborations with, International Geneva. Digital communications products such as cinematic and immersive videos are being produced, animations created, and events held to help educate about the work of the United Nations and the need to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.



To watch the Geneva Witness series, scan the QR code.



Big data working for you

Open access to data is crucial for the expanded innovation required to meet the challenges of tomorrow. This is especially important to the work that will underpin achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A wealth of knowledge and information, rich in expertise, is being generated by the numerous international organizations, non-governmental organizations, governments, civil society organizations, and private sector actors and academic institutions that make up International Geneva. Yet, despite the relative proximity and frequent collaborations, many organizations within this large network are not fully aware of each other's unique skill sets and capabilities. By leveraging each other's strengths, a bigger impact can be made globally.

Key information can be hard to find and is rarely coordinated, while search tools and other resources are often limited in their range or too focused on single issues. UN Geneva's [Perception Change Project](#) has developed an innovative approach to overcome these challenges, working together with its more than 100 partners to build two distinct and powerful data systems: [SDG Mapping](#) and [GVADATA](#).

To simplify and strengthen potential collaborations among various organizations, the recently updated SDG Mapping platform provides an interactive visualization of the contribution and different types of expertise of actors across International Geneva, and of the Sustainable Development Goals they are working to address. This is a significant update, considering that the first version, released in 2015, was available only in print. Now, no matter where in the world you are, you can see who is doing what for the Sustainable Development Goals across International Geneva.

United Nations agencies, international organizations and non-governmental organizations have united

their data in one collective portal to meet the demands of people searching for specific information from International Geneva. Users can search by thematic areas, by organization and by type of information. Improved and relaunched in 2018, GVADATA is a powerful and evolving platform for discovering the wealth of information and publications available from Geneva-based partners.



A participant listens attentively during a "PCP Meet-up". PCP partners meet monthly at the Palais des Nations to talk about upcoming projects and to share initiatives related to the Sustainable Development Goals.



Viewing our work from different perspectives

Throughout history, stories have been told with more than words. Whether simple drawings or complex multimedia, visual communications bring stories to life. UN Geneva and international organizations are seizing opportunities to use technological innovations to explain their complex work for humanity in new ways. To strengthen our capacity with visual communication tools, UN Geneva organized a series of events in celebration of International Print Day 2018. These events explored the techniques for storytelling through data visualization, immersive 360 video and virtual reality (VR).

Pulitzer Prize winning presenters from USA Today, Nicole Carroll and Ray Soto, along with David Bradshaw from BBC Studios, described the art of immersive storytelling to participants from more than 30 UN agencies and international organizations. *"VR takes away the middleman and it's no longer a journalist explaining the situation to the viewer; the viewer can step into that environment for him- or herself. And when you take away that gap, something really powerful happens,"* said Carroll, Editor in Chief at USA Today.

Through technologies like virtual reality, the United Nations can immerse audiences in settings that would otherwise be inaccessible. *"For me, the best use-case for VR is as a tool for education and learning, because it allows us to experience things that were previously out of our reach, and with new experiences comes new knowledge,"* said Bradshaw.

Participants at the event explored VR through a number of international movies and equipment provided by the [World VR Forum](#). At the workshop on the following day, they got hands-on experience producing a VR product. The teams transformed



Experimenting with virtual reality for telling the UN story from a different perspective.

the ideas sparked at the presentation into rough first-draft pieces that showed parts of the Palais des Nations that the public does not often see. One piece took the viewer from the roof to deep inside the library stacks ending in the room where the League of Nations archives are being digitized. A team member who worked on the piece noted, "The technology is amazing, affordable and straightforward to use, but it's easy to get excited about a secret space or cool tech features and end up leaving the viewer shrugging their shoulders, wondering what the point of the piece was."

Soto, USA Today's Director of Emerging Tech, works at the cutting edge of journalism technology. He highlighted the importance of strong foundations in creating a VR piece, "It really does come down to storytelling. What is it that we want to tell? Why are we telling it? Are we leveraging technology well enough to ensure that we're trying to tell the story we want to tell, but also making an impact?"

UN Geneva is in the process of completing immersive 360-degree views of conference rooms at the Palais des Nations and has plans for a VR tour, for those who want to visit but cannot make it to Geneva.



A unique bag of goodies

Throughout the year, the Director-General meets with high-level dignitaries from around the world. Something many don't know about these meetings is that the honoured guests receive a small gift bag filled with intriguing items. These gifts merit a brief description because they represent, in an innovative way, the work of International Geneva.

The bag contains four creative publications produced by the [Perception Change Project \(PCP\)](#), which was launched by the Director-General in 2014 to showcase the daily impact that Geneva-based organizations have on people's lives around the world:

- [Recipes for Peace, Rights and Well-being](#), co-authored by partnering organizations from International Geneva, shares one-page "recipes" for peace and humanitarian initiatives that have changed the world, interspersed with real food recipes from some of Geneva's most celebrated chefs.
- [Fairy Tales for a Fairer World](#), the PCP's second publication, is a colourful, multicultural compilation of fairytales. The tales gathered from around the world are retold in modern-day language and incorporate global challenges as a way to highlight the significance of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- [After the Rain](#) is a children's book about migration. As migration continues to be a topic in our global discussions, the book is a pathway to include young people in the conversation. Through a baby elephant's journey relocating to a new land, the book explores some of the difficulties refugees and migrants face when leaving their home countries. The aim is to help children better understand the challenges at hand, how to discuss them, and how to help welcome refugees and migrants into their own countries.

- The guide "170 Actions to Transform our World" goes beyond just informing the public about the SDGs. It educates readers on *how* to be part of the solution by listing actions that everyone can take in their daily lives to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by the year 2030.

As the Director-General strives to promote gender equality at UN Geneva and in International Geneva at large, two publications on gender are included in the bag:

- UN Geneva-wide [Policy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women](#) aims to improve gender parity and to combat discrimination across the Organization.
- The second is a communications package about the International [Gender Champions initiative](#), launched in 2014 by the Director-General in Geneva, former US Ambassador Pamela Hamamoto and the NGO Women@TheTable. The International Gender Champions are a leadership network that brings together female and male decision-makers to break down gender barriers, while generating a strong impulse for action on this issue at the highest levels.

Brochures about some of UN Geneva's special projects are among the gifts. For example, a brochure on the [SDG Lab](#), an initiative that contributes to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by supporting Geneva-based actors and a voluntary contributions brochure from the [Strategic Heritage Plan](#) and other restoration projects.

Dignitaries also receive the latest [Annual Report](#) on the work of UN Geneva, a publication which, as you may have discovered, features official activities and events, with a focus on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Finally, the *pièce de résistance* in the gift bag is a tasty pot of honey, which comes from UN Geneva's own beehives located in Ariana Park and symbolizes the special relationship between UN Geneva and its host country of Switzerland: the ten beehives were Switzerland's gift to UN Geneva on the country's tenth anniversary of membership in the UN, under the overall slogan "For a Sweeter World". This item always brings a smile to its recipients.

All these symbolic gifts are wrapped up in a bag printed with the colourful SDG icons, which serves as a reminder that the multitude of actions undertaken by UN Geneva and its partners are underpinned by and in strong support of the Sustainable Development Goals.



UN Photo/Elna Okic



SDG Studio Geneva: global efforts to make the 2030 Agenda a reality

Spreading the word about the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) to as many people as possible is key to achieving them by 2030. The [SDG Studio Geneva](#) is bringing the Goals to the forefront of global conversation by capturing stories in a unique visual format and sharing the messages worldwide.

Many special guests visited the Palais des Nations in 2018, and a number of them stopped by the SDG Studio Geneva to share their unique and inspiring stories. Guests included influencers, politicians, grass-roots organizers, business leaders, artists and United Nations officials, all of whom had at least one thing in common – they are all speaking up and taking action to make the Sustainable Development Goals a reality.

A big hit this year was British actress Rachel Shenton, ambassador for the National Deaf Children's Society in her home country, who is working towards achievement of [Goal 4](#) on ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, focusing especially on the availability of sign language for deaf children. In 2018, she was not only the star of one of the most viewed and shared films made at the SDG Studio Geneva, she also won an Academy Award for her short film *The Silent Child*.

Marie-Laure Vercambre, Director of Green Cross International's Water for Life and Peace programme, which is working towards achievement of [Goal 6](#) on clean water and sanitation, emphasized how access to water is intrinsically linked to peace.

Big in the news this year were stories about global hunger. Carolyn Rodrigues Birkett, Director of the Food and Agriculture Organization, Geneva Liaison Office, which is working towards [SDG 2](#), talked

about the importance of using the world's natural resources more responsibly.

Sparking meaningful conversation between viewers, the SDG Studio Geneva continues to demonstrate the importance of communicating messages supporting achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Since its launch in 2017, more than 109,000 people have viewed and shared the studio's films on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. The studio's film library continues to grow, with 56 videos featuring key messages and stories from world leaders and global influencers now produced, covering all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The studio's films illustrate how UN Geneva makes sure its work and the Sustainable Development Goals feature prominently in discussions – and actions – with the goal of improving the lives of people everywhere by 2030.



To watch the SDG Studio Geneva video series, scan the QR code.



Luis Figo, UEFA's football advisor and retired football star, is interviewed by Aziyadé Poltier-Mutal, Head of the UN Geneva Perception Change Project in the SDG Studio Geneva on 13 February.



#NewWork

Like the world around us, the traditional office continues to evolve and change, becoming more sustainable and efficient. Embracing new ways of working is not only a necessity for UN Geneva to remain relevant and become more efficient, it is also an opportunity for personal and professional growth for staff and managers alike.

With significant construction and changes already taking place at the Palais des Nations, senior leaders from UN Geneva and other agencies met in 2018 to share ideas and experiences about the best way forward. From expert speakers and visiting Geneva-based employers, the leaders heard insights about new ways of working and how to adapt. Techniques for the empowerment of staff, now and in the future, were the goal of the gathering, as was learning to build the right environment and work culture so that they will be happier and more satisfied with their work.

A blueprint called #NewWork was developed to help drive the change at UN Geneva. Under this banner, a series of initiatives has already begun to be implemented specifically with the intention of creating a more open, trusting and collaborative work environment. With the integration of new technologies into the office, staff are encouraged to explore the potential of flexible working arrangements.

In a new and changing workplace, embracing change and rethinking how and where we work is necessary for both staff and management. The Chief of the [Centre for Learning and Multilingualism](#), Thomas Neufing, says, "On a day-to-day basis, in a new flexible working environment, this means moving away from managing by presence to managing by results."

#NewWork lays the groundwork for UN Geneva to become a more sustainable modern organization –



To watch a video about the #NewWork initiative, scan the QR code.

one where staff are supported in the effort to go paperless, share documents and work collaboratively online, work remotely, experiment with cross-assignments, rely on efficient electronic document approvals, and more.

The Director of the Division of Administration, Clemens Adams, says: "It is essential for us to recognize that different ways of working are to be harnessed to enable us to realize the full potential of all our staff and give them an opportunity to contribute in different ways."

As the workplace evolves, staff and managers will continue to be supported and encouraged to experiment with different work methods. Embracing #NewWork is crucial, and empowering the workforce to contribute to achieving the goals of the Organization is vital for the future of UN Geneva.



Cybersecurity: a concern for all

From eyeglasses to gloves to watches to phones, everything nowadays is becoming smart. As useful as these smart tools may be, they also bring an ever-increasing risk to the Organization’s computer networks and data. Because the actions of one person can affect the rest of the Organization, protecting the information infrastructure from intrusion is extremely important for UN Geneva.

UN Geneva is working constantly to combat cyberattacks. One of the most effective methods of protection is education. In 2018, UN Geneva held a cybersecurity week during which information security professionals stressed the importance of security awareness, because there are no “safe places” on the Internet.

“The whole idea behind our Cybersecurity Week started because we realized that without the full engagement of staff, we cannot address the cyber risks posed by hackers.”
– Patrick Gordon, Chief of the Strategic Planning, Policy and Governance Unit, Regional Technology Centre-Europe, UN Geneva

To educate and alert staff about cybersecurity threats, UN Geneva created posters, held information sessions and put together simulated phishing emails. Cybersecurity awareness is about reaching out, and constantly reminding staff that IT security needs to become a daily practice. As a result of this information campaign, the number of people falling victim to phishing scams has decreased.

“Cybersecurity is not a destination, it’s a journey, because security never ends. Threats evolve and new breaches appear daily – which must be countered.”
– Badr Kandouz, information security officer, UN Geneva



There are 100 kilometres of cables in UN Geneva's data centre.

UN Photo: Emma Okic



100-day innovation challenge

We are in the midst of a global technological upheaval that is changing humanity and shaping the future. This Fourth Industrial Revolution is affecting everything from the way we connect with others to the way we live and work. And these developments have already impacted the work of UN Geneva. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by the year 2030, structural transformations are needed for the economy; adaptive and intelligent knowledge and learning facilities need to be advanced; digital and physical infrastructure must become more efficient and sustainable.

Innovation is the leading edge of this transformation. To remain ahead of the curve, UN Geneva launched a 100-day innovation challenge with the objective of identifying cutting-edge technological advancements that can be harnessed to help shape future strategies and policies for the work of the Organization in the area of conferencing.

A group chosen from volunteers of all levels and specialities, took up this challenge to ensure that new ideas are always brought forward. They used a simple strategy: find it, evaluate it, communicate it. Methods to identify trends were chosen, models were analysed, and their applicability and potential impacts were explored. The resulting concepts ranged from simple methods for collaboration to the more complex, including crowdsourced funding, ideation technologies and AI-powered client

assistants. The methodology they developed is now combined with design thinking, foresight and human-centred design by Innov8, an Innovation Team working to advance concrete innovative projects to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and range of conference services offered by UN Geneva.

The Innovation Team is part of the greater UN Innovation Network, which involves more than 20 UN agencies and partnering organizations worldwide.



Scan the QR code to watch staff members share their impressions of the 100-day innovation challenge.



Setting trends and standards with language technologies

Are we moving towards a world where, thanks to the advent of automated translation, not knowing a certain foreign language no longer stops you from communicating with someone in that language?

How do we make sure translation is accessible to all?

How do we make sure all languages benefit equally from machine translation and none are left behind?

What if the algorithms behind our tools foster prejudice?

If translation tools become too centralized by private service providers, can we avoid biases that could impede the work of the UN?

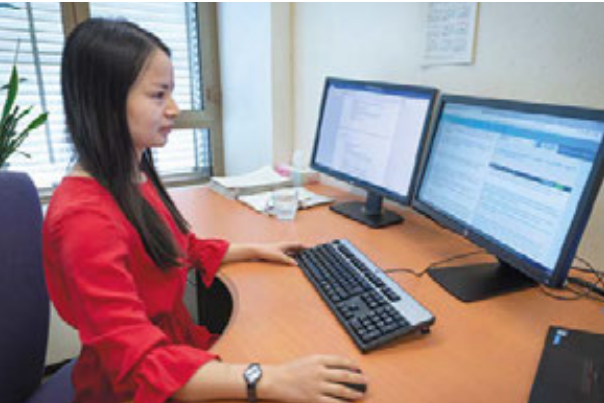
How do we create the perfect translation products for our clients?

These are some of the questions discussed during the 2018 Joint Inter-Agency Meeting on Computer-Assisted Translation and Terminology (JIAMCATT) in Geneva. Every year, language professionals from across the UN system, EU institutions and universities gather at JIAMCATT to explore the latest ideas at the nexus of translation and technology.

Due to the unique nature of UN work and international diplomacy, translations have developed over the Organization’s history to have their own characteristics and special requirements. Efficient and accurate translation plays an important political and practical role in the functioning of the Organization and is necessary to achieve the highest degree of multilingualism, a priority for António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General. “I care deeply about multilingualism, a core value of the United Nations,” said Secretary-General Guterres, “Multilingualism helps guarantee the effectiveness of our multilateral system.”

JIAMCATT is an opportunity for those involved in the development, testing and actual use of translation tools, as well as in interpretation and documentation retrieval, to come together and discuss how best to accomplish the objectives of the Organization now and in the future.

JIAMCATT was launched at UN Geneva and had last been held here in 1999. Over the years, the meeting has become a well-established forum to promote closer cooperation among all actors along the authoring-translation-publishing chain, combining knowledge sharing and conceptual discussion with practical workshops.



A Chinese language translator at UN Geneva uses specialized machine translation software developed specifically for the United Nations.



Sign language: a seventh UN language?

The deaf community represents a population of approximately 70 million people, of whom 80% live in developing countries and only 1% or 2% have access to education in sign language. In fact, sign language has only recently received legal recognition in some countries which had previously forced deaf children to learn to speak and lip-read in school.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) affirms that sign languages are equal to spoken languages and should be supported worldwide. To raise awareness of sign languages as fully fledged natural languages, vital for an inclusive society and for multilingualism, in 2017 the General Assembly set 23 September as International Day of Sign Languages.

UN Geneva has taken the lead in terms of inclusiveness and accessibility by providing international and national sign interpreters at a number of meetings in Geneva. As the home of the Human Rights Council and the meetings of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN Geneva has become the main duty station using sign languages.

There are numerous different types of sign language which have developed naturally over centuries in deaf communities and are generally specific to each country, region and, sometimes, local community. They are an expression of cultural diversity and national identity. In 2018, UN Geneva provided 208 days of sign interpretation, including 132 days in International Sign and 75 days in national sign languages.

With the increasing demand at UN Geneva for sign language interpretation and the scarcity of certified and accredited interpreters, efforts are underway to expand the pool of available interpreters.



UN Photo: Volaine Martin

To celebrate the inaugural International Day of Sign Languages at the Palais des Nations, a series of events were held in September 2018. These included a screening of *The Silent Child*, an Oscar-winning short film from 2017. The film’s Academy Award-winning writer and star, Rachel Shenton, introduced the film, which tells the story of a deaf child who lives in a world of silence until a social worker teaches her to communicate in sign language. International Day of Sign Languages also featured a guided tour of Palais des Nations with sign language interpretation, and a pop-up café with sign language teachers. The Director-General and representatives from the deaf community took part in a high-level panel organized by the secretariat of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.



New online services facilitate public access to information

Broadening access to information to reach the largest audience possible was a priority for the new online services launched in 2018 by UN Geneva librarians and archivists. By facilitating access to information in this way, the UN Library Geneva is continuing to support diplomats, academics, researchers and the public at large working towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Anyone can now submit a question to the UN Library Geneva through the Ask Us portal: <http://ask.unog.ch>.

Search for relevant resources in the growing collection of research guides on topics ranging

from peace and human rights to disarmament and the Sustainable Development Goals: <http://libraryresources.unog.ch>.

Researchers benefit from the close collaboration between the UN Library Geneva and the Dag Hammarskjöld Library in New York, with powerful search platforms for electronic and print books, journals and collections, through Global Search: <http://libraryresources.unog.ch/global>.

Those looking specifically for United Nations Documents can use a new search tool – the UN Digital Library: <http://digitallibrary.un.org>.



Harmonization of language learning and assessment

UN staff members often function as social agents in a variety of multilingual and multicultural contexts in Geneva and around the world. The use of multiple languages helps to facilitate communications and cooperation within the Organization, further developing a plurilingual and multicultural workforce.

To better support multilingualism in the UN Global Secretariat, a priority of Secretary-General António Guterres, the Language Harmonization Project was launched in partnership with UN Geneva. The goal of the project is to harmonize language learning and assessment for the six official UN languages, as well as other locally taught languages.

The Project aims to build consistency among all UN language programmes, while also remaining flexible and adaptable. This will allow for more

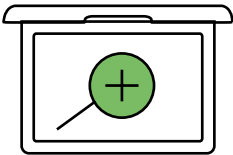
efficient management of language programmes and stronger recognition of language skills.

The Project is a collaboration between UN Geneva, the UN Secretariat in New York and UN Nairobi. Since 2017, these duty stations have been working closely to create a new UN Language Framework, developed around the unique needs of our Organization.

Other language programmes in the Global Secretariat are also contributing to the development of the UN Language Framework, which will provide consistency to how languages are learned, taught and assessed in the international context of the United Nations.

The UN Language Framework is expected to be completed in December 2019. It will benefit the Organization by recognizing the learning of languages, and create smoother transitions for staff in terms of career mobility and development.

Research guides



70,518
consultations

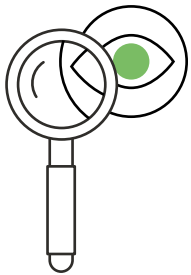


52,145
users consulted
the research guides

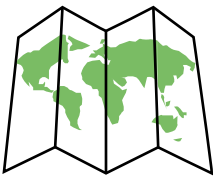
Ask us



4,417
questions were answered
online

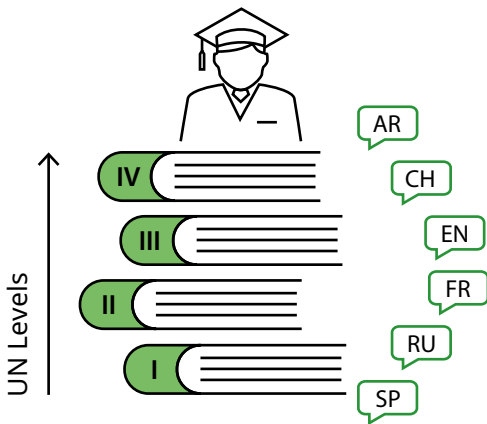


136,192
content views



The guides were
consulted in **215**
countries or territories

United Nations Language Framework



UN Level IV
Expert Language Competence

UN Level III
Advanced Language Competence,
baseline for the Language Proficiency Examination

UN Level II
Intermediate Language Competence

UN Level I
Foundational Language Competence

The UN Language Framework establishes four UN levels of language competence, equally valid for the six official UN languages.



Moving forward on common ground

As people around the globe are changing the way they learn and share knowledge, libraries and educational institutions are also evolving to meet their digital, technological and educational demands. At UN Geneva, the Library and the Centre for Learning and Multilingualism are leading the way – through the Knowledge and Learning Commons, a joint venture launched in 2018.

“The Commons” was developed on the basis of a strategy that brings together the skills and resources of both the Library and the Centre for Learning and Multilingualism to create an integrated service responding to the learning requirements and knowledge needs of diplomats and UN staff in Geneva. The initiative complements existing formal training courses, and also supports campaigns and policies issued by the Organization, including those concerning gender equality, integrity and non-discrimination. It offers a physical communal space for knowledge generation and exchange, where staff and diplomats can work either collectively or individually as part of their collaboration on projects, with the support of experts from the Library and the Centre for Learning and Multilingualism.

Designed to create more meaningful interactions between UN Geneva and academics, leaders and experts both within and outside the UN, the Commons provides new ways to learn about and engage on, global issues. These connections can empower staff and diplomats to develop professionally and personally.

“The Library is also at the heart of the cultural and intellectual life of the Palais”, says UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller. “Taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by the Strategic Heritage Plan and our new Centre for Learning and Multilingualism, this initiative will allow beneficiaries to find, in one location, all the services pertaining to knowledge, learning and records.”

Since its launch in April 2018, the Commons has held events every month covering a diversity of topics, from gender bias, to mindfulness, to strategic and future thinking. Activities have included language learning through film and discussions with leaders from various branches of knowledge.

The evolution is not complete; new learning methodologies continue to be tested and needs assessed, to identify future learning priorities. This will ensure that the Commons continues to adapt to meet the actual needs of its clients, providing the necessary knowledge resources and support for years to come.

Photo, opposite page, above
The Chief of the Centre for Learning and Multilingualism, Thomas Neufing (left), guides a leadership discussion with young leaders Ruth Blackshaw, the initiator of the Young UN: Agents for Change global network (centre), and Vivian Núñez, the founder of the Too Damn Young community organization (right).

Photo, opposite page, below
Professors from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies guide participants in a workshop on future thinking, part of a series of events on agility and innovation.



UN Photo



UN Photo



Supporting SDG implementation at the country level: Niger in focus

A national “Digital Revolution” plan to promote development through technology has been established to transform Niger into a more technologically connected, enabled and knowledge-based society. *Niger 2.0* is designed to leverage its youth and ICT capacities to achieve the 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2018, Niger was the first country to engage with the [SDG Lab](#) at UN Geneva, which is experimenting with models that allow countries to harness the extraordinary expertise of the Geneva community in order to realize their own development efforts, building on the important work already underway with the UN country teams and other local actors. The Lab provided support to the Government of Niger to build sustainable partnerships with Geneva-based organizations with the goal of advancing the *Niger 2.0* strategy.

Minister Ibrahima Guimba Saidou, Special Advisor of the President of Niger and Director General of ANSI (Agence Nationale pour la Société de l’Information), explored the potentials of what International Geneva could add to their national transformation strategy during a four-day visit to Geneva in March 2018.

The SDG Lab continues to build strong relationships with the vast network of NGOs active in Geneva, offering programmes through the [Geneva 2030 Ecosystem](#). This is the impact-oriented group working towards achieving the SDGs by mobilizing the capacity, skills, experience, ideas and motivation

of a host of Geneva-based organizations. After meeting with the Minister, the group recommended a series of new approaches to overcome the challenges of establishing Smart Villages in Niger, a system of connected and technologically educated communities.

The Lab will continue to expand its position as an amplifier of practices, learning what does or does not work at country levels. In 2019, the Lab will begin the process of uncovering, understanding and sharing this information to promote learning towards the achievement of the SDGs by the year 2030.

About Niger 2.0

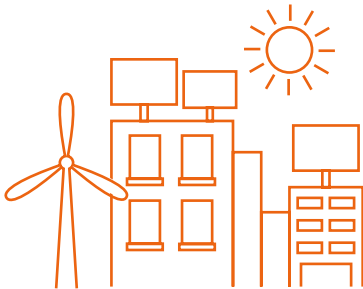
THREE MAIN TRACKS



e-Government



Smart villages

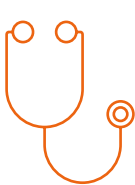


Tech city
(innovation hubs/incubators)

RELEVANT INFORMATION ABOUT NIGER AND NIGER 2.0

Land area: 1,267 million square kilometres	Physician density: 0.02 physicians/1,000 population
Capital: Niamey 1.09 million inhabitants	Population without access to electricity: 15.2 million
Population: 19,245,344	Rural communities to be connected by 2030: 15,000
Median age: 15 years	Rural communities to be connected by end of 2018: 100
Fertility rate: 6.49 live births per woman	

FOCUS AREAS FOR PILOT IMPLEMENTATION



Health



Education



Rural development



Exploring important issues at the cinema

Should online content be moderated by corporations? An audience had the chance to discuss this ethically challenging question after viewing *The Cleaners*, a film screened as part of the Ciné-ONU repertoire in 2018.

Ciné-ONU uses film to tell powerful stories on UN themes. The screenings are followed by expert-led interactive discussions. The United Nations Information Service in Geneva launched this initiative in 2014 in collaboration with the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. Since then, UN Geneva has been welcoming diverse local audiences to the events, where they have discussed issues of global importance. In 2018, films featuring human rights, UN peacekeeping operations, gold mining and the Holocaust sparked lively debates.

The Cleaners was one of six films presented by Ciné-ONU in 2018, including *No Asylum: The Untold Chapter in Anne Frank's Story*, *Filmmaking for Peace-Building: Joint Pakistani-Afghan documentaries on human rights*, *Until there is Peace, River of Gold* and *Thomas Pesquet: L'Envoyé Spatial*.

For more information, or to be notified about future screenings, please contact cineONU@unog.ch.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Made in Forests: a story about sustainable fashion

"The connection between our clothes and our impact on the environment doesn't immediately come to mind. If a jacket or a skirt or a dress looks good, and if we can afford it, we buy it. But the environment pays the price."
– Actress and United Nations Development Programme Goodwill Ambassador, Michelle Yeoh

To help shine a spotlight on the role of clothes manufacturing and consumer fashion in creating a better planet, Malaysian-born film star and United Nations Development Programme Goodwill Ambassador Michelle Yeoh presented her new short film at the 2018 high-level political forum for sustainable development, in New York. The film took centre stage at the forum, where it was viewed by more than a thousand world leaders and influencers from government, business and civil society who had gathered to review global progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

During her journey to explore the linkages between the garment industry, consumer fashion and the health of our planet, Ms. Yeoh sought out *"what sustainable fashion could look like, without compromising the beauty of our clothes"*.

Highlighting conventional fashions' reliance on cotton and polyester, two materials with a high environmental impact, *Made in Forests* demonstrates new research and technological innovations with sustainably sourced wood-based fabrics that promise to be more environmentally friendly.

The film, which follows Ms. Yeoh on her journey to find an outfit that does not harm the planet, was produced by UN Geneva and the Economic Commission for Europe, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Made in Forests is an example of the unique contribution UN Geneva can make to the global conversation on key contemporary issues, such as the environmental and ecological impacts of the fashion industry. The film continues to attract fashion-conscious viewers, on the web and on social media, who are interested in looking good while doing good for the future of the planet.

Maintaining forests and creating sustainable value chains is critical for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Ms. Yeoh says that producing the film opened her eyes to the need to make different choices. *"Sustainable fashion isn't some futuristic idea,"* she said. *"It's a choice we all need to be aware of, here and now, for a better life on our planet."*



Scan the QR code to watch *"Made in Forests"*, a story about sustainable fashion.



Goodwill Ambassador Michelle Yeoh works with designer Tiziano Guardini to create a sustainable outfit, in the film *Made in Forests*.

UN Photo: UNTV

CHAPTER 3

EMPOWERING ACTION

This is the age of global action. People around the world are standing up for what they believe in and looking for new ways to better contribute to global causes. UN Geneva doesn't just encourage this, we are actively working to assist governments, individuals and others to commit to the Sustainable Development Goals and to take an active part in UN priority issues. Through a variety of special events, youth initiatives, tailored programmes and much more, UN Geneva is making the work of the United Nations more accessible to wider audiences and is using social media to expand the space for dialogue.

More than
109,000

people took a guided
tour at the Palais
des Nations in 2018,

participating in over **4,470** tours in
English, French, Spanish, Chinese,
Russian, Portuguese, Italian, German,
Slovak, Bulgarian, and Romanian.

80% of the groups were made up of youth.

Students pose for a photo with Roben X, American rapper and activist for Albinism.
The event was organized as part of the Human Rights Day celebration at UN Geneva in December.
UN Photo: Violaine Martin





Perception Change Project: Take Action

Have you thought about how you can help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals? Participate in disaster relief and clean-up? Donate supplies for refugees? Set up a community welcoming event for new immigrants? Teach your neighbours about recycling?

Sustainable development takes time and effort by everyone. There are already many people making big changes in the world and others who want to help but don't know how. Students, professionals, children and elders are working in different ways and contributing to make a difference for all of humanity.

Take Action – these are words to live by, and UN Geneva is working to transform the words into reality. The Organization has developed a number of tools to facilitate action and support the personal drive that exists in so many of us. Through numerous online and social media platforms, information is made available for sharing to help people around the world figure out how they can best contribute towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. These actions include everything, such as rethinking the way they do household chores, garden, engage with their community, employ staff, and more. The booklet "[170 Daily Actions to Transform Our World](#)" goes beyond just informing the public about the SDGs. It educates readers on how to be part of the solution by listing actions that everyone can take in their daily lives to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by the year 2030.

One of the actions taken at the Palais des Nations, was the display of portraits of influential people such as Andre Agassi, Jeffery Sachs, and Dario Piselli, Project leader for Solutions Initiative of Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Youth, along with descriptions of their commitments

to achieve the Global Goals. The campaign challenged UN Geneva staff and visitors to the Palais to learn from others and get involved.

In addition, the Perception Change Project continues their #YouNeedtoKnow campaign, spreading awareness about the Sustainable Development Goals at numerous international airports, with signs in Geneva, Zurich (during the World Economic Forum), Greece, Milan, Spain, Portugal, Bulgaria, Morocco and Algeria. The campaign promoted the important messages of the SDGs to millions of international passengers visiting these popular destinations.

Take Action helps connect people near and far who want to participate through the Sustainable Development Goals in promoting prosperity while protecting the planet. This conduit can link like-minded people in order to come up with the most efficient ways to work together.



Scan the QR code to discover the booklet "170 Daily Actions to Transform Our World", available in eight languages.



Leaving your mark on UN Geneva

Built between 1929 and 1938, the Palais des Nations is one of the most iconic and active centres for multilateral diplomacy in the world. From the League of Nations to the United Nations Office at Geneva, this edifice has witnessed decades of conferences, peace negotiations, high-level visits and many other activities aimed at changing peoples' lives for the better. First reflected in the mandate of the League of Nations, its heritage continues to be carried forward to this day by the UN family in Geneva. These efforts are made possible especially thanks to generous financial and in-kind contributions from Member States, foundations, and private donors.

Investing in the Palais des Nations means investing in the mandate of the United Nations. More so, it means investing in our shared future and supporting the United Nations' efforts towards peace, rights and well-being. UN Geneva offers a palette of options for prospective donors to do just that. Some of our projects are targeted, such as the creation of a dedicated space to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; the creation of a "Mediation House" to host the many negotiations and peace processes held in Geneva; or even the establishment of a modern, fully equipped Media Centre, capable of delivering news globally – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Other projects lend themselves more broadly to modernizing the technology in the building, making the Palais des Nations "green" and sustainable, strengthening the security infrastructure or to the renovation of specific rooms. Many of our projects aim to improve the well-being of delegates, be they



Mr. Ali Khalfan Al-Mansouri, Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar to the United Nations Office at Geneva (right) and UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller (left) visit the worksite of Room XIX on 25 September. The State of Qatar generously donated CHF 20 million to renovate one of the biggest rooms at the Palais des Nations.

State representatives, civil society actors or visitors, as well as staff members.

Contributing to the legacy and sustainability of the Palais des Nations means not only contributing to the overall work of the UN in Geneva, but also to preserving our common heritage for future generations.

To donate to UN Geneva, or to request a compendium of voluntary contributions projects, please contact: unog.frontoffice@un.org.



Conference on Disarmament

The Conference on Disarmament is the only multilateral negotiating body on disarmament. It serves as a platform for its 65 Member States to participate in complex discussions and negotiations on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, arms control and other related issues.

Notable successes, in the form of key international treaties, have resulted from the work of the Conference and its predecessors. They include the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.

In 2018, the Conference established five subsidiary bodies, each focused on one of seven agenda items of the Conference and other relevant issues. The subsidiary bodies worked to reach an understanding on the areas of common understanding, to deepen technical discussions and to consider effective measures on these topics.

While the Conference did not formally resume negotiations, through the establishment of subsidiary bodies, its Member States have displayed their commitment to make substantive progress after nearly two decades of political impasse.

Recognising the need for broader partnerships, including with civil society, UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller, in his capacity as Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, organized the third Civil Society Dialogue on new technology issues, with the support of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA).

The Dialogue brought together States, civil society and experts for a thought-provoking, in-depth conversation. Questions of ethics, the ramifications of new technologies and scientific developments on international security, future generation weapons technologies, as well as how to innovate responsibly and in support of Agenda 2030, were all discussed.



High-Level Segment of the Conference on Disarmament on 26 February



Disarmament for future generations: lethal autonomous weapons systems

In recent years, neural networks, deep learning and artificial intelligence (AI) innovations have continued to advance rapidly, with these systems already surpassing human abilities in certain areas including image recognition and strategic thinking. With these intelligent machines taking on challenging tasks in the complex, real-world environments of security, medicine, finance, transportation, and other industries, governments must create and affirm sound policies regarding automation of technologies.

Innovations in science and technology continue to raise important questions with regard to their use in warfare. Rapid development of intelligent systems complicate conversations about the role of autonomy in weapons, as international discussion must be able to keep pace with these advances and anticipate what might be coming in the near future. Concerns regarding accountability for the use of such new weapons systems, the possibility of new arms races, as well as the retention of human control over the use of force have already been raised.

A key instrument of international humanitarian law, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), is seeking to prohibit or restrict the use of specific types of weapons that indiscriminately affect civilians or cause unnecessary suffering for combatants. To ensure flexibility in dealing with new developments in armed conflict and evolution of weapon technologies, the CCW framework convention can be extended by adopting new protocols governing new types of weapons systems.

The need to address the potential security implications of relevant advances in science and technology is reflected in one of the core pillars of the United



Ambassador Amandeep Singh Gill, Chairman of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (centre), briefs the press after the second session of the Group of Governmental Experts of the Conference of Disarmament on 27 August. Also pictured are Anja Kaspersen, Director, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in Geneva, Deputy Secretary-General, Conference on Disarmament (left) and Alessandra Vellucci, Director, United Nations Information Service.

Nations Secretary-General's new agenda for disarmament, dedicated to "disarmament for future generations". The agenda highlights some of the risks related to the evolution of new weapons technologies with yet uncertain or potentially unwanted and damaging implications for peace and security.

Additionally, a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems was established in 2017. The Group involves representatives from States, civil society, academia and industry. Interdisciplinary formal discussions within the Group have focused on the human element in the use of lethal force, potential military applications of related technologies as well as options for addressing the humanitarian and international security challenges they pose.

In 2018, the Group agreed on a set of emerging conclusions and recommendations. These include ten guiding principles, which among others reaffirm the applicability of international humanitarian law to all weapons systems, the importance of maintaining human command and control in the operation of weapons systems as well as the importance of not hampering progress in or access to peaceful uses of emerging technologies.



Strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention

It was in Geneva in 1925 that States agreed to the Geneva Protocol, prohibiting the use of both chemical and biological weapons in war. More than four decades later, also in Geneva, States successfully negotiated the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention, the global treaty which effectively bans the development, production, acquisition, transfer and use of biological weapons. Since then, 182 States have joined the Convention, which serves as a strong bulwark against this category of weapons of mass destruction. Since it entered into force in 1975, all meetings of the Convention have taken place at UN Geneva, making Geneva the hub of international efforts to combat biological weapons. Nevertheless, technological barriers to the acquisition, access and use of several biological weapons are eroding.

In 2018, to address these urgent concerns, several hundred experts from States, international organizations, academia and the private sector met at UN Geneva under the framework of the Biological Weapons Convention. The group shared insights and reviewed the implications of recent scientific and technological developments on biological weapons.

UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller, in his capacity as Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to the Conference on Disarmament, highlighted the importance of the meeting, saying, *“the continuing and increasing impact of frontier technologies, transcends borders and institutions. It is therefore essential that such developments continue to be monitored and discussed with experts like yourselves”*. A range of issues were discussed, including a voluntary code of conduct for biological scientists, genome editing, synthetic biology, field activities, as well as biological risk assessment and management.

In the same context, Secretary-General António Guterres stressed in his new disarmament agenda the need to strengthen institutions to prevent any use of biological weapons. This includes strengthening the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention and ensuring the capabilities of an Organizational response in case prevention fails. The need to further strengthen the norms embodied in the Convention were also highlighted, to ensure that advances in science and technology are applied responsibly.

In his agenda, the Secretary-General has undertaken to engage with scientists, engineers and industry actors to encourage responsible innovation of science and technology, thus ensuring its application for peaceful purposes. UN Geneva offers a unique platform to bring together stakeholders from across the world to work together and advance global disarmament for the benefit of humankind.



Scan the QR code to watch the Secretary-General presenting his disarmament agenda “Securing Our Common Future” at the University of Geneva.

Secretary-General António Guterres announced a bold new vision for global disarmament, “Securing Our Common Future”, at the University of Geneva, in May 2018. In the agenda, the Secretary-General says we must “work together to make sure that developments in science and technology are used for the good of humankind. Our joint efforts to prevent the weaponization of new technologies will save future generations. We owe this to our children and grandchildren.”



Secretary-General António Guterres presenting his disarmament agenda, “Securing Our Common Future”, at the University of Geneva on 24 May.

UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



Geneva Ministerial Conference on Afghanistan

With the goal of achieving peace and prosperity for the Afghan people and of the Afghan Government to renew its commitment to development and reform, a two-day Ministerial Conference on Afghanistan was held at the Palais des Nations in November 2018. The meeting was held as a sign of solidarity of the international community with the Afghan people and Government.

Over 1,000 participants from more than 100 delegations and 25 motorcades descended on the Palais des Nations. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and First Lady Rula Ghani, as well as numerous foreign ministers, diplomats, civil society representatives and senior UN officials were in attendance.

The conference took place at a crucial moment for the Afghan Government and the international community, enabling them to demonstrate progress and commitment while maintaining momentum for upcoming elections and opportunities for peace.

At the 2011 International Conference on Afghanistan in Bonn, Germany, the international community agreed to pursue a “Transformation Decade” for the country. During this period, Afghanistan was promised international assistance to work towards self-reliance by 2024. The high-level periodic reviews coinciding with ministerial meetings have been scheduled every two years since 2012. In 2018, the conference focused on coordinating donor assistance, policy and strategy following the \$15.2 billion pledges made at the 2016 conference in Brussels, and \$16 billion in commitments made at the 2012 conference in Tokyo. The next major pledging conference is scheduled for 2020.

UN Geneva contributed to the success of the conference through the provision of well-coordinated

security and a wide range of conference services, including simultaneous interpretation in all six official UN languages, meeting room support and documentation services.

In the lead-up to and throughout the conference, multiple services, sections and units within UN Geneva worked closely with colleagues from the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to ensure the smooth running of the event.

Ultimately, the conference was a good opportunity for stakeholders to highlight the importance of achieving the development and reform agenda and the need to advance it as a constructive contribution to peace and security in Afghanistan.



Scan the QR code to watch the opening session of the Geneva Ministerial Conference on Afghanistan.



UN Geneva security guards await the arrival of high-level dignitaries before the Geneva Ministerial Conference on Afghanistan on 27 November.



Photos, this column, top to bottom
First Lady Rula Ghani delivers a keynote speech during the side event “Pathway to Progress: Professional Training for Afghan Women” on 27 November.

The press is briefed after the Closing Session of the Geneva Ministerial Conference on Afghanistan on 28 November.

Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (centre), walks with UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller (right) to a private-sector side event of the Conference on Afghanistan on 27 November.

Photo, right
Afghan delegates attend the Geneva Ministerial Conference on Afghanistan on 28 November.





International Gender Champions

Three years after its launch, the International Gender Champions network has accomplished more than its leaders expected. Now on board are 234 Champions, including The Honourable William Morneau, Minister of Finance of Canada (and IGC's first finance minister), the President of the UN General Assembly and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights having joined IGC this year. The network also continued to expand geographically, with a new hub in The Hague counting some 35 founding members.

The initiative was also given added impetus in 2018 through the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements. Further to the launch of the Director-General's campaign against casual sexism, three other Geneva-based Champions joined an IGC "Harassment-Free Assemblies" initiative. At the opening of conferences and Assemblies gathering thousands of delegates at the Palais des Nations, the Director-General of the World Health Organization, the Director-General of the International Labour Organization, and the President of the Human Rights Council thus delivered strong statements against sexual harassment and misconduct.

Additionally, based on the observation that international decision-making forums are still largely male-dominated, IGC developed a Gender-Responsive Assemblies Toolkit, which was launched in the margins of the UN General Assembly. This agenda for concrete action compiles a set of best practices intended for chairs of meetings, heads of delegations and heads of international organizations to ensure that major intergovernmental meetings, conferences or assemblies advance gender equality.

In 2018, a work stream was also inaugurated to engage IGC's growing number of alumni who left their original posts but continue to promote gender equality and apply the Panel Parity Pledge in their new functions. This group already gathers some 105 former gender champions, including the new, and first female, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the first female Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea.

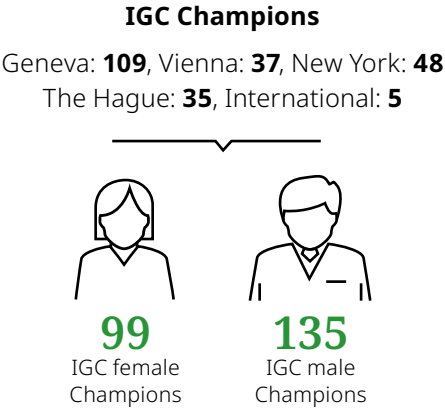
In three years, the International Gender Champions network has not only made the notion of single-sex panels truly obsolete in Geneva and beyond, but it has also had an increasingly significant impact on



UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller delivers remarks during the Annual Meeting of Champions on 5 March.

the way institutions tackle gender equality. The initiative has thus been internationally recognized by the first Paris Peace Forum in November 2018. It was one of the 10 winning projects out of 850 applications that was profiled for innovative global governance.

2018 year-end statistics on current gender champions



Why gender equality?

On the occasion of IGC's three-year anniversary, 16 Champions gave us their answers. Scan the QR code to watch.





UN Geneva says no to sexism

“I say no to sexism. What do you say?” This is the key message in the campaign against casual sexism at UN Geneva. With the goal of eliminating casual sexism and micro-discrimination in the workplace, this initiative was launched in 2018 by UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller.

The campaign’s objective is to turn UN Geneva into a sexism-free zone and raise awareness of the harm done by casual sexism, while encouraging and empowering UN staff to counter casual sexism.

Working to shine a light on the issue, the Director-General said, *“Sexism at the workplace is an everyday reality for more people than we actually imagine.”* Indeed, a survey on perceptions about gender equality conducted at UN Geneva in 2017 revealed that one third of respondents had been in situations where they had felt uncomfortable about sexist language, jokes or comments made by supervisors, colleagues or delegates. Additionally, there were doubts as to whether action would be taken to address such incidents.

The United Nations Theatre Club presented a number of engaging skits illustrating examples of sexist comments reported by staff. The special event gave participants an opportunity to discuss the campaign goals with the Director-General. Personal experiences were shared, along with methods for dealing with unwelcome conduct at work.

“Change can happen”, says UN Geneva gender focal point Nicole Maguire, sharing how “a staff member told me that she dared having a discussion with her sexist colleague, thanks to the campaign”.

The “I say no to sexism” campaign is an open invitation for everyone to join in this quest to change mindsets and create a work environment built on trust, collaboration and respect for human dignity.



Scan the QR code to listen to an UN Radio interview with UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller.



EMERGE: career development and leadership skills for female professionals

Launched in 2018, the Programme for Emerging Women Leaders (EMERGE programme) was created to identify, develop and encourage professional women leaders to break down silos and work together as the next generation of United Nations system leadership.

The EMERGE programme has shown what can happen when employees’ values are aligned with organizational objectives. Participants have enhanced their understanding of the interconnections between gender, culture and leadership.

Support for empowered women leaders and system-wide gender equality has resulted in a high level of engagement between the 33 participants and 28 organizers. The ongoing collaborative initiative, led by UN Geneva and the International Labour Organization, strengthens connections

between peers from across 11 United Nations agencies (International Labour Organization, International Telecommunication Union, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Children’s Fund, UN Geneva, United Nations System Staff College, World Health Organization and World Intellectual Property Organization).

EMERGE proves that working in teams across UN organizations is not only possible, but can also be a more efficient, innovative, cost-effective and fun way to move forward with the Agenda 2030 goal of achieving gender parity.



Participants in the EMERGE programme learning the new United Nations system leadership framework.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Kate Gilmore, dissenter, disrupter: “No transformative achievements have come from the well-behaved or the compliant. (...) We have a right to question. Those who have power too – have a duty to be questioned. To earn – NOT merely to command – the trust of our assent.”



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Maya Ghazal, a Syrian refugee and pilot-in-the-making: “A refugee is like any other human being. (...) I challenge you to find a group of people more allergic to violence and discrimination than refugees.”



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Maha Mamo, passport holder: “Statelessness is a human rights problem. (...) Everyone has the right to belong.”



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Jasmine Abdulcadir, obstetrician-gynaecologist and myth debunker: “Countering myths around female genital mutilation can empower women who have experienced it. (...) When there is a lack of awareness of female anatomy, myths spread. (...) Some of these myths can drive or maintain harmful practices.”



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Novelita Palisoc, from exploited to empowered, a union leader: “I didn’t want to become a domestic worker. For me it was a shameful job. (...) Today, I am the leader of a domestic workers’ union.”



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Ray Acheson, anti-nuclear feminist: “Nuclear weapons still exist. Militarism and violence still dominate ... I urge everyone to help debunk myths, rewrite narratives and disrupt the supposed natural order of things.”



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Mariana Costa, educator, transformer: “Somewhere along the way of designing our modern world, we forgot how important it was to consider the needs of all. As technology became more important for business, women were pushed out of the equation. (...) The issue is that technology is not just any other sector. It is the field that will define our future.”

TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen, EMPOWER

The United Nations and other actors in Geneva impact the lives of millions of people around the world, every day. It is this simple yet powerful idea that the series of TEDx events launched by UN Geneva at the UN Refugee Agency in 2014 aims to convey. Ideas are at the very heart of TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design), a non-profit organization devoted to “ideas worth spreading” in the form of short, powerful speeches. TEDx (with the “x” designating an independently organized TED event) is a programme of local events that brings people together to share a TED-like experience.

In the wake of the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements, 2018 was defined by some as the year of women’s empowerment. In collaboration with seven partner organizations in Geneva, UN Geneva therefore decided to focus its third TEDx event on the theme “Empower”, showcasing the impact of International Geneva through the lens of inspiring and empowered women. This third edition was held on 6 December.

The talks covered a wide range of issues such as nuclear disarmament, domestic workers’ rights, the importance of digital skills and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The 11 inspiring and passionate speakers all came together to amplify one powerful idea: when women are empowered, they do great things for their communities. The audience was provided with specific examples of how gender equality is not only a moral imperative, but also a necessity which will benefit our society as a whole.

The voices of the speakers were heard far beyond the walls of the Human Rights and Alliance of Civilizations Room, where over 700 students, Ambassadors, UN and NGO staff members attended the event. More than 20,000 people also watched the event live– some of them were gathered in the 20 “viewing parties” organized in universities, UN offices and other locations on five continents.

Whether they be entrepreneurs, medical doctors, politicians, historians or students, women are all remarkable agents of change. TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen paid tribute to all women around the world today and throughout history.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Saber Hossain Chowdhury, progressive parliamentarian: “Women have been instrumental in designing cyclone shelters in Bangladesh. (...) When women are empowered, they can change the future of their communities.”



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Jennifer Shigoli, social entrepreneur, creator of a reusable and affordable sanitary pad: “Menstruation is a major barrier to girls’ education. (...) Teachers in one of our pilot projects gave us the feedback that the rate of absenteeism has gone down from 23% to 5% among girls who had started using our sanitary pads.”



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Elise Luhr Dietrichson and **Fatima Sator**, researchers on a mission tell the story of how gender equality made it to the UN Charter in 1945: “No women were involved in writing the first draft of the Charter, so women’s rights were not mentioned at all. (...) When you have women at the table, they change things for the better.”



Scan the QR code to watch the full programme of the TEDxPlaceDesNationsWomen event.



Reinforcing our commitment to the environment

In 2018, UN Geneva strengthened its commitment to protecting the environment by formally adopting an environmental policy. This comprehensive document provides a framework that guides the Organization towards achieving its sustainability goals.

As part of this framework, UN Geneva developed an Environmental Management System based on the International Organization for Standardization’s [ISO 14001:2015](#) norm. This system allows UN Geneva to identify, evaluate and reduce the environmental impact of its activities.

Joining the viral [#beatplasticpollution](#) campaign in celebration of World Environment Day, UN Geneva took a stand to beat plastic pollution. In the campaign, each person tagged via Twitter or Instagram was challenged to give up one plastic item and then tag more people to do the same, with the aim of reaching as many people as possible.

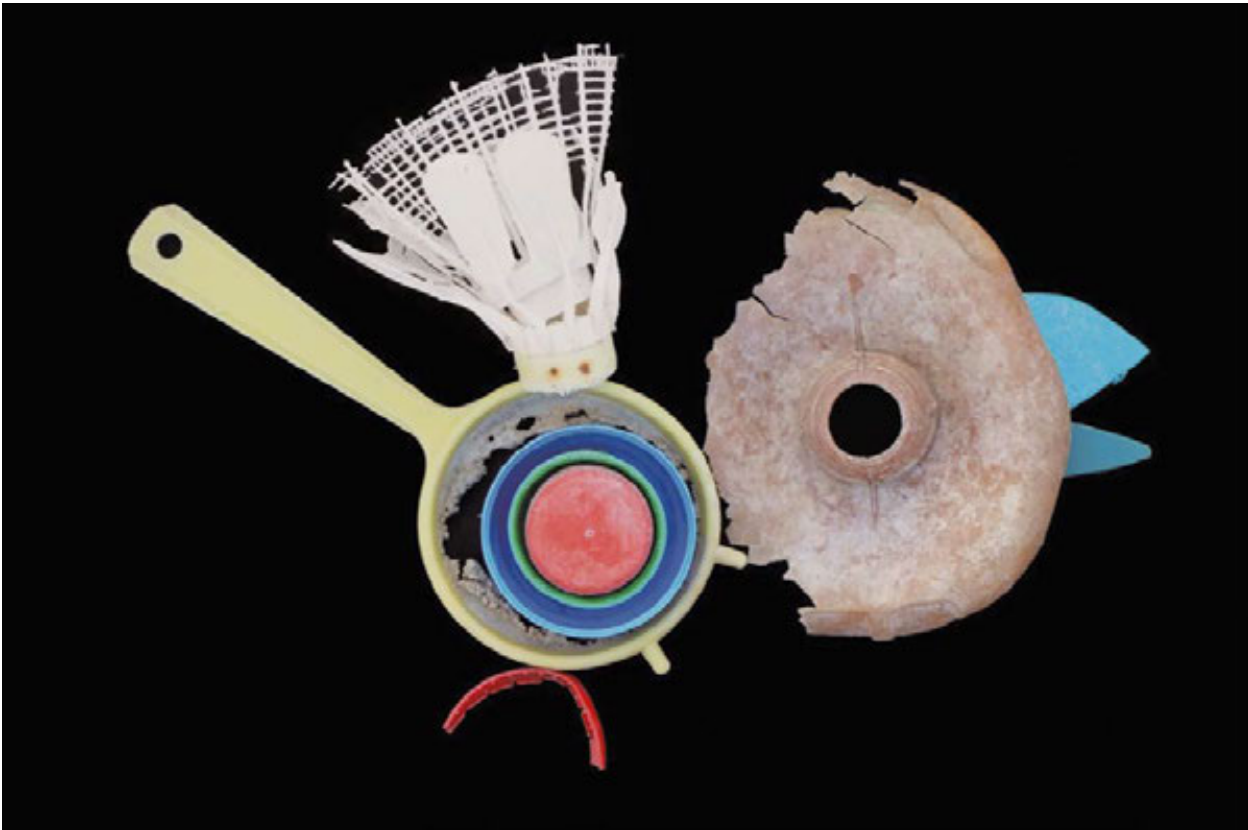
All around the world, big steps continue to be taken to beat plastic pollution. UN Geneva stepped up to the plate, promising that all takeaway containers used in its cafeterias would henceforth be made from biodegradable materials. As a result, catering operations are now 99% free of single-use petroleum-based plastics. Additionally, reusable water bottles and mugs are now sold in the Palais des Nations shop as a means of reducing the number of plastic bottles and single-use beverage cups.

Highly involved in waste management, in reducing energy consumption and in the sustainable use of natural resources, Eldora, UN Geneva’s catering partner, has also taken significant steps to reduce the environmental impact of its operations. In the kitchen at the Palais des Nations, 99% of cleaning products are eco-friendly and biodegradable, as

are 12 types of waste reclaimed by the team. Embracing a seasonal menu, meals are now prepared with traceable, locally sourced fresh products. An on-site process has also been added to reduce food waste from the cafeteria and provide fertilization for local horticultural fields.

Artist and photographer Emilie Crittin demonstrated the magnitude of the environmental impact of plastic pollution beyond the walls of the Palais des Nations. [She presented](#) artwork created from plastic objects that had been recovered during the annual clean-up of the Grangettes Nature Reserve. Her pieces included a sculpture of a heart made from over 11,000 cotton swabs, and photos of animals she had sculpted from plastic debris.

Find out more about the efforts of UN Geneva and the UN system to protect the environment from:
www.greeningtheblue.org or
<http://worldenvironmentday.global>.



Seabirds are often victims of plastic pollution, mistaking debris for food.

Did you know that UN badges are helping to save trees?

Staff at the Palais des Nations now have to have their ID badges scanned before printing out documents or making photocopies.

So what?

Thanks to this simple action, people have become more aware of the issue of excess printing.

And what are the results?

42 million sheets of recycled A4 paper were printed in 2018, a 49% reduction from 83 million sheets in 2010, saving the equivalent of 308 trees.

Fun fact

1 tree = 8,333 sheets of paper



COP through the eyes of a translator

The work of a translator can be solitary. Unlike interpreters, who are direct participants in the multilateral process, translators work from the sidelines. Servicing the meetings of important international mechanisms such as the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#), gives UN Geneva translators the rare opportunity to be close to the action.

Over the past 10 years, translators have been requested on-site for the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP) on three occasions: Copenhagen, in 2009 (COP 15), Paris, in 2015 (COP 21), and most recently Katowice, in December 2018 (COP 24). A team of 11 translators, 11 staff members from the text processing units and a technician were sent to Katowice. Witnessing negotiations first-hand, talking to authors, editors and delegates, and even working more closely with colleagues from other language sections was an enriching experience for the team, despite the long hours, the lack of sleep and the demanding and technical nature of the work itself.

“While all three conferences were a great experience from a human and a professional point of view, if I were to remember a moment it would have to be the gavelling of the Paris agreement, minutes after our last language version had been issued. This was a unique milestone, not only for those of us who attended the conference, but also for those who worked overnight from Geneva. It gave meaning to all the arduous work that was behind it. It was quite something to know that we had helped to achieve it.”

– MARIA ROSA PLA HUBERTI,
Senior Reviser, Spanish Translation Section



UN Secretary-General António Guterres during the opening ceremony of COP 24.



UN Geneva staff are proud and diverse, but desire more flexibility

Creating a work environment that is more enabling, empowering, respectful and inclusive is the goal of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who sought out staff sentiment across the Organization in a 2017 survey.

The Secretary-General launched the first staff engagement survey to better understand their desires, what they appreciated about the United Nations, and what could be changed. The United Nations continually seeks to foster a work environment that encourages all staff to contribute their best, and the survey was a further step in that direction.

“The survey [is] an important listening tool as we strive together to further strengthen the Secretariat and identify areas where we can improve our performance,” said Mr. Guterres.

Staff members were asked to respond to 49 questions, categorized into 15 groups, on matters ranging from engagement and trust to integrity. The results showed that UN Geneva staff are proud to be working for the United Nations, understand how their work contributes to overall objectives

and goals, and are positive regarding the gender diversity aspects of the Organization.

Three areas for improvement stood out from the results. Staff highlighted their desire to be empowered to challenge the status quo, to cooperate more among teams and to be more adaptable to change.

Action is being taken now to enhance these areas. For example, in order to improve communication, UN Geneva plans to strengthen internal communications and facilitate staff engagement with the Director-General and other senior leaders.



Match for Solidarity

The Union of European Football Association (UEFA) and UN Geneva joined forces on 21 April to stage the first ever Match for Solidarity, a charity football match, organized with the support of the Republic and Canton of Geneva, the City of Geneva and the Fondation du stade de Genève. Aside from the game, which featured the likes of Ronaldinho and Luís Figo as well as countless other former football legends, the event also included a unique global digital auction for fans and a live auction at a gala dinner held after the match. All funds raised were allocated to humanitarian and development projects for handicapped children around the world.

The match, held at the Stade de Genève, created huge interest among the general public. A total of 23,654 fans turned up to watch Figo’s team triumph 4–3 in glorious sunshine in the near packed stadium. The driving message behind the whole spectacle was to promote peace, human rights and well-being across the world through the Sustainable Development Goals as set out by the United Nations.

“I am delighted that both fans and football legends were able to come together in order to help raise money for good causes and help those in need,” said UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin. *“We are in a privileged position and we must use this to help children living in challenging and difficult conditions around the world.”*

A total of €605,000 was raised and will be made available to the UEFA Foundation for Children. The projects were selected by a committee of representatives from UEFA, UN Geneva and the Fondation du stade de Genève. The objective set by the committee is to support initiatives that use sport, and in particular football, as a way to promote inclusion among children living with disabilities. *“Solidarity is key to creating a fairer world for everybody,”* said UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller.

“This match proved it one more time, by bringing together stakeholders of International Geneva to help reduce inequalities – Sustainable Development Goal number 10 – and to support projects for children with mental and physical disabilities worldwide. Together, our actions can produce results and have a tangible impact on people’s lives; we need to put aside our differences and focus on our mutual goal to create a world of opportunities.”

At the local level, the proceeds will be used to support an awareness campaign run by Autisme Genève, an association which looks to promote a better understanding of people living with autism, and an appreciation of diversity in society. The non-profit organisation was founded in Geneva in 2007 at the initiative of parents whose children live with autism spectrum disorders. At an international level, the projects are Blind soccer in Bamako (Mali), Everyone invited to the pitch! (Argentina) and Inclusive Sports for Peace (Sri Lanka).



Scan the QR code to watch behind the scenes footage of the football stars’ exclusive visit of the Palais des Nations.



Football star Kelly Smith during the Match for Solidarity.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Photos, above and middle left
UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller gave an exclusive guided tour of the historic Palais des Nations to the team before the event. The group poses for a photo in the Human Rights and Alliance of Civilizations Room, one of the most ornate rooms at UN Geneva showcasing a major work of art by artist Miguel Barcelo.

Photo, bottom left
Legendary football stars Michael Essien (right) and Youri Djorkaeff (centre) lead the team into the Stade de Genève on 21 April.



Exploring ideas and culture at the Library

Throughout the year, the [UN Library Geneva](#) continued to be a hub for events that spotlight the work of the United Nations and its partners. The Library, which oversees both the [Cultural Activities Programme](#) and the [Library Events Programme](#), welcomed more than 10,000 participants to 80 events at the Palais des Nations in 2018. The Library also supported 24 side events of conferences taking place at UN Geneva.

The Cultural Activities Programme provides a dedicated space for cultural diplomacy, where Member States and international organizations can share culture and speak for diversity through art and music. The Programme was developed in the context of the Global Agenda for Dialogue Among Civilizations, proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in its 2001 resolution [56/6](#). The Library Events Programme, on the other hand, brings together authors, experts and sometimes celebrities to discuss topics of global concern with the international community. Library events are held in collaboration with Member States, international organizations, universities, non-governmental organizations, members of the international community and the public.

The events in 2018 focused on, among other things, women’s rights and gender equality, children’s rights, challenges and opportunities for youth, migration, climate change and the environment, languages, peace and conflict prevention, education, and the internet and technology. These themes were presented through a wide range of creative expression: photo and art exhibitions, musical concerts, film screenings, plays, interactive debates and book launches.

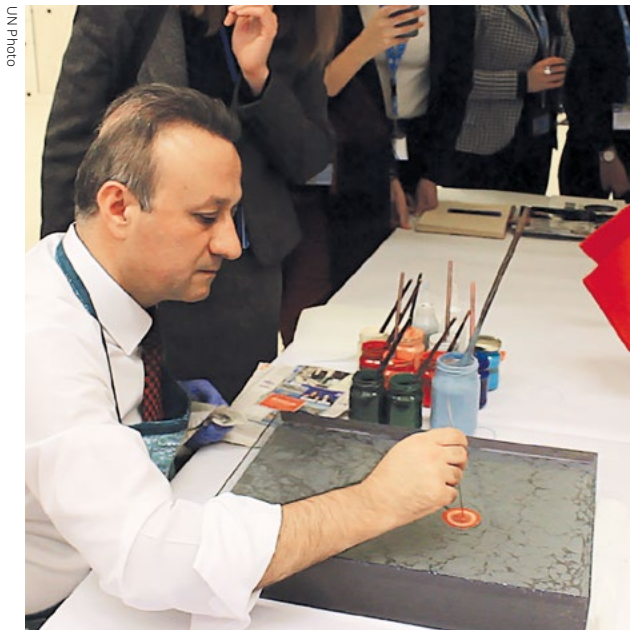
Through its events, the UN Library Geneva has created a unique space for dialogue and cultural exchange. The increasing number of events taking place at UN Geneva, often organized as joint projects by Member States and other organizations, is a testament that culture has the power to strengthen links across borders and even entire continents.



Visitors admire the World Peace Art Exhibition, organized by the Permanent Mission of Japan, which displayed works from 120 artists.



Charles Aznavour receives flowers and cheers from the audience, following his performance at the Grand concert de la Francophonie in March 2018, organized by the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie.



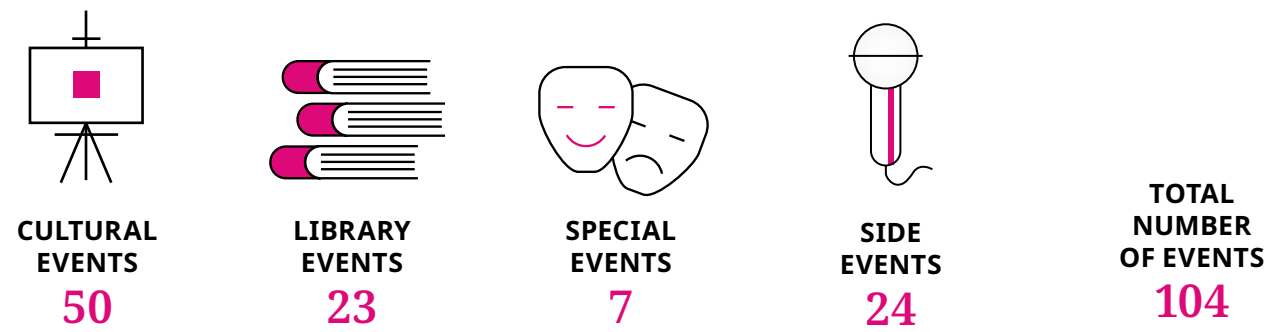
The artist Atilla Can demonstrating Ebru artwork at the opening of the exhibition “Migratory Birds”, organized by the Permanent Mission of Turkey.



A performance of Mongolian traditional dance and music during a cultural evening organized by the Permanent Mission of Mongolia.



The Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán salute the audience before their performance, “Raíces de México”, in a packed Assembly Hall. The concert was organized by the Permanent Mission of Mexico



At a Storytelling@TheLibrary event, “Vint Cerf, One of the Fathers of the Internet,” Google’s Vice President and Chief Internet Evangelist shares his captivating story on cybersecurity and data management.



Grammy®-nominated Rocky Dawuni performs on stage, accompanied by other renowned artists, during the WHO concert “BreatheLife for a Healthy People – Healthy Planet” at the Assembly Hall of the Palais des Nations.



Maestro Pablo Mielgo conducts the orchestra during the annual Concert for Human Rights, organized by ONUART Foundation on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Slovenian artist Marko Hatlak performing with his band FUNtango at the concert organized by the Mission of the Republic of Slovenia in Room XX of the Palais des Nations.

LAMPA International Film Festival lights up UN Geneva on International Volunteer Day

The LAMPA International Film Festival Retrospective, celebrated at UN Geneva on the occasion of International Volunteer Day on 5 December, was a powerful showcase of short films and social advertising that encouraged volunteering and charity. It was an opportunity for the international community to celebrate volunteers and their efforts, to share their values, and to promote their work.

The festival, which began in Perm, Russia, in 2014, is now a large-scale international event that presents a unique collection of social media stories about volunteers around the world. Today the LAMPA Film Collection consists of more than 5,000 works from 123 countries.

The best short films and videos, dedicated to volunteers and benefactors from all over the world, were seen by more than 200 representatives of permanent missions to UN Geneva, international organizations, artists and cinematographers, and the media.

One of the highlights of the festival was the “Brighter than a movie!” interactive exhibition. Participants viewed special digests about the films and scanned QR codes to revisit the screenings featured at the festival. During the opening of the exhibition, letters of gratitude were presented to the directors of the LAMPA Film Festival, who came from all over the world to participate in the event.

The event was organized by the festival’s organizing committee, the National Association for the Education Development “Notebook of Friendship”, the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation and UN Geneva.



Do you want to volunteer for the United Nations? Learn about the United Nations Volunteer programme and how you can contribute to peace and development by going to www.unv.org.



Scan the QR code to watch a short feature about the LAMPA International Film Festival Retrospective.



Geneva Peace Talks: Peace without Borders

Each year on 21 September, the International Day of Peace is celebrated around the world. It is a day to remember that peace is within our power and that it requires the actions of everyone, everywhere.

In celebration of the International Day of Peace, UN Geneva, the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and Interpeace organized the 2018 edition of the Geneva Peace Talks under the theme “Peace without Borders”. For the sixth consecutive year, the Palais des Nations became a space for empowerment, celebration and inspiration, welcoming almost one thousand participants.

Nine speakers from around the world shared personal experiences about their efforts to promote peace that went beyond all borders – be they boundaries in our minds, geographical borders or political limitations.

22-year-old Aya Mohammed Abdullah recounted the story of being a refugee helping other refugees by working with partner NGOs of the UN Refugee Agency. Entrepreneur Jasminko Halilović shared his work in founding the awarded War Childhood Museum – the world’s first and only museum focusing on the experiences of children within conflict zones.

Feminist activist Diana García spoke about creating spaces where women learn to utilize their experiences and knowledge to promote peace in their own communities.

Medica Mondiale founder Monika Hauser told her story of working with rape victims of the Bosnian war and supporting survivors of sexualized violence in conflict zones.

Psychologist Nino Rizzo explained the mental health aspects of adolescent addiction, and the

importance for children placed with adoptive families to have frameworks to ensure their own rights. Pauline Bend, a representative of Fondation Hironnelle, advocated for the promotion of communication spaces for the most marginalized people in society.

Hacene Ouahmane shared his experiences working with migrants, organizing integration workshops and creating harmony amongst people from different cultures.

Finally, Generations for Peace volunteers Zakaria El Baba and Wala’ Alsmadi spoke about building sustainable peace through grassroots organizations.

The message of the Geneva Peace Talks is clear: Every one of us, anywhere in the world, must continue to tear down walls and build bridges if we want to create truly sustainable peace.



Scan the QR code to watch the full-length version of the Geneva Peace Talks.



Photo: Frederik Kernisch for Interpeace



Photo: Frederik Kernisch for Interpeace



Photo: Frederik Kernisch for Interpeace



Geneva Peace Week

Launched in 2014 by UN Geneva and the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, Geneva Peace Week has become an essential point of reference on the international peace agenda for dialogue on building peace and resolving conflict.

In the last five years, Geneva Peace Week has mobilized actors and institutions in and beyond Geneva, to propose a diverse series of events focused on the crosscutting nature of peace, human rights and development.

The 2018 edition emphasized the urgent need to find peaceful solutions to the growing risks of violent conflict, building on lessons from history, as we commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Armistice of the First World War, and examined the need for future peacebuilding practices.

More than 120 partners organized 65 events in 2018, attracting over 5,000 participants from all over the world. This represents a vast increase from just 10 events organized by 9 actors in 2014.



Actress and former Bosnian parliamentarian Zana Marjanović delivers remarks during the screening of *A Rose in Winter* on 7 November.



Participants enter the Kazakh Room (Cinema XIV) to watch the screening of *A Rose in Winter*, showcased during Geneva Peace Week 2018.



Youth-driven change from within the Organization: Young UN

Despite the name “Young UN”, there is no age criteria to become a member of the growing network that is Young UN. The initiative, which started in 2016, aims to bring together professionals of all ages and ranks from across the United Nations system to help the almost 75-year-old institution evolve and adapt to the modern era.

The network now includes over 800 individuals in 80 duty stations, of whom 108 are based in Geneva. Young UN has become a proven platform for crowdsourced ideas and to pilot innovation and experimentation. It is also a bottom-up mechanism to drive a cultural shift towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2018, Director-General Michael Møller and UN Geneva senior management met with representatives from Young UN to discuss areas of collaboration, the network’s activities in Geneva and how to better integrate the youth voice into our work. On 10 October, the event “Seniors and Millennials Dialogue” explored how the two generations can work together for the Sustainable Development Goals by drawing on the experience and advice of older generations and the future projects and hopes of youth. The event was organized by Greycells, a non-profit association of former international civil servants of the United Nations and other international development organizations, in collaboration with Young UN, the Geneva International Model United Nations, the City of Geneva, Rotaract Genève International, la Plateforme des associations d’ainés de Genève and le Parlement des Jeunes Genevois.





Motivating youth for action

Contributing. Meaning. Purpose. These notions towards improving lives and the planet are just some of what motivates youth to take action. Research has shown that youth, including Millennials, Generation Z and Generation Alpha, are more purpose-driven than those who came before, and often prioritize meaningful activities over ones that harm the environment or humanity.

To empower youth to achieve their full potential, Secretary-General António Guterres launched in September "[Youth 2030: The United Nations Youth Strategy](#)". This bold, ambitious new strategy will guide the UN system in stepping up support for young people while ensuring that the Organization's work fully benefits from their insights and ideas.

Throughout the year, UN Geneva continued to educate and empower youth through a variety of initiatives, special events and creative publications. Check out some of the highlights from 2018.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Young visitors to UN Geneva

International Days

During the [International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust](#) in January, 140 youth from local schools met with Holocaust survivor Eva Schloss to learn about her experiences and the brutality of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. Ms. Schloss, who is also the stepdaughter of Otto Frank, Anne Frank's father, noted that the current refugee crisis was a terrible reminder of what happened to Anne Frank's family and to her own – they had been denied visa and safe haven in other countries and had perished in the Nazi death camps.

Schoolchildren from Lyon, France paid us a visit on the [International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers](#), which Geneva celebrated in May. They met with and learned from real Blue Helmets! Former Peacekeeper Commander Jean-Louis Pradier was on hand to interact with the children and to tell them about his service in Somalia and other missions. Through educational games and activities, they learned how peacekeeping works and how the UN promotes a better future for people and the planet through a global effort known as the Sustainable Development Goals.



Scan the QR code to see behind-the-scenes footage from the visit of schoolchildren from Lyon.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



Youth for refugees and migrants

As part of the “TOGETHER” campaign to promote the respect, safety and dignity of refugees and migrants, students from the Lycée International de Ferney-Voltaire worked all year on a project focused on migration. In March, they came to UN Geneva to present their work at the literary encounter on contemporary writings on migration and to interact with four writers whose work explores this global theme: André Bucher, Delphine Coulin, Jean-Pascal Collégia and Emmanuel Ruben. Opening the event, co-organized with the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, UN Geneva Director-General said, “I am very proud to see so many committed supporters for refugees and migrants. And I am especially proud to see so many young people participating in this campaign.”



UN Photo: Violaine Martin

SDGs through games and play

“Ban child labour”, said 30 Japanese and Swiss children, aged 10–15, who gathered at the Palais des Nations in July to learn – through games, discussions and play – about the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations. “Ban child labour because it is important to learn things such as reading and writing, to make friends and play sports,” Yura, Sayo, Gaétan and Yusaku argued in defence of their proposal. Creative juices were flowing hard and fast, as teams outdid each other in brainstorming solutions to global challenges, such as poverty, education or life below water, demonstrating beyond doubt that they have firmly set foot on a path to becoming active and engaged global citizens. Rei (13) from Osaka, Japan and her team-mates proposed to build more schools so children could grow up to get good jobs and avoid poverty, while Lourine (14) from St Gallen, Switzerland and her team focused on solutions to clean plastic from the oceans and protect marine life. The event was organized by Junior Chamber International and the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva.



UN Photo: Charlotte Denis

Youth visitors

Do you know what percentage of visitors to UN Geneva are children and youth?

Well, they represent a whopping 80% of all those who take guided tours of the Palais des Nations – some 45,000 school and university students visited in 2018 and another 13,000 toured the home of UN Geneva with their families! Our Visitors’ Service is working on developing a special tour for young children, to better inform and engage this critical population group on global issues and the work of the UN.

“Not your typical school Monday, but I still learned a whole lot” – Sabrina Odofin, a student from Belgium who visited UN Geneva on 12 November.

Ready to sprint!

Young participants competed in the 5th edition of the Course de l’Escalade training session at the Palais des Nations on 21 October. The Course de l’Escalade, or Escalade race, is Geneva’s biggest annual sporting event. The training session was an opportunity for the United Nations family to strengthen the ties with the Geneva community, including the youth community, and to express appreciation for the continued support of the host country. The theme of the training session – Health for All – highlighted health and inclusion, and health benefits for each individual and society as a whole, which are essential in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

Welcome to #FerMUN 2018!

Over 600 students from 23 countries, including Morocco, Senegal, Israel, Costa Rica, Ivory Coast, Australia, and the United States of America, took part in the 8th edition of the Model United Nations organised by Lycée international de Ferney-Voltaire. Over the three-day session which opened on 10 January, they debated on how to tackle the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and foster innovation through intellectual property. The “delegates” discussed and adopted resolutions on

intellectual property, and on areas related to the work of the Human Rights Council, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Security Council and the International Court of Justice.

Why School?

What would the ideal school look like in 2030? This question, among others, guided Swiss students aged 4 to 19 who poured their creativity and curiosity into artwork, media production or an idea for concrete action as part of the competition “Why School? Towards Quality Education for All”, launched by the Eduki Foundation under the high patronage of the UN Geneva Director-General. More than 800 young participants from all over Switzerland came to the Palais des Nations on 20 April to unveil the 18 winning projects: cartoons, board games, T-shirts, awareness-raising videos, radio programmes, and models.

A young girl student named Adélaïde, of the HPI Group Fribourg, received the special human rights prize, awarded this year by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The winning project “Il était une fois l’école” – a collaborative board game – found its inspiration in Malala Yousafzai’s eloquent words: “Let us pick up our books and our pens, they are the most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world.”



Photo: Eduki Sigfredo



Expo Juniors

The Perception Change Project (PCP), launched by the Director-General in 2014 to better explain how Geneva-based organizations affect the lives of everyone on this planet, is spearheading a number of youth initiatives. In 2018, the PCP in partnership with Addictlab Academy exhibited at Expo Juniors in Geneva. The purpose of the event was to educate children ages 4 to 12 about the Sustainable Development Goals. Many of the youth, excited to learn more about how they could help achieve the Goals, shared creative ideas and wrote their thoughts and ambitions on a “wall of actions”.

Cité des métiers

An exhibition on the Sustainable Development Goals was showcased at a Geneva job fair for students ages 15 to 20. Developed in coordination with UN Geneva, Fondation pour Genève, Eduki Foundation and Cité des Métiers, the aim was to raise awareness of the SDGs and to show how different professions contribute towards achieving the Goals by the year 2030. This year, the event attracted over 90,000 students. 49 experts from international organizations interacted with the students to demonstrate how their work was contributing towards the SDGs. As the youth at these events found out, many workers, including cleaners, businessmen, teachers, gardeners, chefs and more, can help achieve the SDGs in their own ways. To inspire young people to be creative in their future roles and to achieve the greatest impact, the Perception Change Project distributed a new guide “*170 Jobs with a Purpose*”.

Youth and International Geneva

The Perception Change Project, in collaboration with Eduki and UN Information Service, continues to run the youth outreach programmes “KidsWannaKnow” and “Young Reporters”. These two programmes allow students to engage with experts from International Geneva on a variety of relevant topics, including Internet and security, human rights, and health. In 2018, KidsWannaKnow produced 21 interview videos held between the student and a representative from International Geneva, which accumulated over 2,000 views on its YouTube channel. One hundred thirty-five students attended the “Young Reporters at the UN” press conferences created for them, 10 conclusive articles were written by some students after the conferences, and 3 of the articles were published in the *UN Special* magazine. In 2018, seven international organizations and one foundation presented to the students.

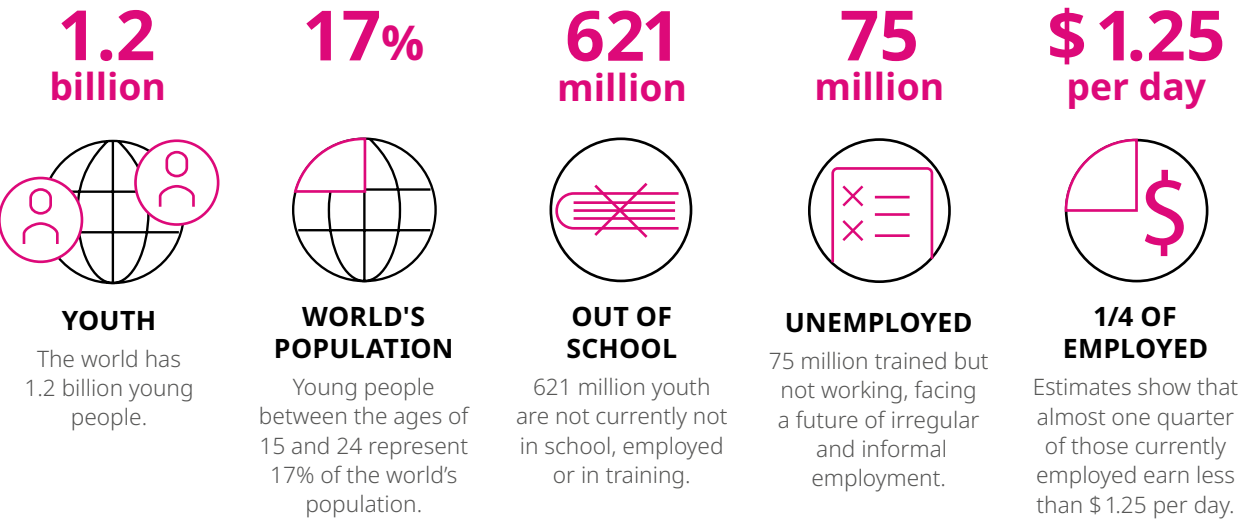
Animated stories for Sustainable Development

Along with the children’s books *Fairy Tales for a Fairer World* and *After the Rain*, which were showcased in chapter two (Innovative evolution), the Perception Change Project released the first two books from the *Iceberg* series. The animated books for teens show how important it is to be constructive when telling stories about current events. With so much negative news in the media today, we only see the tip of the iceberg and are unaware of all the positive work being done below the surface to tackle global problems. *Iceberg* helps shed light on topics that are usually seen from a negative angle. By exposing solutions and results, the series aims

to inspire people to be part of the solution. The Perception Change Project works closely with students who create powerful illustrations for the series. The collaboration with the students extends to many other projects, including the multilingual, animated GIFs created for the “YouNeedToKnow” social media campaign, “170 Daily Actions to Transform Our World”.



Scan the QR code to watch the first installment of the *Iceberg Series*, *Amira*.





Leaders of tomorrow for human rights

“The Universal Declaration is not a tired collation of pretty sentiments. It is a programme of hard-headed action. It tells us what human life can be, and should be, and it shows us the steps that will take us there. Human rights are the workhorses, the load-bearing bricks and mortar which build resilience, and greater security, for every society,” the then High Commissioner Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein expressed during an event in observance of the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He continued, *“You are the leaders you have been waiting for. We are in this together, this struggle to question, to debate, and to act on behalf of one another in pursuit of our deepest convictions.”*

Gathered at the event were participants from 32 countries, standing up for human rights by learning and sharing together, as part of UN Geneva’s Graduate Study Programme, the longest-running educational programme in the UN. A series of lectures were also given with expert speakers from eleven UN agencies, funds and programmes based in Geneva.

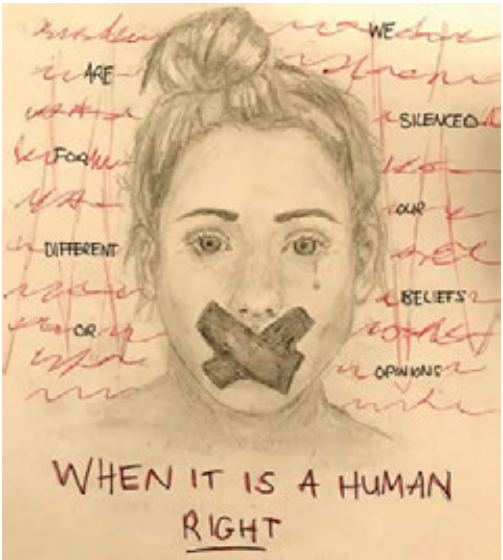
The promotion of human rights is equally relevant for younger generations, and on the occasion of the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, youth were encouraged to participate in an event where they shared their artistic skills and expressed what human rights meant to them. *“The goal”,* UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller said, *“is to get the children to reflect about the importance of respecting the desires, the differences and legitimate aspirations of all individuals”.*

More than 17,000 youth from all over the world ages 10 to 14 participated in an international drawing competition launched by UN Geneva together with Spanish artist Cristóbal Gabarrón,

the Gabarrón Foundation, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The works were a pure testimony of the children’s perception of human rights, with many of them demonstrating a depth of thought and artistic skills that far exceeded expectations. Several of the young artists attended the award ceremony and their art was exhibited at the Reina Sofia Children’s Art Museum in Valladolid, Spain.

“They sometimes revealed injustices seen through the eyes of children that may not correspond to the views of the adults”, declared the international jury, presided by artist Gabarrón and including Hani Abbas, a Syrian-Palestinian cartoonist, Kate Gilmore, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Susanna Griso, Spanish journalist and television presenter, Jenna Ortega, a young American actress, Tomás Paredes, President of the Spanish chapter of the International Association of Art Critics, and Jayathma Wickramanayake, the Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth.

Numerous other works of art were recognized with honourable mentions and are available from <http://kids4humanrights.org>.



Madie Crawshaw, 14, Sydney, Australia



Addison Wright, 12, California, USA

João Marques, 13, Cascais, Portugal



Adebola Adewale, 14, Georgia, USA



Barad Memar Kermani, 10, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran



Margaret Kuts, 12, British Columbia, Canada



Saied Muhamma Saleh, 12, Dhaka, Bangladesh



Prima Rungruang, 12, Bangkok, Thailand



Macarena Díaz, 10, Santa Cruz, Plurinational State of Bolivia



Information programmes fit the bill: Charlotte’s story

The Palais des Nations receives more than 120,000 visitors a year. Many come through the Visitors’ Service to take guided tours, while others participate in tailored programmes to have a better understanding of the activities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies based in Geneva. The UN Geneva information programmes, on the core activities of the United Nations Information Service, can be customized for students, journalists, diplomats or anyone working on global issues.

Having always wanted to make a more universal impact with her work, University of Geneva master’s student Charlotte Denis worked diligently to accomplish her goals during a public information internship at UN Geneva. *“This is exactly where the value of the information programmes is – reaching outside of the UN walls to ordinary people, and in a more accessible manner,”* said Charlotte, who helped organize specific information programmes for the wide variety of special guests who came to the Palais in 2018. Often preparing programmes specifically for students like herself, she said, *“At school or university, most courses about the UN focus on the Security Council or the General Assembly, and we learn very little about UN agencies. It’s very interesting to find out about their daily work.”*

It is for this precise reason that UN Geneva established the information programmes: to better reach out to students and professionals from around the world and help them make the most of their visit to Geneva.

In 2018, UN Geneva organized 40 information programmes for 1,539 participants from 17 countries.

“It is impossible to overestimate the value added for our students – and through them for the UN itself,” says Dan Plesch, Director of the Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, United Kingdom. *“The presentations from UN staff are always highly engaging and the net effect is that each year 100 or more SOAS students enter their international careers with a realistically positive comprehension of the UN system – an experience that will resonate for decades to come.”*



Charlotte Denis in the Salle des Pas Perdus of the Palais des Nations.

UN Photo: Adam Kane



United Nations Women’s Guild: Women with a cause

When women who are passionate about a cause come together, extraordinary things happen. The United Nations Women’s Guild, an association of women from over 100 countries, organized its annual International Bazaar in collaboration with Geneva-based permanent missions at UN Geneva on 20 November 2018. This lively event was a showcase of the cultural diversity of International Geneva, with around 8,000 people in attendance. Through the sale of culinary delights and colourful handicrafts from over 70 countries, the Guild raised an impressive CHF 222,000 for underprivileged children around the world.

Children’s rights are an integral part of the Sustainable Development Goals, and the work of the United Nations Women’s Guild touches on fields such as the fight against poverty, health, education, gender equality and the reduction of inequalities. “The Roadmap for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals states that every child must grow up in a healthy and peaceful environment, that every child must be able to eat, go to school, have access to a doctor and have all-inclusive development”, said Director-General Michael Møller at the event.

The spirit of the Bazaar is built on the spirit of partnerships, and it is just one of the many initiatives organized by the Guild that is underpinned by Goal 17, “Partnerships for the Goals”. In 2018, UN Geneva continued to host other annual events organized by the Guild, such as the “Children’s Walk” on 12 October, in benefit of a scholarship for underprivileged girls, and an exhibition “Art Expo” on 1 May. To date, the Guild financed around 2,000 projects in over 100 countries with more than CHF 7 million.



UN Photo: Adam Kane



UN Photo: Adam Kane

Photos, above
A close-up of Russian nesting dolls, or “matryoshka” dolls, during the 2018 International Bazaar

Participants queue up to taste dishes from the Thai national stand during the 2018 International Bazaar.

Photo, right
Women from the Sudanese national stand during the 2018 International Bazaar



UN Photo: Adam Kane

ANNEXES

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2018 in Photos



On International Women’s Day, Geneva’s landmark Jet d’eau fountain was illuminated in blue in honour of the International Gender Champions. IGC and its numerous Geneva-based member entities organized the first ever “International Women’s Week” **5–9 MARCH 2018**.



Pierre Krähenbühl, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (left), Elena Mancusi Materi, UNRWA Senior Liaison Officer (centre) and Alessandra Vellucci, Director of the United Nations Information Service (right) during UNRWA’s annual press conference on **30 JANUARY 2018**. UN Geneva hosted **195** press conferences by UN officials, UN family in Geneva and the Member States in 2018.



Bilateral meeting between Staffan de Mistura, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria (left), and Sergey Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (right), on **28 FEBRUARY 2018**. UN Geneva is one of the most active centres for multilateral diplomacy worldwide. In 2018, over **200** Heads of State and Government and Ministers for Foreign Affairs were welcomed by the UN Geneva Protocol and Liaison Service and around **4,500** high-level officials flew into International Geneva.



UN Photo/Pierre Albouy

UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller (second left) gives Alain Berset, President of the Swiss Confederation (left), a tour of the Palais des Nations on **8 MAY 2018**. The tour included a presentation of the Strategic Heritage Plan, aimed at renovating the historic Palais des Nations, and a stop at the construction site of the new permanent building.



UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

Secretary-General António Guterres (left) consulting with Mark Lowock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (centre) and Isabella Lövin, Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden and Minister for International Development Cooperation (right) during the High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen on **3 APRIL 2018**.



UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

A peacock walks through the interior courtyard of the Palais des Nations in **JUNE 2018**. Peacocks were donated to UN Geneva by a zoo in Japan in 1997, while others were sent as gifts from the Permanent Mission of Japan. UN Geneva's Ariana Park has over **800** species, including a bee apiary, 100-year-old trees and many different varieties of plants.



UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

The 56th edition of the Graduate Study Programme (GSP), which took place **2-13 JULY 2018**, gathered 47 students from 32 countries. Established in the 1960s, the GSP is one of the longest-running educational programmes in the United Nations.



UN Photo/Violaine Martin

A cameraman provides live coverage of a press briefing on the second session of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems on **27 AUGUST 2018**. UN Geneva produced **2,455** webcast videos in 2018, which were seen more than **430,000** times by viewers worldwide.



UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

Nane Annan (right), wife of the late Kofi Annan, seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations, and his children, bid farewell as the casket leaves Geneva for the State funeral in Ghana on **10 SEPTEMBER 2018**. Kofi Annan spent many years in Switzerland, where he studied and worked. Hundreds of people gathered in the iconic Assembly Hall at the Palais des Nations on 27 September 2018 to celebrate his life and pay homage to his legacy.



UN Photo/Violaine Martin

For the first time, on **7 OCTOBER 2018**, runners taking part in the Canton of Geneva's "Geneva 20 km race" were provided access to the Palais des Nations grounds as part of this semi-marathon. Overall, almost **1 million people** were screened on entry to the Palais des Nations in 2018.



UN Photo/Jean Marc Ferrière

UN Geneva Director-General Michael Møller (left) in the "operations room" of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) on **19 NOVEMBER 2018**. In 2018, UN Geneva and EBU, the largest community of public service media organizations in the world, signed a Letter of Intent to strengthen their partnership. This agreement aims to enhance cooperation on quality journalism, constructive news, public service media, freedom of information and the safety of journalists.



UN Photo by Violaine Martin

Antonio Hodgers, President of the State Council, Republic and Canton of Geneva (right) delivers remarks during Human Rights Day, celebrated on **13 DECEMBER 2018**.

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The UN Geneva senior management team provides executive support to the Director-General in his functions as the representative of the Secretary-General in Switzerland, as executive head of the United Nations Office at Geneva and the designated official for security for Switzerland, as mandated in the Secretary-General's bulletin on the organization of the United Nations Office at Geneva. The team meets on a weekly basis to inform and advise the Director-General on priority issues, upcoming events and other high-level matters.

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*Note: The Director-General of UN Geneva also serves as the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and is the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Conference on Disarmament, which is serviced by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in Geneva.

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