

TRANSFORMING

FOR THE FUTURE

UN GENEVA ANNUAL REPORT



UNITED NATIONS
GENEVA

TRANSFORMING

FOR THE FUTURE

2023 UN GENEVA ANNUAL REPORT



UNITED NATIONS
GENEVA



4 FOREWORD

6 2023 IN NUMBERS

**13 CHAPTER 1
REINVIGORATING
MULTILATERALISM
AND RECOMMITTING TO
THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

- 15 Marking International Days
- 21 Executive Briefings: spreading knowledge about multilateral diplomacy
- 23 Pursuing multi-stakeholder multilateralism
- 26 Facilitating exchanges with civil society for an inclusive multilateralism
- 28 Supporting international law at UN Geneva
- 30 Human-centred disarmament: a renewed vision for disarmament efforts
- 31 Unpacking disarmament with the Geneva Disarmament Conversation Series
- 33 Onboarding diplomats at UN Geneva: building knowledge and partnerships
- 34 Pursuing gender equality and the empowerment of women
- 36 Sustainable Development Goals: a perfect match for European football's movers and shakers
- 37 Bringing the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals Summit – and momentum – to Geneva
- 38 Setting sustainable futures in motion
- 39 Shaping the long term: SDG Lab's new series explores what's next for sustainability
- 41 UN Geneva's engagement for a greener, more sustainable future
- 43 Ensuring safe conferences, meetings and visits
- 44 SPOTLIGHT ON UN GENEVA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF "OUR COMMON AGENDA"**

**53 CHAPTER 2
BOOSTING
COMMUNICATION ON
OUR WORK AND
AMPLIFYING
YOUTH VOICES**

- 55 Empowering women around the world
- 57 UN Geneva meetings coverage: audience engagement and promotional strategy
- 58 Through the lens of UNTV Geneva: conversations to drive action
- 60 Sharing knowledge, inspiring action: multimedia engagement by UN Library and Archives Geneva
- 62 The power of visual communication
- 65 New climate change pop-up space at Geneva Airport
- 66 A thriving Visitors' Service
- 67 Fostering cultural exchange and understanding
- 69 Young Activists Summit honours five activists at UN Geneva with the participation of Prince Albert II of Monaco
- 70 Beyond tokenism: walking the talk on genuine and meaningful youth engagement in policymaking
- 72 Prioritizing values today for sustainable futures of tomorrow: SDG Lab at the St. Gallen Symposium
- 74 Increasing the involvement of youth in disarmament discussions
- 75 57th session of the International Law Seminar
- 76 Perception Change Project – youth engagement
- 77 *Vimal*: championing peace through sport
- 78 SPOTLIGHT ON CELEBRATING A MILESTONE 75 YEARS OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

**81 CHAPTER 3
CULTIVATING OUR
MODERN WORKPLACE
AND MOBILIZING
OUR RESOURCES**

- 83 The new Visitor Centre "Portail des Nations"
- 84 Inauguration of the renovated Pregny Pavilion and new digital badging system
- 86 Renovated sections of the Palais des Nations reopen
- 87 UN Geneva adopts Lean construction management methodology
- 88 New meeting rooms and collaboration spaces
- 89 Harnessing user feedback to improve the workplace
- 91 Technological products and innovations for conferences
- 92 UN Geneva: a modern conferencing hub
- 94 Strategic Heritage Plan online open house sessions
- 95 Advancing disability rights at UN Geneva
- 96 UN Geneva anti-racism working group recommendations
- 98 Celebrating multilingualism at UN Geneva
- 100 Assessing and learning languages under the United Nations Language Framework
- 101 Training new security officers
- 102 Sharing expertise with others
- 103 Career fulfilment monthly sessions for staff

104 2023 IN PHOTOS

This year was another difficult year for us all. Faced with challenges that include global economic insecurity, the rise of violent conflicts and nuclear threats, record levels of humanitarian needs, the increasingly pressing consequences of climate change, deepening inequalities and growing mistrust and misinformation, humanity is being put to the test.

More than halfway to the deadline for achieving the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we are not on track. Herein lies the issue – the current multilateral governance system is not effectively meeting the complex challenges of today's rapidly changing world. A new international consensus on a specific plan to better meet today's needs and tackle tomorrow's obstacles must be forged. We must transform for the future. Keeping the mission and the values of the United Nations as our compass in this time of acute uncertainty, the Organization is adapting while continuing to deliver concrete results, often without sufficient support and resources.

Despite the challenges, UN Geneva accomplished a tremendous amount in 2023, and achieved some key milestones. We supported multilateral processes in Geneva and beyond, gradually returning to the levels of conferencing activities seen prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. We continued to facilitate United Nations-led peace processes,

including on the situations in the Syrian Arab Republic and in Yemen; we completed a number of important phases of the Strategic Heritage Plan, including the reopening of some historical buildings; and we took the first steps in the Portail des Nations project – our visionary new Visitor Centre. We also continued to ensure diversity and inclusivity in our workplace, thereby strengthening our capacities for the 21st century.

Above all, we worked with Member States, young people, civil society, the private sector, academic entities and many more actors in order to restore trust, boost the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and reinvigorate multilateral cooperation. For almost 80 years, UN Geneva has been a centre for international diplomacy. Our commitment to building a better future for all, and the facilities, resources and expertise we provide, have been instrumental in this endeavour. As we look back and reflect on the challenges faced in 2023 and on our collective achievements, we are more determined than ever to transform for the future.

Tatiana Valovaya

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



“As we look back and reflect on the challenges faced in 2023 and on our collective achievements, we are more determined than ever to transform for the future.”

2023 IN NUMBERS

PEOPLE AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

As at 31 December 2023, there were **1,535** staff at UN Geneva, representing **110** nationalities and a wide range of professional backgrounds.

52% of UN Geneva staff were women and **48%** were men.

Payroll services were provided for some **7,500** staff.

Administrative and operational support was provided to more than **40** UN system entities in Europe

and some **60** of their field offices around the world.

The **Human Resources Management Service** provided:

- General human resources management
- Policy and legal services
- Learning and training activities
- Medical and welfare services

The **Client Support Centre** responded to more than

11,010 telephone calls

and **130,603** remote service requests.

A total of **18,897** in-person consultations were provided.

The **Financial Resources Management Service** supported:

- Accounts and trust fund management
- Treasury functions
- Payroll and accounts payable services
- Budget management
- The processing of more than **300,000** payments

The **Central Support Services** handled procurements valued at approximately

\$163 million

Issued **25,980** travel requests representing an estimated value of **\$31.2 million**, together with

10,104 United Nations travel documents (United Nations laissez-passer and travel certificates)

Processed **102.9 tons** of items through the diplomatic pouches on behalf of Geneva-based United Nations entities

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The UN Geneva Medical Service:

Provided medical support and advice to staff and 24/7 telephone support

Provided medical-related administrative services for more than

15,000 staff in the field and at main duty stations, including the processing of **7,166** medical clearances

Provided **1,707** vaccines for safe travel and prevention of serious disease

23 workshops and training sessions were provided by the Staff Counsellors Office, attended by

738 people. **21** weekly and **11** monthly bulletins were disseminated by the Staff Counsellors Office.

The United Nations **Staff Mutual Insurance Society** against Sickness and Accidents provided medical insurance for staff, retirees and their dependents, processing more than

490,000 medical invoices for over **36,000** persons.

SECURITY AND SAFETY

177,225 pedestrians and **332,182** vehicles were screened at the Palais des Nations by the Security and Safety Service.

46,303 identification badges were issued by the Pass and Identification Unit.

354 protective operations were coordinated.

96 training sessions were provided by the Training Unit.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

1,224 tons of CO₂ equivalent were emitted by UN Geneva. Most of the emissions were from the consumption of natural gas and other fuel for heating. Through a carbon-offset programme, UN Geneva is climate neutral.

UN Geneva produced **652 tons** of waste, including waste from the Strategic Heritage Plan renovation project.

100% of general office waste was reused, recycled, composted or used for energy recovery.

680,449 m³ of water was used by UN Geneva.

STRATEGIC HERITAGE PLAN

The Strategic Heritage Plan project spent **SwF 60 million** on renovation work on the historic buildings of the Palais des Nations.

5 newly renovated conference rooms in section AC of the Palais were returned to operations, and a new dedicated press room was opened.

The contract for the renovation of Building E was awarded in January 2023.

CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT

8,478 meetings organized, of which: **5,942** were in person, **2,503** were hybrid, **33** were virtual, **1,614** were held outside of Geneva

At UN Geneva, virtual/hybrid conference services were provided as part of business continuity until the end of June 2023 and extended until the end of 2023 on an exceptional basis. The number of hybrid meetings includes all meetings with a remote participation component, regardless of the proportion of the remote interventions, and the type of platform or tool used, in the meeting.

36% of meetings included interpretation services.

587 summary records were produced. **84.5 million** words were translated.

PEACE TALKS

UN Geneva supported talks to advance peace processes in the context of the Geneva International Discussions, in the Syrian Arab Republic and in Yemen:

Geneva International Discussions: April, July and December

Syrian Arab Republic:

- **3** meetings of the Civil Society Support Room: April, May and December
- **1** plenary meeting of the Ceasefire Task Force of the International Syria Support Group: March
- **12** meetings of the Humanitarian Task Force of the International Syria Support Group

Yemen:

- Supervisory Committee on the Implementation of the Detainees' Exchange Agreement: March

DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Held **70** bilateral meetings with representatives of Member States from all **5** geographical regions; **28** were with Heads of State and Government, foreign ministers or other high-level dignitaries

Briefed all **5** regional groups and held **3** informational sessions with Member States

Held **118** meetings with representatives of United Nations entities, other international organizations, members of civil society and private sector institutions, and academics;

75 meetings were with senior United Nations officials and heads of international organizations

32 new permanent representatives presented their letters of credence, and **5** new permanent observers presented their nomination letters.

11 Executive Briefings held, with an average attendance of **49** delegations per briefing

Gave **5** interviews

Tweeted **275** times

Had **145** public speaking engagements, actively contributing to global discussions on climate resilience, gender equality, sustainable development, human rights and peacebuilding, and reinforcing the pivotal role of the United Nations in promoting international cooperation and tackling global challenges

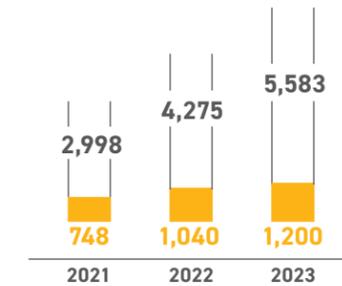
Went on 12 missions:

<p>JANUARY</p> <p>to participate in the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum, in Davos, Switzerland</p>  <p>JANUARY</p>	<p>APRIL</p> <p>to address students of Sciences Po, in Paris, France</p>  <p>APRIL</p>	<p>JUNE</p> <p>to open the <i>17 Faces of Action</i> exhibition, organized by UN Geneva and the Association of Swiss Women and Empowerment, in Lisbon, Portugal</p>  <p>JUNE</p>	<p>AUGUST</p> <p>to participate in Diplomacy Day at the Locarno Film Festival in Switzerland</p>  <p>AUGUST</p>	<p>DECEMBER</p> <p>to open the <i>17 Faces of Action</i> exhibition, organized by UN Geneva and the Association of Swiss Women and Empowerment, in Dubai, UAE</p>  <p>DECEMBER</p>
<p>MARCH</p> <p>to participate in the summit-level meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement Contact Group in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) to discuss global post-pandemic global recovery issues, in Baku, Azerbaijan</p>  <p>MARCH</p>	<p>MAY</p> <p>to participate in a lecture and high-level dinner in the context of the Rectors' Assembly of the League of European Research Universities, in Zurich, Switzerland</p>  <p>MAY</p>	<p>JUNE</p> <p>to participate in the crisis management training course organized by the Department of Safety and Security in Beijing, China</p>  <p>JUNE</p>	<p>JULY</p> <p>to represent the Secretary-General at the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held under the theme "NAM: united and steadfast in confronting emerging challenges", in Baku, Azerbaijan</p>  <p>JULY</p>	<p>OCTOBER</p> <p>to open the <i>17 Faces of Action</i> exhibition, organized by UN Geneva and the Association of Swiss Women and Empowerment, in Hanoi, Viet Nam</p>  <p>OCTOBER</p>
<p>MARCH</p> <p>to participate in the United Nations Senior Women Leaders' Retreat, in New York, USA</p>  <p>MARCH</p>				<p>OCTOBER</p> <p>to participate in the 78th session of the First Committee of the General Assembly and engage in key consultations in New York, USA</p>  <p>OCTOBER</p>

LIAISON WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

5,583 representatives of **1,200** non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council accredited to UN Geneva.

50 meetings of NGOs were facilitated.



● NGOs ○ Accredited representatives

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

3,496 participants in **308** language training courses:

- **259** students in Arabic
- **202** students in Chinese
- **519** students in English
- **2,086** students in French
- **278** students in Russian
- **553** students in Spanish

11,098 participants in management and communication lunchtime learning events; **4,615** participants in **3** outreach activities; **2,314** participants in training activities across **98** training workshops and **179** hours of coaching

34% increase in the use of the **11** Conference Primers comprising **3,468** resources and **2** mobile guides for specific conferences maintained for diplomats and delegates

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

10,203 interactions with clients to support their information needs on-site or online

293,788 information sources, including e-books and journal articles, used by clients

32,863 print and digital resources added to the Library's catalogue

114,831 views of online research guide pages

9 video tutorials produced to facilitate access to digital resources

74,689 online users generated **785,644** page views of the online Archives platform and **23,910** page views of the online Archives research guides.

3,963 United Nations official documents (70,907 pages) were digitized and uploaded to the Official Document System.

The Records Management Unit responded to inquiries from **438** clients and transferred **290** linear metres of physical archives and records for management and storage.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

21 events organized at the Palais des Nations, **11** special events and **30** side events organized at the Palais des Nations

Nearly **3,000 people** attended the events in person, and more than **1.5 million** took part in online or hybrid events.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

 **2,237,000** followers across UN Geneva's

5 main social media platforms as at 31 December:

-  X (English): **1,016,000** (+15%)
-  Facebook: **719,000** (+2.8%)
-  Instagram: **364,000** (+17%)
-  LinkedIn: **126,000** (+30%)
-  X (French): **12,000** (+100%)

120 million impressions across the 5 social media platforms (the number of times @UNGeneva posts were seen by social media users)

3.6 million engagements across the 5 social media platforms (the number of times social media users liked, commented on or shared @UNGeneva posts)

 **243** television news edits produced and distributed through UNifeed

1,440 print and audio stories produced and published on UN News in English and in French

Podcast production:

36 episodes of the French-language news podcast *ONU Info Genève*

24 episodes of *The Next Page*, a podcast on multilateralism

1,118 webcast videos produced and published on UN Web TV

796 meeting summaries issued to the press and other stakeholders, in both English and French

1.3 million unique visitors to ungeneva.org, who looked at a total of **7 million** pages, with **23 million** interactions on those pages.

 **37,683** visitors to the Palais des Nations took a guided tour and visited the UN Museum Geneva. Additionally, the Library and the UN Museum attracted

1,380 visitors who were not part of the regular tours but who visited these facilities specifically, thus increasing the total number of visitors to **39,063**

 **19** information programmes conducted for a total of **519** university and graduate students

58 participants from **50** countries in the **61st Graduate Study Programme**, the longest-running educational initiative of the United Nations

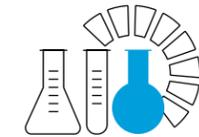
6 Ciné-ONU screenings for **689** participants

 **200** journalists accredited and **746** journalists temporarily accredited

100 hybrid biweekly press briefings held, and subsequent press briefing summaries issued in English

145 press conferences given by officials from United Nations agencies, programmes and funds, and Member States

SDG LAB



The SDG Lab published

5 commentaries on the Secretary-General's *Our Common Agenda* policy briefs on future generations, youth engagement, the Global Digital Compact, going beyond gross domestic product, and United Nations 2.0, collectively garnering

3,500 unique reads.

230 individuals participated in **3** intergenerational dialogues organized as part of the flagship *What's Next* series.



1,200 people, including diplomats, students and non-governmental and private-sector representatives, participated in **25** in-person and virtual briefings on the work of the SDG Lab.

In the lead-up to the high-level political forum on sustainable development and the Sustainable Development Goals Summit,

4 information- and opinion-sharing webinars were hosted by the SDG Lab and its partners between July and September,

attracting some **1,900** attendees and **1,400** YouTube views.

3 community-level events on long-term thinking for sustainable development were held, bringing together more than **80** Geneva-based sustainability practitioners.

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT



The high-level segment of the Conference on Disarmament was held from 27 February to

2 March. **55** dignitaries attended.

In **2023**, a total of **296** people – **184** men and **112** women – participated in the Conference on Disarmament.

Of the **67** heads of delegations, **45** were men and **22** were women.



CHAPTER 1

REINVIGORATING MULTILATERALISM AND RECOMMITTING TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

As part of its efforts to reinvigorate multilateralism and recommit to the Sustainable Development Goals, UN Geneva services and facilitates multilateral processes at the Palais des Nations and beyond. ©UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré



MARKING INTERNATIONAL DAYS

Every year, International Days and commemorations of important historical events offer timely opportunities for the international community in Geneva to gather and remember.

The ceremonies are generally well attended and constitute a powerful advocacy tool for the United Nations.

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

The annual ceremony for the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust was held in January at the Palais des Nations. The theme of “Home and belonging” provided an opportunity to reflect on what those words meant to the people who lived through the horrors of the Holocaust. Avraham Roet, one of the few remaining Holocaust survivors, shared his harrowing personal story, bearing witness to the strength and resilience of the Jewish people.

In her remarks, the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, raised concerns over the alarming resurgence of xenophobia and discrimination. She echoed the call made by the Secretary-General to counter Holocaust denial and distortion, including through the development and implementation of relevant outreach programmes and activities at UN Geneva to educate future generations about the lessons of the Holocaust. In addition, an art exhibition, entitled *Days Beyond Time – Artist Meets Testimony*, was organized in Geneva by the Permanent Mission of Israel and several partners to mark the commemoration.

Scan the QR code to watch a recording of the ceremony.



Every year, International Days and commemorations of important historical events offer timely opportunities for the international community in Geneva to gather and remember.

Candles are lit in a ceremony marking the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust. From right to left: Holocaust survivor, Avraham Roet; Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya; Permanent Representative of Israel, Meirav Eilon Shahaar; and young people attending the ceremony. ©UN Photo: Violaine Martin

◀ Pianist Amit Weiner, violinist Marc Crofts and singer Yael Yekel perform during the ceremony for the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust in January. ©UN Photo: Violaine Martin

International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda

In April, UN Geneva commemorated the [International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda](#) with a wreath-laying ceremony at the memorial stele at the Place des Nations, followed by a commemorative event at the Palais des Nations.

After a candle-lighting ceremony and one minute of silence in memory of the many victims who perished during the genocide in 1994, Providence Umugwaneza, a survivor of the genocide, shared her personal story with the hundreds of people who attended the ceremony in person or watched it online. The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk (through a video message), opened the ceremony. Powerful messages were delivered by the Permanent Representative of Rwanda, Marie Chantal Rwakazina; and a representative of Ibuka – Mémoire et justice (section Suisse), Cynthia Urusaro Imhof.

Scan the QR code to watch a [recording](#) of the ceremony.



Participants observe one minute of silence during the commemoration of the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, held at the Palais des Nations. ©UN Photo: Violaine Martin

The Representative of Ibuka – Mémoire et justice (section Suisse), Cynthia Urusaro Imhof, delivers her remarks during the annual commemoration of the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda at UN Geneva. ©UN Photo: Violaine Martin

International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers

Since the establishment of the [first peacekeeping mission in 1948](#), United Nations peacekeepers have been carrying the torch of peace in some of the most challenging places in the world. In 2023, the [International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers](#) also served to mark the [seventy-fifth anniversary of United Nations Peacekeeping](#). At its annual commemoration, held in Ariana Park in front of the memorial dedicated to those who have given their lives for peace, UN Geneva honoured some 4,300 United Nations peacekeepers who have made the ultimate sacrifice. At the ceremony, UN Geneva also paid tribute to over 2 million uniformed and civilian United Nations personnel who have served and continue to serve under the United Nations flag.

As highlighted by the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, in her remarks, the theme of the 2023 commemoration, “Peace begins with me”, is a reminder that peace begins with each and every one of us – in the choices we make, the values we uphold and the actions we take.

Remarks were also delivered by the President of the Soldiers of Peace International Association, Laurent Attar-Bayrou, and the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Mohammad Sufiur Rahman, whose country was the largest contributor of uniformed personnel to United Nations peace operations in 2023.

Scan the QR code to watch a [recording](#) of the ceremony.



Wreath-laying ceremony in honour of the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, in front of the memorial in Ariana Park. ©UN Photo: Violaine Martin

Musical performance during the commemoration of the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers in Ariana Park at the UN Office at Geneva. ©UN Photo: Violaine Martin

World Humanitarian Day

This year's World Humanitarian Day in August marked the twentieth anniversary of the devastating terrorist bombing of the Canal Hotel in Baghdad, which killed 22 people, many of whom were UN staff members, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello. The commemoration, organized by UN Geneva and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, brought together survivors and family members of victims of the attacks at a solemn ceremony to pay tribute to those who had lost their lives in humanitarian service.

In her remarks, the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, acknowledged the inspiring work and legacy of all humanitarian workers around the globe. Mujahed Hassan, a survivor of the 2003 terrorist attack, and Laura Dolci, a family member of a UN staff member who perished in the attack, shared their recollections of the tragic day, 19 August 2003, that divided their lives into “before” and “after”. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk; the Permanent Representative of Iraq, Abdul-Karim Hashim Mostafa; the Deputy Permanent Representative of Switzerland, Julien Thöni; and the Head and Representative of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Geneva, Ramesh Rajasingham, similarly recognized the sacrifices of the victims, survivors and their families in their remarks.

Scan the QR code to watch a recording of the ceremony.



The master of ceremonies, Ahmad Fawzi, reads out the names of the United Nations staff members killed on 19 August 2003 in Baghdad as they appear on the screen during the annual commemoration of World Humanitarian Day. ©UN Photo: Lai Sanders



International Day of Peace

Geneva – the location of various entities working for peace, and often referred to as “the capital of peace” – has traditionally been a space for diplomacy and for finding solutions to the challenges and conflicts faced globally. On 21 September, the International Day of Peace, UN Geneva, together with Interpeace and other partners, organized the Geneva Peace Talks, an annual outreach event and a highlight on the International Geneva calendar for over 10 years. The 2023 edition of the Geneva Peace Talks storytelling event was held during the same week as the Sustainable Development Goals Summit in New York, which marked the halfway point of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the Talks were organized around the theme “Actions for peace: our ambition for the #Global-Goals”. Seven speakers from diverse backgrounds discussed their contributions to peace through a series of inspiring talks on the empowerment of women and girls, on nuclear disarmament and on climate change, among other topics.

Scan the QR code to watch a recording of the ceremony.



The seven speakers at the eleventh edition of the Geneva Peace Talks, held at the Palais des Nations on the International Day of Peace ©UN Photo: Lidiya Grigoreva

The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, addresses the attendees at the 2023 Geneva Peace Talks through a video message. ©UN Photo: Lidiya Grigoreva

International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People was marked with a special meeting at the Palais des Nations in November, chaired by the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya. The Director-General read out a message from the Secretary-General, António Guterres, who shared strong concerns over the escalation of tension in the region and called for an end to the occupation and the blockade of Gaza. He also reiterated the importance of moving in a determined way towards a two-State solution, on the basis of United Nations resolutions and international law, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security, and with Jerusalem as the capital of both States.

The Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine, Ibrahim Khraishi, read out a statement by the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, in which the President called for an end to the occupation of the territory of the State of Palestine and for the international community to hold an international peace conference to salvage the two-State solution based on the 1967 borders.

Scan the QR code to watch a recording of the ceremony.



The Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine, Ibrahim Khraishi, reads out a statement by the President of the State of Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, at a special meeting marking the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People. ©UN Photo: Lai Sanders

The Geneva-based diplomatic community meets to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People at the UN Office at Geneva. ©UN Photo: Lai Sanders

EXECUTIVE BRIEFINGS: SPREADING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY

In 2023, UN Geneva continued to serve as a multilateral platform for knowledge- and experience-sharing by regularly holding Executive Briefings conducted by senior United Nations officials and senior representatives from partner organizations. A total of 11 briefings were held with high-level speakers from the United Nations Secretariat and United Nations system entities, such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the United Nations University. The events are a key opportunity for these entities and officials to update the diplomatic community in Geneva on achievements and upcoming activities.

Kicking off the 2023 series, in February, the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session, Csaba Kőrösi, briefed Geneva-based representatives of Member States on the priorities of the General Assembly for 2023 and its negotiation processes.

A total of 11 briefings were held with high-level speakers from the United Nations Secretariat and United Nations system entities

The Under-Secretary-General for Policy, Guy Ryder, accompanied by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe, Tatiana Molcean (on the left, at the table), and the Chief, Political Affairs and Partnerships Section of the Office of the Director-General, Lidiya Grigoreva (on the right, at the table), conducts an Executive Briefing for the Geneva-based diplomatic community in November.

©UN Photo: Hélène Champenois



PURSuing MULTI-STAKEHOLDER MULTILATERALISM

In another of the Executive Briefings, in May, the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the [United Nations Sustainable Development Group](#), Amina Mohammed, updated participants on the preparatory processes in the lead-up to the [Sustainable Development Goals Summit](#) being held in New York in September and on the achievements in and results of the ongoing reform of the United Nations development system and the resident coordinator system.

Closing out the 2023 series, the Under-Secretary-General for Policy, Guy Ryder, visited Geneva in November to present the journey towards the [Summit of the Future](#), to be held in September 2024, and encourage the diplomatic community to contribute to the [pact for the future](#), an action-oriented document expected to be adopted by Member States at the Summit.

Representatives of Member States in Geneva participate in an Executive Briefing with the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, Philippe Lazzarini, in October.
©UN Photo: H el ena Champenois



In 2023, UN Geneva continued to foster international cooperation by providing a platform for various stakeholders to discuss their concerns and recommendations on the future of multilateralism.

In January, UN Geneva hosted a [high-level meeting](#) organized by the Nizami Ganjavi International Center, which brought together former Heads of State and Government and others. The event, entitled “Picking up the pieces: the challenges of fixing a broken world”, provided a space for participants to reflect on the new global governance architecture needed to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. In her welcome remarks, the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, underlined the indispensable role played by International Geneva in forging a global coalition for the sustainable future of our planet.

Scan the QR code to watch a [video](#) of the event.



The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, underlined the indispensable role played by International Geneva in forging a global coalition for the sustainable future of our planet.



The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya (centre), with the President of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, Mar a Fernanda Espinosa Garc es (left), and the President of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, Volkan Bozkir (right), during the opening of the high-level meeting organized by the Nizami Ganjavi International Center.
©UN Photo: Matija Potocnik

In October, UN Geneva joined forces with the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance and the Geneva Office of the United Nations University Centre for Policy Research to organize a seminar around the theme “Towards the Summit of the Future: leveraging security sector governance as a tool for rebuilding trust in the social contract”. The members of the panel, which comprised representatives of academia, government dignitaries and current and former senior United Nations officials, discussed the need to leverage the security sector as an important tool for advancing the [New Agenda for Peace](#). Building upon the latter and the related set of recommendations for the [Summit of the Future](#) to be held in 2024, participants in the discussion emphasized that a new social contract is not only a moral imperative, but also a pragmatic approach to fostering lasting peace, stability and sustainable development for all.



From left to right, the United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Nada Al-Nashif, the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, the Director of the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, Nathalie Chuard, and the Deputy Head of the Policy and Research Division at the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, Vincenza Scherrer, engage with participants during the opening of the 2023 seminar organized by UN Geneva, the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance and the United Nations University on 10 October. ©DCAF

This year marked the tenth anniversary of [Geneva Peace Week](#). The result of a collaborative effort by 150 organizations, including UN Geneva, the 2023 Geneva Peace Week was held from 30 October to 3 November around the theme “Building trust, building peace: an agenda for the future”. The event provided a momentous occasion to showcase the power of innovation and collaboration in addressing complex global issues, such as climate change, and the role of education in promoting peace. In her opening remarks, the Director-General stressed the importance of multilateral cooperation in the pursuit of global peace and highlighted Geneva’s role as the “capital of peace”.

Scan the QR code to watch the [Geneva Peace Week events](#).



The opening ceremony of the tenth anniversary edition of Geneva Peace Week, held on 30 October at the Maison de la Paix. ©Olivier Chamard

In November, a high-level roundtable devoted to the promotion of conflict prevention through the socioeconomic inclusion of minorities was jointly convened at the Palais des Nations by the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Kairat Abdrakhmanov, and the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya. Participants in the roundtable discussed the measures and policy approaches set out in a new set of thematic recommendations issued by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities on

the [effective participation of national minorities in social and economic life](#), which are aimed at building more inclusive societies in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. In her remarks, the Director-General recalled that the central promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should be met for everyone, including the poorest, most vulnerable and furthest behind.

Scan the QR code to watch a [recording of the event](#).



Participants in the high-level roundtable “Promoting Conflict Prevention through the Socio-Economic Inclusion of Minorities”, jointly organized by UN Geneva and the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. ©UN Photo: UNECE

FACILITATING EXCHANGES WITH CIVIL SOCIETY FOR AN INCLUSIVE MULTILATERALISM

In 2023, UN Geneva continued to work towards the Secretary-General's vision for an inclusive, networked and effective multilateralism, as set out in [Our Common Agenda](#), particularly by strengthening its engagement and partnership with civil society.

The starting point of this work lies in the [NGO Liaison Unit](#), the bridge between the United Nations and civil society in Geneva. In 2023, the Unit accredited more than 5,500 representatives from 1,200 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and facilitated 50 meetings of NGOs at the Palais des Nations. Hundreds of NGO side events were held at the Palais in the margins of United Nations meetings, such as those of the Human Rights Council. To better support NGO representatives in navigating the complex environment of International Geneva, the Unit developed new tools, such as a monthly newsletter that is shared with civil society actors, a [step-by-step guide for NGOs on organizing meetings at UN Geneva](#) and a [resources catalogue](#) that is available on the UN Geneva website. In addition, videos showcasing the work of civil society in Geneva were promoted on UN Geneva social media channels.

The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, held her annual meeting with Geneva-based civil society at the beginning of the year to take stock and reflect on UN Geneva's engagements, and to look ahead and discuss the Office's priorities for 2023. The discussion focused on the main concerns raised by NGO representatives, and the Director-General reiterated her commitment to guiding and assisting civil society in its involvement with the United Nations family in Geneva.

In 2023, UN Geneva was able to facilitate exchanges between Geneva-based NGOs and senior United Nations officials based at Headquarters in New York. The forums included a town hall meeting between the President of the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly, Csaba Kőrösi, and

civil society organizations in Geneva to discuss the theme "Solutions through solidarity, sustainability and science". This was an opportunity for NGOs to share their recommendations on how to strengthen cooperation between the General Assembly and civil society. NGOs in Geneva also benefited from a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Policy, Guy Ryder, on the preparations for the Summit of the Future. During the exchange, the Under-Secretary-General outlined the priorities of the Summit and the modalities for civil society to participate in this milestone event.

In 2023, the NGO Liaison Unit accredited more than 5,500 representatives from 1,200 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and facilitated 50 meetings of NGOs at the Palais des Nations.



The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, and the Head of the NGO Liaison Unit, Sophie Torelli Chironi, exchange views with civil society representatives in Geneva during the Director-General's annual meeting with NGOs. ©UN Photo: Madeleine Cieniewicz

The President of the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly, Csaba Kőrösi, briefs Geneva-based NGO representatives at the Palais des Nations. ©UN Photo: Madeleine Cieniewicz

An NGO meeting held at the Palais des Nations, organized with the support of the NGO Liaison Unit, provided an opportunity for hundreds of students to participate in a Model United Nations exercise and learn more about the work and functioning of the United Nations. ©UN Photo: Sophie Torelli Chironi

SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL LAW AT UN GENEVA

Geneva, which hosts an array of international organizations and multilateral conferences, has long played a pivotal role in shaping critical developments in international law. As part of this history, the annual sessions of the International Law Commission take place at the Palais des Nations and rely significantly on specialized support from the dedicated staff at UN Geneva.

The crucial importance of UN Geneva's legal collections and the library services provided to the Commission was officially acknowledged by the General Assembly in its resolution 77/103:

... Also takes note of paragraph 275 of the report of the International Law Commission, expresses its appreciation to the United Nations Library at Geneva for the dedicated assistance accorded to the Commission, and notes the Commission's emphasis on the need for adequate funding to ensure the continuation of the Library's ability to function as a research library to assist the Commission in the performance of its mandate in the codification and progressive development of international law ...

This year, UN Geneva made significant strides in enhancing these services and collections. A renewed emphasis on multilingualism and a targeted focus on the topics currently on the Commission's agenda were central to these efforts. The return to in-person meetings and the postponement of Building B renovations under the Strategic Heritage Plan project allowed the UN Library and Archives Geneva to provide a dedicated space and facilities, customized to meet the research needs of Commission members and their assistants. During the session, nearly all Commission members used the UN Library and Archives Geneva premises, with many becoming regulars in the reading rooms.

In addition to these core services, UN Geneva organized events and exhibits designed to educate participants and viewers about legal research and to showcase the contributions of International Geneva

to international law. Special exhibitions of the UN Library and Archives Geneva collections were organized, and curated tours were offered for members of the International Law Commission and participants in the International Law Seminar, and to participants in the Annual Course of the International Association of Law Libraries. For the Annual Course, UN Geneva librarians, in collaboration with colleagues from the libraries of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Geneva Graduate Institute, facilitated a unique learning experience for 140 law librarians worldwide, enabling them to explore different areas of international law in the context of the work of multilateral organizations in Geneva.

The impact of these initiatives extends beyond the immediate audience. Through such projects, UN Library and Archives Geneva staff gain invaluable insights into clients' needs and the nuances of UN Geneva's collections. This collaborative approach fosters relationships and partnerships that are integral to ensuring the sustainability and growth of UN Geneva's services in support of international law.



Members of the International Law Commission gather in the UN Geneva Library Events Room for a photograph. ©UN Photo

HUMAN-CENTRED DISARMAMENT: A RENEWED VISION FOR DISARMAMENT EFFORTS

The pursuit of human-centred disarmament remained a paramount objective for the international community. The Geneva branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs played a pivotal role, aligning itself with the Secretary-General's policy brief entitled [A New Agenda for Peace](#), which was issued in July. In his vision for the New Agenda for Peace, the Secretary-General emphasizes the importance of a people-centred approach, placing individual well-being at the forefront of international peace and security considerations. The concept entails incorporating into disarmament measures human rights, sustainable development and humanitarian, environmental and other considerations essential for the well-being of people.

UN Geneva hosted significant meetings on this topic in 2023 to contribute to the overarching objective of enhancing global security while safeguarding human well-being. These included the annual [Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons](#), which was held in November. Participants at the Meeting underscored the imperative to minimize the human cost of weapons and discussed concerns related to mines and lethal autonomous weapons

systems. The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons emphasizes the importance of balancing military necessity with humanitarian concerns, thereby reinforcing a human-centred approach to disarmament.

At the [Meeting of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention](#), held at the Palais des Nations in December, participants discussed the threat of biological weapons. The recently created working group on the strengthening of the Convention held three sessions in 2023, tackling issues related to compliance and verification, scientific and technological developments and international cooperation. These events reinforced the commitment to protect human life from the devastating consequences of biological warfare.

The [Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space](#) met at the Palais des Nations from 20 November to 1 December. By fostering dialogue and cooperation in support of the process aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space, the Group seeks to establish norms and rules that prioritize the peaceful use of outer space and mitigate the potential risks associated with the militarization of this frontier.

At these international meetings and others, participants emphasized the inclusion of human-centred disarmament approaches and underscored the importance of fostering a world where peace and the well-being of humanity take precedence over the destructive capabilities of weapons.

During the 2023 annual Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, chaired by the Permanent Representative of Argentina, Federico Villegas, Member States discussed how to address the threat represented by autonomous weapons systems. In these exchanges, the need to protect civilians was always highlighted.

©UN Photo: Mariia Koroleva



UNPACKING DISARMAMENT WITH THE GENEVA DISARMAMENT CONVERSATION SERIES

With an increasing multitude of disarmament meetings being held every year, keeping up with the diverse, technical and rapidly evolving topics under discussion has become increasingly challenging. At the same time, in light of the current international peace and security landscape, understanding the role and potential of disarmament has never been more imperative.

Thanks to a generous contribution from the Federal Government of Switzerland, the [Geneva branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs](#) launched the Geneva Disarmament Conversation Series in August. The Series offers an informal forum for discussion of key topical issues for Geneva-based delegates and members of United Nations entities, think tanks, organizations and academic institutions working on human-centred disarmament and the wider peace and security agenda.

Four sessions of the Series were held in 2023. The first addressed the disarmament aspects of the Secretary-General's policy brief entitled [A New Agenda for Peace](#), in which disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation are recognized as key enablers of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), the [women, peace and security agenda](#), conflict prevention and climate security.

At the second session, participants discussed human-centred disarmament and ways to incorporate this approach into the implementation of disarmament measures. They discussed linkages with other domains, including the health sector, as well as victim assistance measures, the role of industry and the private sector and ways to curb increasing military expenditures.

The third session addressed the potential impacts of artificial intelligence on international peace and security, and the types of frameworks needed to respond to the risks emerging from developments in this field. At the event, a representative from the

In light of the current international peace and security landscape, understanding the role and potential of disarmament has never been more imperative.

ONBOARDING DIPLOMATS AT UN GENEVA: BUILDING KNOWLEDGE AND PARTNERSHIPS

Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator foundation spoke about the foundation's Anticipatory Situation Room and about its most recent annual report on science trends: *The GESDA 2023 Science Breakthrough Radar*.

The fourth and last session of the year was focused on coordination in addressing biorisks, including risks associated with the rapid advancement of biotechnologies and the related dual-use dilemma, in particular with regard to applications in the area of bioweapons. A representative of the World Health Organization gave a presentation on the

United Nations Biorisk Working Group, the inter-agency mechanism established to foster coordination within the United Nations in responding to natural, accidental and deliberate biological events.

The Geneva branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs will continue to hold sessions of the Geneva Disarmament Conversation Series on a range of topics in 2024.

Participants discuss the disarmament aspects of A New Agenda for Peace at the first session of the Geneva Disarmament Conversation Series.
©UN Photo: Mariia Koroleva



UN Geneva held orientation sessions in May and October to welcome newly arrived permanent representatives and other diplomats. The UN Library and Archives Geneva hosted these comprehensive, insightful and interactive sessions to help diplomats better understand UN Geneva's many functions and services. Participants highlighted the critical value of learning about UN Geneva and the wider family of United Nations entities in International Geneva, and of receiving practical information that would support their multilateral work.

By investing in thoughtful onboarding and capacity-building initiatives such as these, UN Geneva strengthens multilateral cooperation and collective impact. Through orientations, online tutorials and interactive sessions, new diplomats can learn to navigate complex systems and maximize partnerships. UN Geneva also connect them with the tools and information they need, thereby building a more empowered and engaged community that is united by a passion for progress and possibility. Onboarding and continuous learning cement relationships and understanding and encourage purposeful collaboration.

This year, UN Geneva also released a series of video tutorials to help diplomats and researchers better understand available online services and platforms. These tutorials facilitate access to e-resources, journals, United Nations publications and the archives held at UN Geneva on multilateralism and other topics.

In addition, UN Geneva gave online presentations to universities worldwide to explain its archival documents and enhance research on the history of modern multilateralism. The presentations received praise from students and professors, with one attendee sharing that the presentations had made her want to learn more about multilateralism.



Newly arrived diplomats attend the October orientation session at UN Geneva.

©UN Photo

A diplomat browses the selection of books at the UN Library and Archives Geneva during the October orientation session.

©UN Photo

Scan the QR code to watch the [video tutorials](#) about the online services provided by the UN Library and Archives Geneva.



PURSUING GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

In 2023, UN Geneva continued to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women through a number of activities and partnerships.

As an [International Gender Champion](#), the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, remained active in advocating for gender equality and the achievement of [Sustainable Development Goal 5](#). In this endeavour, she enjoyed the enduring support of Geneva-based international organizations and Member States.

In July, following the success of the photo exhibition entitled *Not a Woman's Job?*, organized in 2021 for the wider International Geneva community, UN Geneva unveiled a [spin-off exhibition](#), entitled *Not a Woman's Job? Breaking Barriers in Sports*. Curated in collaboration with the [International Olympic Committee](#) and featuring photos submitted by permanent missions and permanent observer offices to the UN in Geneva, the exhibition celebrates remarkable women athletes who have broken down gender barriers in sports. The photos showcase athletes, coaches, referees and others from diverse backgrounds and sporting disciplines and acknowledge their efforts in reducing gender disparities.

As in previous years, for the [International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women](#), celebrated in November, UN Geneva joined the global campaign [16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence](#) and participated in several events at the Palais des Nations, together with members of the international community.

Raising awareness among members of the Geneva-based diplomatic community about the need for concerted efforts to eliminate gender inequalities is one of the Director-General's priorities. The number of women permanent representatives and permanent observers serving in Geneva continues to grow – reaching 57 in 2023. The Director-General invited those women to join her for a discussion on

how to translate this shift in representation into a shift in institutional culture and how women leaders can best advance the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

Tackling gender-based disparities and discrimination against women and girls is also an in-house commitment at UN Geneva. In January, UN Geneva conducted a peer review with the UN Office at Nairobi to exchange lessons learned across all United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women ([UN-SWAP 2.0](#)) performance indicators and in the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies. Thanks to such inter-agency collaborations and increased efforts by all UN Geneva divisions and services, gender parity was achieved across all professional staff levels, six years ahead of the deadline set for the United Nations Secretariat.

As an International Gender Champion, the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, remained active in advocating for gender equality and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 5.



(Photo above) The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya (right); the President of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach (second from right); and the Permanent Representative of France, Jérôme Bonnafont, at the opening of the *Not a Woman's Job? Breaking Barriers in Sports* exhibition. ©UN Photo: François Vioud

(Photo below) At an event at the Palais des Nations, organized by the Permanent Delegation of the European Union and the Geneva office of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), attendees were invited to add orange flowers to a canvas to form the word "no", symbolically planting the seed for a world free of violence against women and girls. ©UN Photo: Lidiya Grigoreva

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: A PERFECT MATCH FOR EUROPEAN FOOTBALL'S MOVERS AND SHAKERS

Few sports can match football's unrivalled global appeal and power for positive change. The United Nations is therefore forging strong links with the industry – and with footballing communities everywhere – to promote shared values within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In March, staff members of the United Nations Information Service in Geneva visited one of Spain's top football clubs, Real Betis Balompíe in Seville, to showcase the UN "Football for the goals" initiative on behalf of the Organization at a conference hosted by the [European Football for Development Network](#).

The #Morethanfootball gathering was an opportunity for Information Service representatives to meet dozens of footballing stakeholders and establish new partnerships to help end poverty, improve health and education, promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, create decent work and peaceful

and inclusive societies, tackle climate change and protect the environment and human rights. Supporting sustainable development is already a way of life for many local football clubs, leagues and associations all over Europe, so it was also a chance to learn more about the power of grass-roots activism.

Through "Football for the goals", the United Nations will work to develop further joint efforts to leave no one behind, with the involvement of players, unions, media partners and fans.

Scan the QR code to find out more about "Football for the goals".



UN Geneva staff member Daniel Johnson speaks about "Football for the goals". ©Photo: European Football for Development Network



BRINGING THE 2023 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS SUMMIT – AND MOMENTUM – TO GENEVA

This September marked eight years since the adoption of the 17 [Sustainable Development Goals](#). To commemorate the halfway point to the 2030 deadline for achieving the Goals, the President of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly convened the 2023 [Sustainable Development Goals Summit](#) on 18 and 19 September in New York. UN Geneva's [SDG Lab](#) used this important milestone to engage the International Geneva community and beyond in key information-sharing and thought leadership activities in the lead-up to, during and after the Summit.

Together with its institutional partner, the [International Institute for Sustainable Development](#), the SDG Lab organized online briefings to [share expectations of the Summit](#) and to [provide a recap and analysis](#) of outcomes. These two virtual gatherings were attended by stakeholders from around the world, which provided an opportunity for the representation of diverse perspectives.

On 16 September, the SDG Lab convened a youth-focused workshop in New York, entitled "Manifesting new sustainability values: from aspirational envisioning to practical policymaking", as an official side event of the Sustainable Development Goals Action Weekend that preceded the Summit. The [workshop](#) provided an interactive space for participants to envision a world that genuinely reflects the values and priorities of younger generations and to discuss what policies are needed to make such a world a reality.

Back in Geneva — and honouring the role of UN Geneva as a hub for networked multilateralism — the SDG Lab, together with the [Geneva Graduate Institute](#) and the [United Nations Development Programme Geneva](#) office, organized the Geneva Sustainable Development Goals Day on 28 September to bring together the International Geneva community for discussions on how to advance action on the Goals. A highlight of the day was an [intergenerational dialogue](#) between students from



Participants attend a youth-focused workshop organized by the SDG Lab, "Manifesting new sustainability values: from aspirational envisioning to practical policymaking", held at United Nations Headquarters on 16 September. ©UN Photo: Edward Mishaud

Swiss universities and senior representatives from International Geneva on keeping commitments alive for a sustainable future.

Finally, the SDG Lab penned a [thought leadership piece](#) from the perspective of the Sustainable Development Goals Summit as if the event were a person. The letter, addressed to representatives of Governments, the United Nations and other organizations, was aimed at spurring greater discussion on what is needed to prioritize long-term sustainability. The letter also urged Member States to look ahead to the 2024 Summit of the Future and its focus on meeting the needs of the present while safeguarding the planet for future generations.

SETTING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES IN MOTION

After six impactful years as a collaborative, multi-stakeholder innovation space to advance the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) within International Geneva, the SDG Lab, in the Office of the Director-General, embarked on a “2.0” transformation journey. In recognition of the escalating complexity and interconnectedness of global challenges, the Lab is being revitalized, evolving into a multi-stakeholder “think and do tank” dedicated to advancing long-term sustainability while contributing to systems change. This transformation is grounded in the core of sustainable development as articulated in the [Brundtland Report](#), published in 1987, which emphasizes the imperative of meeting today’s needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own.

As part of its new strategy, the SDG Lab is focusing on three key lenses to shape the future of sustainable development. These lenses are aligned with the approach outlined by the Secretary-General in his report entitled “[Our Common Agenda](#)” and offer an International Geneva perspective.

The first lens is focused on assessing the intergenerational impact of actions and policies, including

by working more closely with young people and making space for future generations. The second lens builds upon the idea of going beyond current economic systems and moving towards regenerative sustainability. This also includes rethinking what societies value and how growth is measured. Through its third lens, the Lab is exploring the role of emotions and affective science and their impact on sustainability by connecting evidence with policy design and action.

As part of the new strategy, the SDG Lab launched “What’s Next”, a new dialogue series that brings marginal concepts to the centre of the sustainable development discussion, with the aim of uncovering new approaches to sustainability. Other initiatives highlighted in 2023, and that will be further discussed and developed, include a pilot residency programme; an accountability framework for long-term sustainability anchored in intergenerational equity; an advocacy framework to promote constructive hope; and an alliance for a post-2030 framework.

This strategic evolution delineates a roadmap for the SDG Lab 2.0 towards shaping a sustainable, inclusive and optimistic future in which current and subsequent generations can thrive.



Panellist Garrette Clark (right), of the United Nations Environment Programme, shares her perspective on the topic of affective sciences, joined by Branka Zei Pollermann, a Geneva-based linguist and psychologist (left) and Disa Sauter (centre), an associate professor at the University of Amsterdam, during the SDG Lab’s “What’s Next” event on emotions and sustainability, held on 29 November 2023 at the Palais des Nations. ©Aimée Bamu

SHAPING THE LONG TERM: SDG LAB’S NEW SERIES EXPLORES WHAT’S NEXT FOR SUSTAINABILITY

UN Geneva’s [SDG Lab](#) launched its “What’s Next” series, a new dialogue and ideas forum designed to explore and demystify emerging sustainable development trends and to engage key stakeholders in dynamic conversations and collective intelligence on the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and long-term sustainability.

A key part of the new strategy adopted by the SDG Lab, the series delved into new perspectives on sustainability and unpacked themes such as regenerative development, future generations, intergenerational impact, and emotions and affective sciences. The conversations on these topics, and on other topics being explored by the SDG Lab, are meant to inform sustainable development strategies and actions over different time horizons, but with an emphasis on long-term impact.

Participants engage in an exercise during the SDG Lab’s first “What’s Next” event on 12 June at the Geneva Graduate Institute, which focused on future generations through the lens of an intergenerational dialogue. ©UN Photo: SDG Lab



“Halfway to the deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals, we are not on track. To course correct and arrive on a pathway towards sustainable development in 2030 and beyond, we need a mindset change. This must include rethinking our economic systems to achieve the SDGs and serve people and the planet.”

Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, at the SDG Lab’s “What’s Next” event on rethinking economic systems



Master's students from the Geneva Graduate Institute ask questions about the role of art and media as tools in emotional responses to sustainability during the SDG Lab's "What's Next" event on emotions and sustainability, held on 29 November at the Palais des Nations.
© Aimée Bamukunde

The "What's Next" series, which commenced in June with an event, co-hosted with the [Geneva Graduate Institute](#), was aimed at [exchanging views on the concept and policy approach of future generations](#) through an intergenerational dialogue. It emphasized the need for greater accountability and for advocacy in favour of incorporating youth perspectives into policy design to counter short-term thinking and actions. Panellists recommended increasing youth representation, promoting the use of futures thinking and empowering individuals as proactive agents of change for long-term sustainability.

The series continued in October with a high-level dialogue on the need for a [paradigm shift in economic systems](#). After opening remarks by the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, participants in the session explored how concepts such as going beyond gross domestic product can refocus economic systems to work for – rather than against – people and the planet. Participants broadly agreed that reimagining economic systems involves more than measurement; it requires a deep consideration of societal priorities and values.

At the end of November, the 2023 edition of the "What's Next" series concluded with a multifaceted

discussion, organized in collaboration with the [European Federation of Psychologists' Associations](#), on how tapping into [emotions can support a broader societal transition](#) towards long-term sustainability. Panellists and participants, who included representatives of academia and the United Nations, stressed the importance of better understanding how emotions can be used in communications, awareness and behavioural strategies to promote long-term sustainable actions.

In total, the three "What's Next" events in 2023 reached over 200 individuals in International Geneva and beyond.

UN GENEVA'S ENGAGEMENT FOR A GREENER, MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

In 2023, UN Geneva signed two landmark environmental documents: an [Ambition Négawatt Vision charter](#) and the [2050Today Charter](#).

The [Ambition Négawatt Vision charter](#) is an agreement with the [Services Industriels de Genève \(SIG\)](#), Geneva's local energy provider. Signed on 1 November by the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, and the Director-General of SIG, Christian Brunier, the charter underlines a shared commitment to environmental protection and sustainable development. The partnership will provide UN Geneva with specialized energy management training by SIG experts to better optimize energy use across the Palais des Nations campus. General training and coaching will be provided to UN Geneva staff in order to increase their knowledge of energy management, including with regard to electricity use, heating, cooling, ventilation and lighting.

The [2050Today Charter](#), signed on 5 December, establishes a framework for Geneva-wide environmental action by international organizations. [2050Today](#) is a climate action forum in which United Nations entities, other international organizations and permanent missions come together with private and civil society entities to tackle climate change by measurably reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The forum offers advice and support from technical experts working for the local authorities and in academic institutions such as the University of Geneva. More importantly, it provides a space for Geneva-based organizations to collaborate through thematic working groups on energy management, waste management, food and biodiversity.

The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya (centre), signs the [Ambition Négawatt Vision charter](#), accompanied by the Director-General of the [Services Industriels de Genève](#), Christian Brunier (right), and the Chief ad interim of the [Engineering Unit at UN Geneva](#), Gaétan Rouault (left). ©UN Photo



These collaborations align with the ambitious objectives and targets set out in the [United Nations Secretariat Climate Action Plan 2020–2030](#) and the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). They also position UN Geneva as a leader in energy efficiency and sustainability. These are critical steps for the United Nations as it works towards transforming its operations to achieve an ambitious reduction in greenhouse gas emissions while generating benefits for sustainable development efforts overall. UN Geneva is further developing action plans to tackle important emission sources and target the areas that consume the most energy; its lighting systems will soon be upgraded, and its solar photovoltaic power generation capacities will be expanded.

To improve its energy efficiency and sustainability, UN Geneva installed 460 square metres of solar panels on the roof of its new Building H. In total, the Palais des Nations features 3,683 square metres of solar panels. ©UN Photo



“Our partnership clearly demonstrates a commitment to using energy responsibly. It is a promise to future generations to preserve the planet that we share”.

Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, during the Ambition Négawatt Vision charter signing ceremony.

ENSURING SAFE CONFERENCES, MEETINGS AND VISITS

In 2023, UN Geneva’s Security and Safety Service provided security for over 980 conferences, ensuring a safe and secure environment for all occupants and users of the Palais des Nations. Of these conferences, 38 special events, including the [World Health Assembly](#), the [Human Rights Council sessions](#) and the [International Labour Conference](#), required enhanced security, with the presence of additional uniformed Security and Safety Service personnel and local police.

In addition, Security and Safety Service personnel were deployed to secure conferences and events held outside Switzerland. These included the [Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries](#), held in Doha from 5 to 9 March; the [World Investment Forum](#), held in Abu Dhabi from 16 to 20 October; and the [twenty-eighth United Nations Climate Change Conference](#) (also referred to as COP 28), held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 30 November to 13 December.



Members of UN Geneva’s Security and Safety Service coordinate security at the World Investment Forum. ©UN Photo

The Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Rebeca Grynspan, speaks with UN Geneva Security and Safety Service personnel at the World Investment Forum. ©UN Photo

SPOTLIGHT ON

UN Geneva's contribution to the implementation of "Our Common Agenda"

Published in 2021 at the request of the General Assembly, the report entitled "Our Common Agenda" outlines the Secretary-General's vision for the future of global cooperation. A wake-up call to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the report shares recommendations to respond to current and future challenges in four broad areas across the 12 commitments of the declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

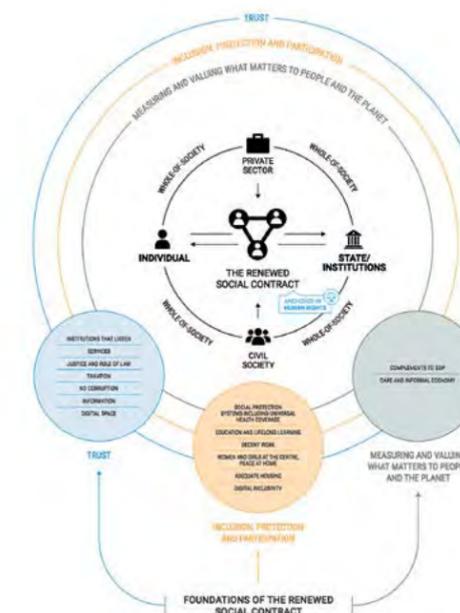
Committed to supporting the Secretary-General in his vision, in 2023, UN Geneva continued to leverage its engagement with key stakeholders in support of the report's recommendations.

In "Our Common Agenda", the Secretary-General identifies **the renewal of our social contract** as the best way forward in tackling today's challenges and realities. The approach is focused, at its core, on people and human rights, and is aimed at strengthening trust in institutions, ensuring inclusion and fighting discrimination.

Since the launch of the report, UN Geneva has embedded the Secretary-General's vision in its activities, providing guidance and related tools to achieve inclusive societies for all and ensure that no one is left behind. An active knowledge hub for all stakeholders to learn more about multilateralism and its history, UN Geneva offers access to conferences and meetings and to information and documentation on a wide range of issues, including disarmament, peace and security, social and humanitarian affairs, human rights, health and intellectual cooperation. For almost 80 years, UN Geneva has been a modern centre for research and dialogue in the field of international relations, and it continues to fulfill that role today.

In addition to having an exceptional historical heritage and a wide range of resources, UN Geneva also engages in strong communication and outreach efforts on the role and work of the United Nations system and its partners. UN Geneva shares various multimedia products and coverage of the outcomes of multilateral intergovernmental discus-

sions globally, on behalf of the United Nations family in Geneva and others, fostering greater transparency for the general public and helping to rebuild trust in global multilateral institutions. Through its coverage of the discussions that take place at the Palais des Nations and in similar international forums on issues such as human rights, climate action, gender equality and sustainable development, UN Geneva communicates knowledge and information in a clear, coherent and action-oriented manner that encourages people, particularly younger generations, to get involved.



Infographic from the "Our Common Agenda" report, describing the renewal of the social contract. [Link here](#).

Maria Ressa, Vice-Chair of the Internet Governance Forum Leadership Panel and 2021 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, is interviewed by UNTV colleagues at UN Geneva. The interview was [shared](#) with the wider public, along with various other multimedia products.

©UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré





The moderator of the 2023 edition of the Young Activists Summit (far left) and young activists honoured for their impactful work engage in discussion. UN Geneva acknowledges the important role of young people in rethinking and reshaping future paradigms and regularly organizes or hosts important youth-oriented events at the Palais des Nations. ©UN Photo

The Secretary-General's vision also recognizes **the paramount role of young people in rethinking and reshaping future paradigms**. Young people can be a positive force for development when provided with the knowledge and opportunities they need to thrive.

To this end, UN Geneva opens its doors every year to support youth participation in multilateral diplomacy through a number of programmes and events, such as the [Young Activists Summit](#), the [Graduate Study Programme](#), Model United Nations gatherings and [Young Reporters at the UN](#). These targeted activities facilitate exchanges with younger generations and allow UN Geneva to incorporate the perspectives of future generations into its work. Outside its doors, UN Geneva is also very active in engaging with schools, universities and other academic institutions in Geneva and beyond to introduce students to the importance of multilateralism and encourage them to get involved. These initiatives, including the [UN@school programme](#), bring United Nations experts directly to students, providing an interactive platform for discussion, helping young people deepen their understanding

SOLIDARITY BETWEEN GENERATIONS

Decisions made today will define the future for younger and future generations.



SOLIDARITY WITH YOUNGER GENERATIONS

-  Voice and participation
-  Quality education
-  Sustainable jobs

SOLIDARITY WITH FUTURE GENERATIONS

-  Long-term thinking
-  Represent future generations



SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE

-  HEALTHY PLANET
-  STRONG INSTITUTIONS
-  HEALTH, SOCIAL PROTECTION
-  EDUCATION, WORK
-  PREPAREDNESS

Infographic from the "Our Common Agenda" report, describing the deepening of solidarity between generations that is necessary for a renewal of the social contract. [Link here](#).

of various topics and fostering their engagement in global issues. Following the recommendations made in "Our Common Agenda", recent exchanges with students and other young people have focused on future values, priorities and the transformative forces shaping modern multilateralism.

Another paramount aim of the Secretary-General's vision for the future of global cooperation is to **build a more networked, inclusive and effective multilateralism**.

Often referred to as the operational hub of the multilateral system, International Geneva, with UN Geneva at its heart, supports the fostering of partnerships, knowledge exchange and collaborations on a wide range of subjects, including peace and security, human rights, sustainable development and climate action. Geneva's unique ecosystem of actors comprises over 100 international organizations, 183 Member State representations, over 750 NGOs, a dynamic private sector and prominent academic institutions, all of which have a strong collaborative culture. This ecosystem has progressively grown, positioning the city as a centre of multilateral discussions on the actors' various areas of expertise, and continues to grow. As part of this ecosystem, UN Geneva is able to maintain and strengthen exchanges, partnerships and collaborations and build synergies with these various actors. Working together, the actors advance international cooperation and deliver global public goods, thereby contributing to a more networked, more inclusive and more effective multilateralism.

Furthermore, with the [New Agenda for Peace](#) as a guide, UN Geneva serves as a central venue for international diplomacy in the field of peace and security. Peace talks and mediation events are regularly hosted at the Palais des Nations, along with various conferences and meetings attended by actors working on the peace and security agenda in Geneva. Home to the [Conference on Disarmament](#) – the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body of the international community – and the Geneva branch of the United Nations [Office for](#)

Disarmament Affairs, UN Geneva also provides substantive and organizational support for a wide range of multilateral agreements in the field of disarmament.

As UN Geneva continues to contribute to building a more networked, more inclusive and more efficient multilateralism, it has also become the venue of choice for discussing emerging topics, such as global health, the development of artificial intelligence and digital governance, that will likely dominate the global agenda in the coming years and that will shape the future of global cooperation.

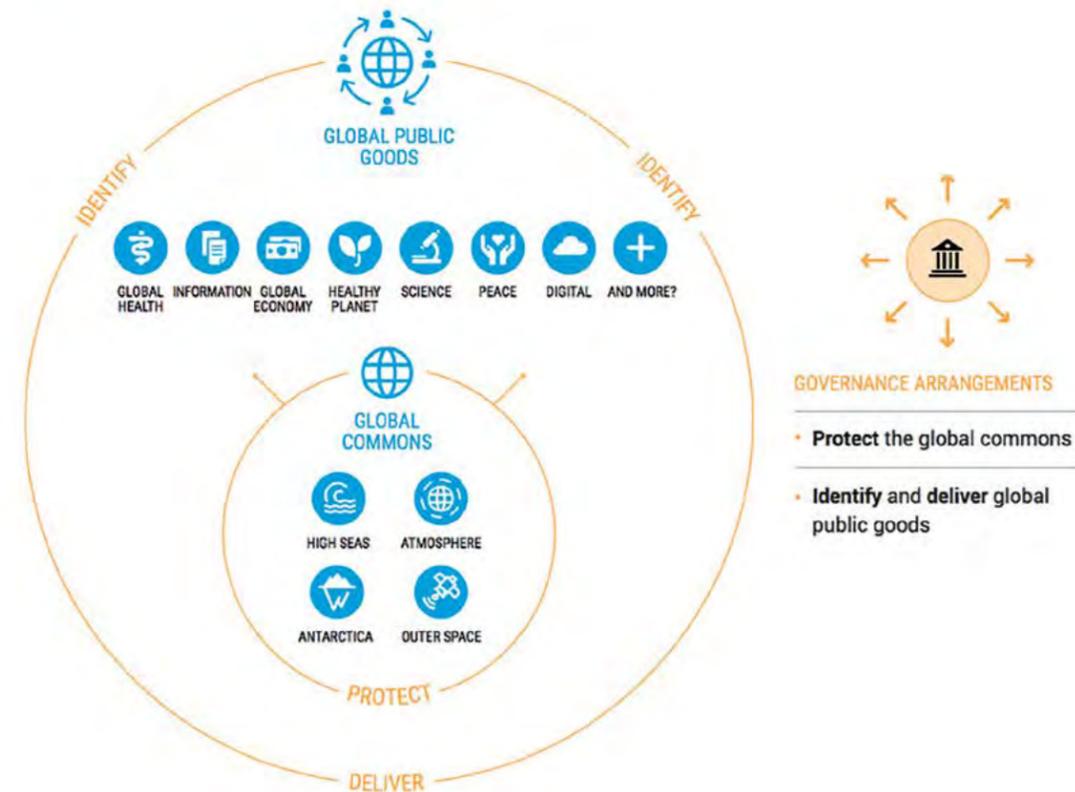


Home to the Conference on Disarmament – the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community – UN Geneva, through the Geneva branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, supports a range of multilateral agreements in the field of disarmament and hosts disarmament-related conferences.

©UN Photo: Violaine Martin

GLOBAL PUBLIC GOODS AND THE GLOBAL COMMONS

DELIVER AND PROTECT



Infographic from the “Our Common Agenda” report, identifying the global public goods and the global commons. [Link here.](#)

“Our Common Agenda” also includes the Secretary-General’s vision for a **modernized United Nations**, one that is fit to tackle today’s and tomorrow’s challenges.

UN Geneva is ensuring that it remains fit for the future by upgrading its facilities and services and enhancing its resources. Approved by the General Assembly in 2015, the Strategic Heritage Plan is aimed at renovating and upgrading the Palais des Nations campus to better support multilateral diplomacy. As part of the improvements under the project, new audiovisual systems have been

installed in conference rooms to ensure inclusive participation. The renovations of office spaces were designed to ensure that offices are fit for new and future ways of working and that safety and accessibility standards are met, while still preserving heritage elements.

In parallel, building on its analytical capacity, UN Geneva launched phase two of the Conferencing Today and Tomorrow initiative – also known as CTT-2 – to review lessons learned in conference organization during the coronavirus disease

(COVID-19) pandemic. The analysis provided grounds to develop key recommendations for conference organization in the future, further supporting the common vision of Geneva as a hub for modern conferencing. Additionally, strategic foresight workshops were held to build foresight capacity in conferencing and develop appropriate strategies. CTT-2 is an outlet to track innovation in conference organization and build awareness and partnerships within UN Geneva and across International Geneva to leverage new technologies and working methods.

UN Geneva is also determined to cultivate an organizational culture that focuses on agility, creativity, learning and adaptability. Following the positive introduction of a culture change programme, UN Geneva is strengthening its implementation of the Agile methodology and supporting initiatives to bolster collaboration and innovation,

Quintet of cutting-edge skills



DATA

Building modern data skills and culture is integral to our mission. It means enhancing our capabilities to gather, process, and use data from diverse sources. It is about transforming raw data into valuable insights that drive smarter decisions and impact.



INNOVATION

Cultivating innovation skills and culture is about fostering environments that encourage creativity, risk-taking, and continuous learning. It goes beyond simple problem-solving - it's about viewing challenges as opportunities for groundbreaking ideas and solutions.



BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCE

Nurturing behavioural science skills and promoting a culture of behavioural insight goes beyond understanding human actions. It is about applying knowledge of human behaviour to design evidence-based strategies and interventions that encourage positive change.



DIGITAL

Developing digital skills and culture means embracing technological advancements and integrating them seamlessly into our work processes. It is about leveraging digital tools and platforms to enhance efficiency, foster collaboration, and amplify results.



FORESIGHT

Instilling a culture of foresight means equipping ourselves with the capacities to discern emerging trends, anticipate potential shifts, and respond proactively. It signifies a commitment to long-term thinking, strategic planning, and readiness for a spectrum of possible futures.



READ THE ONE-PAGER

Download the one-pager on the quintet of cutting-edge skills and forward-thinking culture.



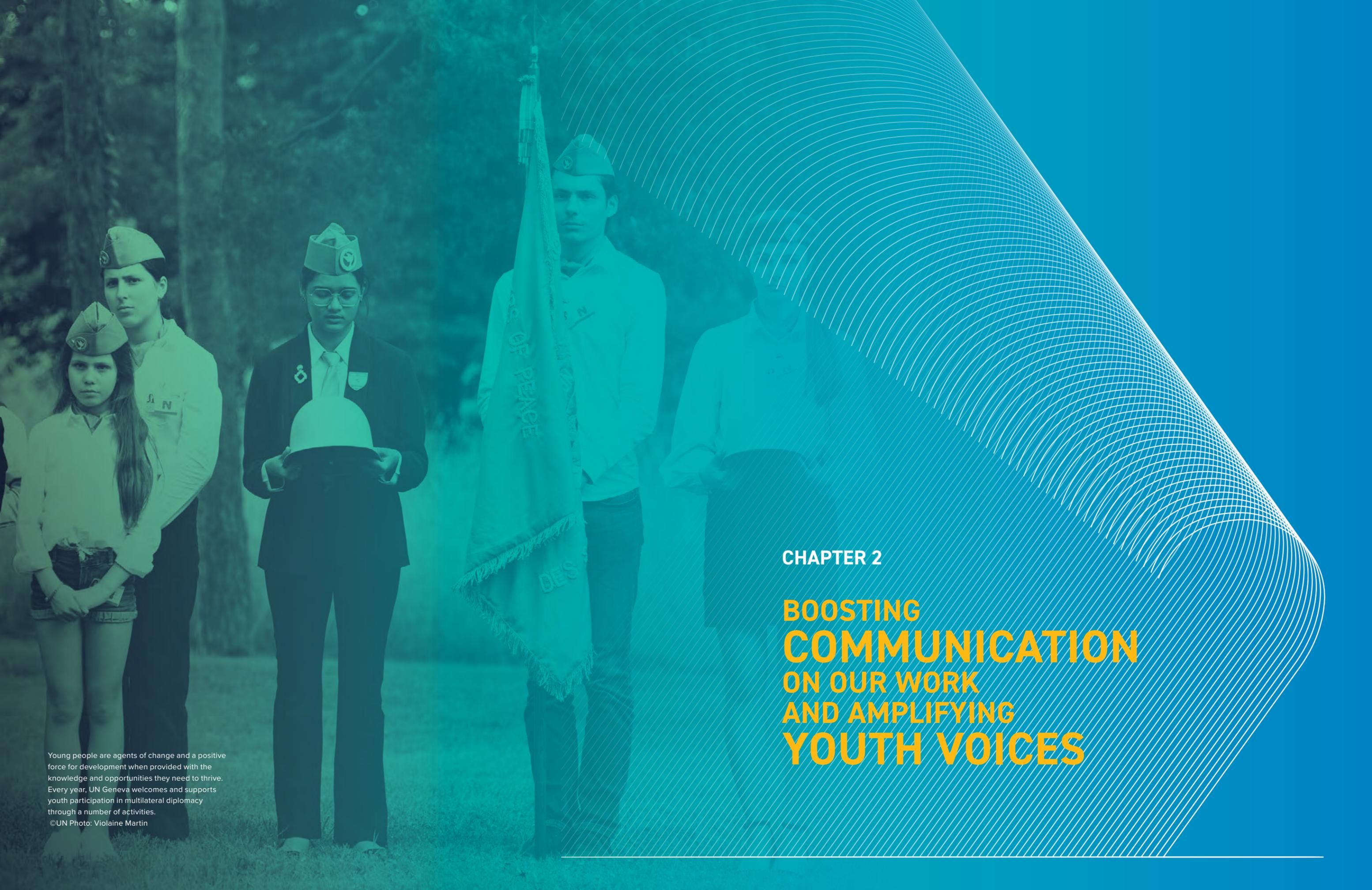
At the InnoVent 2: Innovation in Conferencing event, organized as part of the Conferencing Today and Tomorrow initiative, participants from the International Geneva conference network, experts on the future of meeting organization and United Nations staff discussed the latest post-pandemic trends, developments and innovations in conferencing.

©UN Photo: Matija Potocnik

particularly through the use of artificial intelligence, data analysis and digital transformation.

UN 2.0 is the Secretary-General's vision for a modernized United Nations system empowered by cutting-edge skills and a forward-thinking culture to achieve better results, improve support to Member States and have a greater impact on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

More than halfway to the deadline set in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, much remains to be done to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. UN Geneva is supporting the Secretary-General's vision, as presented in the "Our Common Agenda" report, by pioneering efforts to implement his recommendations and by serving as a pillar of inclusive multilateralism and a catalyst for building a better world for people everywhere.



CHAPTER 2

BOOSTING COMMUNICATION ON OUR WORK AND AMPLIFYING YOUTH VOICES

Young people are agents of change and a positive force for development when provided with the knowledge and opportunities they need to thrive. Every year, UN Geneva welcomes and supports youth participation in multilateral diplomacy through a number of activities.

©UN Photo: Violaine Martin



EMPOWERING WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

In 2022, at the initiative of the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, the annual exhibition series *17 Faces of Action* was launched, with the first iteration held in Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. Organized in collaboration with Member States and the Swiss Association of Women and Empowerment, the series recognizes the important contribution of women in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. This year, UN Geneva continued to shine a light on the inspiring stories of women in different countries with four impactful national exhibitions.

In June, the Portuguese exhibition took place at the National Library of Portugal. It shone a spotlight on the stories of pioneering women and their contributions in the fields of science, art, diplomacy and activism – just a few examples of the many remarkable women who can be found throughout the country's history.

The next exhibition was held at the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia in Tbilisi in July, and the following exhibition was launched in Viet Nam on Vietnamese Women's Day in October. The photos were displayed at the Vietnamese Women's Museum in Hanoi, which offered a unique backdrop, given its role in raising awareness of and preserving the rich historical and cultural heritage of women across all of Viet Nam's diverse 54 ethnic communities.

◀ The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, views the Emirati edition of the *17 Faces of Action* exhibition on the margins of the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Dubai on 3 December.
©UN Photo: Lidiya Grigoreva

The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Portugal, João Gomes Cravinho, open the Portuguese edition of the *17 Faces of Action* exhibition on 19 June in Lisbon.
©UN Photo: Lidiya Grigoreva





The Director-General inaugurated the last *17 Faces of Action* exhibition of 2023 in the United Arab Emirates on the margins of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Dubai (COP 28). Strategically positioned at the heart of Expo City Dubai, the exhibition garnered a great deal of attention from the public and COP 28 participants. It highlighted the remarkable work of 17 Emirati women leaders in advancing gender equality.

The national exhibition series will continue in other countries in 2024. UN Geneva will later display the photographs from all the national exhibitions at the Palais des Nations, as a call for action to inspire future generations.



“Through their resilience, passion and unwavering commitment, the women portrayed in these exhibitions have become catalysts for positive transformation within their communities and beyond.”

Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya

The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, opens the Vietnamese edition of the *17 Faces of Action* exhibition on 20 October in Hanoi. ©UN Photo: Lidiya Grigoreva

A participant addresses the audience during the inauguration of the exhibition in Tbilisi. ©Photo: UN Women/Leli Blagonravova

UN GENEVA MEETINGS COVERAGE: AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT AND PROMOTIONAL STRATEGY

This year, the United Nations Information Service in Geneva implemented a strategy to enhance the visibility and reach of key information products, primarily the summaries of meetings of the human rights treaty bodies and the Human Rights Council held in Geneva. The summaries are available on the websites of UN Geneva and of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

To amplify the content, the Information Service launched a social media campaign with promotional videos to raise awareness about the summaries of Human Rights Council and treaty body meetings. A systematic strategy of posts on X (formerly known as Twitter) was implemented, and collaboration with the communications team of the Office of the High Commissioner further amplified the reach.

As part of this strategy, the Information Service shared meeting summaries and social media assets with United Nations information centres around the world for dissemination, especially during reviews of their host countries by human rights mechanisms. Additionally, video highlights of Human Rights Council and treaty body meetings were featured on the UN Geneva website, with links directing users to the meeting summaries.

These efforts led to a substantial increase in press coverage. For example, after the summaries of the review of Mexico by the Committee on Enforced Disappearances in September were made available, 32 stories on the review were published across a multitude of prominent Mexican media channels. Similarly, following the review of Andorra by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, articles on the review were published by the country’s three main news outlets.

The strategy to amplify the reach of meeting summaries also resulted in an increase of visitors to the websites of UN Geneva and the Office of the High Commissioner. In 2022, 744 summaries in

English and French generated 556,265 page views for both websites combined. In 2023, 750 meeting summaries in both languages had yielded 805,170 page views for both websites as of November, representing an increase of 45% and underscoring the strategy’s effectiveness. UN Geneva intends to sustain this momentum, aiming for further growth in page views next year.

Since 2021, the overall online audience of the United Nations Information Service in Geneva has quadrupled, reflecting the successful outreach efforts. This expanded reach addresses a demand for accurate information from the United Nations in an era of misinformation. The use, by global media outlets and in official government communications, of information produced by UN Geneva confirms the indispensable role that UN Geneva plays in important global issues.

Scan the QR code to access [meeting summaries](#) produced by UN Geneva.



Delegates take part in the fifty-second session of the Human Rights Council at the Palais des Nations in February. ©UN Photo: Violaine Martin



THROUGH THE LENS OF UNTV GENEVA: CONVERSATIONS TO DRIVE ACTION

In addition to covering major news events at UN Geneva for international broadcast partners, UNTV Geneva staff often have the opportunity to interview individuals whose work aligns with the inclusive values of the United Nations.

“If you don’t have facts, you can’t have truth. Without truth, you can’t have trust.” This was the inspiring plea for information integrity made by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Maria Ressa, just one of the many personalities who shared their calls for action with UNTV Geneva this year. A co-founder of the online news site Rappler in the Philippines, Ms. Ressa visited UN Geneva in July in her role as Vice-Chair of the Internet Governance Forum

Leadership Panel established by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres. The renowned journalist went on to say that if we do not fix our information ecosystem, we will “have no shared reality” and will not be able to solve the world’s most pressing problems, such as rapidly advancing climate change.

Supporting the United Nations’ push to get the world on track towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, singer and activist Joan Baez, from the United States of America, made a memorable visit to the Palais des Nations in June, using her star power to advocate for tackling the climate crisis. Famous for her anti-war activism,



Ms. Baez told UNTV Geneva how, in the face of conflict and despair, she continues to choose action and to “do her part”.

Bringing a touch of glamour to climate campaigns, Riccardo Bellini, Chief Executive Officer of luxury fashion brand Chloé, spoke at UN Geneva in March on the margins of a sustainable development forum organized by the Economic Commission for Europe. Mr. Bellini told UNTV Geneva about the sustainability revolution that he had started within his company, leading the company to eliminate polyvinyl chloride from its products.

Regularly, personalities who have important messages about the work of the United Nations are hosted in the UNTV Geneva studio, where their messages are relayed across the world to UNTV Geneva broadcast partners and other media organizations. Next year will mark a significant milestone for UNTV Geneva: the studio, and other UNTV Geneva offices, will move to new premises at the Palais des Nations. The move will bring all audiovisual and multimedia content editors and producers together in one place for the first time.



Singer and activist Joan Baez discusses climate change in the UNTV Geneva studio.
©UN Photo: Nicholas Hopkins-Hall

Riccardo Bellini, Chief Executive Officer of luxury fashion brand Chloé, explains to UNTV Geneva the sustainability initiatives he has introduced at his company. ©UN Photo: Emmanuel Hungrecker

◀ Nobel Peace Prize laureate Maria Ressa speaks to UNTV Geneva about the importance of information integrity. ©UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

SHARING KNOWLEDGE, INSPIRING ACTION: MULTIMEDIA ENGAGEMENT BY UN LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES GENEVA

The UN Library and Archives Geneva created a number of diverse multimedia products to promote knowledge-sharing on multilateralism and inspire informed action. A new video series, *Journey to the Summit of the Future*, featuring interviews with United Nations system specialists and other experts, focuses on key issues leading up to the Summit. The interviews are aimed at enriching preparations across the United Nations and raising awareness among Geneva audiences of the Summit, which will take place in September 2024.

In *The Next Page*, the UN Library and Archives Geneva podcast, experts joined the hosts to explore numerous subjects with the aim of making

Ultimately, the multimedia engagement of the UN Library and Archives Geneva is aimed at opening minds, spurring discussion and mobilizing informed advocacy around shared global priorities.

knowledge about multilateralism more accessible worldwide. Topics included reimagining international relations, knowledge and learning for multilateralism, change and effective multilateralism, the democracy-multilateralism nexus, and technological change and future-proof policymaking.

The UN Library and Archives Geneva also organized learning events on topics such as the role of young people, civic participation and the history of multilateralism as part of the *HiSTORIES* series.

By leveraging multimedia tools and participatory forums in this way, the UN Library and Archives Geneva stimulates learning and exchange on pressing issues. Videos, podcasts and events make knowledge about multilateralism more engaging and accessible. They spotlight diverse voices and fuel solutions-oriented dialogue. Most importantly, these initiatives inspire action by equipping audiences to participate in shaping the collective future of humanity. When people better understand the stakes and the possibilities of multilateralism, they are empowered to advance progress.

Ultimately, the multimedia engagement of the UN Library and Archives Geneva is aimed at opening minds, spurring discussion and mobilizing informed advocacy around shared global priorities. In a complex world, knowledge fuels hope, connects stakeholders and catalyses change. Through multimedia storytelling and enquiry, UN Geneva is helping to write the next chapter in humanity's journey – one filled with justice, sustainability and peace for people and planet.



A student writes down her thoughts on multilateralism during a learning event at the UN Library and Archives Geneva. ©UN Photo

Attendees pose for a photo at a learning event on young people and multilateralism at the UN Library and Archives Geneva. ©UN Photo

THE POWER OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION

As the adage goes, a picture is worth a thousand words, particularly in our fast-paced, ever-evolving world. In 2023, UN Geneva and its partners continued efforts to raise awareness, and thus broaden the understanding, of the work undertaken by Geneva-based international actors, particularly through outreach activities that leverage the power of visual communication.

The opening ceremony of the Crafting a Better World exhibition, organized by UN Geneva in partnership with permanent missions in Geneva.
©UN Photo: François Vioud

Crafting a better world

At the initiative of the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, UN Geneva, in partnership with permanent missions, curated *Crafting a Better World*. For the exhibition, inaugurated on United Nations Day, Member States provided artefacts from around the world. Centred around craftsmanship, the event reflected traditions that have been passed down through generations and mirrored the world's diverse beauty and shared cultural richness. It also highlighted UN Geneva's commitment to promoting cultural diversity and supporting the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth and Goal 12 on sustainable consumption and production.



World Trade Organization Public Forum 2023

In September, UN Geneva continued its successful collaboration with the World Trade Organization (WTO), setting up a Sustainable Development Goals spinning wheel during the WTO Public Forum 2023. The wheel served as a prompt to illustrate the important role that trade plays in promoting sustainable development and the contribution that WTO can make to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Participants in the Forum were all invited to spin the wheel and share their thoughts on the relationship between the Sustainable Development Goals and trade.



The Director-General of the World Trade Organization, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (left), and the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya (right), launch the Sustainable Development Goals spinning wheel on the margins of the WTO Public Forum 2023.
©UN Photo: Niccolò Ventura

Le MEG et les 17 Objectifs de développement durable exhibition

UN Geneva worked with a local museum, the Musée d'ethnographie de Genève (MEG), and the city of Geneva to organize an exhibition aimed at inspiring the local population to take action and build a more sustainable future for all. Inspired by the booklet *170 Actions to Combat Climate Change*, developed by the Perception Change Project, the exhibition, entitled *Le MEG et les 17 Objectifs de développement durable*, showcased 20 posters illustrating the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Each poster was written in easy-to-understand French and highlighted the possible actions individuals could take to build a better future.



The *Le MEG et les 17 Objectifs de développement durable* outdoor exhibition showcased posters illustrating the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in easy-to-understand French.
©UN Photo: Niccolò Ventura



***Not a Woman's Job? Breaking Barriers in Sports* exhibition**

In July, UN Geneva and the [International Olympic Committee](#) joined forces with Member States in Geneva to launch *Not a Woman's Job?: Breaking Barriers in Sports*, a spin-off of the *Not a Woman's Job?* photo exhibition. The 65 photos submitted by permanent missions, alongside 30 photos shared by the International Olympic Committee, celebrate inspiring women – athletes, coaches, referees and community leaders – and their contributions to breaking down gender barriers in sports. UN Geneva and the International Olympic Committee brought these powerful images forward in the hope that the exhibition would inspire women and girls around the world to break the glass ceiling.

Scan the QR code to discover the [exhibition](#).



UN Geneva and the International Olympic Committee brought these powerful images forward in the hope that the exhibition would inspire women and girls around the world to break the glass ceiling.

Costa Rican surfer Brisa Tomi Hennessy Kobara, one of the inspiring women featured in the *Not a Woman's Job? Breaking Barriers in Sports* exhibition, tied for fifth place in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, in the first appearance of this sport at the Olympics. ©Costa Rican Surfing Federation

A guest looks at the powerful photos of women displayed in the *Not a Woman's Job? Breaking Barriers in Sports* exhibition.

©UN Photo: Ali Khaffane

NEW CLIMATE CHANGE POP-UP SPACE AT GENEVA AIRPORT

UN Geneva's [Perception Change Project](#) and [Lagardère Travel Retail](#) introduced a new pop-up space at Geneva Airport as part of an ongoing collaboration to promote the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). The initiative – 170 Actions and More to Combat Climate Change – actively engages travellers and inspires them to learn about and adopt sustainable practices in their daily lives. The space invites both adults and children to contribute their own ideas for ways to combat climate change and increases awareness about the collective action needed to tackle this global issue. By focusing on interactive and practical methods of public engagement, such as this pop-up space, UN Geneva and the Perception Change Project aim to shift mindsets and motivate a global audience to undertake significant actions for a sustainable future.



Colourful spaces invite the public to learn about climate change and share their ideas for ways to combat it. ©UN Photo: François Vioud

The inauguration of the pop-up space at Geneva Airport took place on 30 November.

©UN Photo: François Vioud

A THRIVING VISITORS' SERVICE

The Visitors' Service at UN Geneva saw a significant increase in the number of visitors to the Palais des Nations, despite spatial and logistical challenges linked to the renovation works currently under way. The Visitors' Service welcomed over 36,000 visitors in 2023, compared to just under 24,000 in 2022. Students constituted most of the visitor groups: 68% of visitors came from schools and universities. The Visitors' Service increased the variety of languages it offers and now also conducts tours in Japanese.

Furthermore, this year the Visitors' Service conducted many tours for special guests, including singer and activist Joan Baez, from the United States of America, and singer Dimash Kudaibergen, from Kazakhstan.

A group from Japan takes a guided tour given in Japanese, a new language offered by the Visitors' Service at UN Geneva. ©UN Photo: UN Geneva Visitors' Service



On 9 November, the Visitors' Service participated in an initiative entitled "Futur en tous genres" (Futures for all genders). The aim of this annual event, which is organized by the Swiss authorities, is to broaden the future professional horizons of both girls and boys by allowing them to discover various career paths with no preconceived ideas and to recognize that their gender does not bar them from any profession. More than 80 children visited UN Geneva as part of this initiative, which offered the children a valuable glimpse of an international workplace, including through guided tours given by the Visitors' Service in English and in French.

Scan the QR code to [book a tour of the Palais des Nations](#).



FOSTERING CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND UNDERSTANDING

Culture is an integral part of diplomacy and is often spotlighted at UN Geneva through the [Cultural Activities Programme](#). Art exhibitions, film screenings and concerts organized at the Palais des Nations encourage exchanges and dialogue among cultures and people who share different traditions. In 2023, 21 activities were organized by Member States and international organizations and held at the Palais des Nations, either virtually or in person, and in various languages.

By fostering tolerance and respect, these cultural activities helped UN Geneva strengthen the foundation for the promotion of successful dialogue and international cooperation in areas central to the work of the United Nations, such as education, global health, gender equality, sustainability and multilingualism.

The Permanent Mission of Bulgaria, together with the Diplomatic Club of Geneva and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), organized a concert featuring renowned soprano Sonya Yoncheva and the children's orchestra MusicEnsemble from the Conservatoire de Musique de Genève for World Children's Day in November. ©UN Photo: Zeyu He



YOUNG ACTIVISTS SUMMIT HONOURS FIVE ACTIVISTS AT UN GENEVA WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF PRINCE ALBERT II OF MONACO



The arts, languages and traditions of the activities offer unique immersive experiences and spaces for learning and growth. The activities are aimed at dispelling stereotypes and championing cultural understanding, in order to bring the global community closer together. Some of the events that were held in 2023 are highlighted in these photos.



Resolution 46/230, an exhibition that showcased 10 pieces of art, including unique Azeri carpets, was held at the Palais des Nations in September, with the generous support of the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan.

©UN Photo: Polina Urmanova

The Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan presented the World Painting exhibition in February at the Palais des Nations. The unique art project depicts brush strokes by over 2,000 people from 190 countries, and advocates for harmony, tolerance and the peaceful co-existence of the citizens of the world.

©UN Photo: UN Library and Archives Geneva

UN Geneva, through the United Nations Information Service in Geneva, continued to promote global youth activism by co-organizing the 2023 [Young Activists Summit](#). The Summit, held at UN Geneva for the fifth straight year, honoured five remarkable young activists in the presence of Prince Albert II of Monaco.

This year's Summit, watched lived on UN Web TV by around 20,000 participants from 144 countries, was centred on the theme of peace and reconciliation. During the event, the 650 attendees present observed a moment of silence to pay homage to all victims of conflict, violence and climate change globally. The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, emphasized the challenges faced by the world, and the tremendous human tragedy, loss and conflict being experienced. She urged youth to actively engage in the issues, stating: "We need you, young people, to help us find solutions."

Prince Albert II of Monaco underscored the importance of action over mere words. Addressing the young activists, he offered them encouragement to take a course of action to maintain their enthusiasm, optimism and desire to change the world, and urged them to persevere in their pursuit of positive change.

The five honorees hailed from Burkina Faso, Colombia, India, Myanmar and the Sudan. The event showcased their impactful work in areas ranging from human rights and peacebuilding to climate action and environmental protection. They each received donations to support their field projects, underscoring the Summit's commitment to translating inspiration into tangible action.

This year's Summit discussions were moderated by Trisha Shetty, founder of the non-governmental organization SheSays. Niki Black gave a poignant musical performance, singing the John Lennon song *Imagine* as a powerful message of peace.

The event, organized jointly by UN Geneva, the non-governmental organization [dev.tv](#), [Radio Télévision Suisse](#) and the [Geneva Graduate Institute](#), marked a pivotal moment in efforts by the United Nations to empower young people to be catalysts for positive change on a global scale.

Scan the QR code to watch a [recording](#) of the 2023 Young Activists Summit.



Young Activists Summit 2023 laureates Roshni Perween (centre) and Maimouna Ba (right) embrace next to fellow laureate Nisreen Elsaïm (left). ©UN Photo

BEYOND TOKENISM: WALKING THE TALK ON GENUINE AND MEANINGFUL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN POLICYMAKING

Current global crises disproportionately affect youth, although they generally had little say in the policies and ensuing actions that caused those issues in the first place. Young people should not only be considered as the inheritors of tomorrow. As emphasized by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, in *Our Common Agenda*, they must also be given concrete opportunities to design such a tomorrow, aligned with priorities and values they can relate to and own.

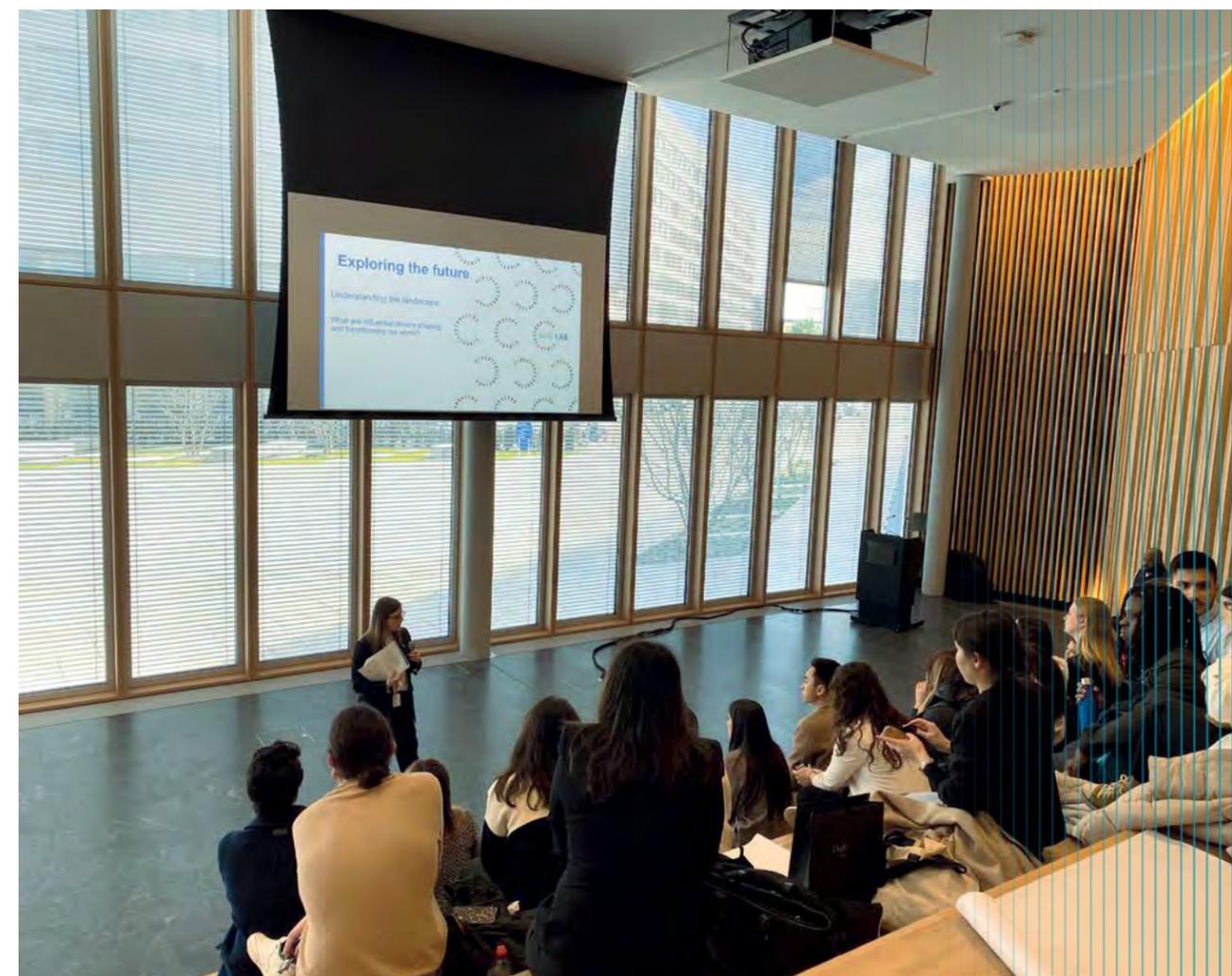
As part of efforts and commitments to that end, UN Geneva's [SDG Lab](#) collaborated with young people globally to design [surveys](#) and intergenerational dialogues aimed at understanding their priorities and values. The outcomes and findings of the consultations were reinforced and amplified through a series of workshops held with youth during various events, including the fifty-second St. Gallen Symposium, the 2023 [Sustainable Development Goals Summit](#) and the multi-partner [Collaborate for Social Impact initiative](#). Smaller-scale dialogues were also held with young people at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne in Switzerland, IE University Madrid and China Foreign Affairs University, and with youth and government representatives, including a workshop organized on behalf of the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for youth, education and employment.

This workshop dialogue approach provided a safe space for intergenerational exchanges on topics that are at the core of the SDG Lab's work, such as long-term sustainability, intergenerational equity and future generations.

Building upon this framework, the SDG Lab explored alternative sustainable development models to promote core values identified through the above-mentioned activities, and collaborated with youth in the design of strategies and recommendations to move such models from the margins to the centre of the global sustainable development narrative. Ways to apply this centering approach,

which is now key to the work of SDG Lab, were explored by students at the [Geneva Graduate Institute](#), who carried out an applied research project under the mentorship of SDG Lab staff. The SDG Lab plans to expand these efforts in 2024 through innovative projects and initiatives, such as a pilot SDG Lab residency programme.

At the intergovernmental level, the SDG Lab used its thought leadership role to influence and share perspectives on significant youth-related processes and developments. Notable highlights included its reflections on *Our Common Agenda* policy briefs on [meaningful youth engagement in policymaking and decision-making processes](#) and on [future generations](#).



Students from IE University Madrid take part in an interactive workshop on unpacking the drivers of system change, hosted by UN Geneva's SDG Lab on 28 March 2023 at the Palais des Nations. ©UN Photo: Davide Fanciulli

PRIORITIZING VALUES TODAY FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURES OF TOMORROW: SDG LAB AT THE ST. GALLEN SYMPOSIUM

For the past 52 years, the University of St. Gallen in Switzerland has gathered students, alumni and leaders from various sectors at its annual [symposium](#), a unique student-led and student-organized conference focused on cross-generational dialogue and collaboration on sustainable development topics. It is one of the oldest intergenerational forums of its kind.

In 2023, UN Geneva's [SDG Lab](#) attended the St. Gallen Symposium to workshop certain aspects of its newly adopted vision and mission. It was in this spirit that the Lab, in collaboration with the [Club of Rome](#), organized an interactive session entitled "[Setting the pillars of a new sustainability paradigm](#)". The session reflected the SDG Lab's new

focus on intergenerational equity and provided a unique opportunity for various actors to exchange views on how to assess the intergenerational impact of sustainable development policies. An important result of the session was a compilation of values that, if prioritized today, could have a significant and positive impact on both current and future generations.

This exercise was built on the SDG Lab's engagement in the [Big Brainstorm 2023](#). For this initiative, led by the [United Nations Foundation](#), the SDG Lab worked with young people worldwide to collect opinions on the values that youth deem fundamental for a fairer and more sustainable future. The following key values emerged from both initiatives:

An important result of the session was a compilation of values that, if prioritized today, could have a significant and positive impact on both current and future generations.

- A healthy relationship with nature
- Equality and equity
- Tolerance and diversity
- Inclusivity and participation
- Community approaches
- Collective actions

These values also resonated with participants attending a side event organized by the SDG Lab at the [2023 SDG Summit](#) held in September in New York. During the workshop, which was entitled "[Manifesting new sustainability values: from aspirational envisioning to practical policymaking](#)", participants proposed a suite of actions to better integrate the values and perspectives of future generations into current policymaking. The highest priority was given to:

- Raising awareness about the impact of an individual's environmental footprint on future generations.
- Developing better cultural transformation and evaluation tools to estimate and predict priorities of future generations.
- Establishing representatives of future generations at different levels of governance.
- Ensuring funding so young people can actively participate in intergenerational dialogues.

Scan the QR code to take part in the [SDG Lab's global survey](#) on values and priorities for young people and future generations.



Participants exchange ideas at the SDG Lab workshop entitled "Setting the pillars of a new sustainability paradigm", held in collaboration with the Club of Rome on 5 May at the fifty-second St. Gallen Symposium. ©St. Gallen Symposium

INCREASING THE INVOLVEMENT OF YOUTH IN DISARMAMENT DISCUSSIONS

In his policy brief entitled [A New Agenda for Peace](#), the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, observed that “youth are essential to identifying new solutions that will secure the breakthroughs that our world urgently needs”. Meaningful youth engagement has been a priority for the [Geneva branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs](#) for several years. Throughout the year, the branch organized several events to raise awareness among youth about disarmament issues, and met with students, youth representatives and young scientists.

In March, the branch launched the [Youth for Biosecurity Fellowship](#). The programme ran for a period of three months, during which young people participated in online courses and had the opportunity to take part in a five-day field visit to Geneva, including to institutions working in the area of biosecurity.

Within the framework of the [Conference on Disarmament](#), a special youth panel discussion was organized under the presidency of Germany and held in a plenary session on 10 August. On that occasion, the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth, Jayathma Wickramanayake, urged Member States to expand and strengthen youth participation in decision-making at all levels and to make the provision of spaces for youth engagement a requirement in United Nations decision-making processes.

On 22 August, UN Geneva welcomed a group of Hiroshima and Nagasaki Peace Messengers, who visited the Palais des Nations and attended a meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.



Participants in the Youth for Biosecurity Fellowship programme during their visit to the Palais des Nations in August. ©UN Photo: Remi Bacouillard

Staff members of the Geneva branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs also had exchanges with students from various universities about disarmament, notably in the context of the [sixty-first Graduate Study Programme](#), organized by UN Geneva.

The Geneva branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs remains committed to involving youth in disarmament discussions and will undertake further initiatives to that end in 2024.

57TH SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LAW SEMINAR

Twenty-three young jurists of various nationalities, representing all regional groups of the United Nations and specializing in international law, came to UN Geneva for the 57th session of the [International Law Seminar](#), held from 3 to 21 July.

In addition to attending plenary meetings of the [International Law Commission](#), participants took part in specially arranged lectures, visits to the offices of the International Labour Organization and the World Trade Organization, and visits to academic institutions – the Geneva Graduate Institute, the University of Geneva, the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights and the Swiss Institute of Comparative Law.

A day trip to Lausanne was organized in cooperation with the Swiss Institute of Comparative Law. A special programme, focused on the topic of end of life and assisted suicide from a comparative law perspective, was tailored for participants with the participation of a team of lawyers from the Institute, led by its Acting Director, Lukas Heckendorn Urscheler.

Two working groups were organized: one on identifying new topics for the International Law Commission, and another on regionalism and universalism in the work of the Commission. Under the supervision of two members of the Commission, Dapo Akande and George Rodrigo Bandeira Galindo, each group prepared a report and presented its findings during the last working session of the Seminar. The reports were compiled and distributed to all participants and to the members of the Commission.

UN Geneva has organized the International Law Seminar since 1965, in connection with the annual session of the International Law Commission. The Seminar is aimed at promoting knowledge of the work of the Commission and the United Nations concerning the progressive development of international law and its codification.

Participants in the 57th session of the International Law Seminar pose for a group photo. ©UN Photo: Philippe Morard



PERCEPTION CHANGE PROJECT – YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

UN@School

The United Nations and its partners navigate a complex landscape of global challenges in a fragmented world. The UN@School initiative, which was launched in 2020 by UN Geneva's [Perception Change Project](#) and the [Eduki Foundation](#) with the aim of igniting students' passion for the work of the United Nations, continues to be a dynamic force, bringing together students and international organizations in Geneva. In 2023, 11 sessions were held involving over 200 enthusiastic school students, aged from 17 to 19, from six cantons of Switzerland. The students engaged in active discussions on topics such as the Human Rights Council, conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, food security and international trade. Through the UN@School initiative, UN Geneva aims not only to impart knowledge, but also to instill a fervent sense of global citizenship and inspire young minds to tackle the world's most pressing challenges with determination and zeal.



School students attend a UN@School briefing with the Geneva-based International Bureau of Education of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

©UN Photo: François Vioud

Hand Solo's journey of innovation towards inclusion and empowerment

An event entitled "From bullying to building" was held at the Palais des Nations on 7 December to showcase the importance of disability awareness and inclusion. Organized by UN Geneva's [Perception Change Project](#), the Permanent Mission of Andorra and the [World Intellectual Property Organization](#), the event featured David Aguilar, a young man from Andorra who built his own prosthetic arm from LEGO bricks at the age of 8. Speaking in front of an audience that included diplomats and children, Mr. Aguilar demonstrated the power of overcoming physical challenges through creative solutions.



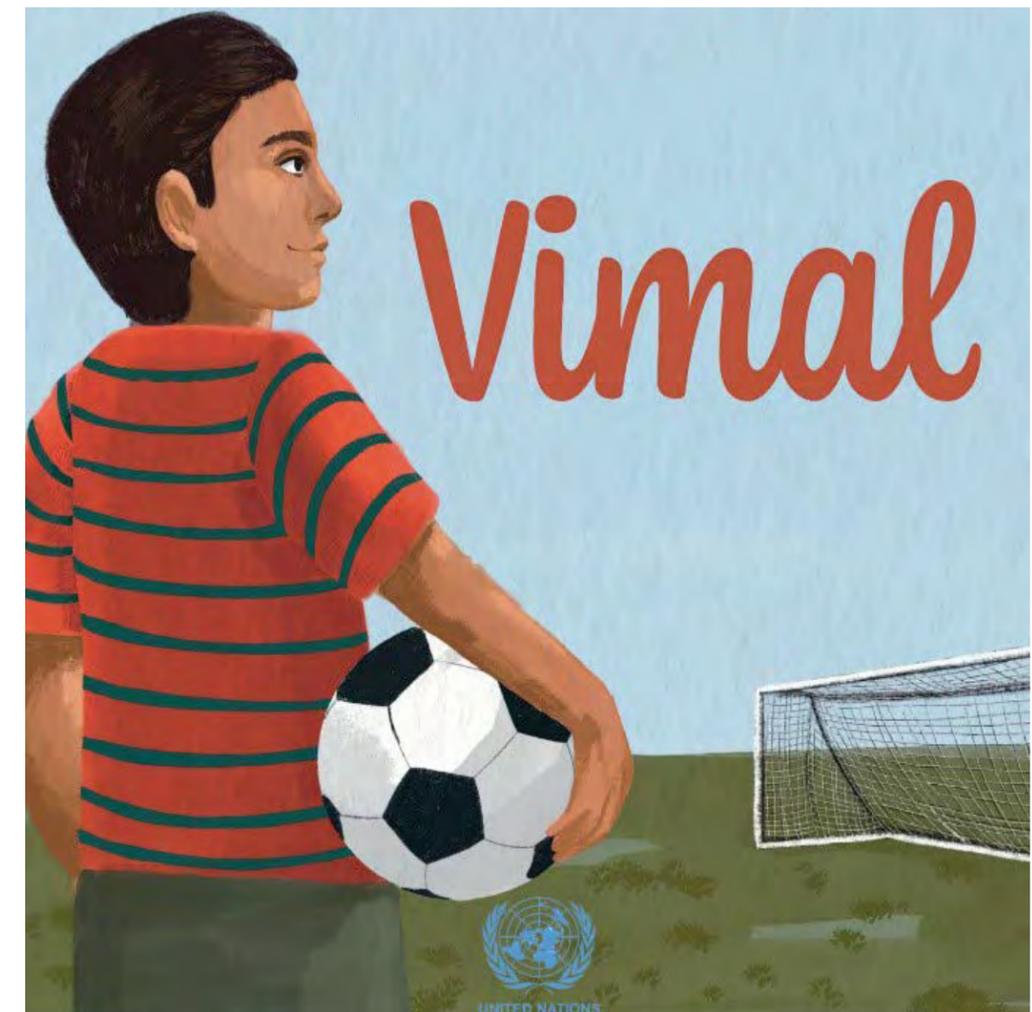
David Aguilar (second from right) speaks at the "From bullying to building" event at UN Geneva.

©UN Photo: Niccolò Ventura

VIMAL: CHAMPIONING PEACE THROUGH SPORT

UN Geneva's [Perception Change Project](#) released [Vimal](#), the seventh and final book in the Project's [Iceberg](#) series. [Vimal](#) explores themes of peace and resilience through sport with the heart-warming tale of a young boy who is committed to preserving peace in his distressed community. By using the universal language of sport, he finds a way to restore trust and spark hope among his peers. The story celebrates the enduring power of solidarity and the indomitable human spirit.

Scan the QR code to download [Vimal](#).



SPOTLIGHT ON

Celebrating a milestone: 75 years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

This year marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#). Ahead of the celebration events held in December, UN Geneva took the opportunity to reflect on the Declaration's enduring legacy and on Geneva's unique position in the history of human rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a foundational text for the United Nations. Translated into more than 550 languages, the Declaration enshrines the rights of all human beings and is a global blueprint for international, national and local laws and policies. It is also the bedrock of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

For 75 years, the core ambition furthered by the Declaration has been to infuse societies with equality, fundamental freedoms and justice.

UN Geneva, through its library and archives, maintains records related to the drafting of the Declaration and international human rights treaties, which are available to the public in digitized form through the [UN Archives Geneva](#) platform. Several thousand pages of original and unique materials related to the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are accessible. The files include drafts of the Declaration, comments from Governments, organizations and the general public, and material related to the implementation of the Declaration. Original documents from René Cassin and Eleanor Roosevelt are among these invaluable records.

In the lead-up to the anniversary celebrations, UN Geneva reflected on the vital role of this landmark document through a number of activities, including a compelling [HISTORIES episode](#) that delved into the history of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Other workshops organized by the United Nations system libraries further contributed to promoting human rights across the world and disseminating educational resources as part of the year-long [Human Rights 75 initiative](#) led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Easy access to information on human rights was also facilitated by the [online guides](#) jointly published by the UN Library and Archives Geneva and the OHCHR Library.

On 11 and 12 December, the international community gathered in Geneva to reaffirm its dedication to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights during the [high-level event commemorating the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Declaration](#). Member States, representatives of civil society organizations, of cities and of local governments, human rights defenders, young people, artists and many others took part in the celebrations. Dialogues, thematic consultations and side events provided space for participants to call for urgent change in the light of the many crises currently endangering human rights. In connection with the event, and as a reflection of the collective responsibility to uphold human rights, 286 pledges were announced by Member States and others on a wide range of human rights issues. A firm defender of human rights for all, UN Geneva was proud to support the celebrations of this milestone anniversary at the Palais des Nations.



The UN Archives Geneva platform gives the general public access to files and archival documents managed by the UN Library and Archives Geneva, including records related to the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, available in digitized form.

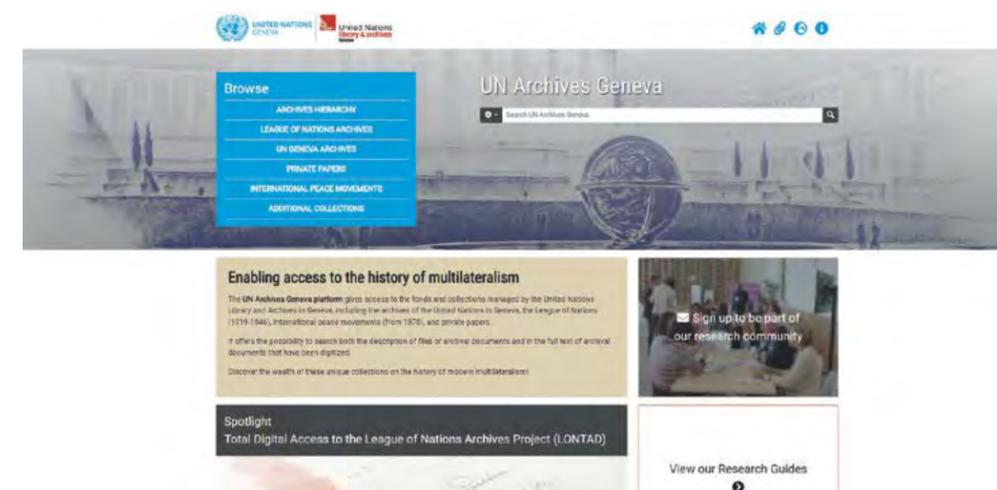
Original drafts of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights preserved by the UN Library and Archives Geneva. ©UN Photo: Nadia Al Droubi



Scan the QR code to watch the [HISTORIES episode on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).



The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk (centre), meets with young human rights activists as part of the high-level event commemorating the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. ©OHCHR Photo: Irina Popa





CHAPTER 3

CULTIVATING OUR MODERN WORKPLACE AND MOBILIZING OUR RESOURCES

In line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UN Geneva is taking steps towards improving its energy efficiency and sustainability, particularly through the expansion of its photovoltaic power generation capacities.

©UN Photo



THE NEW VISITOR CENTRE “PORTAIL DES NATIONS”

The Portail des Nations new Visitor Centre is a project that aims to improve the outreach of UN Geneva by providing the Palais des Nations with a new, dedicated building for visitors. The building, which is being developed on the basis of the framework agreement signed by UN Geneva and the Fondation Portail des Nations in 2019, will house a modern, immersive and interactive learning exhibition on multilateralism and the work of the United Nations. The new Visitor Centre, together with the existing guided tours of the Palais des Nations, will provide a unique public experience and opportunity to learn about the UN family.

The Portail des Nations Visitor Centre, to be located on the east side of the Alley of Flags, will be composed of a constructed area of 1,965 square metres and an additional 1,705 square metres of outdoor landscaped area. The structure will contain three immersive rooms, where visitors can discover

how the work of the United Nations has an impact on everyone around the world. In a fourth room, visitors will be able to learn about current United Nations activities and initiatives. After passing through the Portail, visitors will be offered a guided tour of the Palais des Nations.

The visitor experience is being developed by an exhibition and media design firm, Local Projects, with input from the various United Nations agencies based in Geneva. The perimeter fence for the construction site was installed in December 2023; the construction will start in March 2024. The inauguration of the Portail des Nations is planned for the summer of 2025.



◀ A rendered view of the future Portail des Nations, which features a new dedicated building for visitors. ©Charles Pictet Baptiste Broillet Architectes Associés

A rendered view of a courtyard of the Portail des Nations. ©Charles Pictet Baptiste Broillet Architectes Associés

INAUGURATION OF THE RENOVATED PREGNY PAVILION AND NEW DIGITAL BADGING SYSTEM

In September 2022, UN Geneva commenced a major renovation of the Pregny Pavilion, the main access point to the Palais des Nations. Eight months later, on 22 May 2023, this redesigned and re-equipped security facility was inaugurated.

The redesign of the Pregny Pavilion not only reinforced the physical security infrastructure in a sustainable and innovative manner, but also improved the speed, efficiency and comfort with which conference and event participants can safely enter the Palais des Nations. These upgrades were aimed at resolving some long-standing issues, such as lengthy wait times, and improving accessibility for persons with disabilities.

In September, UN Geneva implemented its new digital badging system. Previously, the Pass and Identification Unit at UN Geneva printed an average of 250,000 badges per year. With the move to a digital badging system, the aim is to reduce not only wait times, but also the plastic, metal and paper used in the previous badges. The new system revolutionizes access control and paves the way for a future where security is seamlessly integrated, efficient and adaptable. By combining continuous innovation with client engagement and adaptability to global contexts, these improvements can have a lasting, positive impact on all users of the Palais des Nations.

Scan the QR code to watch a [video](#) about the new digital badging system.



By combining continuous innovation with client engagement and adaptability to global contexts, these improvements can have a lasting, positive impact on all users of the Palais des Nations.



The newly renovated Pregny Pavilion features enhanced natural light and open spaces.
©UN Photo: Matija Potocnik

Speed gates are among the technological improvements made to the Pregny Pavilion.
©UN Photo: Matija Potocnik

RENOVATED SECTIONS OF THE PALAIS DES NATIONS REOPEN

This year was marked by a number of milestones in the renovation of the historic buildings of the Palais des Nations as part of the [Strategic Heritage Plan](#) project. Renovation works on Section AC of the Palais were completed, and the Section was reopened in May. The first meeting to be held in one of the newly renovated conference rooms was a meeting of the Strategic Heritage Plan Advisory Board; Member State representatives on the Board were complimentary of the works that had been completed. The Section was also open in time for full use during the annual World Health Assembly and the International Labour Conference. The renovation of Building D was fully completed and the building formally handed back to UN Geneva in August.

The buildings renovated as part of the Strategic Heritage Plan will provide staff and delegates with state-of-the-art conference facilities, infrastructure and technology, enabling UN Geneva to deliver modern conferencing to the international community. The improvements comply with modern fire and life safety standards. Furthermore, enhanced accessibility features for persons with disabilities have been fully integrated into the design, consistent with the [United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy](#) and UN Geneva's commitment to [disability inclusion](#).

Section AC of the Palais des Nations reopened in May after renovation, providing improved conference facilities to the international community. ©UN Photo: Matija Potocnik



UN GENEVA ADOPTS LEAN CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

In 2023, the [Strategic Heritage Plan](#) team introduced the Lean construction management methodology to improve contractor performance and keep the project on budget and on schedule. This followed major operational disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, supply chain challenges and global geopolitical events. The main goal of the Lean methodology is to improve efficiency and effectiveness by reducing the time spent on activities with no added value and by optimizing the workflow. The contractor and all subcontractors hold daily morning meetings to identify issues as they arise, which supports a collaborative approach to the work by all. The Lean methodology is now being mainstreamed throughout the Strategic Heritage Plan project.



The main goal of the Lean methodology is to improve efficiency and effectiveness by reducing the time spent on activities with no added value and by optimizing the workflow.

The adoption of the Lean construction management methodology by UN Geneva has led to daily collaborative meetings aimed at optimizing the workflow of the Strategic Heritage Plan project. ©Photo: Rénovation Palais des Nations SA/Federica Brunone

As part of the Lean construction management methodology, UN Geneva staff, contractors and subcontractors work together to keep the Strategic Heritage Plan project on track. ©Photo: Rénovation Palais des Nations SA/Federica Brunone

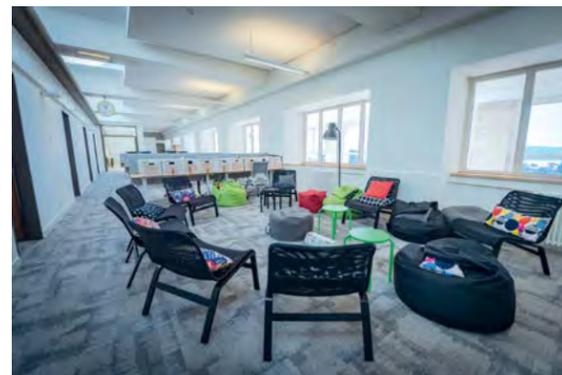
NEW MEETING ROOMS AND COLLABORATION SPACES

As part of the [Strategic Heritage Plan](#) project, the renovation of the historic buildings of the Palais des Nations will provide a range of alternative work-spaces. The options will allow people to collaborate more effectively, in a space suited to their needs and with the technology they require to get their work done. New meeting room designs at the Palais des Nations will modernize how staff work at UN Geneva.

Some of the old offices in the Palais des Nations have been transformed into meeting rooms; as a result, the number of available meeting rooms will almost triple. The new designs include small, medium and large rooms. In addition, there will be more open spaces, giving staff the option of working in spaces that are more collaborative and informal than traditional meeting rooms.

Both modern furniture and existing heritage furniture will be used in meeting rooms. The spaces will also include new audiovisual systems featuring video screens and microphones, similar to the technology already provided in meeting rooms in Building H, which was opened in 2021 and is in use by staff.

In addition, support nodes have been created in renovated sections of the Palais des Nations, including in Buildings S1, C and A. Support nodes are centralized areas in key locations of buildings where new functional spaces are grouped together to allow greater collaboration among coworkers. Thanks to the installation of new windows and the demolition of walls separating previously enclosed offices, some of these spaces are now brighter, benefiting from greater natural light. This was achieved without reducing the final total number of enclosed offices.

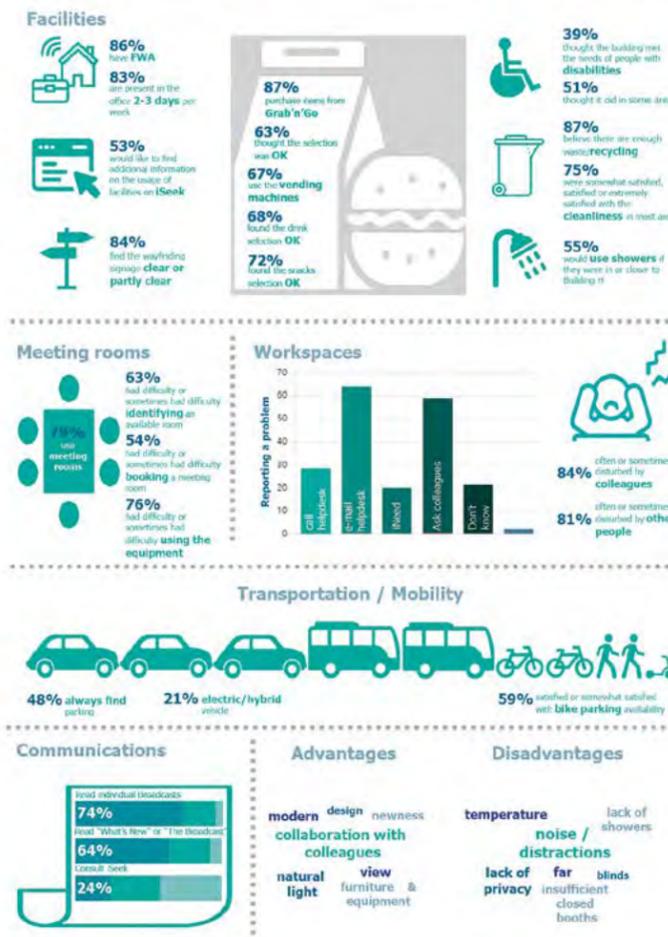


A UN Geneva staff member uses the audiovisual technology available in one of the new meeting rooms of the Palais des Nations. ©UN Photo: Matija Potocnik

The creation of open and informal meeting spaces as part of the renovation of the Palais des Nations will give staff more options for collaborative work locations. ©UN Photo: Matija Potocnik

HARNESSING USER FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE THE WORKPLACE

Building H User Survey 2023



Summary of results from the Building H User Survey 2023.

The UN Office at Geneva, in its role as a provider of office and meeting space and core services to more than 40 different United Nations and other affiliated entities at the Palais des Nations, is committed to continuously improving the user experience in all of its facilities.

Building H, the newest office building on the Palais des Nations campus, was opened to staff in 2021. The first milestone of the [Strategic Heritage Plan](#) project, the building was designed before the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. It features open plan workstations, shared meeting rooms and several different types of spaces for working and collaborating, thus promoting a flexible work environment. In 2023, UN Geneva staff responsible for the provision of services sought feedback from the occupants of Building H to improve the experience of staff and visitors across the compound.

TECHNOLOGICAL PRODUCTS AND INNOVATIONS FOR CONFERENCES



User feedback was actively gathered through surveys and one-on-one consultations with staff and was also provided by the newly formed Building H User Group, which comprises representatives from all main Building H entities and meets on a monthly basis. Based on the input received, UN Geneva improved Building H catering services, bicycle parking, signage and outdoor terraces, among other features. Building upon the goals and benefits of the Strategic Heritage Plan and reflecting on the new, post-pandemic ways of working, users also offered creative solutions to challenges commonly faced within the building. UN Geneva will expand the consultative process through the creation of a renovated buildings user group as newly renovated spaces return to occupancy.



A poster introducing the members of the Building H User Group to staff members was circulated throughout Building H.

Members of the Building H User Group attend their monthly meeting on the “town hall” stairs in Building H. ©UN Photo: Victor Sena

FAST

The Fully Automated Speech-to-Text (FAST) project scope is expanding: soon, searchable transcripts of recent meetings held at UN Geneva will be available in all six official languages. Since 2019, the FAST project has provided searchable, machine-generated meeting transcripts to help delegates, other participants and UN staff capture important content, review meeting deliberations and report on outcomes. Transcripts of recent meetings are promptly made available to the public on the [Digital Recordings Portal](#) on the UN Geneva website.

Following the launch of the pilot version in English, and of the French and Spanish versions in 2022, the FAST project was expanded in 2023 to include pilots for transcripts in Arabic, Chinese and Russian. Starting in 2024, transcripts from meetings at UN Geneva will be automatically generated in all six official UN languages. This development is part of a conscious effort by UN Geneva to better cater to a linguistically diverse audience, thereby fostering a greater global exchange of ideas and information.

Scan the QR code to access the [Digital Recordings Portal](#) and transcripts generated by the Fully Automated Speech-to-Text (FAST) tool.



Indico.UN

Indico.UN – created in 2015 by a team at UN Geneva and built upon open-source technology from the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) – passed a major milestone: over 1 million meeting participants have now used the platform to register for events organized by United Nations entities and affiliated organizations around the world. Additionally, UN Geneva developed functionality in the platform to ensure compatibility with the new digital badging system at UN Geneva. Work is now under way to upgrade Indico.UN to provide a more streamlined registration experience for persons with disabilities.

Over 1 million meeting participants have now used the platform to register for events organized by United Nations entities and affiliated organizations around the world.

UN GENEVA: A MODERN CONFERENCING HUB

UN Geneva is strongly committed to offering cutting-edge services to clients in order to best meet their needs and to further its position as a hub for modern, multilingual and multilateral conferencing.

In September, as part of [phase two of UN Geneva's Conferencing Today and Tomorrow initiative](#) – also known as CTT-2 – UN Geneva released a report on the use of expanded meeting modalities. Through a survey, extensive interviews and focus group discussions, UN Geneva was able to gain a better understanding of conference organizers' and

participants' needs for hybrid and virtual modalities and webcasting during meetings and conferences.

The report outlines possible ways forward to ensure that UN Geneva offers the best possible conditions for multilateral actors to convene and negotiate solutions to today's most pressing challenges. At the same time, the findings reflect that a formal global mandate for remote simultaneous interpretation is currently lacking, and that mandates for services such as webcasting are specific to certain intergovernmental processes.

Seeking inspiration from the latest trends in conference organization, the CTT-2 team also organized InnoVent 2: Innovation in Conferencing in March. Participants in the one-day event explored how pioneering technologies, such as holographic glasses and an artificial intelligence robot that generates meeting summaries, could enhance meeting experiences. Participants were presented with the latest updates in speech-to-text technology and virtual booth-mates that support interpreters.

The event attracted a large audience from Geneva and beyond, which allowed for fruitful exchanges of

experience among participants from UN Geneva and other international organizations and experts from the private sector. The InnoVent 2 sessions also marked the launch of the [Conferencing Today and Tomorrow video series](#) dedicated to innovation in conferencing.

Scan the QR code to watch the [Conferencing Today and Tomorrow video series](#).



Hybrid meetings at UN Geneva

Hybrid meeting modalities allow for greater inclusiveness, particularly in Geneva, where not all Member States and other stakeholders have permanent representation and where meetings often address very technical issues that require expert participation. In 2023, UN Geneva had a larger proportion of hybrid meetings (44%) than each of the United Nations duty stations in Nairobi, New York and Vienna.

◀ Participants in the InnoVent 2: Innovation in Conferencing event discover IQ'whalo, an artificial intelligence robot that generates meeting summaries. ©UN Photo: Matija Potocnik

STRATEGIC HERITAGE PLAN ONLINE OPEN HOUSE SESSIONS



The [Strategic Heritage Plan](#) team organized a series of online open house sessions on a range of topics to inform staff about the evolution of the project. The events were a great example of staff engagement and strong collaboration among various teams working together at UN Geneva.

The first half of this year's programme kicked off with a session on the unpredictability of renovation projects, which featured an update on the status of the project and a discussion of how uncertainty is a normal part of renovation works. The online open house session that followed provided an insight into the renovated workspaces, including offices, hybrid office space and meeting rooms. Staff were taken behind the scenes during a live broadcast and shown around renovated areas. The next session focused on the amenities and facilities provided at the Palais des Nations, including catering options and the various services that would be available for staff during and after the renovation works.

In September, the online open house programme resumed with a session on preserving art and heritage in a renovation project, featuring the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, as keynote speaker. Presentations given during the event highlighted how UN Geneva, respectful of the architectural and artistic legacy of

the past, has put the protection and restoration of the unique heritage and art of the Palais des Nations at the heart of the Strategic Heritage Plan project.

A subsequent event was focused on the design, booking and usage of new meeting rooms; this theme was selected on the basis of a poll in which staff were asked to choose a topic of interest for the online session. During this event, presenters described the range of alternative settings that will be provided in the renovated historic buildings of the Palais des Nations and how they will allow people to collaborate more effectively.

During a session in November, staff were again taken behind the scenes of the Strategic Heritage Plan project to learn about the energy-saving measures, new sustainability features and sustainability targets that are part of the renovations and of the wider environmental efforts being made by UN Geneva. The last event of the year, in December, highlighted the improvements made to conference management at the Palais des Nations, including upgraded audiovisual capabilities, aimed at making UN Geneva a modern conferencing centre for the future.

Segments of the December online open house session were broadcast from a conference room to show staff the new features introduced as part of the Strategic Heritage Plan renovations to support more modern conferences at UN Geneva.
©UN Photo

ADVANCING DISABILITY RIGHTS AT UN GENEVA

Over the past year, UN Geneva has made progress in disability inclusion, continuing to implement the [United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy](#) while enhancing inclusivity across our operations.

Significant improvements to physical accessibility were made at the Palais des Nations. These included installing tactile guiding strips to aid navigation for persons with visual impairments, adapting surfaces and pedestrian crossings to ensure better mobility, and renovating toilet facilities to be more accessible. These structural changes are crucial to creating a barrier-free environment for all.

There was also a notable increase in the number of meetings with accessibility services at UN Geneva. More than 500 hours of live English captioning were provided at meetings, which is a 20% increase from the previous year. International Sign interpretation was provided at 134 meetings.

Additionally, UN Geneva worked on developing policies and practices to ensure inclusive employment and participation. Training sessions were

offered for staff, with the aim of fostering a more inclusive workplace culture by focusing on empathy and an understanding of the challenges faced by colleagues with disabilities.

To raise awareness of disability inclusion and the importance of supporting people with different disabilities, UN Geneva organized seven workshops and events in honour of International Days, including [World Braille Day](#), [World Down Syndrome Day](#), [World Autism Awareness Day](#), [International Albinism Awareness Day](#), the [International Day of Sign Languages](#) and the [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#). Additionally, a special video was produced for [World Toilet Day](#) to promote the importance of accessible toilet facilities. Many of these events were organized in partnership with permanent missions and other Geneva-based international entities.

These initiatives demonstrate UN Geneva's dedication not only to complying with international standards for disability rights, but to going beyond them and creating a truly inclusive and supportive environment for all employees and visitors.



On World Down Syndrome Day, UN Geneva hosted a dance performance by Théâtre de l'Esquisse, a Geneva-based theatre company composed of persons with intellectual disabilities.
©UN Photo

UN GENEVA ANTI-RACISM WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2022, the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, oversaw the creation of the Working Group on Addressing Racism in the Workplace. The Working Group is chaired by the Chief of the Interpretation Service at the UN Office at Geneva, Marie Diur, and guided by the Secretary-General's strategic action plan on addressing racism and promoting dignity for all in the United Nations Secretariat. The Working Group has since developed a set of recommendations for addressing racism and racial discrimination at UN Geneva, which were endorsed by the Director-General in April 2023.

Among the Working Group's recommendations was the establishment of a coalition for sharing best practices on addressing racism and coordinating activities and initiatives across Geneva. As a result, the Geneva Alliance against Racism was officially launched in October 2023, with the full support and presence of 22 heads and representatives of UN entities and international organizations based in Geneva, including UN Geneva, the World Health Organization and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. Together, the heads and representatives of the organizations signed a declaration affirming their commitment to the objectives of the Alliance.

With the support of the Working Group, the Alliance will:

- Strive to ensure zero tolerance of racism and racial discrimination in the workplace.
- Encourage a culture where all staff members feel empowered to speak up about racism and racial discrimination.
- Identify and tackle obstacles to ongoing efforts to diversify the workforces of UN entities and international organizations based in Geneva.

Among the Working Group's recommendations was the establishment of a coalition for sharing best practices on addressing racism and coordinating activities and initiatives across Geneva.



The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina Mohammed and the Special Adviser for Addressing Racism in the Workplace, Mojankunyane Gumbi (not shown) participate virtually in the official launch of the Geneva Alliance against Racism on 5 October.
©UN Photo: Lai Sanders

The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya signs, along with her colleagues from Geneva-based UN entities, a declaration affirming their shared commitment to the goals of the Geneva Alliance against Racism.
©UN Photo: Lai Sanders

Scan the QR code to see [photos](#) from the launch of the Geneva Alliance against Racism.



CELEBRATING MULTILINGUALISM AT UN GENEVA

Throughout the year, UN Geneva played host to a diverse and dynamic array of multilingual celebrations, many of which remain accessible in the form of video recordings or other highlights.

One such celebration was [International Mother Language Day](#) in February, for which UN Geneva organized a hybrid discussion on the need for multilingual education and how it can shape the future. The event featured experts from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the University of Geneva and the International School of Geneva.

Scan the QR code to watch a [recording of the event](#).



In March, UN Geneva marked [French Language Day](#) with a roundtable discussion about *glottophobie*, the concept of discrimination based on a person's use of language, including in relation to accent and choice of vocabulary. Four videos were produced in French on this topic, featuring UN Geneva staff.

Scan the QR code to watch the [videos on glottophobia](#).



Panellists discuss *glottophobia* as part of UN Geneva's French Language Day event.
©UN Photo: Matija Potocnik



For [English Language Day](#) in April, UN Geneva was pleased to welcome Karimot Odebode, a Nigerian poet, who read two poems from her collection *A Woman Has Many Names*.

Scan the QR codes to watch Ms. Odebode read her poems.



In honour of [Chinese Language Day](#), UN Geneva and the Permanent Mission of China, among others, organized an exhibition of paintings from the Song Dynasty, which highlighted the rich cultural heritage of China's Zhejiang Province. The support from the Permanent Mission, in particular, made the event possible. The paintings were on display at the Palais des Nations from 20 April to 3 May.

In June, UN Geneva and the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation jointly organized an online poetry and musical programme for [Russian Language Day](#).

Scan the QR code to watch [UN Geneva's 2023 Russian Language Day event](#).



UN Geneva staff showcase the languages they speak at the multilingualism photo booth during the International Translation Day event.
©UN Photo: Lai Sanders

In October, UN Geneva brought back the beloved multilingualism photo booth for the International Translation Day celebration. The event was focused on honouring the Languages Service staff, whose work makes it possible for UN Geneva to translate and produce materials in all six official languages of the United Nations. The event also featured remarks by the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, and readings by staff in Basque, Brazilian Portuguese and Georgian.

Scan the QR code to see photos from this year's [International Translation Day event at UN Geneva](#).



ASSESSING AND LEARNING LANGUAGES UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS LANGUAGE FRAMEWORK

This year marked the official implementation of the [United Nations Language Framework](#), the new reference for promoting multilingualism and for assessing and learning languages in the United Nations system. This follows the launch, in 2017, of the harmonization of language learning and assessment project, which was aimed at improving the effectiveness of the language programmes, promoting staff language skills and facilitating staff mobility and career development.

Between 2017 and 2023, the UN Geneva Language Training Programme team worked tirelessly to align the language courses delivered in Geneva with the new framework. From the introduction of new levels of language competence and new learning objectives to the adjustment of the learning and assessment processes, the courses have evolved to reflect the most recent research and recognized frameworks for language learning. The team has also ensured that the training content and assessment of language capabilities are fit for the United Nations context. Thanks to the team's efforts, as of 2023 all language courses offered at UN Geneva were aligned with the framework, which has led to greater satisfaction among participants.

This harmonization exercise is a crucial step for UN Geneva in its journey towards multilingualism and inclusion. Personnel and other participants are able to benefit from the United Nations Language Framework, in particular with regard to improving the languages skills required to navigate their multilingual and multicultural working environment, and the United Nations is able to benefit from a multitalented and flexible workforce. This allows for more successful communication and cooperation among personnel and stakeholders, thereby further strengthening the ability of the United Nations to achieve its mandate.



Students take part in a UN Level I French language class. ©UN Photo: Charlotte Burguière

Between 2017 and 2023, the UN Geneva Language Training Programme team worked tirelessly to align the language courses delivered in Geneva with the new framework.

TRAINING NEW SECURITY OFFICERS

On 26 October, UN Geneva welcomed 10 new Security and Safety Service officers who had completed their induction training course. The graduation ceremony was presided over by the Director of the Division of Administration at the UN Office at Geneva, Kira Kruglikova, and Officer-in-Charge of the Security and Safety Service, Liam Drumgoole. The new officers came to UN Geneva with a wealth of experience and a strong commitment to maintaining the security and well-being of everyone on the UN Geneva campus. Upon graduation from the six-week induction training course, they were even better equipped to make a significant contribution to the overall safety and security of UN Geneva.

New officers of UN Geneva's Security and Safety Service stand to attention upon graduating from their induction training course. ©UN Photo: Christophe Marchat



SHARING EXPERTISE WITH OTHERS



In Geneva and elsewhere, the United Nations flag at times flies at half-mast in memory of fallen colleagues who have lost their lives in the line of duty. ©UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

In 2023, UN Geneva supported a number of United Nations entities with the expertise of members of its Staff Counsellor's Office. The support ranged from training and resource development to psychological support and guidance on mental health and well-being.

In June, UN Geneva colleagues co-facilitated a training event for the [United Nations Mission in Kosovo](#) (UNMIK). Organized by the [Department of Safety and Security](#) and the UNMIK staff counselling unit, the event focused on topics such as supporting vulnerable populations dealing with trauma; addiction; and psychological violence in the workplace.

In September, UN Geneva provided direct support to the [United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali](#) (MINUSMA). For three weeks, a Geneva staff counsellor helped MINUSMA personnel cope with the unexpected closure of the peacekeeping mission and with the heightened

tensions in the region, which had elevated stress and caused anxiety and low morale. In particular, the staff counsellor delivered workshops to advise staff on managing the unexpected situation and on dealing with concerns that had arisen at mission headquarters and in field offices.

Lastly, in November, UN Geneva expertise was shared with participants in a Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments training course organized by the [International Organization for Migration](#). Subjects covered included the principles of managing traumatic anxiety, specifically with regard to the possibility of flashbacks and post-traumatic reactions triggered in individuals who have already been subjected to prior trauma.

Expertise-sharing and collaboration with other organizations is key to promoting mental health and well-being across the United Nations system. It also provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to gain new perspectives and share best practices in order to ensure an inclusive and sustainable work environment for all.

CAREER FULFILMENT MONTHLY SESSIONS FOR STAFF

Launched more than two years ago, [Career Tips Thursdays](#) – a series of interactive monthly sessions on career-related topics – continues to prove a valuable resource for staff seeking career support.

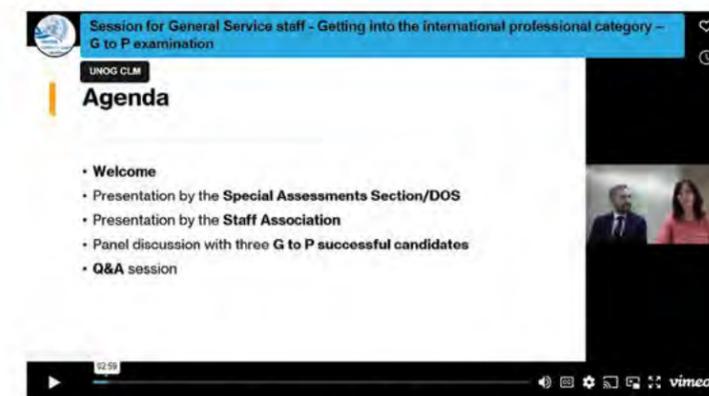
The series, available to United Nations personnel globally, provides tips, guidance and insights for career development. The sessions feature experts in recruitment and professional development, and are aimed at empowering staff to actively manage their careers. In 2023, session topics included developing emotional intelligence for improved career management, assessing one's strengths, building career resilience and managing reputation. Since the launch of the series, 11,464 people have taken part in 24 sessions, and 11,164 have watched the recordings, attesting to the success of the series.

This year, UN Geneva developed new partnerships with other United Nations entities, including [United Nations Volunteers](#), the [International Atomic Energy Agency](#) and the [Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance](#) at United Nations Headquarters, to offer the training sessions to a wider range of staff. By creating synergies and optimizing the use of available resources, UN

Geneva has turned the series into a unique resource for staff across duty stations and United Nations entities. The webinar recordings also serve as a useful repository of content for United Nations trainers and coaches, providing material that can be shared with participants prior to the beginning of other training or coaching sessions, or that can be used as a basis for complementary practical exercises or scenarios.

The partnership with other entities allows the experts to better meet the needs of personnel and help staff advance their professional careers wherever they may serve. For example, in February, UN Geneva and the Department of Operational Support at United Nations Headquarters organized a Career Tips Thursdays session for General Service staff interested in working in the Professional category. The special session was attended by over 3,500 participants.

Overall, the series continues to generate very positive feedback on its usefulness from participants and viewers at UN Geneva and in other duty stations.



Session for General Service staff - Getting into the international professional category – G to P examination

Two UN Geneva experts on recruitment give a presentation on career development for General Service staff as part of the Career Tips Thursdays series.

IN PHOTOS

JANUARY



The Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres (on the right) and the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif answer questions from journalists during a joint press stakeout following the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan co-hosted by the Government of Pakistan and the United Nations in Geneva on 9 January.
©UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

FEBRUARY



(From right to left) The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, the President of the UN General Assembly, Csaba Kőrösi, the President of the Human Rights Council, Václav Bálék, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, open the 52nd session of the Human Rights Council at the Palais des Nations on 27 February.
©UN Photo: Violaine Martin

MARCH



The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen, Hans Grundberg (centre), the Regional Director for the Near and Middle East of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Fabrizio Carboni (third from left), and representatives of the parties to the conflict in Yemen mark the conclusion, on 20 March, of the seventh meeting of the Supervisory Committee on the Implementation of the Detainees' Exchange Agreement, at which they successfully finalized the implementation plan for the release of 887 conflict-related detainees from all sides. ©UN Photo: Elma Okic

APRIL



On 20 April, UN Geneva celebrated Chinese Language Day by promoting the rich cultural and linguistic heritage of China. Every year, UN Geneva showcases its commitment to multilingualism through various activities organized as part of celebrations of language days.

©UN Photo: UN Library and Archives Geneva

MAY



The Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya, welcomes the President of Botswana, Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, to the Palais des Nations for a bilateral meeting on 2 May, on the margins of the President's State visit to Switzerland. ©UN Photo: François Vioud

JUNE



Singer and activist Joan Baez discusses her advocacy efforts for tackling climate change in the UNTV Geneva studio on 27 June. ©UN Photo: Nicholas Hopkins-Hall

JULY



Students from 50 countries mark the conclusion of the sixty-first Graduate Study Programme, the United Nation's longest-running educational initiative, at UN Geneva on 14 July.
©UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

AUGUST



On 19 August, UN Geneva and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs commemorated World Humanitarian Day, paying tribute to the 22 persons, many of whom were UN staff members, killed in the devastating terrorist bombing of the Canal Hotel in Baghdad 20 years ago, as well as to all colleagues who have lost their lives in humanitarian service.
©UN Photo: Lai Sanders

SEPTEMBER



Technicians run the audiovisual equipment in the newly renovated press room at the Palais des Nations as members of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic present, on 12 September, their latest report to Geneva-based journalists.
©UN Photo: Jean-Marc Ferré

OCTOBER



Twenty-two heads and representatives of Geneva-based United Nations entities gathered at the Palais des Nations on 5 October to sign a declaration affirming their commitment to the goals of the Geneva Alliance against Racism.
©UN Photo: Lai Sanders

NOVEMBER



The Young Activists Summit, held on 16 November at UN Geneva for the fifth straight year, honoured five remarkable young activists. Prince Albert II of Monaco (centre), a State Councillor of Geneva, Nathalie Fontanet (second from right), and the Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Tatiana Valovaya (third from left) attended the ceremony, along with four of the five laureates, Maimouna Ba (right), Francisco Vera (third from right), Roshni Perween (fourth from right) and Nisreen Elsaim (second from left). The event was moderated by the founder of the non-governmental organization SheSays, Trisha Shetty (far left). ©UN Photo

DECEMBER



The year-long [Human Rights 75 initiative](#) culminated in a high-level event, held at the Palais des Nations on 11 and 12 December. The event brought together many high-level dignitaries, who pledged commitments to human rights, engaged in panel discussions on fundamental and emerging questions related to human rights and, among other activities, attended exhibitions and a concert held in the context of the event.

The interactive version of the Report is available from the 2023 UN Geneva Annual Report website, where you can also download an accessible PDF version of the Report.

<https://www.ungeneva.org/annualreport>

