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MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS

“The challenges of peace and security are too complex and interlinked for any country or organization to address alone. To be successful, we must join forces and craft joint strategies that draw on respective strengths.”

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to the Security Council on 28 October 2013
PROMOTING UNITED NATIONS PRIORITIES

UNOG interacts closely with the more than 35 United Nations entities in Geneva and is a key facilitator in relations within the Organization and with the broader diplomatic community.

In his role as the Secretary-General’s personal representative, the Director-General engages in regular dialogue with regional groups of Member States in Geneva to promote the priorities of the Secretary-General and strengthen collaboration, ensuring that the respective priorities are well aligned. He also frequently represents the Secretary-General at international meetings in the region.

UNOG EXECUTIVE BRIEFINGS

The UNOG Executive Briefing Series is organized by the Director-General to provide Member States with information on issues of interest to the diplomatic community. In 2013, Executive Briefings included an update on the situation in Afghanistan by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, Ján Kubiš; two briefings on reform by Kim Won-soo, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Change Implementation, as well as an update from the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, on the efforts leading up to the “Geneva II” Conference. The frequency and scope of these briefings will be increased in 2014 and beyond.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2013...

UNOG RECEIVED 155 HIGH-LEVEL VISITS*:

3 VISITS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

4 VISITS OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

2 VISITS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

146 VISITS OF HIGH-LEVEL DIGNITARIES OF UNITED NATIONS MEMBER STATES

* Figures provided by the Security and Safety Service. They only take into account high-level dignitaries who benefited from close security protection.
“Talking together is the first important step, yet it has to be followed by collaborative action. It is only by joining forces and acting together that we will achieve the changes we want to see in the world.”

Martin Dahinden, Director-General of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, September 2013

HONEY FROM ARIANA PARK — A SWEET SYMBOL OF COOPERATION WITH SWITZERLAND

September 2013 marked the first harvest of honey from the apiary in Ariana Park. The beehives were donated by Switzerland in 2012, on the tenth anniversary of its accession to the United Nations. The honey is shared equally between UNOG and the Permanent Mission of Switzerland for use in non-commercial promotional activities.

UNOG directly supports the Swiss authorities and permanent missions in Geneva with regard to visits of Heads of State and Government, Ministers for Foreign Affairs and other high-level dignitaries when they attend the Human Rights Council, the Conference on Disarmament and other conferences which take place in Geneva.

1. Official visit of Heinz Fischer, President of the Republic of Austria, accompanied by Margit Fischer, the First Lady of Austria, 10 June 2013 (UN Photo/Pierre Virot)
2. Official visit to UNOG of Joachim Gauck, President of the Federal Republic of Germany, together with UNOG Director-General Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, 25 February 2013 (UN Photo/Pierre Albouy)
3. Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President of the Republic of Colombia, during a press conference, 3 July 2013 (UN Photo/Jeane-Marc Ferré)
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ADVANCING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

From 1 to 26 July 2013, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) held its substantive 2013 session in Geneva. The Council held a high-level segment from 1 to 4 July, focusing on science, technology and innovation, attended by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and over 500 delegates. UNOG also provides support to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), two essential bodies of the United Nations that advance economic and social development.

UNOG AS A PLATFORM FOR PEACE

Capitalizing on the unique spirit and history of Geneva as a “City of Peace,” UNOG has strived over the past year to increase its role in peacemaking, peacebuilding, conflict prevention and mediation activities. In this regard, UNOG serves as the venue of a number of ongoing mediation efforts and political negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations, including the Geneva International Discussions and the Geneva-based mediation on Equatorial Guinea and Gabon.

In addition, critical services were provided to the discussions on the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and the talks on the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which culminated on 24 November in a historic interim agreement.

UNOG also contributes to the ongoing enhancement of the United Nations’ mediation capacities through the network of United Nations system Mediation Focal Points.

These efforts are operational realizations of the goal of prioritizing early warning and early action to prevent conflict contained in the Secretary-General’s five-year action plan.

There were also a number of events held throughout the year to promote these key priorities.

On 6 March 2013, the Director-General chaired the seminar “The United Nations and Security Sector Reform: The Way Forward,” organized jointly by the Slovak Republic, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces and UNOG. The event highlighted the multidimensional nature of the security sector reform challenge, and the need to work across institutional and thematic boundaries in order to provide and consolidate the security environment that will ensure peaceful post-conflict transitions.
UNOG has helped to strengthen coherence and coordination on peacebuilding work in Geneva, in particular through the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, a networking and knowledge-sharing hub for peacebuilding professionals. On 10 September 2013, the Director-General chaired the joint event organized by UNOG, the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform and the Institute for Economics and Peace on “Positive Peace and the Post-2015 Development Agenda: Towards a more comprehensive approach to increase resilience and well-being.” The one-day event highlighted Geneva as an ideal platform for the promotion of peace due to the presence of unique actors with in-depth expertise in the fields of security, development, human rights and governance.
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to catalyze practice and ideas on themes related to peace that resonate with Geneva’s diverse community of practice and the broader peacebuilding field. Focusing on the theme “What does peace mean to you?”, speakers shared their own personal stories about practical involvement in peacebuilding, dispute resolution or violence reduction, emphasizing how their engagement shaped their own understanding of peace.

SUPPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION

“Switzerland, and particularly Geneva, plays — and will continue to play — an important role in safeguarding the principles and values that underpin humanitarian work.”
Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to the World Humanitarian Summit, 26 September 2013

From conference services to administrative support, UNOG plays an essential role in supporting United Nations action on human rights and in humanitarian emergencies. By providing essential services to, in particular, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNOG contributes to advancing these important United Nations priorities.

FACILITATING PARTICIPATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY

 “[Non-governmental organizations] have specialized competence, hands-on experience and flexibility that is of great value. They need to bring to the table their knowledge of the challenges on the ground and of practical solutions that work.”
Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Director-General of UNOG, at his 2013 Annual Civil Society Briefing, 9 April 2013

In 2013, civil society organizations continued their enthusiastic participation in United Nations activities. Of particular interest was the discussion on the United Nations post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals. The UNOG NGO Liaison Unit supported consultations and meetings with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on these subjects and, among other events, organized, in cooperation with the United Nations Non-governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS) and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General/One Secretariat, a thematic debate and dialogue in the context of the high-level segment of ECOSOC. The discussion was centered on the effective participation of civil society in the shaping of the post-2015 development agenda.

Among the 4,000 NGOs that benefit from consultative status with ECOSOC, a few hundred designate annual or temporary representatives, accredited to UNOG. UNOG assists NGOs in obtaining consultative status and in organizing meetings and debates in the Palais des Nations, while promoting the creation of partnerships between NGOs. Highlights of 2013 included the drafting of a
declaration on the right to peace, the platform of NGOs on the right to education and a symposium of indigenous peoples, which highlighted the use of new information technologies by young indigenous people to safeguard the historic memory of the older generations. Some of these meetings took place in the NGO Resources and Services Centre, a working and meeting space for NGOs within the Palais des Nations.

**NGO BRIEFINGS**

Growing in popularity each year, the Joint NGO Briefing Series, was organized in 2013 jointly by the UNOG NGO Liaison Unit, the United Nations Information Service (UNIS) and UN-NGLS and aimed to provide information and facilitate civil society participation in United Nations activities. In February, the briefing focused on NGO participation during the 2013 substantive session of ECOSOC and, in April, a briefing was offered on population and development, looking at the framework “ICPD beyond 2014” (United Nations review of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action). In October, the briefing explored the post-2015 development agenda and opportunities for civil society participation and, in December, the final session of the year welcomed the start of discussion on the role of civil society and indigenous communities in the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, to be held in September 2014.

**SUPPORTING THE FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL LAW**

UNOG actively supports efforts promoting the respect of international law, which remains fundamental to achieving the objectives of the Organization as a whole.

The mandate of the International Law Commission towards the progressive development and codification of international law remains vital. The Commission held its sixty-fifth session in May–June and July–August 2013 at the Palais des Nations. Discussions focused, among other issues, on the obligation to extradite or prosecute, the protection of persons in the event of disasters, the immunity of State officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction, the provisional application of treaties, the formation and evidence of customary international law, subsequent agreements and subsequent practice in relation to the interpretation of treaties, and the Most-Favoured-Nation clause. The UNOG Legal Liaison Office provided administrative support to the Commission to facilitate its work.
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UNOG also organized and hosted the forty-ninth session of the annual International Law Seminar, designed for postgraduate students in international law, young scholars and government officials exposed to issues of public international law in their work. They attended plenary meetings of the International Law Commission and special lectures by the Commission’s members, senior officials of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and professors from the University of Geneva, as well as from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. The participants formed three working groups and considered the following topics: agreements and practice in relation to treaty interpretation; the protection of persons in the event of disasters; and immunity of State officials from foreign criminal jurisdiction. UNOG also called on members of the International Law Commission to invite governments to make voluntary contributions to the International Law Seminar Trust Fund, which awards scholarships every year to deserving participants, primarily from developing countries.

UNOG HOSTS THE SHABTAI ROSENNE MEMORIAL LECTURE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AS INTERNATIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

Dr. Shabtai Rosenne, one of the foremost international lawyers of recent times, had ties to the United Nations and to Geneva that were profound. As a widely acknowledged expert on treaty law, the law of the sea and the International Court of Justice, he was a formative voice in the field of international law.

On 1 October, the UNOG Library, together with the Permanent Mission of Israel and other international organizations in Geneva, Brill/Martinus Nijhoff Publishers and the Rosenne family, hosted the third Shabtai Rosenne Memorial Lecture as part of its successful UNOG Library Talks series. The Memorial Lectures are held in cities that had special significance in Dr. Rosenne’s professional life, the first taking place at the Peace Palace in The Hague and the second in the Law Society’s Hall in London. Geneva was the natural choice for the location of the 2013 Memorial Lecture given Dr. Rosenne’s profound connection to the city through his diplomatic and legal career and as a member of the International Law Commission.
“We are united in countering the erroneous view that security is achieved through the pursuit of military dominance and threats of mutual annihilation. Our memories are long. We know this path is a dead end.”

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s message to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony, 6 August 2013

ADVANCING UNITED NATIONS DISARMAMENT PRIORITIES

UNOG is a central hub for disarmament and non-proliferation issues — indispensable to ensure human development and promote international peace and security. It is home to the Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community. It also provides, through the Geneva Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), substantive and organizational support to a wide range of multilateral disarmament agreements and hosts a large number of disarmament-related conferences. The Director-General of UNOG is also Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Conference.

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

“I continue to believe in the value, importance and necessity of the Conference on Disarmament as the single, multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community.”

Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, UNOG Director-General, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General to the Conference, 10 September 2013

Several Presidencies also organized focused plenary meetings on all the agenda items of the Conference, as well as on how to reach agreement on a programme of work and on the revitalization of the Conference.

A positive development of the 2013 session was the establishment of an informal working group with a mandate to produce a programme of work that would be robust in substance and progressive over time in implementation, in line with a proposal made on 18 June 2013 by Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament. The working group is led by the President of the Conference on Disarmament, the Co-chair (Ambassador Luis Gallegos Chiriboga of Ecuador) and the Vice Co-chair (Ambassador Peter Woolcott of Australia).
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MULTILATERAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS — ESTABLISHMENT OF AN OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP

The General Assembly made history in many ways when it adopted resolution 67/56 of 3 December 2012 establishing the Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals to advance multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. It decided to address, in a vigorous manner and outside the existing traditional forums, the universal objective of a non-violent world free of nuclear weapons, and also agreed that the meetings of the Working Group would take place at UNOG with the broad participation of civil society. Throughout the year, with the substantive support by the Geneva Branch of UNODA, the Working Group discussed in an interactive, inclusive and constructive manner the current status, challenges and prospects for negotiations, the responsibilities of the different players and the role of the nuclear weapons in the security context of the twenty-first century.

As its outcome, the Open-ended Working Group adopted a substantive report reflecting its deliberations and the variety of proposals made. The report refers, in particular, to several approaches towards this goal, including: an action plan for achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world in a universal, time-bound, non-discriminatory, phased and verifiable manner; the step-by-step approach of mutually reinforcing and progressive steps leading to the full and complete elimination of nuclear weapons; the comprehensive approach for a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame; or a “building blocks” approach — a set of mutually reinforcing unilateral, bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral elements, not implying conditionality and without prejudice to a time frame.

The report of the Open-ended Working Group also emphasizes that, notwithstanding the approach, in order to move forward on nuclear disarmament the international community should focus on common ground and not on differences.

The report was considered by the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly in New York.

SUPPORTING OTHER UNITED NATIONS DISARMAMENT EFFORTS

In 2013, three Groups of Governmental Experts held their meetings in UNOG: the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security; the Group of Governmental Experts on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development; and the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities. Supported substantively by the Geneva Branch of UNODA, this third Group of Governmental Experts agreed on a set of substantive transparency and confidence-building measures for outer space activities and recommended that States consider and implement them on a voluntary basis. The recommendations of this Group are contained in its final report, which was presented to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session and will be referred to the Conference on Disarmament for consideration as appropriate.

The Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, which advises the Secretary-General on matters of arms limitation and disarmament, held its sixtieth session at UNOG. The Board, which was substantively supported by the Geneva Branch of UNODA, focused its deliberations on the relations between nuclear-weapon-free zones in advancing regional and global security and disarmament, and on security implications of emerging technologies. Its recommendations are contained in the report of the Board to the Secretary-General, who subsequently presented a report on the work of the Board to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session.
As home to the secretariats of a number of key disarmament conventions, UNOG serves as a platform for international disarmament efforts. The year 2013 witnessed several important developments in this area, as highlighted below:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Biological Weapons Convention</th>
<th>UNOG is the premier international forum ensuring that modern biology is used safely, securely and solely for beneficial purposes: it is where the Convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and on their destruction (also known as the Biological Weapons Convention) was negotiated and where all its meetings take place.  In 2013, the States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention worked with the treaty’s UNODA-based Implementation Support Unit to continue to put into effect the decisions and recommendations of the Seventh Review Conference, which was held at UNOG in December 2011. The new, restructured intersessional work programme, which began in 2012, was further developed to strengthen the effectiveness of the treaty and focus on the three standing agenda items: cooperation and assistance; review of developments in science and technology; and strengthening national implementation. Furthermore, a range of outreach and awareness-raising activities were conducted on the Convention, briefing government representatives, students, NGOs, the scientific community and industry bodies.</th>
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<td>Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)</td>
<td>UNOG continued to actively support the work of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (commonly known as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons). The Convention is a key instrument of international humanitarian law and humanitarian action. The two experts’ meetings and the three annual conferences of the States parties convened at UNOG in 2013 continued to focus on strengthening the implementation and enhancing the universalization of the Convention and two of its five protocols — the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices as amended on 3 May 1996 (also known as Amended Protocol II) and the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (also known as Protocol V). In 2013, the CCW Implementation Support Unit, which is based within the Geneva Branch of UNODA, organized a number of awareness-raising and outreach events on the Convention and its Protocols. Such activities — which included briefings to government officials, university students, officials from international organizations and civil society representatives — were an excellent opportunity to help participants better understand the Convention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mine Ban Convention</td>
<td>Support for the implementation of the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, commonly known as the Mine Ban Convention, is provided by the Geneva Branch of UNODA. The Thirteenth Meeting of the States Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention took place in UNOG from 2 to 5 December 2013, followed by the First Preparatory Committee for the 2014 Third Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention. The activities of the Geneva Branch of UNODA in this area included raising awareness and promoting the universalization of the Convention, maintaining the database of annual national reports submitted by the States parties pursuant to the provisions of the Convention, and supporting action aimed at facilitation and clarification of compliance with the Convention.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convention on Cluster Munitions</td>
<td>Support was provided for the Fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which took place from 10 to 13 September 2013 in Lusaka and reflected significant international support for the Convention. The meeting focused on universalization of the Convention, particularly in Africa, and on ways to further enhance its implementation.</td>
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