

Geneva for Human Rights – Global Training (GHR)  
**ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT 2013**

**A. PROFILE OF GENEVA FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

*Geneva for Human Rights - Global Training (GHR)* is an International **training** Association under Swiss law (in conformity with articles 60 *et al.* of the Swiss Civil Code). It obtained tax exemption status from the State of Geneva and Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC). Its Secretariat is based in Geneva.

***Our Vision***

Since 1948, the international community adopted numerous human rights declarations and conventions and created dozens of monitoring mechanisms and procedures. In the field, victims, witnesses, human rights organisations and defenders working under difficult conditions, all demand implementation of these international standards. Massive human rights abuses persist around the world. Indeed, there is still a **gap** between the standards of the United Nations (UN) and the follow-up of their decisions.

It is **time for implementation**. And this has to be done by the country itself, which implies a need to develop national capacities.

***Our Objectives***

*Geneva for Human Rights - Global Training (GHR)* is a **training organization**. Through training, study and protection, GHR aims to **bridge** this gap and to **empower** all those involved in the promotion and protection of human rights. Its 'Global Training Department' (GTP) conducts each year dozens of Courses and Seminars in Geneva and in the regions. Monitoring and analyzing UN human rights meetings, its 'Department of Human Rights Policy Studies' (HPS) supports these training activities.

***GHR Achievements***

Over the last years, we carried out many training Courses, Seminars and briefings on human rights, humanitarian law, criminal law, transitional justice, the UN system, international procedures and implementation strategies, in particular:

- **thirty** (3 to 4 weeks) **Geneva Courses** for human rights defenders from the regions during the main UN human rights sessions (ECOSOC, Commission on Human Rights, all the ordinary sessions of the Human Rights Council (hereafter: 'HR-Council'), and during the 2009 Review Conference on Racism;
- **thirteen Expert Seminars** (on Caste Discrimination, International Humanitarian Law (2), the HR-Council, Transitional Justice, Minorities, Enforced Disappearances (2), Religious Freedom, Business and Human Rights (2), and on the World Conference);
- **thirteen Courses and Seminars** during Universal Periodic Review (UPR) sessions;
- **ten regional Courses**: in Banjul, Gambia (with the *African Centre*, 2003), Seoul (national institutions, 2004), Kolkata (South Asian NGOs, 2004), Bangkok (team of *Forum Asia*, 2005), San José de Costa Rica (Course of *IIDH*, 2006), Kathmandu (with *AITPN*, indigenous peoples, January 2007), Kathmandu (with *Save the Children*, January 2007), Kolkata (with *AITPN*, October 2007), Bangkok (with *ADRM*, Dalits network, July 2008) and Kathmandu (with *AITPN*, indigenous peoples, August 2008);
- **forty-eight In-Country Courses and Seminars** in the following regions: 15 in Latin America (Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras), 3 in Africa (Kenya, Botswana, Morocco), 7 in the Russian Federation, and 23 in Asia: Bangladesh, Indonesia (West-Papua, 2), Pakistan, Nepal (7), India (9), Sri-Lanka (3);
- a comprehensive **training and mediation program** in Mexico to support the process of the national implementation Programme (2004 – 2008);
- **seven Courses for diplomats** organized by the *Graduate Institute (IHEID, Geneva)*;

- **nine Courses for humanitarian actors** (eight for the *International Committee of the Red Cross, ICRC*);
- **twenty-seven on-demand Courses for partners**, including the *World Council of Churches, UNITAR, the High Commissioner's Office for Human Rights (OHCHR)*, the *University of Padova*, the *German NGO Forum* and the *F. Ebert Foundation* (Berlin), *Forum Asia* (Bangkok), *Ecole Instrument de Paix* (Geneva), *Freedom House*, the *German Network on Papua*, *Cordaid* (The Hague) and *Progressio* (London);
- and a dozen **briefings** for the international press and for NGOs attending the sessions of the UN Commission, Sub-Commission and HR-Council.

### What we achieved in 2013

- **three 3-week Geneva Courses** on the occasion of the ordinary sessions of the Human Rights Council in February-March, June-July and September;
- **four Expert Seminars**, on Human Rights and Business (2), on the World Conference on Human Rights, and on Enforced Disappearance;
- **one Course** and **several briefings** during the sessions of the **UPR Working group**;
- **two In-Country Courses** in **India**;
- the launching of our **Implementation Programme** with Workshops in **Botswana** (April) and **Morocco** (December);
- **several lectures** and briefings, in particular at the *University of Padova*, for the *German Chinese Dialogue on Human Rights*, and for the *OHCHR* (on minorities).

In 2013 GHR diversified its training services with more experts participating and more trainees involved in the animation of its Courses (training of trainers); GHR strengthened its HPS Department and its working relations with universities and research institutes.

## B. GLOBAL TRAINING DEPARTMENT

To meet the needs and priorities of its partners in the regions, to fill the existing information gaps and to empower its partners, GHR Global Training Department has set up **three Programmes**: on the Human Rights Council (PRE), on Implementation in the Countries (*INP*) and for Specific Stakeholders (TSS).

### Programme No. 1

#### ***'Participation of the Regions in the Human Rights Council'***

Our main Programme is entitled: ***'Participation of the Regions in the Human Rights Council'*** (*PRE*) - a training program for an effective participation of defenders from the regions in the work of the HR-Council. Aim is the full access and participation of defenders from the regions in the work of the HR-Council and its mechanisms, and the effective use of human rights special procedures and treaty bodies. The Programme contains a variety of Courses and Seminars in Geneva and in the regions.

Four **donors** contributed to this Programme in 2013: the *Human Security Division* of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (*DSH-FDFA*), the *Government of Liechtenstein*, the *Loterie Romande* (Geneva), and the *Kingdom of the Netherlands*. Other donors contributed to *GHR Training Fellowship Fund for Defenders from the Regions*, providing fellowships to defenders from the regions and enabling them to be trained in the *Geneva Courses: UEM* (Wuppertal), *Misereor* (Aachen), *Bread for the World* (Berlin) and the *F. Ebert Foundation* (Berlin-Geneva).

### 1. THE GENEVA COURSES OF GHR

As in previous years, GHR conducted in 2013 its three *Geneva Courses* on the occasion of the ordinary sessions of the HR-Council in March, June and September 2013.

## What are the Geneva Courses ?

The 3-week 'Training Courses on the Human Rights Council, international human rights and humanitarian law, international procedures and diplomacy' (hereafter 'Geneva Courses') are conducted by GHR at each ordinary session of the HR-Council.

The *Geneva Courses* are unique. Providing **intensive and interactive training**, they combine **theory, working field experiences** of the participants and the **exposure to international human rights diplomacy**. With its researchers and interns from a variety of universities, the *HPS Department* assists the trainees during the HR-Council's session.

For many years, Adrien-Claude Zoller has presented these Courses with different organisations. The outline and main objectives (needs from the regions; General Course and daily classes) were defined during the 1986 Course, organized with the *OMCT*. Since 2003 the *Geneva Courses* are conducted by GHR. With the creation of the HR-Council (2006), *GHR* elaborated specific teaching methods taking into consideration the new UN realities.

The **strategic objective** of the *Geneva Courses* is to **empower NGOs, defenders, coalitions and networks from the regions** to participate fully in the HR-Council's deliberations. *Geneva Courses* are advanced Courses to train trainers and therefore **based on the realities in the field**. The programme of each Course is tailored to the thematic needs and priorities of the participants. Moreover, to close the **information gap** of defenders in the regions, the *Geneva Courses* teach the **new UN orientations** (UN Reform process, dialogue and cooperation with the States, *OHCHR* priorities).

The Courses start with a 3-4 days **General Course** during the first week of the UN session to teach the basic elements of international law, the UN structure, mechanisms and procedures, and international relations.

Then, during the entire session of the HR-Council, trainees participate in **daily morning classes**, receive briefings on the main reports examined in the HR-Council and analyze the debates and the main human rights issues. For each Course, *HPS* prepares a *Documentation Kit* for the trainees with all the relevant documents.

Each trainee receives a **list of assignments**, which includes drafting a communication to a thematic procedure, writing several summaries of the debates in the HR-Council and summaries of the morning classes, and submitting a brief note with the main patterns of human rights abuses in their country. Most of the summaries and draft letters to the Special Rapporteurs are read out and discussed during the morning classes.

During the Course, there are also **weekly tests** on the teaching of the previous week. This enables the trainers to monitor the progress made by the trainees. The trainers correct and mark the tests. Those with insufficient marks receive additional briefings.

### Geneva Course GSC-29 (25 February – 15 March 2013)

The 29<sup>th</sup> *Geneva Course* took place during the 22<sup>nd</sup> session of the HR-Council (25 February - 22 March 2013).

#### **Participants in the Geneva Course GSC-29**

24 trainees attended the 29<sup>th</sup> *Geneva Course*. Amongst them, 14 trainees came from the regions: **Colombia** (2), **Chechnya** (Russia), **Sri Lanka** (3), **Egypt**, **Congo DRC**, **Chile** (3), **Uganda**, **Russia**, **Turkey**. Two others (from France and Ireland respectively) were members of partners, *Franciscans International* and *Vivat International*. The other participants were fellows of *GHR*, graduate students from Congo DRC, Ireland (2), Germany, the United States of America (3), and Switzerland.

#### **Resource persons**

Trainers and resource persons for this 29<sup>th</sup> *Geneva Course* were:

- the 3 full-time trainers: Edward Flynn (Ireland, Geneva Representative *Vivat International*), Sébastien Coquoz (Switzerland, *GHR* member), Adrien-Claude Zoller (Switzerland, *Course Director*);
- 5 experts who introduced morning classes: René Kosirnik (Switzerland, *Legal Advisor GHR*), Suhas Chakma (India, Director *Asian Center for Human Rights*, Dehli, *GHR* Executive Council member), Ms. Penny Parker (Human Rights Advocates, *GHR* Executive Council member), Ms. Aileen Diez-Bacalso (*Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances*, *AFAD*, Philippines) and Ms. Anna Dobrovolskaya (head

of *International Youth Human Rights Movement* (*IYHRM*) in Voronezh, Russia, former trainee in the Geneva Course);

- and GHR support staff: George D'Souza (India, GHR Advisor), Nicolas Zoller (Switzerland, GHR IT Officer), and Ms. Maria Teresa Tienda Rivera (Spain, Coordinator Department *Human Rights Policy Studies*, HPS).

## Proceedings of the 29<sup>th</sup> Geneva Course

- **General Course** (25 February – 2 March 2013)

On the first day, the trainees attended the opening the HR-Council and received a general briefing on access to the HR-Council (documentation, annotated agenda, programme of work, of the year and of the session, order of the day). Day-2 started with the confidential session. Trainees explained the situation in their countries, highlighted their needs and priority issues for the Course, and exchanged on the situations in several countries. The trainers introduced the special procedures.

On Day-3 (27 February) the trainers summarized the opening session of the HR-Council and introduced the question of women's rights in the UN. On Day-4, René Kosirnik gave the Course on international humanitarian law (IHL). On Day-5, the trainers made a synthesis of the general debate in the HR-Council and of the reports prepared by UN Secretariat (Secretary General and High Commissioner).

The General Course concluded on Saturday 2 March with the full-day Course on the international system. Trainers introduced in the morning the international human rights, humanitarian and criminal laws, international relations, IGO's, UN structure, organs and programmes, including the Commissions of ECOSOC, the former Commission on Human Rights, and the HR-Council and its mechanisms. Themes of the afternoon were the human rights standards (civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, concept of violations - by action and by omission - non State actors), justice in period of transition, the UN Reform process (in particular the Millennium Development Goals) and religious freedom. The day ended with the *Dinner of the General Course* offered by GHR. Anna Dobrovlakaya told her experience in Russia.

- **Course on the proceedings of the HR-Council** (4 - 13 March 2013)

During Week-2 and Week-3, trainees attended GHR morning classes (each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday) before monitoring the HR-Council's session. Each class opened with the summaries by the participants of the debates in the HR-Council. To learn how to use the Special procedures, trainees were also assigned to draft a communication to the thematic procedures, and the drafts were read out and commented during the classes.

The following themes and reports were introduced by the trainers during these classes: (recapitulation on) international law, UN structure, mechanisms of the HR-Council; the Universal Periodic Review (UPR); transitional justice; special procedures' reports on torture, enforced or involuntary disappearances, human rights defenders, right to food, adequate housing, religious freedom, and minority rights; reports and debates on country situations (Syria, North-Korea, Burma, Iran).

During **extended morning classes**, courses were given on: indigenous peoples' rights in the UN (by Suhas Chakma); enforced disappearances (by Adrien-Claude Zoller and Ms. Aileen Diez-Bacalso); and treaty bodies (by Ms. Penny Parker).

Trainees also prepared two **self-made dinners**. This facilitated working relations between them and offered good opportunities to deepen issues raised during the Course. The dinners took place on Thursday 7 March and on Thursday 14 March.

- **Conclusion of the Course** (14-15 March 2013)

The dinner of 14 March was the final dinner of the Geneva Course. 17 trainees received the Course's certificate. On Friday morning 15 March, the trainers presented a **recapitulation** of the entire Course and they presented the strategies to contribute to human rights **implementation** in the countries (national plans, public policies regarding human rights, national institutions, technical assistance programmes, coalitions and networks). The Course concluded with an evaluation by the participants. The trainers also held separate meetings with trainees from Sri Lanka, Colombia and Egypt to discuss their future strategies.

**Geneva Course GSC-30**  
**(27 May – 14 June 2013)**

The 30<sup>th</sup> *Geneva Course* took place during the 23<sup>rd</sup> session of the HR-Council.

**Participants in the Geneva Course GSC-30**

Amongst the 24 trainees, **15 came from the regions: Dominican Republic, Tanzania, United Arab Emirates (4), Algeria, Iran, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, China, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, India-Singapore.** The other trainees were graduate students and *GHR* fellows from Hungary, Sweden, Italy, and the United States of America (3), and three observers from Ireland, Rwanda and Nigeria. It was the first time *GHR* welcomed trainees from the UAE.

**Resource persons**

Trainers and resource persons for this 30<sup>th</sup> Geneva Course were:

- the 3 full-time trainers: Edward Flynn, Sébastien Coquoz, Adrien-Claude Zoller;
- 2 experts who introduced morning classes: René Kosirnik (*Legal Advisor* *GHR*, Course on IHL), and Ms. Alice Mogwe (*Director DITSHWANELO*, Course on human rights implementation, her experience in Botswana.);
- and *GHR* support staff: Nicolas Zoller and Ms. Maria Teresa Tienda Rivera.

**Proceedings of the 30<sup>th</sup> Geneva Course**

- The **General Course** took place from 27 May to 1 June 2013. Additional themes were rape of women in war time, business and human rights, and religious freedom.
- The **Course on the proceedings** of the HR-Council ('*morning classes*') was conducted from 3 to 13 June. Trainers introduced the reports the UN Secretariat, the High Commissioner and special procedures (trafficking, foreign debt, extreme poverty, judiciary, freedom of assembly, and freedom of opinion and expression, country reports), UPR; justice in period of transition, treaty bodies, criminal law, racism and racial discrimination; and the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights.
- Theme of the **last two days** was follow-up and evaluation. The trainers presented the recapitulation of the Course, with comments on follow-up strategies. Individual follow-up meetings took place with trainees from Malaysia, Taiwan, Tanzania, Santo Domingo, the UAE and Sri Lanka. 15 trainees obtained the Course's certificate.

**Geneva Course GSC-31**  
**(9 – 27 September 2013)**

The 31<sup>st</sup> *Geneva Course* took place during the 24<sup>th</sup> session of the HR-Council.

**Participants in the Geneva Course GSC-31**

Twenty human rights defenders attended. **13 trainees came from the regions: Sri Lanka (2), Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya** (observer), **United Arab Emirates (3), Indonesia (2, incl. one from Papua), Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Brazil.** The others were one member of *AFEDEM* (DRC-Congo) and graduate students and *GHR* fellows from Italy, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, the United States and Switzerland.

**Resource persons**

The two full-time **trainers** for this Course were Edward Flynn and Adrien-Claude Zoller.

René Kosirnik gave the Course on international humanitarian law. Ms. Maria Teresa Tienda Rivera gave the Course on treaty bodies. The other resource persons for the Course were, Ms. Agnès Gràcia Corberó (Project Officer, Spain) and Nicolas Zoller.

**Proceedings of the 31<sup>st</sup> Geneva Course**

- **General Course (9 - 14 September 2013)**  
Special classes were held during the General Course on access to the HR-Council, the mechanisms of the HR-Council, women's rights, the geopolitical aspects of the Syrian conflict, justice in periods of transition, international humanitarian law, and the (the full-day Course) on the international system.
- **Course on the proceedings of the HR-Council (16 to 25 September 2013)**  
During Week-2 and Week-3, the trainees attended every day the morning class. They received them briefings on reports submitted to the HR-Council (children in war,

children of parents sentenced to death, democratic order, mercenaries and private security companies, access to water, and toxic wastes) and Courses on UPR, treaty bodies, indigenous peoples' rights, human rights defenders' protection and reprisals against NGOs, racism and UN technical assistance. The group prepared the meeting of some of them with the Rapporteur on internally displaced persons.

- **Conclusions of the Course (26 and 27 September)**

The (extended) morning class of 26 September was devoted to the recapitulation of the Course and the implementation strategies inside countries. 19 trainees received the Course's certificate. The last class of Friday 27 September analyzed the first resolutions adopted by the HR-Council and the decision-making process.

## 2. GENEVA SPECIFIC SEMINARS DURING THE UPR

GHR followed closely the set-up of the new mechanism of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). It is an important additional tool to implement human rights inside countries. GHR actively supported the creation of a new documentation and communication tool for the 'Stakeholders', 'UPR-Info.org'. It elaborated a **specific training scheme**, covering all the stages of UPR, and highlighting the importance of bolstering the cooperation with the States and with the special procedures and the treaty bodies. GHR explains the UPR in all its Courses, both in Geneva and in the regions. Main aims of GHR Courses on the UPR are:

- promoting awareness on the **potential NGO contribution at each stage** of the UPR process (contribution to the State's report, preparation of the 'stakeholders' reports (civil society); review of the country by the Working group; adoption of the report by the group; adoption of the report by the HR-Council; follow-up in each country);
- teaching the **long-term perspectives** and the links between UPR and the process of implementation of all rights for all in each country.

Since December 2008, as many NGO coalitions come to Geneva to attend the review of their country, GHR conducts during each UPR session Courses and briefings Seminars for representatives of NGOs and national institutions.

### 15<sup>th</sup> UPR session (21 January - 1 February 2013)

During the 15<sup>th</sup> session on the UPR Working Group, GHR actively supported the work of defenders from Botswana and Burundi. Its HPS Department also monitored the examination of Barbados, France, Liechtenstein and the United Arab Emirates.

#### Review of Botswana - Briefing and orientation (Geneva, January 2013)

To prepare Botswana's second UPR review, GHR welcomed in its 27<sup>th</sup> Geneva Course (June-July 2012) Ms. Alice Mogwe, Director of *DITSHWANELO*, who coordinated the drafting of the NGO Report for the review. This 'stakeholder' report was submitted on 9 July 2012. Ms. Mogwe and GHR President later attended the Berlin Conference on the HR-Council, hosted by the *Ebert Foundation*, the *German Institute* and the *Forum Menschenrechte* (October 2012). In November 2012, GHR assisted Ms. Mogwe to meet about twenty Permanent Missions in Geneva to advocate for the priority issues of Botswana NGOs to be addressed at the review of Botswana.

With briefing, orientation and contacts with Governmental delegations, GHR helped three defenders from Botswana to prepare the review. GHR participated actively in the side-event convened by the Ebert Foundation on the civil society contribution to the UPR of Botswana (22 January 2013). Between the review (23 January) and the adoption by the Working Group of Botswana's report (25 January), GHR and Ms. Mogwe held several meetings with the Delegation of Botswana to discuss follow-up initiatives in Botswana.

#### Review of Burundi - Briefing and orientation (Geneva, January 2013)

Over the last years, GHR trained in Geneva several defenders from Burundi, members of NGOs, the National Commission and the BNUB (UN Operations). After the participation of members of the National Commission in the *Geneva Course* of September 2011, GHR supported its former trainees in preparing their contributions to the UPR process. After the

review of Burundi, GHR had two meetings with the President of the National Commission, to prepare training Courses in the country (24 and 28 January 2013).

#### **16<sup>th</sup> UPR session** (22 April - 3 May 2013)

GHR briefed NGOs from Colombia (23 April) and met with NGOs and experts from Germany and participated in the side-event organised by the German NGO coalition (25 April).

#### **Review of the Russian Federation – Briefing and partnership** **(Geneva, April 2013)**

From 24 to 30 April, GHR had three briefings with the group of Russian defenders attending the review of their country, which took place on 29 April. GHR expressed concern at the **repression** of the civil society and the **reprisals** against defenders who were involved in the human rights work of the UN.

#### **17<sup>th</sup> UPR session** (21 October - 1 November 2013)

During this *UPR* session, GHR met with NGOs and partners from Mexico, and assisted defenders from Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

#### **Invitation to a NGO Delegation from Saudi Arabia** **(Geneva, 17 – 24 October 2013)**

GHR invited to Geneva five human rights defenders from Saudi Arabia on the occasion of the review of their country. From 17 to 19 October, they met officials at the *OHCHR* and several diplomatic missions to raise the key issues for the review. Meetings had been arranged by GHR Secretariat. GHR gave the group a briefing on the UN mechanisms and the *UPR* process (20 October). During the review (21 October), the team of GHR introduced them to other key actors. After the review, they analyzed with GHR the outcome of the review. They arranged a formal meeting with the Delegation of Saudi Arabia.

GHR team gave a second briefing on 22 October. The discussion focused on the *UPR* recommendations and on the best practices for NGOs to ensure a follow-up to this *UPR* debate in the country. Aware of their challenges, GHR guests were interested in GHR strategies for domestic implementation. To better assess the value of the *UPR* mechanism, the Group returned to the UN to attend the review of another country, Mexico (23 October).

GHR team was composed of Maria Teresa Tienda Rivera (Secretariat Coordinator), Alex Guye (Project Officer, Switzerland), Nuno Santos Rocha (Project Officer, Portugal).

#### **NGO Delegation from Jordan** **(Geneva, 23 – 25 October 2013)**

GHR met with the broad coalition of NGOs from Jordan (*'Insan'*), invited to Geneva by the F. Ebert Foundation. Members of the Group were quite experienced. Thus, GHR briefing focused on techniques and strategies on the use of UN procedures and the elaboration of domestic strategies. The review took place on 24 October.

GHR was actively involved in the side-event convened by the Ebert Foundation on 25 October 2013 to discuss key human rights issues of Jordan, the recommendations of the civil society, and those made by the States during the review of Jordan. Representatives from the *Phenix Center for Economics and Informatics Studies*, the *Insan* coalition, *Tamkeen for legal aid and human rights*, the *Centre for the Defense for freedom of journalists*, and the *Arab Womens' Organisation (AWO)* participated in the round-table, which was moderated by GHR President Adrien-Claude Zoller.

#### **Joint initiatives on UPR**

As a new mechanism of the HR-Council, the *UPR* is a too important tool to be entrusted to States only. Active participation of the civil society is a must. GHR is concerned by some initiatives to weaken this mechanism. It therefore co-signed joint statements with dozens of NGOs on reprisals against civil society organizations participating in the *UPR* process, as well as a letter to the HR-Council President requesting clarifications on the attempts of the Russian Federation to remove from the report of the *UPR* Working Group a recommendations made by States, which it did not like (issue of the so-called '*footnotes*').

### 3. TRAINING FELLOWSHIP FUND FOR DEFENDERS FROM THE REGIONS

In 2006, GHR Executive Council created a special Fund entitled '*Training Fellowship Fund for Defenders from the Regions*' to provide fellowships for defenders from the regions to be trained in the *Geneva Courses*. A fellowship covers the registration fees for the *Geneva Course*, the travel expenses to and from Geneva, and to the cost of living in Geneva. GHR Executive Council and its Bureau award the scholarships following the recommendations of GHR advisors and partners in the regions.

The following donors contributed to this Fund in 2013: *UEM* (Wuppertal), *Misereor* (Aachen), The Hague, *Bread for the World* (Berlin), *Home for Human Rights* (Jaffna, Sri Lanka), and the *Ebert Fondation* (Berlin-Geneva). **Six fellowships** were awarded in 2013.

### 4. IN-COUNTRY AND IN-REGION COURSES

In 2013, GHR conducted training Courses in India, Botswana and Morocco. The activities in Morocco are reported hereafter under GHR Programme '*Implementation Now*'

#### Course in India for indigenous leaders (Kolkata, 10 – 12 August 2013)

From 10 to 12 August, GHR, *Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR)* and *Asian Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Network (AITPN)* conducted the '**Annual Capacity Building Programme for Indigenous Peoples Rights Activists of India**'. The Course took place in Kolkata. Trainers were *Suhas Chakma (ACHR)* and *Adrien-Claude Zoller*. 36 indigenous representatives attended. They came from Assam, Bihar, Jharkland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Sarkland, Tripura, and the Tibetan community in India. A dozen participants were sponsored by *Christian Aid*.

After informal consultations on Day-1, the Course opened on Day-2 with the analysis of the local situations in the States of origin of the trainees in India. Most participants were working in conflict zones and/or with indigenous communities. They highlighted the following issues: militarization, activities of mining companies, big development projects, land's rights, self-determination, violence against women, customary-based violence, custodial deaths, enforced disappearances, '*atrocities*', child trafficking, right to food, internally displaced.

Theme of the morning was the international system. The discussion focused on the judiciary system, access to justice, human rights defenders and non State actors. Themes of the afternoon were the national mechanisms available in India (*Suhas Chakma* also introduced *ACHR* draft Manual on the National Human Rights Commission) and the mechanisms and thematic procedures of the HR-Council. The participants further analyzed these procedures in Working groups focusing on cases concerning indigenous peoples. In the evening, they discussed the proposals for an Indigenous Peoples Alliance of India.

Day-3 started with a recapitulation on the national and international mechanisms and the discussion of the Working groups' reports on cases of human rights abuses. The trainers then explained the treaty bodies and the experience of Indian NGO coalitions preparing shadow reports. The UPR mechanism was presented and discussed during the afternoon and the Course ended with a debate on the best strategies.

Documentation included files prepared by GHR (summary of the Course) and *ACHR-AITPN* documents (NGO involvement in the *UPR* of India, UPR recommendations for India, shadow reports to and concluding observations from treaty bodies).

#### Course for Defenders from West Bengal (Kolkata, 13 August 2013)

14 defenders from all parts of West Bengal attended in Kolkota on 13 August 2013 the Capacity Building Course prepared by GHR and *Banglar Manabadhikar Suraksha Mancha (MASUM)*. The Course was chaired by *MASUM* Secretary *Kirity Roy*.

The first two sessions were introduced by *Adrien-Claude Zoller* (on the international system; on the special procedures, the treaty bodies and the *UPR*). At the end of the day, *Suhas Chakma* spoke on the strategies and further use of UN mechanisms. The discussion focused on summary executions, violence against women, child labour, child trafficking, freedom of expression, custodial torture and prisons' conditions.



## **Programme No. 2 : ‘Implementation Now’ (INP)**

Contributing to human rights implementation is the key objective of GHR. Since October 2004, GHR has a specific Programme to promote the **implementation** of human rights in **specific countries** through training, mediation, advisory services and teaching strategies. The Programme is entitled *‘Implementation Now’: Strengthening national empowerment to facilitate the implementation of human rights at national level.*

### **1. LEARNING FROM THE MEXICO PROGRAMME**

The Programme finds its origins in Mexico. At the request of the Mexican Ministry of Interior (‘SEGOB’), and with the support of the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), GHR contributed to the elaboration and the first stages of the implementation of Mexico’s national Programme for human right (2004-2008). As Mexico joined the OCDE, significant development funds were no longer available. In 2007, the FDFA ceased its assistance to several countries and decided to phase-down its Programme Mexico. At the same time, the Swiss Federal Council stressed the importance of GHR work, declaring:

***‘Switzerland will be withdrawing from its commitment in Mexico at the end of 2007. The process described above has made a significant contribution towards the urgently required implementation of a uniform national plan for the promotion of human rights. The fact that a Swiss human rights organisation has successfully acted as mediator between civil society and government and supported the Mexican Ministry of the Interior through the provision of expertise represents a good example for implementing similar projects in other countries’.***

(DFAE, ‘Peace and human rights in Switzerland’s foreign policy - Report 2006’, approved by the Swiss Federal Council on 15 June 2007, p. 18)

To learn from its Mexican experience and develop similar programmes in other countries, the Mexico Programme was evaluated in 2007. GHR activities started in Colombia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Timor Leste, Burundi. GHR *Geneva Courses* offer a unique opportunity to help defenders from the regions to elaborate concrete plans for the future. The follow-up meetings with our trainees led to include more countries to the list: Tunisia (2011), Botswana (2012) and Morocco (2013). In these implementation initiatives, GHR experienced that the new **UPR** mechanism was an essential tool to implement human rights inside countries. Since 2011, GHR has thematic programmes on women’s rights and on human rights defenders.

### **2. BOTSWANA: TOWARDS A NATIONAL ACTION PLAN**

In its national report and its presentation to the *UPR Working Group* (January 2013), the Government of Botswana confirmed its will to elaborate a national strategy to implement human rights. To review the *UPR* recommendations, it established in February 2013 a Joint Task Force (JTF), chaired by the Ministry of Defence, Justice and Security (*MDJS*), and composed of several Ministries and two NGOs (*BOCONGO* and *DITSHWANELO*). The JTF’s had two tasks: to examine the deferred recommendations and to implement those accepted, and to prepare a National Comprehensive Human Rights Strategy.

*DITSHWANELO* and GHR proposed to hold a National Workshop. Several stakeholders would have preferred to wait until a formal decision of the Government to launch a National Plan. For *MDJS*, *DITSHWANELO* and GHR however, the drafting of the Botswana’s replies of to the HR-Council constituted a unique momentum. Moreover, the political will of the Government was clear. At GHR initiative, it had even welcomed the offer of the Mexican delegation in Geneva to contribute to this process.

**Botswana First National Workshop**  
**(Gaborone, 23 and 24 April 2013)**

#### **Preparation**

*DITSHWANELO* and GHR drafted for *MDJS* a concept note for the Workshop and an outline on a National Action Plan. The President of GHR was in Botswana from 21 to 27 April 2013

to serve as a facilitator for this first National Workshop. With *DITSHWANELO*, he had a preparatory session. He also attended the first meeting of the JTF, which examined the unanswered *UPR* recommendations, exchanged views on the preparation of a National Action Plan, and finalised the agenda for the Workshop. All the *JTF* members were present.

### Proceedings of the Workshop

The 'Scoping Workshop 1 for the development of a comprehensive Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan on Human Rights' took place in the Mokolodi Nature Reserve near Gaborone on 23 and 24 April 2013, with 34 Representatives from *MDJS*; from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Lands and Housing; Labour and Home Affairs (Gender Affairs); the Attorney General's Chambers; the Office of the Ombudsman; the Land Tribunal; the Chobe District Council; the Gantsi Land Board; the Ngwaketse Land Board; *UNICEF*; *BOCONGO*; *LeGaBiBo*; *Rainbow Identity*; *Youth Health Organisation*; *Kuru Family of Organisations*; *Botswana Coalition on Education for All*; and *DITSHWANELO*.

### Deliberations on Day-1

Opening the Workshop, Minister Dikgakgamatso Seretse stated that the deliberations would focus on the outcome of the *UPR* and on the perspectives. He called for a broad-based, inclusive home-grown, consultative and participatory process, including *UPR*, thematic procedures, treaty bodies and African Commission's recommendations.

The Co-Chairs, Mr. Augustine Makginatsotlhe (*JTF* Coordinator, *MDJS*) and Ms. Alice Mogwe, explained the objectives of the meeting. Adrien-Claude Zoller introduced the UN main bodies and their mechanisms. After the break, he spoke on the strategies for human rights implementation. Participants agreed that, each country having its own history and socio-economic context, a National Action Plan had to be specific and pragmatic.

A survey of Botswana's legal obligations was commented. Participants continued the discussion in Working groups, whose reports highlighted specific needs and priorities: ratifications; domestication of already ratified treaties; access to land; indigenous peoples' rights; persons with disabilities; sexual orientation; right to education; gender equality; need for strong human rights institutions; environmental rights; and right to health.

These issues were discussed in plenary. It was felt that sensitive issues, such as death penalty, corporal punishment, impact of traditions on human rights, persons with HIV-AIDS, and discrimination against LGTB's, should be placed at the center of the human rights education campaign, to be gradually integrated in a National Plan. Day-1 concluded with a contribution of the facilitator on the National Action Plan.

### Deliberations on Day 2

After the summaries of the previous day, participants discussed the existing information gaps. The facilitator commented on the main facets of a National Action Plan: long-term effort; legal obligations of the State; commitment to universal and regional human rights standards; focus on human rights promotion and protection; human rights mainstreaming into the public policies; central role of the Government; participation of the entire society. A National Plan should start with the analysis of the human rights needs. Effective monitoring and review of implementation was also essential. All agreed that it had to be a bottom-up process. After the presentation, participants met in Working Groups.

The Groups corroborated that the National Action Plan would have five phases: **preparation, elaboration, implementation, monitoring** and **evaluation**. For each stage, they made concrete proposals, which were discussed in plenary. The last part of the Workshop was devoted to the discussion of the UPR recommendations. The Workshop took position on each of the deferred recommendations, thus providing advice to the Government in the preparation of its responses to the HR-Council.

### Outcome of the Scoping Workshop 1

This was the first such forum in Botswana. All the human rights issues were discussed by Government and civil society in an open, respectful environment of mutual learning, based on the Tswana concept of 'Botho'. Concluding the Workshop, Mr. Makgonatsotlhe said that a 2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop would be convened after the adoption of Botswana *UPR* by the HR-Council.

After the Workshop, Mr. Zoller and Ms. Mogwe met key actors for the National Action Plan process in Botswana. They had a de-briefing meeting with diplomats of the European Union, the United Kingdom and France, and visited the UNDP and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The *JTF* held its second meeting with the facilitator on 26 April to review the outcome

of the Workshop. Since then, many consultations took place in Botswana. A baseline study is underway and the revised mandate of the *JTF* has been drafted. More entities and NGOs were invited to seat in the *JTF*. A second Workshop will be held probably in February 2014.

### 3. MOROCCO: IMPLEMENTING UN RECOMMENDATIONS

*GHR* initiatives started in Morocco in 2013. The country had its truth commission. Human rights are at the center of its new constitution. Its national institution actively contributed to the democratization process. An *Inter-Ministerial Delegation for Human Rights (Délégation Interministérielle aux Droits de l'Homme, DIDH)* was created in April 2011. After the adoption of Morocco's *UPR* report by the HR-Council (September 2012), the Government started to prepare a 'mid-term' review on the implementation of the recommendations.

#### Seminar on the Implementation of UN Recommendations and Strategic Planning (Skhirat, Morocco, 3 and 4 December 2013)

*GHR* participated in the International Seminar convened by Morocco's *DIDH* in Skhirat with the support of *UNDP*, the *OHCHR* and the *OIF (Organisation of La Francophonie)*.

Title of the Seminar was 'Follow-up to the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review and Strategic Planning in the field of Human Rights: Compared Experiences and Good Practices'. About 200 persons attended, Representatives of several Ministries, members of the National Council on Human Rights ('*Conseil National des Droits de l'Homme*', *CNDH*), of the *DIDH*, of the civil society and of the diplomatic and academic worlds. To discuss the good practices of other States, diplomats from Thailand, Mexico, Mauritius and France had been invited to present their own experiences.

During its *UPR* Review, Morocco committed itself to associate all the stakeholders in the implementation process, and to present in 2014 a mid-term review prepared with them. The Seminar was part of this process. Interestingly, the Action Plan elaborated by the *DIDH* concerns all the UN recommendations (UPR, thematic procedures and treaty bodies).

The oral communication of *GHR* President concerned NGOs contributions to human rights implementation in countries from different regions. He spoke on *GHR* experiences with the *UPR* reviews of Vanuatu, India, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Botswana, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Switzerland, Mexico and Colombia. He highlighted the learning process for many NGOs and Governments, and several good practices, like the inclusion of NGOs in a monitoring body, the clearly demonstrated political will by the State to include all the stakeholders in the process, and the need for NGOs to adapt their strategies.

Animated debates took place showing that the Inter-Ministerial Delegation, the national institution and the NGOs are seriously involved in this process.

### 4. FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES IN OTHER COUNTRIES

#### **Colombia**

*GHR* has close working relations with many Colombian NGOs. Meetings with the *Colombian Commission of Jurists (CCJ)* took place in Geneva on 26 February and 21 March to review the initiatives at the HR-Council and to discuss justice issues during the peace process.

#### **Sri Lanka**

*GHR* was actively involved in the Hague Consultation (January 2008). *GHR* conducted training Courses in Sri Lanka, welcomed in its *Geneva Courses* a dozen of Sri Lankan defenders and provided guidance and orientation at all the meetings of the Sri Lanka consultation. On 17 April 2013, *GHR* President gave a lecture in Berlin at the *Round-Table on Sri Lanka* (Round-Table) of the *Heinrich-Boll Foundation*. Theme was 'Human rights and the rule of law in Sri Lanka: elements for a road map for a development policy'. The conference was chaired by Ms. Ute Koczy, member of the Parliament and Spokesperson of the Green Party ('*Die Grune*'). On this occasion, he also attended the meeting of the *German NGOs coalition on Sri Lanka*, which took place in the Headquarters of Bread for the World.

#### **West Papua**

In 2013, *GHR* continued to provide training and orientation to human rights defenders from Papua (Indonesia). On 11 April, *GHR* participated in the meeting of the *Coordination Board*

of the *International Coalition for Papua (ICP)*. With the *World Council of Churches (WCC)* and *Franciscans International*, GHR hosted in Geneva the International Consultation on Papua. Entitled 'Isolating Papua', the Consultation took place in the *WCC Headquarters* on 23 and 24 September in the presence of dozens of defenders from the territory and of many international NGOs. The *ICP Board and Assembly meetings* were held on that occasion.

One Papuan trainee attended the *Geneva Course* of September. In 2013, GHR President chaired two side-events on the situation in Papua, on 4 June (with speakers from international NGOs), and on 25 September (with Papuan and Indonesian Representatives).

## Nepal

On 16 March 2013, GHR welcomed in Geneva a Delegation of Nepalese NGOs, members of the 'Accountability Watch Committee' (*AWC*). The group had a brainstorming with GHR on the evolution of the situation in Nepal, the trends in the HR-Council and the forthcoming training initiatives.

## **Programme No. 3** **'Training Specific Stakeholders' (TSS)**

### Course for students of the University of Padova (Geneva, 21 May 2013)

On 21 May, GHR gave a Course to a group of students from the *University of Padova* having a one-week study trip in Geneva. Thirty-eight students attended. The Course concerned the international context of the initiatives of the UN (former) Commission of Human Rights and HR-Council. It explained the *UPR* mechanism and proposed an assessment of the work of the HR-Council, the treaty bodies and the *OHCHR*. Having close working relations with the Human Rights Centre of the Padova University, GHR had meetings with Prof. Cinzia Clemente, Prof. Paolo de Stefani and Ms. Claudia Pividori (a former *GHR* trainee).

### Course at the University of Padova (12 and 13 November 2013)

The Masters programme of the University of Padova has set-up a 'Padova Human Rights Laboratory', inviting field experts in human rights and humanitarian action, international organizations' officers, diplomats, practitioners, and scholars from foreign universities and research centres to address students and the faculty and report on their experience and studies. On 12 and 13 November 2013, Adrien-Claude Zoller contributed to the first Human Rights Laboratory. Theme of his Course was 'The decision making process in the UN regarding human rights violations since 1945'.

### Lecture at the German Chinese Human Rights Forum (Geneva, 9 June 2013)

At the invitation of the *Ebert Foundation*, GHR contributed to the exchanges during the XI German Chinese Human Rights Dialogue (Geneva, 9 to 12 June). Adrien-Claude Zoller intervened on the first day with a synthesis on the experiences from the first cycle of the Universal Periodic Review. He further exchanged views on the importance of *UPR* with the members of the Chinese and German Delegations.

### Annual German partners' Conference on the HR-Council (Bossey, 7 and 8 October 2013)

Adrien-Claude Zoller participated in the (annual) International Conference convened by the *Ebert Foundation*, the *Forum Human Rights* and the *German Institute for Human Rights* on the HR-Council. These of the 2013 Conference was: 'The HRC – a mechanism for access to justice ? Role, impact and expectations of civil society' (Bossey, Ecumenical Institute, 7 and 8 October 2013). He presented a communication on the country-resolutions of the HR-Council and on the Commissions of Inquiry set-up by the HR-Council.

Training for OHCHR on Minorities  
(Geneva, 5 November 2013)

At the invitation of OHCHR, Adrien-Claude Zoller gave a Course in the Palais des Nations to Minority Fellows and staff of the OHCHR on the theme: 'Minority rights in the League of Nations and in the UN system'. Given on the eve of the 6<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Forum on Minority Issues, this Course focused on the different international policies regarding minority protection. 13 fellows and students attended the class. They came from England, Canada, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Sudan, Latvia, Nepal, and Colombia.

## C. DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY STUDIES (HPS)

The HPS Department supports all GHR training activities. It **monitors** international human rights negotiations, **covers** all meetings of UN human rights bodies, **analyzes** the main trends, and **informs** our trainers and partners in the field. Logically, HPS is entrusted with the preparation of GHR brainstorming sessions and Expert Seminars.

### 1. UNITED NATIONS MONITORING

In 2013, HPS monitored all the ordinary and special sessions of the HR-Council and its mechanisms, treaty bodies and the briefings organized by OHCHR. The Department drafted analytical summaries of the UN sessions and compilations for GHR Courses. HPS also issued documentation kits for the *Geneva Courses* and the In-Country Courses.

### 2. GHR EXPERT SEMINARS IN GENEVA (GSS)

NGOs and defenders in the regions work under difficult conditions. They have **specific concerns**. Launched in 1997, a consultation process with defenders from the regions highlighted a strong demand for domestic implementation of the international standards, and their priorities for humanitarian law; for macroeconomic issues (economic system as source of violations); the struggle against impunity (need to deal with the past and to strengthen international criminal law); and the protection of defenders. More recently, another main concern emerged in our working relations with partners: indigenous peoples' rights and violence against women. These issues are critical in all GHR Courses and Seminars.

To sensitize actors at the HR-Council on such issues, GHR has convened since 2009 a series of *Expert Seminars in Geneva*: on Caste Discrimination (during the Durban Review Conference, April 2009), International Humanitarian Law (September 2010 and June 2011), Trends in the HR-Council (March 2011), Transitional Justice (September 2011), Minorities (November 2011), Enforced Disappearances (November 2012) and Religious Freedom (December 2012). In 2013, GHR has convened Expert Seminars on Human Rights and Business, on the Anniversary of the World Conference, and on Enforced Disappearance.

#### 2.1 Business and Human Rights

In 2011, the HR-Council adopted the 'Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights' and created a mechanism (the *Forum on Business and Human Rights*) and a special procedure (the *Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises*). These tools are important to raise the (negative) consequences of activities of transnational and other big companies for human rights. However, there are important gaps and failures in the international legal framework in relation to access to justice. NGOs in the field, victims and witnesses still insist to obtain redress. This is a strong concern of many defenders in the regions.

Expert Seminar on Business and Human Rights  
(Geneva, International Centre, 31 May 2013)

Entitled 'Legal seminar 'Corporate complicity, access to Justice and the international legal framework for corporate accountability'', the Seminar was organized jointly with the

*International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)*, which has a broad project and a recognized legal expertise on the matter. *FIAN* and *Al Haq* (Palestine) joined the initiative.

The Seminar was chaired by *ICJ's* Legal and Policy Director Ian Seiderman and, for the concluding part, by Adrien-Claude Zoller, 23 expert legal practitioners, scholars, diplomats and public officers participated in the deliberations.

The first session on '*Challenges to establishing legal liability for transnational corporations*' was introduced by Carlos Lopez (Head Business & Human Rights Programme at the *ICJ*). Victims and defenders from Ecuador, Uganda and Palestine described their difficulties in obtaining justice. Theme of the second session was: '*Challenges to jurisdiction, investigation and enforcement of judgments in transnational cases*'. Experts discussed the three cases and found that the difficulties faced by victims and the legal barriers posed to their access to justice highlighted some of the shortcomings and gaps in the international legal framework. As the *ICJ* report assessed, there was a lack of common practice across jurisdictions in attributing criminal responsibility for involvement in crimes under international law by corporations; a lack of common rules to exercise adjudicatory jurisdiction in serious human rights cases (civil and criminal); deficiencies in the investigation and judicial cooperation dealing with transnational human rights abuses; and deficiencies in the field of enforcement of judicial decisions from other jurisdictions. GHR expert Penny Parker reviewed the treaty body mechanisms that could be available in each of the cases examined.

In his synthesis, GHR President recalled the importance of prioritizing the victims, of analyzing the States' extraterritorial obligations and of regulating their relation to companies.

**Side-event on Business and Human Rights  
(Geneva, Palais des Nations, 31 May 2013)**

The *ICJ*, GHR, *FIAN* and *Al-Haq* convened this conference on the same day to sensitize a broader public on the issue. Title of the side-event was: 'Access to justice and corporate complicity in human rights abuses'. More than eighty persons, including diplomats from more than 25 countries, attended the event which was chaired by Carlos Lopez (*ICJ*).

The four victims and defenders who addressed the Expert Seminar in the morning explained to the audience the cases of the Mubende community (Uganda, case against the Kaweri Coffee Plantation), of the Lago Agrio communities (Amazonian region of Ecuador, case against the oil company Texaco, later part of Chevron), and of the Hizma Village (Palestine, case against Riwal, subsidiary of the Dutch Lima Holding, construction of the settlements built on the village's confiscated land).

The debates highlighted that the issue 'business and human rights' in the HR-Council remains unfinished, especially in the critical areas of access to justice and accountability. There is a need for stronger HR-Council action to provide States and other actors with the necessary tools to ensure remedy and justice to victims of serious human rights abuses.

**Briefing for a NGO Delegation  
attending the Forum on Business and Human Rights  
(Geneva, Hotel Ny't, 2 December 2013)**

For the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN Forum (2 to 4 December 2013), the *Ebert Foundation (FES)* brought to Geneva a group of eighteen representatives from civil society organizations (human rights NGOs, national institutions, trade unionists).

On 2 December 2013, GHR joined the *FES* to conduct a briefing for these defenders from the Global South coming from: Macedonia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Singapore, Philippines, Mongolia (2), Malawi, Kenya, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Argentina, Ecuador, Guatemala and Peru. Six of them were sponsored by the *FES*. The others were funded by a grant from the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs. Three delegates of '*Forum Asia*' (India, Philippines and South Korea) were also present.

The session was opened by Felix Kirchmeier, *FES* Senior Program Officer Human Rights and Development. He introduced the programme of the UN Forum and explained the different issues which would be dealt with both during the series of panels of the Forum and in the many side-events. Adrien-Claude Zoller presented the historical overview of the issue at the UN and the current developments and initiatives. The discussion with the participants focused on the lack of a legal instrument, the need to progress with the support of all (consensus) and the difficulties faced by victims of human rights abuses to obtain reparation.

Other resource persons were Noreen Eberle and David Cichon (*FES*).

## 2.2 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the World Conference

2013 marked the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the World Conference on Human Rights (WCHR), which took place from 14 to 25 June 1993. In Vienna, Representatives of 171 States adopted a common plan to strengthen human rights work around the world, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA), which reaffirmed the universality of human rights and made concrete recommendations, in particular the establishment of a High Commissioner for Human Rights. Created by General Assembly resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993, the post of High Commissioner made the difference. GHR convened an Expert Seminar on the World Conference to sensitize those attending the HR-Council's session on the main provisions of the VDPA and on the remaining protection gaps.

### Expert Seminar on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the World Conference (Geneva, International Centre, 6 June 2013)

The Expert Seminar was entitled: 'After Vienna: all rights for all!'. Sponsored by the Dutch Mission and chaired by Professor Bertrand Ramcharan, former High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Seminar took place in the International Centre of Geneva. It had two parts, one public meeting in the afternoon, and one private brainstorming in the evening.

Fifty-seven persons attended, including 17 **experts, diplomats** from the Netherlands, Norway, Finland, Austria, Botswana, Mexico, Switzerland, Taiwan, six **international NGOs**, and **defenders** from Dominican Republic, Colombia, Botswana, Tanzania, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Iran, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia.

#### **Opening: Overview and Achievements of the WCHR**

Prof. Bertrand Ramcharan (*former High Commissioner, GHR Board member*) opened the Seminar. He highlighted key achievements of the WCHR and the importance of reflection and action at national level. A message was read out from Amb. Gilberto V. Saboia (Brazil), who chaired the WCHR Drafting Committee. Paul Peters (*Counsellor at the Netherlands' Permanent Mission*) recalled three great UN enterprises which preceded the WCHR: the San Francisco Conference and the UN Charter; the Bill of Rights; and the First World Conference in Tehran. Vienna emphasized the national responsibility.

Ambassador Christian Strohal (Austria) delivered the key-note address. He recalled the context of the Conference, which gave the global civil society a voice for the first time. The WCHR brought the reality of human rights closer to the negotiations, and provoked a change within the paradigms, specifically the achievement of the OHCHR. It became possible to mainstream human rights within the UN system. The VDPA did not eliminate the challenges and shortcomings.

#### **Round-table on 'NGOs and the Vienna process'**

The Chair of the Panel, Ms. Penny Parker (*Advocates for Human Rights, Minnesota & GHR board member*), spoke of her experience in Vienna, where she actively participated in the daily morning briefings for NGOs coordinated by Adrien-Claude Zoller. Three speakers intervened: Ms. Ingeborg Schwarz, former Coordinator of BIM during the WCHR, spoke about NGOs from the regions during the regional conferences and in Vienna; Ms. Alice Mogwe, Director the Botswana Centre for Human Rights DITSHWANELO, spoke about the experiences of African NGOs in Vienna; and Adrien-Claude Zoller about the role of NGOs in the negotiations. They stressed that the participation of NGOs from the regions had a significant impact on the negotiations in Vienna.

#### **Round-Table on the VDPA**

The Chair of this Panel, Prof. Zdzislaw Kedzia (*Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, former Rapporteur of the WCHR*), opened the panel with an overview of the process of the Conference. Several experts analyzed the provisions of the VDPA: Prof. Theo Van Boven (*Maastricht University, former Special Rapporteur on Torture*) spoke about the VDPA and the strengthening of human rights law; Prof. Vera Gowlland-Debbas (*Emeritus Professor, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva*), about the VDPA and International Humanitarian Law; Prof. Cornelis Flinterman (*member of the Human Rights Committee, Head of the Dutch Delegation at the WCHR*) about the VDPA and the treaty bodies; Madeleine Rees (*Women's International League for Peace and Freedom*) about the VDPA and women's rights; and Adrien-Claude Zoller about the main provisions concerning

the UN special procedures. In the discussion, participants stressed the importance of the *VDPA* for the special procedures and raised the erosion of core human rights values since 9/11 (such as the absolute prohibition of torture), and the issue of culture, which often constitutes an obstacle, in particular for women's rights.

### **Round-Table on the implementation of the *VDPA* and protection gaps**

The Chair, Thomas McCarthy (GHR member, former Advisor *OHCHR*), credited the *VDPA* with playing a pivotal role in the establishment of the *OHCHR*, and offering a solid foundation on which other mechanisms for the gradual implementation of human rights. Mr. Augustine Makgonatsotlhe (Secretary for Human Rights, Botswana) described the efforts of his Government to implement the UN recommendations. Speaking of the protection gaps in the implementation of the *VDPA*, Peter Splinter (Amnesty Representative, Geneva) stressed that unimportant details were stealing the focus away from the goals that truly mattered. New issues should not divert the attention from the main patterns of abuses and from the needs of the victims. Ian Seiderman (*ICJ*) spoke about another gap, the access to effective judicial remedies for the victims, and recalled the proposal of an International Court on Human Rights, which the *ICJ* already made at the Tehran Conference. Prof. Gabriella Citroni (Senior Legal Advisor *TRIAL*, University of Milano-Bicocca) spoke on the fight against impunity, and quoted important, and often overlooked, provisions of the *VDPA*. Adrien-Claude Zoller spoke about the variety of strategies and tools to promote human rights implementation in the countries. Ms. Penny Parker concluded the round table with a presentation on treaty bodies.

### **Brainstorming dinner**

Half of the experts, several GHR trainers, and diplomats from Austria, Mexico, the Netherlands, Finland, Norway, and Switzerland attended the dinner for the brainstorming on the key issues raised during the Expert Seminar. Exchanges started with the current lack of **institutional memory** in the UN, and the **fight against impunity** and the importance of the 'UN Principles against Impunity' and the 'UN Principles on Reparations'.

The discussion further focused on the **implementation gaps** and on the experience made by GHR with the Government of Mexico to promote the national Plan of Action there. The Mexico Delegation has committed itself to join the Government of Botswana in similar GHR efforts there. This process was facilitating a concrete South-South cooperation.

GHR Preparatory Group for this Seminar was composed of Maria Teresa Tienda Rivera (Spain), Elif Durmus (Turkey), Katie Moran (Ireland), Sébastien Coquoz (Switzerland) and Adrien-Claude Zoller (Switzerland).

## **2.3 Enforced Disappearances**

In 2012, GHR convened a first Seminar on the occasion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> session of the Committee on enforced disappearances ('*the Committee*') and of the 98<sup>th</sup> session of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances ('*the Working Group*'). Title of the 2012 Seminar was: 'Prospects for the UN mechanisms Against Enforced Disappearances'. And the discussions focused on the complementarity and cooperation between the two bodies.

In 2013, during the simultaneous sessions of the Committee and the Working Group, GHR convened experts, diplomats and NGOs to discuss the pivotal role of the Committee in the necessary efforts to promote more system-wide coherence.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Expert Seminar on Enforced Disappearances** **(Geneva, Hotel Warwick, 7 November 2013)**

Sponsored by the Permanent Missions of Argentina and France, the Expert Seminar took place on Thursday 7 November in Hotel Warwick. Its theme was 'The pivotal role of the CED in the treaty bodies and in the thematic procedures'. After the *International Coalition Against Enforced Disappearances (ICAED)* convened a side-event on 11 November for the *CED* and *WGEID* members<sup>1</sup>, GHR transformed the Programme of the Seminar into a short public part, with a reception at the end of the afternoon, and a long brainstorming dinner with the invited experts, diplomats and NGOs in the evening.

The Ambassador Alberto Pedro D'Alotto (Argentina) and GHR President Adrien-Claude Zoller co-chaired the Seminar. From the 15 experts, members of the Committee and

<sup>1</sup> Being a member of this Coalition, GHR also joined the sponsors of this side-event.



of the Working Group, 14 were attended, as well as delegates from 11 countries, eight NGOs and OHCHR staff members.

### **Introduction and reception (public part)**

Delegates were welcomed by the Ambassador D'Alotto and Adrien-Claude Zoller, who explained that the main aim of the Seminar was to discuss the promotion of a system-wide coherence in the fields of doctrine and of action regarding enforced disappearances in the General Comments and decisions on individual cases.

Both warmly congratulated the special guest of this Seminar, Mr. Louis Joinet (France), whom they thanked for his significant contribution to many facets of the UN human rights programme, in particular on the crime of enforced or involuntary disappearances. Mr. Joinet had just published his Memoirs in Paris. As an expert in the UN Sub-Commission, he was the author of several landmark reports and of the first draft declaration on enforced disappearances. He played a major role in the elaboration of the Convention on Enforced Disappearances. He was also the Chairman of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Independent Expert on Haiti. Prof. Olivier de Frouville, member of the *WGEID*, introduced the Memoirs of Louis Joinet.

### **Introduction to the brainstorming dinner**

Fifteen experts attended the dinner: thirteen members of the Committee and of the Working Group, one member of the Sub-Committee on Prevention of Torture, and Mr. Joinet. They were joined by the Ambassadors of Argentina and Spain, by diplomats from Argentina, France, Germany, Iraq, Mexico, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Uruguay, by NGOs representatives (*ICJ, IKOHI-Indonesia, ICAED and TRIAL*) and the team of GHR.

Opening the dinner, GHR President paid tribute to Mr. Nicolas Joffre, who passed over on 4 November. Nicolas Joffré had coordinated GHR *HPS* Department, and was a member of *GHR* Executive Council. As a sign of gratitude for his work, GHR had decided to dedicate henceforth its sessions on enforced disappearances to Nicolas Joffre.

Introducing the debate, Ambassador D'Alotto focused on the need to redouble efforts to prevent enforced disappearances, which was still a widespread phenomenon. The mechanisms dealing with this crime heard a lot of cases. He called for more ratifications of the Convention, and for strengthening the work of the Committee to improve its role, rules of procedure, methods, decisions on individual cases and adoption of general observations.

Mr. Thomas Wagner, Deputy Representative of France, recalled that enforced disappearances constituted a serious issue in many contemporary conflicts. The elaboration, adoption and entry into force of the Convention could be considered as a success story, but one should not forget that a lot remained to be done to strengthen the Committee.

The Chairs of the Committee, Prof. Emmanuel Decaux, and of the Working Group, Prof. Ariel Dulitzky, made their key-note address. They reviewed the accomplishment of their bodies, the complementarity between the two mechanisms, and the challenges ahead.

Ambassador Ana María Menéndez Pérez (Spain) explained the action of her Government, who recently received the visit of the *WGEID* and whose report had been examined by the Committee at the current session.

### **Deliberations of the Seminar**

The participants exchanged views on decisions regarding cases of disappearances, in the Committee, the *WGEID*, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee Against Torture, and in certain thematic procedures. In view of the continuous character of the crime of enforced disappearances, there was a discussion on the non-retroactive provision contained in the Convention. As several participants stated, the 'UN Principles against Impunity' ('Joinet Principles') constituted a bridge to help each country to deal with its past.

Participants also discussed jurisprudence on enforced disappearances. The General Comments on the Declaration already adopted by the *WGEID* and the first deliberations of the Committee were noted. Several experts proposed to include in future similar talks other treaty bodies and several Special Rapporteurs, which the Committee and the *WGEID* already met, and to also examine decisions and opinions of regional mechanisms.

GHR Preparatory Group for this Seminar was composed of Ms. Maria Teresa Tienda Rivera, Mr. Nicolas Zoller, Ms. Agnès Gràcia Corberó (Spain), Ms. Martina Tarlà (Italy) and Ms. Amanda Edwards (Denmark).

### 3. INTERNSHIP & FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME (IFP)

HPS has a multidisciplinary and cross-regional team. Unpaid Internships and fellowships are from 3 to 6 months. GHR selects students and graduates in international relations, international law, human rights, political science and economics, who are motivated in the promotion and protection of human rights and social justice.

For GHR, internships and fellowships necessarily constitute a **training**. The interns receive a weekly briefing and attend the *Geneva Courses*. In addition, long-term interns are assigned specific study projects corresponding, where possible, to the theme of their forthcoming *thesis*, and coinciding with GHR thematic priorities. GHR also ensures the necessary follow-up to these long-term interns, by facilitating their placement in specialized institutes for their PhD and their research for jobs.

HPS holds weekly study meetings to analyze the UN human rights sessions it is monitoring. During these meetings, GHR trainers explain the background and the evolution of the debates in the different bodies monitored by the team. HPS meetings also serve to prepare and review documentation material for GHR Expert Seminars. Extended meetings took place outside Geneva, in Laconnex (25 June) and in Bernex (22 July).

Many contributed to the HPS Department, which was coordinated by Ms. Maria Teresa Tienda Rivera (Spain). In 2013, HPS welcomed the following 33 interns and fellows:

a) Interns from the regions:

Ms. Liliana Moran (Chile), Ms. Guadalupe Souza Satiro (Brazil), Ms. Mariat Imaeva (Chechnya, Russia), Ms. Xenia Pisarewski (Russia), Ms. Sandra Muya Miyanga (Congo DRC), Bardia Jebelli (Iran), Ms. Aneri Desai (India), Ms. Prema Rahman (Bangladesh), Ms. Winda Permatasari (Indonesia), Ms. Tiffany Febrin (Indonesia), Iqbal Faktkhi (Malaysia), Ms. Mengqian Zha (China), Ms. Bharathi Muthu Kumaran (Singapore), and Ms. Mak Shin Yi (Singapore).

b) Interns from Western countries:

Ms. Danica Finger (Germany), Ms. Elif Durmus (Turkey), Ms. Viktoria Nemeth (Hungary), Ms. Giulia Biancotto (Italy), Ms. Martina Tarla (Italy), Ms. Katie Moran (Ireland), Ms. Oriana Fedeli (Switzerland), Alexandre Guye (Switzerland), Ms. Agnès Gràcia Corberò (Spain), Ms. Beatrice Bendeman (Sweden), Ms. Amanda Edwards (Denmark), Nuno Santos Rocha (Portugal), Ms. Sophie Berner-Eyde (Norway).

And the following American students from universities in the USA: Ms. Nicole Aronson, Ms. Erinn Benedict, Ms. Samantha Flescher, Cole Rabinowitz, Charles Roberts and Andrew Stinavage.

## D. THE ORGANISATION OF GHR

As an International Association under Swiss law (in conformity with articles 60 *et al.* of the Swiss Civil Code), GHR obtained tax exemption status from the State of Geneva as from the financial year 2005 onwards. On 10 November 2010, the State of Geneva renewed this status for a period of 10 years. On 27 July 2009, GHR obtained Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).

### 1. GHR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

On 31 December 2013, the Association was composed of 46 individual **members** and 4 observers<sup>2</sup>. Twenty-two of them are trainers or teachers. Many participate pro bono in GHR training activities. On 7 March 2013, the Executive Council welcomed the following eight members of the association GHR: Sébastien Coquoz (Switzerland, trainer in the Geneva Courses, former member SMT); Ms. Laurence Blattner (Canada, former member SMT), Ms. Annikla Lindholm (Finland, former Secretariat coordinator); Prof. Theo Van Boven (Netherlands, former Special Rapporteur on Torture, former member CERD); Thomas

<sup>2</sup> Nationalities of the members: Congo (1), Senegal (1), India (2), Armenia (1), Russian Federation (2); Colombia (2), Haiti (1), Guyana (1), Canada (1), United States of America (1), Malta (1), Germany (2), Belgium (1), Finland (1), Ireland (4), Italy (1), France (1), Netherlands (2), United Kingdom (1), Switzerland (19). Nationality of the observers: Timor Leste (1), Russian Federation (1), Bolivia (1), Switzerland (1).

McCarthy (Ireland, former advisor OHCHR); Prof. Paolo de Stefani (Italia, Human Rights Institute and Faculty of Political Science of the University of Padova); Prof. Michael O’Flaherty (Ireland, former member Human Rights Committee, professor at the University of Galway); and Félix Kirchmeier (Germany, Human Rights Officer Ebert Foundation).

GHR General Assembly holds its ordinary session once a year. The most recent Assemblies took place on 12 January 2006, 29 March 2007, 13 March 2008, 6 March 2009, 19 March 2010, 19 September 2010, 10 March 2011, and 8 March 2012.

Ms. Penny Parker chaired the General Assembly of 7 March 2013. The Assembly examined and approved the Narrative report 2012, the Action Plan for 2013 and 2014, the Financial report 2012 audited by *Comtesas + Gerficom*, and the Budget for 2013 and 2014. The mandate of the Executive Council members was extended.

## 2. GHR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

In 2013, the Executive Council was composed of Suhas Chakma (India), Alain Dick (France), Jean-Pierre Huber (Switzerland, Treasurer), Nicolas Joffré (Bolivia), Ms. Penny Parker (United States of America), Prof. Bertrand Ramcharan (Guyana), Eric Revillet (Switzerland), and Adrien-Claude Zoller (Switzerland, President). In its 7 March meeting, the Council adopted administrative and financial measures prepared by its Bureau. Throughout the year, the Council members received many proposals of its Bureau and took decisions by E-mails.

In 2013, the Bureau of the Executive Council (Alain Dick, Eric Revillet, Jean-Pierre Huber and Adrien-Claude Zoller) met on 29 January, 4 July, and 17 December. In between the meetings of the Bureau, the President and the Treasurer met weekly to prepare proposals for the Bureau on all the financial matters. Rule is that all Bureau decisions have to be taken by consensus, including when decisions are taken by E-mails exchanges.

2013 was also a sad year for GHR. On 4 November, our Executive Council member Nicolas Joffré passed over. He was a great defender and a wise architect, who built our Programme of *Human Rights Policy Studies*, which became our pivotal Department to ensure our knowledge and the quality of our teaching. From July 2005 to January 2010, Nicolas Joffré coordinated the Department. He was a member of our Executive Council since 2003. During seven years, he resisted to his illness, but on 4 November he lost this battle. During all these years, we all learned a lot from him, in particular his unlimited efforts to be always available, at the service of all the defenders we train.

## 3. GHR SECRETARIAT

GHR Secretariat has three Departments: the Global Training Department (GTP), the Department of Human Rights Policy Studies (HPS) and the Technical Department. Since 2010, the **bookkeeping** has been entrusted to an external accountant, Mr. Cesar Mercado.

### Senior Management Team

Since 2008, GHR Secretariat is directed under the authority of the Bureau by the Senior Management Team (SMT), which meets once a week. The SMT is composed of the Head of the Departments and a few selected long-term interns. In 2013, the permanent SMT members were Adrien-Claude Zoller (Coordinator GTP), Maria Teresa Tienda Rivera (Coordinator HPS and Secretariat), and Nicolas Zoller (*Technical Secretariat*).

During the **first Semester**, Ms. Liliana Moran, Ms. Katie Pia Moran, Ms. Danica Finger and Ms. Oriana Fedeli joined the SMT. **From July to November**, Ms. Agnès Gràcia was a SMT member. She ensured the Coordination of the Secretariat during the holidays period.

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