“This is a two-way communication. This includes carrying the voices and messages of young people back to the Organization and opening channels of communication between youth and the United Nations.”

Ahmad Alhendawi, Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth, 19 March 2013

As a main priority of the United Nations, UNOG continued throughout the year to engage young people in the work of the United Nations. Through programmes for children in local schools, outreach to graduate students, library programmes and interaction with UNOG staff, young people learned about the work of the United Nations family.

One highlight was Human Rights Week at a Geneva secondary school, Institut Florimont, where 1,000 students aged 12 to 18 took part in workshops and produced their own “Charter of Rights and Responsibilities”, an extract of which is shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our Rights by the pupils of Institut Florimont</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The right to dream and daydream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The right to help and encourage others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The right to express ourselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The right to love and friendship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SPECIAL FOCUS

Another memorable event was held in the Luminarium, a spectacular inflated sculpture installed in the Ariana Park during a session of the Human Rights Council. Musician and former child soldier Emmanuel Jal performed for children from four local primary schools who, inspired by the Luminarium, wrote their own “Children’s Human Rights Treaty” and took part in a mass recital of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Young people were also engaged through the UNOG Cultural Activities programme. Youth took the lead as performers in three concerts, involving four young pianists, an international children’s orchestra and the Bolivian musical youth group Ensamble Moxos. Street art murals exhibited in the Bar Serpent also involved youth: they were created during a children’s workshop led by a well-known graffiti artist.

1. Ensemble Moxos performing at UNOG, 25 November 2013 (UN Photo/Coralie Chappat)  2. “Several Players, One Goal”: mural made by Brazilian graffiti artist Toz together with children, displayed at the Palais des Nations, 4 June 2013 (UN Photo/Coralie Chappat)
international organizations in Geneva; the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and a representative from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

Young people were also engaged through the 76 UNOG information programmes delivered in 2013. United Nations officials and civil society representatives gave lectures on the activities of the specialized United Nations agencies in Geneva and their role in global issues. Two such seminars were held in partnership with the University of Geneva.

UNOG also welcomed 11 journalists participating in the Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists’ Fellowship Programme for an intense week of briefings by media professionals, diplomats and United Nations officials.

Youth is at the heart of the academic outreach programme of the UNOG Library. Young students and researchers from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and the University of Geneva practice methods of historical research in the archives. The international schools of Bern and Wintertthur in Switzerland hold workshops there on the history of international organizations.

The Geneva International Model United Nations Annual Conference, organized in March 2013 with the support of UNOG, was one of the largest events showcasing youth engagement with the United Nations. Focused on the theme of science for peace and development, this conference united 250 students at the Palais des Nations for five days of debate. In October, on the occasion of the sixty-eighth anniversary of the Charter of the United Nations, the Geneva International Model United Nations organized a panel discussion at the Palais des Nations focusing, in particular, on human rights in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

UNOG has continued its strong partnership with the International School of Geneva, hosting in December 2013 the annual General Assembly of the School’s model United Nations, the Students’ League of Nations.

LEARNING BY “SHADOWING” UNOG STAFF

“I never realized how many different types of people worked for the United Nations ... or that they were all so important to the functioning of the organization.”

Student in the shadowing programme
SPECIAL FOCUS

On 10 April 2013, UNOG welcomed a group of students from the Geneva secondary school André Chavanne for a day of “shadowing” UNOG staff members. The day, organized for the third consecutive year in association with the Eduki Foundation, gave the students a chance to accompany staff throughout their day and learn more about their work.

On the UNOG side, participants included staff from the Office of the Director-General, the Division of Conference Management, the Division of Administration, Security and Safety Service and UNIS, as well as UNECE.

During the day, students were able to discover firsthand how the United Nations machinery works. Throughout the school year, they had participated in a special course on “International Geneva”, learning about the United Nations, its agencies and programmes, and diplomatic activities. The “shadowing” day was the main feature of the course, as it gave them the opportunity to experience concretely what they had learned at school.

ENGAGING YOUTH THROUGH THE UNOG INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

A clear benefit to both UNOG and the students involved, the UNOG Internship Programme is intended to promote a better understanding of international issues and challenges and provide a practical insight into the work of the United Nations. Working side-by-side with staff members, students are able to learn from a hands-on approach, while UNOG staff members gain fresh perspectives and ideas.

“My short time at UNOG has reinforced my belief in the importance of the United Nations in Geneva as a centre of dialogue to enhance mechanisms by which human rights could be protected around the world.”

Bob Jones, intern with the UNOG NGO Liaison Unit

Intern with the UNOG NGO Liaison Unit at a meeting with NGO representatives, December 2013
(UN Photo/Monica Fahmi)