The year 2011 was marked by the 10-year anniversary of General Assembly resolution 56/6 on the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations and of the establishment of the Cultural Activities Programme at UNOG. The UNOG Library, as custodian of this important forum for dialogue and cultural exchange, is particularly proud to have facilitated 861 events throughout this period, promoting the heritage and culture of more than 110 Member States, and providing a forum for the United Nations Secretariat and the funds, programmes and specialized agencies to convey key messages about their work. It is through outreach platforms such as this that the United Nations spreads the word on priority areas, major goals, progress and achievements, and stimulates discussion and multilateral cooperation.

This past year, the Cultural Activities Programme continued to build this advocacy role, working with a record number of international organizations. Over 20 per cent of projects organized in 2011 were collaborative, an indication that Member States and international organizations are increasingly coming together to highlight diverse issues such as human rights, the advancement of women, climate change, development, mine action and disarmament.

In recent years, the Programme has cemented its role as a key vehicle for the commemoration of official United Nations observances, and in 2011 coordinated the celebration of the International Year of Forests and the International Year for People of African Descent.

While the Programme continues to present events on substantive issues, the celebration of culture and diversity is still at the foundation of its mandate. This past year, many Member States adorned the halls of the Palais des Nations with exhibitions of vibrant paintings, sculptures and photographs, providing a snapshot of the unique vantage points of artists from different regions of the world. It was a particularly special year for music and dance, with seven major concerts taking place in the Assembly Hall, and 10 other first-rate musical performances attracting large audiences.

In total, 44 Member States and 17 international organizations contributed to the Programme in 2011. Through this rich programme of activities, the United Nations family continued to build mutual understanding and respect for diversity, essential to the progression towards the United Nations goal of peace and prosperity for all.

Selections of these events are described in greater detail in this special feature (the selection does not include parallel events and events organized by United Nations staff clubs).
1. “Leaders on the Path to Peace: Portraits from the League of Nations Archives” UNOG Library
2. “Czesław Miłosz: Pilgrim in this world” Poland, USA, Lithuania
3. “Storytelling Our Rights” Austria, South Africa
4. “Enracinement et Ouverture - L’art plastique contemporain du Sénégal” Senegal
5. “Gagarin” Russian Federation
6. “An Ocean of Knowledge” Monaco, IAEA
7. “The Recycling Labyrinth” USA
8. “Peace Quilts” USA, Canada, Colombia, UNFPA
9. “Changing Rooms” Malta
10. “Splendid Sichuan” China
11. “International Day of Nowruz” Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkey
12. “Music for Peace” UN Orchestra
2011 CULTURAL ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED BY MEMBER STATES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

FEBRUARY

World Food Programme Fighting Hunger Together: the World Food Programme and partners in action around the world
Photographs depicting the important work coordinated by WFP in the field to bring food relief to people across Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Jordan
Dreams of a Child
Narrative paintings by Abd A. Masoud, capturing the hopes and dreams of all children. The paintings used Arabic writing, images and colours to convey their many simple wishes: to attend school, to find a job when they grow up and to live in peace.

United States of America and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
The Art of Trees: A Forest Gallery
The United States and UNECE teamed up to create a real forest inside the Palais des Nations. Complemented by posters by American artist Monte Dolack and a range of innovative wood products, this exhibition was a celebration of the International Year of Forests.

United Nations Office at Geneva
World Environment Day: The United Nations Family Goes Green
Photographs highlighting the celebration of World Environment Day at the Palais des Nations on 5 June 2010 when dignitaries, colleagues and thousands of members of the public attended an Open Day to enjoy the biodiversity of the Ariana Park, a range of cultural concerts and special activities on the environment.

Austria and South Africa
Storytelling Our Rights: a visual interpretation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights through the eyes of young people
The humanrightsproject.org used real staged photography, created by children at the Ithuba Skills College in South Africa, to create large-scale panoramic photographs, a pictorial reinterpretation of each of the 30 articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

MARCH

The Republic of Moldova
A recital of folk songs from Moldova with Maria Mocanu
Performance of traditional music from Moldova by artist Maria Mocanu, held on the occasion of the Mărţişor spring holiday and the 20th anniversary of the independence of Moldova.

Canada, Colombia, United States of America and the United Nations Population Fund
Peace Quilts: Women’s Power and Resilience in Conflict
An exhibition of quilts sewn by women from many corners of the world – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Colombia, the United States and more – inspired by women who suffered the effects of war and conflict, and as a tribute to their strength. The project was organized in collaboration with World YWCA and the Advocacy Project.

Lithuania
Piano recital by Rokas and Sonata Zubovas
A commemoration concert in honour of composer and painter Mikalojus KonstantinoviciusCiurlionis, on the 100th anniversary of his death. The event also celebrated the twenty-first anniversary of the re-establishment of the independence of Lithuania.

Switzerland
No Women, No Peace
Organized in collaboration with the NGO, PeaceWomen Across the Globe, this event coincided with the celebration of International Women’s Day in 2011. The exhibition highlighted the work of 1,000 “PeaceWomen” working in different sectors all over the world to achieve peace and prosperity for women and girls.

Italy and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
The Forests of Italy through the images of the National Forest Service
Explanatory panels traced the history of forests in Italy, and the technical projects and work of its National Forest Service in managing the forests sustainably.

Malta
Changing Rooms: paintings by Patrick Scicluna
This Maltese artist worked with the concept of private spaces to dissect some of the dangers, both personal and global, that children face as they grow up in a world that is still striving for peace and prosperity for all.
**SPECIAL FEATURE**

**2011 CULTURAL ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED BY MEMBER STATES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### MARCH

**Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkey**

International Day of Nowruz: a Springtime Festival

The international community was invited to share the food and customs unique to the celebration of Nowruz, promoting the values of peace and solidarity, reconciliation and neighbourliness and contributing to cultural diversity and friendship among peoples and communities across the Balkans, the Black Sea Basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East.

### APRIL

**Bangladesh**

Sarod recital from Bangladesh

Traditional music performed by Ustad Shahidat Hossain Khan, Rebbeca Khan, Alhana Khan, Ruhkana Khan and Ustad Yusuf Ali Khan. This concert introduced several classical South Asian instruments in this celebration of the fortieth National and Independence Day of Bangladesh.

**Hungary**

Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra

The Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra from Hungary, founded in 1983 by former students of the Franz Liszt Music Academy, is one of the most famous ensembles of the Central European region and has been well known on the international music scene for decades. The 16 musicians played pieces by Tchaikovsky, Bartók and Liszt, marking the 200th anniversary of the birthday of Franz Liszt.

**United Nations Mine Action Service**

Demining the DRC: mine action and beyond

Images by Ann Hodes of the people affected by landmines and explosive remnants of war – and those determined to protect their lives and livelihoods. This exhibition marked the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action on 4 April.

**Belarus**

Chernobyl and Belarus: Past, Present, Future

On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, this exhibition was a creative reflection on the consequences of the past and on the hard work carried out in the name of revival. It presented a range of technical material on the rehabilitation efforts in Belarus, recognizing the importance of passing lessons learned on to future generations. A series of children’s drawings and paintings illustrated the concerns of the younger generation and captured their hopes for a brighter future.

**Kazakhstan**

L’âme musicale

Presentation of the translation into French of the renowned Kazakhstan literary masterpiece, L’âme musicale by Taken Alimbekov, complemented by an exhibition of photographs of Kazakhstan, its landscapes, peoples and cities.

### MAY

**United Nations Women’s Guild**

Art and Handicraft

Annual exhibition of paintings, drawings, sculpture, porcelain, jewellery and flower arrangements.

**Afghanistan, the United Nations Population Fund and the World Health Organization**

Afghan women and girls move forward

An exhibition of photographs documenting the work of midwives in Afghanistan and highlighting the training sessions organized by WHO to decrease maternal and newborn mortality and to improve women’s and children’s health in the country.

**Brazil and the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace**

Photographers for hope: the transformative power of sport

On the occasion of the International Forum on Sport, Peace and Development, this exhibition displayed a range of photographs taken in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, by eight photographers from all over the world to demonstrate the power of sport as a tool for positive social change.

**Russian Federation**

Chernobyl and Belarus: Past, Present, Future

Exhibition marking the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action on 4 April.

**United States of America**

The Recycling Labyrinth: a path towards a greener future

An installation piece in the Ariana Park, this major work by American artist Mona Nicole Steri gathered 8,000 plastic bottles into an interactive labyrinth to highlight the global waste management challenge, the importance of recycling and the personal steps that can be taken to reduce the impact on the planet.

### JUNE

**Lithuania, Poland and the United States of America**

Czesław Milosz: pilgrim in this world

A literary evening in honour of the distinguished writer and winner of the 1980 Nobel Prize for Literature, Czesław Milosz, by Jan Zielinski, and an interpretation of the poems by Maria Husar, Jerry Husar and Denise Honegger.
**JUNE**

**Finland and the UNOG Library**

**The Aaland Islands Solution: a precedent for successful international disputes settlement**

Archival materials traced the history of one of the greatest successes of the League of Nations, with contemporary photographs capturing life in the Aaland Islands today.

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**July-August**

**Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

**Thirty years rebuilding lives**

An exhibition of artworks by victims of torture, including paintings, drawings, sculptures and masks, held to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture.

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**China**

**Culture of China: splendid Sichuan**

Images of the landscapes, customs, heritage and culture of one of China’s most beautiful provinces and a commemoration of the strength and courage of its people in the aftermath of the Wenchuan earthquake of 2008.

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**UNOG Library**

**Leaders on the Path to Peace: an exhibition of portraits from the League of Nations archives**

An exhibition of paintings and sculptures capturing some of the diverse personalities who helped to shape the League of Nations and worked for its many causes in the name of peace. Among the portraits and busts shown were several of the famous names of the League of Nations era, such as President Woodrow Wilson, Sir Eric Drummond and Fridtjof Nansen.

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**September**

**University for Peace**

**The view from the University for Peace**

Showcasing a collection of 30 photographs taken by students and staff of the University for Peace, reflecting a variety of peace and conflict situations which are part of the everyday lives of many people in today’s world.

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**Slovenia**

**Our rights – nos droits – Naše pravice**

Illustrations for children by the artist Matjaž Schmidt, designed to teach children about the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The exhibition has been used throughout Europe as an education tool.

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**Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

**Breaking Free from Slavery**

A visual journey through 20 years of assistance to victims of contemporary forms of slavery, this exhibition of photographs was organized by the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary.

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**Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

**Osez l’égalité – homme/ femme: abolir clichés et discriminations**

Works by students from schools in Geneva, exploring gender roles and the question of equality between the sexes. This exhibition is a product of the pedagogic programme of the International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights.

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**Austria**

**Collateral Convicts: “If my parents go to prison, what happens to me?”**

An exhibition of drawings, photographs, testimonials and information highlighting the personal experiences and hopes of children of imprisoned parents. The exhibition was organized together with the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Rights of the Child in the context of its day of general discussion on children of incarcerated parents.
2011 CULTURAL ACTIVITIES ORGANIZED BY MEMBER STATES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

OCTOBER

**Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)**
*Que se haga humana, la humanidad – Que elle soit humaine, l’humanité – Let humanity be human*

Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela

**Germany and Sweden**
*Moments of Silence: an exhibition of paintings by Uwe Appel, inspired by the haiku poetry of Dag Hammarskjöld*

Held on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary-General of the United Nations (1953–1961), this exhibition of paintings was inspired by his writings and love of his native southern Sweden.

**Italy**
*Defending Venice and its cultural heritage from floods: the Moses project*

Is Venice sinking? Top Venetian technical experts illustrated the colossal engineering project undertaken to save Venice from periodic flooding, touting the techniques as potential methods for halting floodwaters in other prone areas around the world where culture, livelihoods and human life are at risk.

**Republic of Korea**
*Harmony from Korea*

A concert by Ensemble TIMF performing classical and Korean traditional music, organized in collaboration with the Korea Foundation. The group played Bach, Schubert and a range of Korean folk songs featuring traditional instruments.

**United Nations**
*Research Institute for Social Development*

In the Bag: the art and politics of the reusable bag movement

An exhibition of designer bags from artisans and cooperatives around the world, tracing the beginnings of the movement to ban plastic bags and presenting the growth of creative alternatives to plastic. Held on the occasion of the UNRISD conference on the green economy and sustainable development: bringing back the social dimension.

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/World Food Programme**
*Hunger Fighting Together*

An exhibition of photographs highlighting the joint activities of FAO and WFP to fight hunger around the world. The exhibition marked World Food Day on 16 October.

NOVEMBER

**Chile**
*True Lights of My City – Ciertas luces de mi ciudad*

An exhibition of paintings by renowned Chilean artist, Felipe Mercadal, reflecting the lights of the harbour of Valparaiso at different moments of the day, a thought-provoking reflection on the environment and ensuring its protection.

**Switzerland and the United Nations Development Programme**
*Armed Violence: a threat to development*

A piano recital by acclaimed Georgian musician, Elissa Bolkvadze, performing classical music by Beethoven, Prokofiev and Sogny.

**Georgia**
*Elissa Bolkvadze*

A piano recital by Elissa Bolkvadze, inspired by the haiku poetry of Dag Hammarskjöld, held on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the death of Dag Hammarskjöld, Secretary-General of the United Nations (1953–1961), this exhibition of paintings was inspired by his writings and love of his native southern Sweden.

**Japan**
*Juta-Mai Evening: traditional Japanese dance by Master Kishó Yoshimura*

A traditional dance performance of Juta-Mai, performed by Master Kishó Yoshimura, organized by the Permanent Mission of Japan, the Japanese Consulate in Geneva, the Association Suisse-Japonaise (section Suisse Romande) and the Atelier de Nihon-Bayoi of Geneva. The concert was held to thank the International community for its assistance to the victims of the 2011 earthquake in Japan, and was part of the official programme of the Japanese Cultural Month in Geneva.

**United Nations Mine Action Service**
*Children’s Fund*

Le soleil du renouveau

Colourful contemporary paintings by Congolese artists Kindu Mbuza, Kaspera Deseo, Mampuya Francis, Sapi, Jean-Pierre Mika and Douxou Bengene, inspired by the struggle against landmines in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
Brazil, Rwanda, United States of America, International Organization of la Francophonie and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Africa: mother of all peoples

Celebrating diversity, equality and non-discrimination, a literary conference featuring writers of African descent from around the world: Ana Maria Gonçalves, Brazil; Jean-Euphélite Milce, Haiti; Lucy Cristina Chau, Panama; Eddy L. Harris, Haiti; Lucy Cristina Chau, Panama; Petina Gappah, Zimbabwe, in celebration of the International Year for People of African Descent.

A multi-act concert featuring the following musical attractions: Afrolata (Brazilian percussion group based in Geneva) performing traditional dance. The concert closed the celebrations of the International Year for People of African descent.

November

Serbia Diplomacy and Art
An exhibition commemorating the life and work of the renowned Yugoslav writer and diplomat Ivo Andrić, held on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of his being awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. The event also featured the donation by the Government of Serbia of Gold Powder Box, a painting by Munja Dragojlovic, and the celebration of the 90th anniversary of Serbian multilateral diplomacy in Geneva (1921–2011).

Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Glass Microbiology

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Transit: Photos by Espen Rasmussen
Images of refugees and displaced people around the world, organized on the occasion of the intergovernmental event on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the fiftieth anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

United Nations Orchestra Musique pour la Paix – Music for Peace
Inaugural concert of the United Nations Orchestra at the Palais des Nations under the direction of Antoine Marguier. The Orchestra performed Mozart’s “The Marriage of Figaro (Overture),” “Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra” featuring soloist Mikhail Jouravlev, and “Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5.”

Poland Waldemar Malicki, versatile pianist and star of the Polish Humorous Philharmonic performs his renowned Classical Piano Show
A unique evening of classical and contemporary music with some very special musical surprises, held on the occasion of the close of Poland’s presidency of the Council of the European Union, and to celebrate the end of 2011.

Mongolia Mongolia on the International Stage
An exhibition of photographs highlighting Mongolia’s achievements, its partnerships with the United Nations family, and its dynamic vision for the future, held on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Mongolia’s admission to the United Nations. The opening event also featured a performance by traditional musical group, Khushit Mongol.