



GENEVA FOR HUMAN RIGHTS Global Training

GENEVE POUR LES DROITS DE L'HOMME
Formation Internationale

GHR ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT 2016

(as adopted by GHR General Assembly of 9 March 2017)

TIME FOR IMPLEMENTATION

2016 marked some major human rights milestones, including the 50th anniversary of the two International Covenants –on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and on Civil and Political Rights, the 10th anniversary of the creation of the UN Human Rights Council, and the extension of the mandates of several other UN procedures dedicated to human rights.

However despite the many important human rights principles, declarations, and conventions adopted by the UN and other inter-governmental organizations (such as the International Labour Organisation and UNESCO), and despite many useful monitoring mechanisms and procedures, the international human rights system still has a major weakness: a lack of effective implementation. There are still significant **gaps** between UN standards and the realities on the ground, between UN decisions and their follow-up. It is time for a significant increase in **implementation** activities. And we all know that this must be done at the country-level itself. This is why we must continue to work on projects to better **develop national capacities**. This is why Geneva for Human Rights continues to focus on training and outreach in its activities.

The human rights movement achieved some key successes in 2016, such as the Human Rights Council's new mandate on the discrimination against sexual minorities, and the General Assembly's decision to create a special team to begin collecting, analyzing and preserving evidence of war crimes committed in Syria.

But 2016 was not a better year for victims, witnesses, human rights organizations and defenders in the field. They continued to work under very difficult conditions. As never before civil society organisations have been harassed and repressed. They need our help more than ever. It is a call for more effective implementation of the international standards that were designed to protect their human rights.

January 2017
Adrien-Claude Zoller, President

WE ARE A TRAINING ORGANISATION

Our Objectives

Geneva for Human Rights – Global Training (*GHR*) is a **training organization**. Through training, study and protection, we aim to **bridge** the gaps between the international decisions and recommendations and the realities. We want to **empower** all those involved in human rights promotion and protection. Our *Global Training Department (GTP)* conducts each year dozens of Courses and Seminars in Geneva and in the regions. Our *Department of Human Rights Policy Studies (HPS)* supports these training activities by monitoring and analyzing UN human rights meetings.

Themes of GHR Courses

In all its Courses and Seminars, in Geneva and in the regions, GHR trains defenders on:

- the fundamentals of international law, international human rights law, humanitarian law and criminal law, including the tools of transitional justice;
- the trends in international relations;
- the inter-governmental organisations (IGOs);

- the UN structure and its main bodies (incl. ECOSOC's thematic Commissions);
- the Human Rights Council ('*HR-Council*') and its mechanisms;
- the Universal Periodic Review (*UPR*), and the contribution of the civil society;
- the Special procedures and the drafting and submission of communications;
- the treaty monitoring bodies and the preparation of shadow reports;
- the Office of the High Commissioner (*OHCHR*), its priorities and field operations;
- the preventative measures and strategies to protect human rights defenders;
- the strategies to raise issues and situations at regional and international level;
- the national implementation strategies: implementing all the UN decisions and recommendations (resolutions, Special procedures, UPR, concluding observations of treaty bodies); elaborating and realizing public policies and national plans of action and in the field of human rights; the national institutions.

What we achieved in 2016:

- **two Geneva Courses** for the ordinary sessions of the HR-Council in March and September 2016; and one introduction Course to the June session of the Council;
- **two Expert Seminars**, on the Abolition of the Death Penalty (June), and on Indigenous Peoples' rights (July); and involvement in two follow-up conferences to GHR Expert Seminar on the religious freedom;
- the launch of **three implementation projects**: a study project on human rights implementation at domestic level; the Papua project, and the project on enforced disappearances, focusing on the Conference of the States Parties of 19 December;
- **several courses and briefings** during the sessions of the *UPR* Working group;
- the contribution to the **Assembly of Forum Asia (Bangkok)** and to the **Congress of the Dominican Order (Salamanca)**;
- **a dozen lectures** for our partners, in particular universities and the *OHCHR*.

OUR GLOBAL TRAINING DEPARTMENT

Defenders in the regions find it difficult to follow the UN negotiations and the trends in the HR-Council, the special procedures, the treaty bodies, and the action of OHCHR. Our Courses have to bridge these information gaps, to meet the needs and priorities of these defenders, and to enable them to adapt their work to these new realities. Our Global Training Department has 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'

Entitled: '***Participation of the Regions in the Human Rights Council (PRE)***', the Programme aims at full participation of defenders from the regions in the work of the HR-Council and its mechanisms, and at the effective use of human rights special procedures. It has a variety of Courses and Seminars in Geneva and in the regions. In 2016, GHR received financial support from several foundations and from the Government of Liechtenstein.

1. THE GENEVA COURSES OF GHR

In 2016, GHR conducted two Geneva Courses during the ordinary sessions of the HR-Council and one Introduction Course to the Council.

Profile of the Geneva Courses

- The Geneva Courses for defenders from the regions are **advanced** Courses to train trainers. They are a unique **intensive and interactive training**, combining the **theory**, the exchanges of experience between participants (**field situations**) and the **exposure** to the multilateral **reality** (in the HR-Council), which the trainees monitor. Since its creation, GHR has realized this Course at each session of the Commission

on Human Rights and its Sub-Commission, at sessions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and at each ordinary session of the HR-Council.

- **Each Geneva Course has two parts:**
 - ✓ **the General Course (Week-1)** to introduce the international system (international law; international relations; UN bodies; HR-Council and its mechanisms, including the UPR; special procedures; treaty bodies);
 - ✓ **the daily morning classes (Week-2)**, every day, to introduce the themes of the day on the agenda of the HR-Council and the reports of OHCHR' and Special Rapporteurs submitted to the HR-Council; and to analyze the debates in the HR-Council; every afternoon, the trainees attend the session of the HR-Council.
- **Conditions for the certificate**
 - ✓ To obtain the Course's certificate, trainees have to submit a note on the main patterns of rights abuses in their country; several summaries of the debates in the HR-Council and of the morning classes; and a draft communication to a UN thematic procedure on a case of human rights abuses. All these papers are read out, discussed and improved during the morning classes.
 - ✓ The trainees also stand weekly tests on the teaching of the previous week. This helps the trainers to ensure that their teaching is well understood, and to monitor the level of each trainee. It incites participants to review the Course and read several reports. Those getting an insufficient mark in the first test receive additional (separate) briefings from the trainers.

38th Geneva Course (GCS-38)
(27 February to 11 March 2016)

17 defenders attended the 38th Geneva Course conducted during the 31st session of the HR-Council

Nine participants were defenders from the regions, from **Ethiopia, Nigeria (2), Angola, Nicaragua, China, Armenia, Poland, Philippines-Switzerland**. The other trainees were GHR members and students from India, Italy (3), Switzerland, England and the USA (2).

Trainers were Edward Flynn (Ireland), René Kosirnik (on International Humanitarian Law, Switzerland), and Adrien-Claude Zoller (Switzerland). A staff member of Huridocs also presented the HRC Analyzer project of her organisation.

The General Course took place from 27 February to 5 March, with the full-day class on Saturday 27 February on the international system, the UN bodies, the UN reform, human rights standards and the human rights mechanisms and procedures. It also included specific Courses on the UN and human rights; the mechanisms of the HR-Council, the Special procedures (and how to write to thematic mandate holders); women's rights; religious freedom; the international human rights standards; the UPR; and treaty bodies.

The morning classes of the second week were devoted to the reports submitted to the Council, the debates in the Council, and the papers of the participants. Additional Courses were given on human rights defenders; International Humanitarian, and Criminal Laws; transitional justice; and economic, social, and cultural rights. GHR trainers met individually the trainees from Ethiopia, Nigeria and Nicaragua to discuss their specific follow-up.

The **recapitulation of the course** and GHR course on **implementation in the countries** were presented during the last class on Friday 13 March. The farewell dinner with the certificates took place on Friday Evening 13 March. 16 trainees received a certificate.

39th Geneva Course (GCS-39)
(12 to 23 September 2016)

19 defenders attended GHR 39th Geneva Course conducted during the 33rd session of the HR-Council

14 defenders came from the regions: **Ukraine, Belarus, Congo-DRC (3), Niger, Argentina, Colombia, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, India (Manipur), Papua (Indonesia (3))**.

The other participants were GHR members and interns from India, France (Réunion), Italy (2), Spain. Trainer was Adrien-Claude Zoller. A former trainee from the Philippines, Ron de Vera, participated in one morning class.

The General Course took place from 12 to 16 September, with the full-day course on Monday 12. The special courses concerned enforced disappearances; indigenous peoples,

the OHCHR; the use of the special procedures; UPR and transitional justice. Additional Courses were given during the second week on the women's rights; justice in transition; the UN and indigenous peoples; country situations in the HR-Council; Sri Lanka; International Humanitarian Law; International Criminal Law; and treaty bodies.

Private follow-up meetings were held with the trainees from Ukraine, DRC, Sri-Lanka, Argentina, Manipur, and Papua. 17 trainees obtained their certificate.

Introduction Course to the HR-Council
(Geneva, Uni-Mail, 1 June)

Together with Vittorio Mainetti, Head of the *International Relations Office of the University of Geneva*, GHR conducted a one-day *Introduction Course to the 32nd session of the Human Rights Council*. Intended for students, interns, fellows and NGO workers going to monitor the deliberations in the Council's session, and to advocate on specific issues, the training took place in 'UniMail' on Wednesday 1 June 2016, from 09:00 to 18:30.

Vittorio Mainetti welcomed the 23 interns and NGO representatives present. Isabelle Gallino, Thomas Harris and Adrien-Claude Zoller introduced the five segments of the Course: the UN and human rights; the HR-Council and its mechanisms; the first ten years of the HR-Council; the tools to monitor the HR-Council (annotated agenda, programme of work, panels, interactive dialogues); and using UN mechanisms and procedures (Special procedures, treaty bodies, UPR).

2. GENEVA SPECIFIC SEMINARS DURING THE UPR

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is an important additional tool to implement human rights inside countries. GHR elaborated a specific training scheme, covering all the stages of UPR process: contribution to the State's report; preparation of the stakeholders' reports; review of the country in the Working group; adoption of the report by the Group, and then by the HR-Council; follow-up in each country. GHR also actively supported the creation of UPR-Info, a documentation and communication tool for the stakeholders.

In its Courses, GHR explains the potential NGO contribution. It teaches the long-term perspectives, the cooperation with the States, the use of the recommendations of the special procedures, treaty bodies and UPR, to implement all rights in each country. Obviously, each UPR Course on has to address the specificity of the situation in each country.

As many NGO coalitions come to Geneva to attend the review of their country, GHR offers briefings and orientation at each UPR session.

Assisting defenders from Singapore
(Geneva, January and June 2016)

From 25 to 28 January, GHR assisted three defenders from Singapore who came to Geneva to monitor the examination of their country in the UPR Working group. GHR prepared several meetings for them with NGOs and diplomats. We gave them a briefing on the trends in the HR-Council and we had a last meeting with them to evaluate the outcome of the UPR examination and to prepare the press release and the priorities for the next initiatives.

GHR provided further orientation during their second stay in Geneva, when the HR-Council adopted the report of Singapore. On 24 June, Forum Asia organized with them a side-event on '*Singapore's responses to the UPR recommendations*'.

Briefing to students from Maynooth University
(Geneva, Palais des Nations, 11 May 2016)

GHR assisted the *Maynooth University* in the preparation of the visit of 25 students to Geneva to observe Ireland's UPR examination of 11 May. Thomas Harris and Adrien-Claude Zoller gave them a briefing on the *UN mechanisms and procedures*. GHR met again the students to evaluate the examination of the Irish situation during the UPR Working group.

Lecture at the UPR Seminar of Ebert Foundation and CIFEDHOP
(Geneva, CAGI, 19-20 April, 2016)

The *Ebert Foundation* and the training centre *CIPHEDOP* convened a Seminar entitled '*UPR a human rights awareness-raising process*'. Adrien-Claude Zoller spoke of the experiences

of the engagement of the civil society with the UPR Process. The workshop brought together 16 actors from civil society and national institutions and discussed various practices employed to use the UPR as a lever of understanding and dissemination of human rights.

Indigenous Peoples in Asia and UPR

(Geneva, Palais des Nations, Room XXV, 19 September)

GHR, the *World Council of Churches*, *Action Network Philippines*, *Sri Lanka Advocacy Network*, *International Coalition for Papua*, *West Papua Network*, *Franciscans International* (FI), and *Vivat International*, convened a side-event on '*Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Asia at the UPR*'. Chaired by Adrien-Claude Zoller, the meeting highlighted the cases of the Philippines, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka,

The speakers, Ms Victoria Tauli-Corpuz (UN Special Rapporteur on indigenous peoples' rights), Ms Joeven Reyes (Executive Director, *Sulong CARHRIHL*, Philippines), Mr Paul Mambasar (*Elsham*, West Papua, Indonesia), and Mr Sunanda Deshapriya (Journalist, *Sri Lanka Brief*), recalled the variety of human rights violations indigenous peoples in Asia are confronted with. They stressed that indigenous defenders speaking out face intimidation and violence, often committed by the State security forces, and that in the UPR, the human rights situation of Asian indigenous peoples did not receive ample attention.

3. TRAINING FELLOWSHIP FUND FOR DEFENDERS FROM THE REGIONS

Since 2006, GHR has a special *Training Fellowship Fund for Defenders from the Regions* to offer fellowships to be trained in the *Geneva Courses*. A fellowship for a defender from the regions covers the registration fees for the *Geneva Course*, the travel expenses to and from Geneva, and the cost of living in Geneva. GHR Executive Council and its Bureau award the scholarships following the recommendations of GHR advisors and partners. In 2016, the *Ebert Foundation* (Geneva), *UEM* (Wuppertal), *Misereor* (Aachen), and the *European Human Rights Advocacy Centre* (EHRAC) contributed to the Fund. Five fellowships were awarded to trainees from Angola, Ethiopia, Congo-DRC, Argentina, and Ukraine.

4. PERMANENT REPRESENTATION IN GENEVA OF NGO'S FROM THE REGIONS

The HR-Council meets practically in permanently in Geneva, with every year three ordinary sessions, three UPR sessions, special sessions, working groups on major issues. NGOs and defenders cannot each time undertake the expensive trip to Geneva. Thus, their effective participation in the work of the Council necessitates a permanent presence in Geneva.

Strengthening the presence of Forum Asia (FA) in Geneva

- ***Advising the Assembly of Forum Asia (Bangkok, January 2016)***
Over the last ten years, convinced that the active participation defenders and organisations from the regions is crucial for the work of the HR-Council, GHR significantly contributed to the opening and strengthening of the FA Office in Geneva. In January, Adrien-Claude Zoller participated as a consultant in the 8th Assembly of FA in Bangkok. He advised the participants on the legal and institutional matters (statutes, by-laws, election of the Board).
- ***Advising the Board of Forum Asia (April – November 2016)***
In April, GHR submitted a Note to FA board on the requirements of the Swiss law and the necessary steps to obtain tax exemption. In August, Adrien-Claude Zoller was a member of the selection panel for the post of Executive Director of the Organisation. In May, he was elected in Forum Asia's Executive Council. The first Executive Council meeting of Forum Asia in Geneva took place from 18 to 20 November.

Strengthening the Office of the Dominicans in Geneva *(April – December 2016)*

GHR assisted the Representation of the Dominican Order at the UN in the consolidation of their Geneva Office, revising their Statutes and strengthening their decision-making bodies.

Active at the UN in Geneva since the 90s, the Dominicans constitute an important voice, as their members and their institutions (research institutes, Justice and Peace commissions) are present everywhere in the world. Having decided to recruit permanent staff, their Statutes had to be revised in order to obtain tax exemption. The Dominicans also reactivated their association to have an efficient decision-making. GHR assisted in the preparation of their Assembly and Board meetings, which took place in Rome on 15 November.

5. IN-COUNTRY AND IN-REGION COURSES

Because of lack of funding, the only training activities conducted in the regions in 2016 were Forum Asia's Anniversary in Bangkok and the Congress of the Dominicans in Salamanca.

Forum Asia 25th Anniversary

(Bangkok, Pridi Banomyong Institute, 8 January 2016)

Forum-Asia is the largest coalition of human rights groups in Asia. It is one of the main partners of GHR in this region. On 8 January 2016, a public event took place in Bangkok to celebrate the 25th anniversary of this network. Adrien-Claude Zoller intervened during the panel on the *future of human rights in Asia*. Other speakers were: Ms Debbie Stothard (Secretary General, *International Federation for Human Rights*, FIDH), Ms Gayoon Baek (Coordinator PSPD, South Korea), Rafendi Djamin (Executive Director, *Human Rights Working Group Indonesia*), and Mr Anoop Sukumaran (*ACT Alliance* representative for Asia and Pacific). Facilitator was Anselmo Lee (Secretary General of the *Asia Democracy Network*).

The President of GHR spoke of the hardliner regimes, the widespread impunity, the use of religions for political purpose, the shrinking space for the civil society, and the need to bolster initiatives to protect the defenders. He stressed that international NGOs had to be at the service of regional and domestic NGOs, instead of trying to speak on their behalf.

World Congress of the Dominicans

(Salamanca, Spain, 1-4 September 2016)

Adrien-Claude Zoller animated parts of the international Congress marking the 800th Jubilee celebrations of the Dominican Order. Theme of the Congress was: *'Dominicans in the Promotion and Defence of Human Rights: Past, Present and Future'*.

During the Congress, he presented a communication entitled *'The international community and current global human rights challenges'*. This (39-page) paper describes the history of human rights in the UN, the treaty bodies, the special procedures, the UPR and the recent developments in the HR-Council. It outlines the main challenges in the human rights debates: the proliferation of conflicts, terrorism, humanitarian law, the migration crises, the use of the religions. The document concludes with an analysis of implementation strategies.

Programme No. 2

'Implementation Now ! (INP)

GHR has a special programme to promote the implementation of human rights in specific countries through training, mediation, advisory services and teaching strategies. GHR has launched three new projects have been launched in 2016.

GHR Mexico project: learning from our experience

At the request of the Mexican Ministry of Interior, with the support of the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), GHR contributed to the elaboration and to the implementation of the first stages of Mexico's national Programme for human rights (2004-2008). As Mexico joined the OECD, development funds were no longer available. The FDFA phased-down its Mexico Programme (2007) and the Swiss Federal Council stressed the importance of GHR work:

'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'.

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

Our Mexico project was evaluated (2007) to learn from this experience and elaborate similar projects in other countries. GHR launched activities in Colombia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Timor Leste, (West) Papua, Burundi, Tunisia, Botswana and Morocco. Our *Geneva Courses* offer a unique opportunity for defenders from the regions to elaborate implementation strategies, in which all the UN recommendations, of UPR, special procedures, treaty bodies, are critical.

GHR new study project on implementation

On the proposal of Prof. Bertrand Ramcharan, GHR General Assembly of 15 March 2016 discussed the weak implementation of the UN human rights programme. The Assembly decided to launch a study project on the contribution of UN institutions, mechanisms and procedures to the strengthening of the domestic human rights protection mechanisms.

Our staff members Isabelle Galino and Thomas Harris drafted the outline and a questionnaire, sent to GHR partners and former trainees to assess the impact in their country of UN human rights programme, and the interaction between Government and civil society. The questionnaire is short. The study covers the period 2000 – 2015. Priority countries were selected, where GHR partners and former trainees are involved in human rights work:

- ✓ Latin America: Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico;
- ✓ Africa: Angola, Tanzania, Mozambique, Tunisia, Morocco;
- ✓ Asia: Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, West Papua (Indonesia), Kazakhstan;
- ✓ Europe: Hungary, Romania, Armenia; and Switzerland, Germany.

• Meeting with the University of Padova

On 9 May, GHR and the University of Padova met to discuss GHR's new project on the impact of UN institutions, mechanisms and procedures. It was agreed to start with the assessment of specific mechanisms and specific issues.

• Course at the Lucerne Akademy (Lucerne, 6 July 2016)

On 6 July, Adrien-Claude Zoller animated a Seminar on implementation during the Lucerne Akademy 2016. Theme of his Course was the *role of the UN bodies and mechanisms in the implementation of human rights at the domestic level*. He outlined the variety of recommendations made by Special Rapporteurs, treaty bodies, UPR, UN programmes, as well as the UN advisory services and technical assistance. The second part of his talk was devoted in the domestic use of these recommendations to elaborate public policies.

22 students attended. They were nationals from Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Burma, Kenya, Uganda, Egypt, Israel, Turkey, USA, Canada, Australia, and Switzerland.

GHR project on (West) Papua

As a training organisation, GHR trained many human rights defenders from Papua in its *Geneva Courses*. It also conducted training courses within Papua on how to document human rights abuses and to make use of UN human rights mechanisms and procedures. Our trainees prepare reports on cases of violations, following which we advise them and their organisations on the best way to submit their communications to UN bodies. In 2016, three defenders from Papua participated in the *Geneva Course* of September 2016.

GHR has been shocked by the massive human rights violations occurring in the Papua province since its integration into Indonesia in 1949. Since 2002, together with dozens of human rights organisations and church institutions from Europe and Australia, GHR participates in the *International Coalition for Papua (ICP)*, which issues human rights reports and advocates for peaceful improvement of the situation. In 2016, GHR participated in the two Coordination Board meetings of the Coalition, in The Hague (23-24 May) and Wuppertal (21-22 November). In 2016, in view of the rapidly deteriorating situation there, GHR has launched a **special project on Papua** to promote a stronger campaign in the UN bodies.

- **GHR Appeal to the CERD (14 July 2016)**

On 14 July, GHR submitted an appeal to the *Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)* to consider under its Early Warning measure the deteriorating situation in Papua. Composed of 18 independent experts elected by the States parties, the CERD monitors the implementation of the *International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination*, a treaty ratified by Indonesia.

GHR 18-pages report contained a list of the main human rights violations committed in Papua, and Appendixes with a brief history of Papua, a demographic analysis of the population of Papua and a list of hundreds of Papuan recently arrested and detained. The report is available at our Secretariat upon request.

First aim of GHR is to prevent the extinction of the Papuan population. In recent years, mining activities and military operations increased. The total population of the territory continued to grow, largely due to the transmigration flow from other Indonesian islands. And the Papuan population decreased sharply. Over the last 2 to 3 years, a new trend has been the Papuan youth engaging in (peaceful) demonstrations for justice and independence. Repression in the territory increased.

'The Indonesian Government should stop the systemic discrimination against the Papuan population; stop the excessive use of force against, and extra-judicial killing of, peaceful protestors; and, halt the excessive militarisation of Papua province'.
GHR urgent appeal to CERD, 14 July 2016

On 3 October 2016, by letter of its Chairperson, Prof. Anastasia Crickley, the CERD addressed an 'Early Warning appeal to Indonesia' regarding the situation the 'Papuan indigenous people in West Papua'. This Warning followed the examination of the appeal of GHR during its 90th session of August 2016. The letter of Chairperson Crickley requests the Government of Indonesia 'to submit information on all of the issues and concerns as outlined above by 14 November 2016'.

Main concerns referred to in CERD letter are: 'repression by security forces during Papuan flag-raising ceremonies and demonstrations; excessive use of force and killings during peaceful demonstrations since 2013; massive arrests in May 2014 during demonstrations against extraction and plantation activities; numerous arbitrary arrests and detention since the beginning of 2016, amounting to 4000 between April and June 2016 (...) large scale impunity; State's policy consisting of favouring the migration of non-indigenous persons from other parts of Indonesia to West Papua, 'which leads to the decline in representation of the population of Papuans in comparison to the general population in their territory'; and poor educational standards resulting in very low rates of literacy.

- **Side-event on minorities in Asia (15 March 2016, Palais des Nations)**

On 15 March, the ICP, the *German West Papua Network (WPN)*, FI, *Tapol*, *Minority Rights Group (MRG)*, and *Vivat International*, convened a side-event on '*Discrimination against ethnic minority in Asia: addressing State violence in Asia*'.

The President of GHR chaired the meeting. Four panellists presented the situation of minorities in Papua, Burma and Japan: Ms Yuliana Lantipo (journalist, Papua), Ms Jessica Nhkum (*Kachin Women Association*), Ms Sofia Nazalya (*Tapol*), and Taisuke Komatsu (*IMADR*), Japan. The meeting was attended by 65 persons.

- **Report of the study trip to West-Papua (Geneva, 6 May 2016)**

At GHR request, Edward Flynn undertook a field visit to Papua to assess the training needs of the Catholic partners there. On 6 May, GHR, FI and *Vivat International* held a meeting with him to discuss his findings. Edward Flynn recommended that our partners focus on the use of domestic mechanisms, on strengthening the networks and improving their skills in English.

- **Meeting with Papuan defenders (17 June 2016)**

On 17 June, GHR members met in Geneva two Papuan defenders to review the files received on the waves of massive arbitrary arrests and detention occurring in Papua. They discussed in particular the excessive use of force by Indonesian army and police to the peaceful demonstrations taking place everywhere in the territory.

- **Meeting at the Mission of the Solomon Islands (27 June 2016)**

On the occasion of the visit of Octovianus Mote, Secretary General of the *United Liberation Movement for West-Papua (ULMWP)*, the Permanent Mission of the Solomon Islands at the UN convened a meeting to discuss the situation in West-Papua. Mote highlighted the main features of the Papuan situation. Solomon's Chargé d'Affaires, Barrett Salato, informed on the initiatives taken by the Pacific countries. 10 NGOs attended, as well as several experts. The discussion was moderated by Adrien-Claude Zoller.

GHR project on enforced disappearance

For GHR, the crime of enforced disappearances has always been a priority. Several GHR members were actively involved in the creation in 1980 of the first UN mechanism on this crime, the *Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID)* and in the drafting of the Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances (adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1992).

GHR also participated in the negotiations on the *International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICED)*, which was adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2006.

With the Convention entering into force on 23 December 2010, the Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED) became the most recent treaty monitoring body. GHR monitored all the eleven sessions of the CED and realized in 2012, 2013 and 2014 three Experts Meetings with both the CED and the WGEID.

Conference of the States Parties

For 2016, it was decided that, instead of conducting another Expert Seminar, our project would focus on the preparation of the first Conference of the States Parties to the ICED. The Conference took place in Geneva on 19 December.

Its theme was to decide on the future of the Committee: as provided for in Article 27 of the Convention, after the first period of activities, the States Parties had to evaluate the functioning of the CED to decide whether the CED would continue to monitor the Convention, or whether the monitoring of the Convention would be transferred to another body.

GHR initiatives

GHR worked closely with Argentina and France, who co-chaired the Conference. Meetings took place with the Delegations of both countries in Geneva and during the International Conference of the University of Paris-2 (7-8 November).

Our HPS Department prepared a Memorandum for NGOs with a list of activities of the CED so far, information on the on-going negotiations in Geneva, and a call to associations of relatives and other human rights organisations to prepare statements for the Conference.

Through social media, the Memorandum was widely distributed to all NGOs concerned. Together with the *International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)*, a preparatory meeting was convened for NGOs (13 December). And the co-Chairs proposed to include in the rules of procedures a provision that NGOs could make oral statements.

Proceedings of the Conference

Opened by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, the Conference decided to continue to entrust the *Committee on Enforced Disappearances* to monitor the Convention.

After this decision, GHR read a joint statement of eight international NGOs, the *International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)*, the *Churches' Commission on International Affairs* of the World Council of Churches (CCIA-WCC), the FIDH, the ISHR, the *World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)*, the *International Federation of the Action of Christians for the Abolition of Torture (FIACAT)*, *TRIAL International*, and GHR.

GHR was also authorized to read out several statements prepared by organisations from the regions who could not come to Geneva, including the '*Madres de Plaza de Mayo*'.

At the end of the Conference, GHR agreed to prepare a next Expert Seminar with the CED and the WGEID, which will take place in March 2017.

Programme No. 3

'Training Specific Stakeholders (TSS)

In 2016, GHR gave lectures and briefings during conferences and for specific partners.

Course to National Institutions

(Geneva, Palais Wilson, 4 May 2016)

GHR contributed again to the annual Course on the international human rights system, of the *Ebert Foundation*, OHCHR and the Secretariat of the national institutions (*GAHNRI*) for staff of national institutions (Geneva, 2-6 May). Adrien-Claude Zoller presented the Course on the *Human Rights Council and its mechanisms*. Participants came from national institutions from Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Morocco, South Africa, Uganda, Malaysia, Palestine, Timor Leste, Germany, United Kingdom, Latvia and Ukraine.

Course to students from the University of Padova

(Geneva, 9 & 10 May 2016)

As in previous years, members of GHR Senior Management Team (Isabelle Gallino, Thomas Harris and Federica Parisoli) were involved in the study trip to Geneva of a group of 30 students from the University of Padova. Adrien-Claude Zoller gave them two Courses, on 9 May (on the *political trends in the HR-Council*) and on 10 May (on the *main thematic challenges in the HR-Council*).

Human Rights Working Group of the World Council of Churches

(Geneva, 27 May 2016)

Peter Prove, Director of the *Commission of the Churches on International Affairs* (CCIA) of the *World Council of Churches* (WCC), has set-up a human rights working group composed of staff of the WCC on the strategic engagement with the UN human rights mechanisms. Hosted in the Ecumenical Centre, GHR was invited to contribute.

Prepared by Bruschweiler Patricia and Asfaw Semegnish, a first meeting with WCC staff took place on 27 May. Adrien-Claude Zoller gave an overview of the UN mechanisms. A discussion followed on the working priorities of the participants: women's rights, rights of the child, country files, in particular Palestine, statelessness, freedom of religion, shadow reports to treaty bodies and UPR, and relations between Geneva and Brussels.

International Expert Meeting on the Human Rights Council

(Berlin, 10-11 October 2016)

The annual Expert meeting on the HR-Council, convened by the *Ebert Foundation*, the *German Institute for Human Rights* and *Forum Menschenrechte* took place on 10-11 October in Berlin. Theme this year was the *10th Anniversary of the HR-Council*. Adrien-Claude Zoller chaired the Working groups on the migration crisis and on the role of the civil society. He also spoke at the public conference of the Monday evening devoted to the assessment of the achievement of the HR-Council.

Webinar for the World Council of Churches

(27 October 2016)

Following a request of several members of the CCIA, a first *Webinar on UN human rights mechanisms and procedures* was organized. The Webinar took place on 27 October 2016. It was prepared and animated by Asfaw Semegnish. The Course was given by GHR. It had four parts of 15 minutes: on the UN structure and the human rights standards; on the treaty bodies; on the Special procedures; and on the Universal Periodic Review. Each section of the Course was followed by questions and answer of the trainer.

The summary of the Course was sent in advance by E-mail to the participants. A video recording of the Webinar has been made and sent to CCIA members, so that each of them could use it in briefings to be organized locally.

Paris Colloquy on the UN system of human rights protection
(Paris, Université Paris II, Centre Panthéon, 7-8 November 2016)

On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the two UN Covenants, the *Research Centre on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law* (CRDH) and the *University Panthéon-Assas* (Paris II) organized on 7-8 November their 11th International Colloquy under the theme: ‘*the UN system of human rights protection: assessment and future*’. Many UN Rapporteurs, academics and diplomats attended this conference on the strengthening of the UN system.

During the conference, Adrien-Claude Zoller participated in the round-table on the future of the special procedures. He introduced his communication entitled: ‘*The UN special procedures, origins and challenges*’, describing the creation of these country and thematic procedures, the negotiations during the Vienna World Conference, the institution building of the HR-Council and the challenges for the coming years.

Course on Minority Protection
(OHCHR, Geneva, 11 & 25 November 2016)

As in previous years, GHR participated in the Course organized by OHCHR, as part of its Minorities Fellowship Programme (7-25 November). On 11 November, Adrien-Claude Zoller gave a Course on *The international community and minority protection*. He spoke of the historical development of minority rights: the League of Nations, the standard-setting process in the UN, the Durban processes, the 20th Anniversary of the UN Declaration of Minorities. Together with Michèle Buteau (Head Indigenous and Minority Section of OHCHR), he gave a second briefing on the concepts of indigenous peoples and of minorities (25 November).

The 12 Minority Fellows came from: India (Christian religious minority), Pakistan (Hindu religious minority), Iraq (Yezidi ethnic minority), Egypt (Christian religious minority), Bosnia Herzegovina (Polish national minority), Cameroon (Anglophone linguistic minority), Colombia (Afrodescent), Japan (Korean ethnic minority), Moldova (Roma national minority), Moldova (Russian linguistic minority), Kyrgyzstan (Uzbek ethnic minority), and Ukraine (Polish ethnic minority). At the end of the Course, they spoke at the UN Minority Forum.

Course for diplomats from Guinea
(GCSP, Geneva, 13 December 2016)

From 12 to 21 December, the *Geneva Center for Security Policy* (GCSP) conducted in Geneva a *Course on State building* for 10 diplomats from Guinea. Adrien-Claude Zoller animated the session devoted to the UN human rights mechanisms. He spoke on the usefulness for the States of the special procedures, the treaty bodies and the UPR. The discussion focused on the preparation of States reports, the role of the civil society and the public policies to follow-up on the recommendations, often with the UN support.

Other briefings for stakeholders in 2016

- Public lecture in the cycle of conferences ‘*Witness*’ of the Parish St.-Pie X, Geneva, on ‘*Human rights, justice, resistance, challenges: vision of a defender*’ (8 March).
- Briefing to a dozen students of the School of Journalism from Neuchatel by Ana Maria Rodriguez (*Colombian Commission of Jurists*) on her *lobby experience in the UN* and Adrien-Claude Zoller on the *decision-making process in the UN* (22 March).
- At the invitation of the *Ebert Foundation*, several Geneva-based NGOs, including GHR, had a brainstorming with six Syrian lawyers based in Syria and members of the *Syrian League for Citizenship*, visiting Geneva (6 April).
- Vittorio Mainetti and Adrien-Claude Zoller animated the Course at the *University of Geneva* on *the UN and human rights* for 20 students of the University of California was animated by (8 April).
- On 24 June, GHR gave a briefing to 7 young professionals from Ukraine on the *UN human rights bodies and mechanisms*. The group was on a study visit to Geneva and Switzerland (19-25 June) with the support of the *Bohdan Hawrylyshyn Foundation*.

OUR DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY STUDIES

The Department on *Human Rights Policy Studies* (HPS) supports 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.

1. GHR EXPERT SEMINARS IN GENEVA (GSS)

Defenders and NGOs in the regions work under difficult conditions. Our 1997 consultation process with partners in the regions highlighted their demand for immediate implementation of the international standards, and their **specific concerns** for humanitarian law; macroeconomic issues (economic system as source of violations); the struggle against impunity; and the protection of defenders. Since then, other main concerns emerged in our working relations with partners: indigenous peoples' rights and violence against women. All these issues are raised in all GHR Courses and Seminars.

To sensitize actors at the HR-Council on such issues, GHR convened since 2009 **Expert Seminars in Geneva** on Caste Discrimination (2009), International Humanitarian Law (September 2010, June 2011), Trends in the HR-Council (March 2011), Transitional Justice (September 2011), Minorities (November 2011), Enforced Disappearances (Nov. 2012, Nov. 2013, September 2014), Religious Freedom (December 2012, June 2015), Business and Human Rights (May and December 2013, December 2014, June 2015), the Anniversary of the World Conference (June 2013) International Criminal Law (May 2014), and Religions, Conflicts and Minorities (Padova, September 2015). Logically, HPS is entrusted with the preparation of *GHR* brainstorming sessions and Expert Seminars.

In 2016, GHR Expert Seminars focused on death penalty, indigenous peoples and follow-up to GHR Seminars on religious freedom

Expert Seminar on the abolition of the death penalty
(Geneva, Palais des Nations, 22 June 2016)

Background

Many States either abolished the death penalty or observe a legal or de facto moratorium on its use. However, only 81 States ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), by which they accepted the legal obligation of abolishing the death penalty. As the Human Rights Committee, during its 117th session (20 June to 15 July 2016) continued its examination of a draft General Comment on ICCPR Article 6 (Right to Life), GHR convened a High Level Expert Seminar to promote the universal ratification of this protocol. Eight Permanent Missions co-sponsored the Seminar: **Liechtenstein, Argentina, Brazil, Namibia, Mongolia, Belgium, France and Italy**. The event took place on 22 June 2016, from 3 to 6 pm in Room XVII of the Palais des Nations. 75 persons attended, including diplomats from 17 Permanent Missions.

Opening session

The Expert Seminar was opened by two Ambassadors: Peter Matt of Liechtenstein, spoke on *The Right to Life*, and Madam Elisabeth Laurin, of France, on *The abolition of death penalty*.

Key-note speaker was GHR member Prof. Marc Bossuyt, former Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Death Penalty, currently member of the CERD. He reviewed the historic context of his draft and the contents of the optional protocol.

States' Policies regarding the Abolition of Death Penalty

The second session on *States policies* was chaired by Ambassador Maurizio Enrico Luigi Serra, of Italy. The following Ambassadors presented the policies of their State:

- Ambassador Marcelo Cima, Argentina.
- Ambassador Sabine Böhlke-Möller, Namibia.
- Ambassador Regina Maria Cordeiro Dunlop, Brazil.
- Ambassador Bertrand de Crombrughe de Picquendaele, Belgium.

The session concluded with comments from Ambassador Serra.

Towards universal ratification of the Optional Protocol

The third session on *strategies for universal ratification*, was introduced by two experts: Marianne Lilliebjerg, Deputy Director, International Advocacy, *Amnesty International*, explained Amnesty's position and work planning. And Prof. Sir Nigel Rodley, co-Rapporteur of the Human Rights Committee on the Rights to Life and President of the *International Commission of Jurists*, commented on the trends regarding the abolition of the death penalty.

Synthesis

The Seminar concluded with remarks of Prof. Marc Bossuyt and the traditional brainstorming dinner, during which a dozen of participants shared views with three members of the Human Rights Committee.

GHR Expert Seminar on Indigenous Peoples (Geneva, Palais des Nations, 11 July 2016)

Background

In 2014, to prepare the 'World Conference on Indigenous Peoples', GHR held an Expert Seminar to review UN action and to strengthen UN protection mechanisms and procedures for indigenous peoples. The World Conference took place in New York, on 22-23 September 2014. It invited the HR-Council to review existing mandates to improve the *Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP)*. To prepare this review, OHCHR convened a Workshop (April 2016).

GHR organized an *Expert Seminar on the strengthening of the EMRIP* before the HR-Council would decide in September 2016. It took place on Monday afternoon 11 July 2016 in Room XXV of the Palais des Nations, was chaired by Kenneth Deer (*Mohawk Representative, Coordinator Indigenous Caucus in Geneva*), and co-sponsored by the Delegations of Guatemala, Mexico, Canada and Norway.

Opening session

Kenneth Deer opened the Seminar. He stressed the importance of this consultation for the future of the EMRIP. Representatives of Guatemala, Mexico and Norway outlined the position of their countries. The key-note address was made by Adrien-Claude Zoller on the *existing UN mechanisms and procedures regarding indigenous peoples*.

Strengthening the mandate of EMRIP

Kenneth Deer opened the second session on the *strengthening of the mandate of the EMRIP*. He listed the proposals made so far by States and indigenous organisations. Three speakers outlined the main challenges: John Henriksen (*International Representative Sami Parliament of Norway*), Lola Garcia-Alix (*International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, Copenhagen*), and Karla General (*Indian Law Resource Center, Washington*). They all insisted on the need to implement the UN Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples.

Public debate

The last part of the Seminar was devoted to a debate with the participants. The main issues raised concerned the broadening of the mandate of the EMRIP, the possibility to receive complaints, to undertake field-visit, to provide technical assistance to States, and the requirements to become a member of EMRIP.

Follow-up to GHR expert seminars on freedom of religion of belief

With the support of the Dutch Government, GHR previously held two Experts Seminars on the freedom of religion or belief. In 2012, the focus was on the evolution of the *debate in the UN on the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion*. Theme of the 2015 Seminar was *Religions and Gender-related rights*. GHR also conducted specific courses on the freedom of religion, both in Geneva and abroad. This issue remains a priority of GHR. In 2016, GHR was involved in two follow-up conferences.

- **Seminar on Freedom of religion and freedom of expression
(Geneva, Palais des Nations, 8 March 2016)**

During the 31st session of the HR-Council, Adrien-Claude Zoller moderated the side event convened in the Palais des Nations by the Delegation of the European Union and the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands on the title: '*Twin Rights*': the

Interdependence of the Freedom of Religion or Belief And Freedom of Expression. Welcoming addresses were made by Peter Sørensen, Head of the EU Delegation in Geneva, and Roderick van Schreven, Ambassador of The Netherlands to the UN.

The panellists were Heiner Bielefeldt, Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief; Frank La Rue, Executive Director of *Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Europe*; and Ms. Diane Ala'i, Representative of the *Baha'i International Community* to the UN in Geneva. About 150 persons attended.

Marking the 30th anniversary of the mandate of freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, the panel discussed the recommendations put forward in the Special Rapporteur's latest report in relation to recent developments, such as the Rabat Plan of Action and the shared roles of the 'twin rights' in combating intolerance, discrimination and violence in the name of religion.

- **Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Sexuality (Geneva, Palais des Nations, 8-10 June 2016)**

GHR staff members attended the conference on '*Freedom of Religion or Belief and Sexuality*' organised in the Palais des Nations by the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of religion or belief and *Muslims for Progressive Values* (8 -10 June 2016).

The conference discussed in particular the misunderstanding of freedom of religion or belief and sexuality, violence in the name of religion against individuals based on their sexual orientation, and expression of sexuality in public religious life. It began with keynote addresses from the Prof. Heiner Bielefeldt, Ms. Ani Zonneveld (*Muslims for Progressive Values*) and OHCHR Director Ms. Peggy Hicks.

About 70 persons from around the world attended, including UN staff, faith leaders, academics, lawyers, human rights activists, and diplomats. Adrien-Claude Zoller moderated the first session on '*Mapping the landscape from legal perspectives*'.

2. INTERNSHIP & FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME (IFP)

In 2016, 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*.

HPS is 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, an internship is also a **training**. The interns participate in the weekly study meetings and in 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 internships, by facilitating their placement in specialized institutes for their PhD and their search for jobs.

In 2016, *HPS* welcomed the following 20 interns and fellows:

a) Interns from the regions:

Marina Yazianok (Belarus), Asya Karapetyan (Armenia), Eni Canaj (Albania), Liying Huang (China), Blessing Omoaghe (Nigeria), Fatchima Tankari (Niger-USA), Allegra Nzege (DRC-Switzerland), Ibiyemi FAMILONI (USA-Nigeria).

b) Interns from Northern countries:

Federica Parisoli (Italy), Thomas Harris (Jersey, United Kingdom), Isabelle Gallino (Switzerland); Jean-Michel Brawand (Philippines-Switzerland), Dario Bianchi (Italy), Emanuela Frankel (USA), Jenna Benferhat (USA), Gabriele Bompani (Italy), Sara Dixon (USA), Giulia Squadrin (Italy), Clementine Gaspar (La Réunion, France), Selene Catanzaro (Italy).

GENEVA FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (GHR)

Constituted as International Association under Swiss law, GHR obtained tax exemption status from the State of Geneva and Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).

1. WHAT WE ACHIEVED SO FAR

GHR Courses and Seminars in Geneva

In Geneva, GHR conducted many Courses and Seminars for defenders from the regions:

- **thirty-eight** (2-4 weeks) **Geneva Courses** during UN main human rights sessions (Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission, ECOSOC, the 2009 Review Conference on Racism, and all the ordinary sessions of the HR-Council);
- **twenty-one Experts Seminars** on Caste Discrimination; the HR-Council; International Humanitarian Law (2); Transitional Justice; Minorities (2); Enforced Disappearances (3); Religious Freedom (3); Business and Human Rights (4); the World Conference on Human Rights; Indigenous Peoples (2); International Criminal Law; and Death Penalty.
- **seventeen Seminars and briefings** during the sessions of the **UPR Working group**;
- **several specific 'On-Demand' Courses:**
 - ✓ several Courses for NGOs coalitions from the regions:
 - from **Kazakhstan** (at the request of Soros),
 - **Dalits coalitions** (request of CCFD and Cordaid),
 - from **Mozambique** (request of UNDP and the Swiss SDC),
 - for **Uyghurs** Representatives,
 - for **Burmese lawyers** (request of the *International Bar Association*).
 - ✓ nine Courses for diplomats (with the *Graduate Institute* and the *GCSP Geneva*);
 - ✓ nine Courses for humanitarian actors (eight for the *ICRC*);
- GHR **also lectured for partner organizations**, including *OHCHR*, the *World Council of Churches*, *UNITAR*, the Universities in Galway, Maynooth, Lyon, Paris-2, Lund, Nijmegen and Padova, the *German NGO Forum* and the *F. Ebert Foundation* (Berlin), *Forum Asia* (Bangkok), the *German Network on Papua*, the *JPIC Commissions of the Spiritans*, the *Dominican Order*, the *International Bar Association*, *Cordaid* (The Hague), and *Progressio* (London).

GHR Courses and Seminars in the field

In the **regions**, GHR already conducted:

- **ten On-Demand Regional Courses** in Africa, Latin America and Asia;
- **fifty-two In-Country Courses and Seminars** in Latin America (15), in Africa (4), in the Russian Federation (7), and in Asia (26);
- and, at the request of the *Swiss and Mexican Governments*, from 2004 to 2008, a comprehensive **training and mediation program** in Mexico to support the process of the national implementation Programme; a similar project was launched in Botswana.

2. GHR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

On 31 December 2016, the Association was composed of 45 individual **members** and 4 observers¹. Twenty-one are trainers or teachers. Many participate pro bono in *GHR* training activities.

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, 8 March 2012, 7 March 2013, 6 March 2014, 5 March 2015, 15 March 2016.

¹ 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 (3), Belgium (1), Finland (1), Ireland (3), Italy (1), France (1), Netherlands (2), United Kingdom (1), Switzerland (18). Nationality of the observers: Timor Leste (1), Russian Federation (1), Bolivia (1), Switzerland (1).

Prof. Bertrand Ramcharan chaired **GHR 15th General Assembly** of 15 March 2016. The Assembly examined and approved GHR Narrative Report 2015, the Action Plan for 2016, the Financial Report 2015 audited by the auditing firm *Comtesas + Gericom*, and the budget for 2016 and 2017. The Assembly also discussed and approved a new study project on the contribution of UN institutions, mechanisms and procedures to the strengthening of the domestic human rights protection mechanisms (implementation project). The mandate of the Executive Council members was extended.

3. GHR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Executive Council

The Executive Council monitors the implementation of GHR Action Plan and decides on the main activities of the Organisation. In 2016, it was composed of the following members:

- **Suhas Chakma** (India)
- **Alain Dick** (France, member Bureau)
- **Jean-Pierre Huber** (Switzerland, Treasurer)
- **Guillermo Kerber Mas** (Uruguay)
- Ms. **Penny Parker** (United States of America)
- Prof. **Bertrand Ramcharan** (Guyana)
- **Eric Revillet** (Switzerland, member Bureau)
- **Adrien-Claude Zoller** (Switzerland, President).

Bureau of the Executive Council

The Bureau of the Executive Council is composed of the following four members: Alain Dick, Eric Revillet, Jean-Pierre Huber and Adrien-Claude Zoller. It deals with all the administrative and financial matters. Its working language is French. In 2016, the Bureau met regularly to monitor the evolution of the administration after the moving of GHR Secretariat in December 2015 to the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva.

4. GHR SECRETARIAT

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

The employment of paid employees came to an end in June 2015. Since then, GHR Secretariat continued to work with volunteers only. Nicolas Zoller announced his decision to continue working '*pro bono*' for GHR Secretariat (planning, organization, informatics). To further reduce the expenses of the administration, on 17 December 2015, GHR Secretariat moved to the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva.

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 long-term interns. During the first Semester 2016, Isabelle Gallino, Thomas Harris and Federica Parisoli joined Adrien-Claude Zoller and Nicolas Zoller. From September to December, Giulia Squadrin coordinated the interns.

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