



APPEL DE GENÈVE
GENEVA CALL

ANNUAL REPORT 2012



Table of contents

Foreword from the Directorate	3	Thematic areas	
What they say about Geneva Call	4	– Sexual violence in armed conflict	25
Geneva Call's Mission	6	– Protection of children in armed conflict	27
Geneva Call and the <i>Deeds of Commitment</i>	7	– AP mines and other explosive devices	29
		– International humanitarian norms	31
		– Displacement of civilians	32
		– Humanitarian space at risk	32
		– Theirwords.org	33
Activities in AFRICA		Monitoring and Evaluation	34
– Democratic Republic of Congo	8	Communication and Public Advocacy	35
– Niger	9	Financial results	38
– Mali	9		
– Senegal	10	Staff & Partners	41
– Somalia	10	Acronyms	43
– Sudan	12	Geneva Call's <i>Deed of Commitment</i>	44
– Western Sahara	13	List of ANSAs engaged and map	50
		Footnotes	53
		Thank you and Support	54
Activities in ASIA			
– Afghanistan	14		
– Burma/Myanmar	14		
– India	16		
– Pakistan	16		
– Philippines	17		
Activities in LATIN AMERICA			
– Colombia	18		
Activities in MIDDLE EAST and EUROPE			
– Iran	20		
– Lebanon	21		
– Occupied Palestinian Territory	22		
– Syria	22		
– Yemen	23		
– South Caucasus and Moldova	23		
– Turkey	24		

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Foreword from the Directorate

2012 was an important year for Geneva Call in its engagement with armed non-State actors (ANSAs) on international humanitarian norms.

Geneva Call launched its *Deed of Commitment for the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict and towards the Elimination of Gender Discrimination*. This *Deed* had been signed by five ANSAs from Iran by the end of the year with several more to come very shortly. The *Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict* was signed by seven ANSAs from Burma/Myanmar and Iran, including one ANSA listed by the United Nations as a grave violator of the Rights of the Child. The Justice and Equality Movement from Sudan signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines, bringing the number of signatories to 42.

Geneva Call has begun to engage with ANSAs operating in Syria, and has prepared a series of innovative materials for the dissemination of norms in this context, where increasing levels of armed violence and little coordination among the armed opposition present challenges. The organization has laid the groundwork for engagement in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where it hopes to begin operations in 2013. With the opening of talks between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) in Cuba, Geneva Call engaged with the group directly for the first time in five years, and substantive discussions on international humanitarian norms have already taken place in Havana. Inside Colombia too, the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) responded to advocacy pressure, admitted past mistakes and declared to a Geneva Call conference that it would make greater efforts to protect civilians from the effects of its operations.

An important contribution this year is *TheirWords.org*, a unique searchable online directory which compiles some 400 statements and commitments of ANSAs. This website is a new resource made available to all who wish to know more about ANSAs' views on areas of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL).

Geneva Call's added value remains relevant in the context of peace processes too, and in the fragile moves from ceasefire to negotiating table. In Burma/Myanmar, Geneva Call's expertise has been called upon by eight of the ANSAs. In the Philippines too, Geneva Call's ongoing engagement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has been noted – by the Government – as a contributory factor in the recent signing of the Framework Agreement.

For the second year running, Geneva Call was recognized among Global Journal's Top 100 non-governmental organizations. Geneva Call's President was awarded the prestigious Hessen Peace Prize, and the work of the organization was again noted by the UN Secretary-General in his 2012 report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The crucial case for engagement with ANSAs has been underlined again during the year, by the UN Security Council, by the European Commission, and by many of the States and institutions that continue to support Geneva Call's work around the world. Geneva Call would like to recognize and thank them all.



Finally, Geneva Call would like to thank the individuals and organizations that have contributed to making Geneva Call's vision a reality, in particular its staff and Board, and the donors who have helped to expand Geneva Call's mission to more countries and to cover more subjects of vital importance.

The Directorate of Geneva Call

What they say about Geneva Call

“I urge all Member States to refrain from adopting national legislation, policies or other measures that have the effect of inhibiting humanitarian actors in their efforts to engage non-State armed groups for humanitarian purposes, including to undertake activities aimed at promoting respect for international humanitarian law.”

Report of the UN Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, May 2012

“Your tireless efforts on behalf of civilian populations, for international humanitarian law and human rights law, and for a role for women in peace negotiations are examples to follow. Your innovative work engaging with armed non-State groups against the use of anti-personnel landmines, and your contribution to respect for the rights of the child in armed conflict have helped save countless lives...”

Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf, President of the Swiss Confederation, 24 September 2012

It is necessary “to be clear from the outset that engagement does not constitute political recognition. This is vital, as concerns over the political recognition and “legitimacy” that engagement is perceived to confer have prevented some States from permitting such engagement. There are nevertheless cases in which engagement of one form or another has been proactively facilitated by States. In the Philippines in 2009, both the Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front actively supported and cooperated with the non-governmental organization Geneva Call to facilitate a verification mission to investigate the Front’s alleged breaches of the Geneva Call Deed of Commitment banning anti-personnel mines.”

Report of the UN Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, May 2012



Geneva Call engages the Polisario Front on banning AP mines in Western Sahara. © Geneva Call

“I am happy to hear that non-State armed groups agreed to the Geneva Call Deed of Commitment, and think the time is right for armed ethnic groups to exhibit their accountability and contributions to children in conflict-affected areas. I think the role of human rights workers should include involvement in the monitoring of these commitments and assistance to ensure implementation. That way, we can carefully examine and encourage the improvement of children’s lives in areas touched by war.”

Nai Aue Mon, Coordinator, Human Rights Forum of Monland, a human rights NGO representing the Mon ethnic group in Burma/Myanmar, August 2012

“We accept that we have committed errors of foresight or have conducted defensive minelaying operations in enemy operational areas without then removing unexploded devices laid afterwards due to the death of the combatants who laid them, or other circumstances beyond our control. We are aware that this is a delicate issue for some of the population in affected areas, and we are open to looking for solutions. We are directing the military leadership of the Southwest War Front to exchange with you [Geneva Call] when circumstances allow about the various points you consider relevant. Be assured that we are acting with diligence and responsibility.”

For the National Liberation Army (ELN) Central Command, Nicolás Rodríguez Bautista, Commander-in-Chief, written statement to Geneva Call conference on the protection of civilians in the armed conflict (unofficial translation), October 2012

“Your tireless efforts on behalf of civilian populations, for international humanitarian law and human rights law, and for a role for women in peace negotiations are examples to follow.”

“The Philippine Government also welcomes the breakthrough in our peace process with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), as evidenced by the signing of the Framework Agreement. This historic milestone can be attributed in part to confidence building among all concerned parties achieved through the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APM Convention). The bridging efforts of peace activists, the International and Philippine Campaigns to Ban Landmines (ICBL/PCBL), the Fondation Suisse de Déminage (FSD) and Geneva Call are to be recognized and lauded. The Deed of Commitment signed by the MILF to adhere to the norms of the APM Convention played a pivotal role in moving the peace process forward.”

Government of the Republic of the Philippines, Statement to the 12th Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Geneva, Switzerland, December 2012

“Aside from congratulating Geneva Call for landing one of the world’s top 100 non-government organizations, the MILF also feels honoured because it had signed the Deed of Commitment with Geneva Call that the former commits to the non-use of victim-triggered anti-personnel landmines including production and stockpiling of these prohibited weapons in war.”

Mohammad Ameen, Chair of the Secretariat, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Philippines

“I would like to express my special thanks to Geneva Call for these realistic and meaningful trainings which helped us to gain more clarity about the violent conflict in Colombia. I am grateful that people like you are dedicated to disseminating this material which allows us to have the basis and elements we need to take practical action. We hope that these vitally important trainings will grow from strength to strength. Thank you for the opportunity you have given me.”

Training participant, Southwest Colombia

Geneva Call's mission



Geneva Call is a neutral and impartial humanitarian non-governmental organization (NGO) that engages in dialogue with ANSAs to promote their respect for international humanitarian norms in armed conflict and other situations of violence, in particular regarding the protection of civilians. Geneva Call gives ANSAs the opportunity to adhere to and respect the norms of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL).

Common Article 3 to the Geneva Conventions provides a solid basis for humanitarian engagement with ANSAs, by establishing the right for impartial humanitarian organizations to offer their services to the parties to a conflict.

To achieve this, Geneva Call seeks a formal undertaking by ANSAs, inviting them to sign and comply

with different *Deeds of Commitment* to respect these norms. Signatory ANSAs agree that Geneva Call will monitor and verify their compliance.

Geneva Call is currently focusing its efforts on banning the use of AP mines, protecting children from the effects of armed conflict, prohibiting sexual violence in armed conflict and working towards the elimination of gender discrimination. Geneva Call also responds to ANSA requests to help build their knowledge of, and capacities to implement, IHL and IHRL.

Geneva Call conducts its activities according to humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence. Transparency is also a core working principle: as a matter of policy, Geneva Call informs stakeholders, including the States concerned, of its engagement efforts with ANSAs.

What is an armed non-State actor?

The term ANSA encompasses a variety of different entities. In the context of its mission, and for its operational purposes, Geneva Call focuses on organized armed entities that are primarily motivated by political goals, operate outside effective State control and

lack the legal capacity to become party to relevant international treaties. This includes armed groups, *de facto* governing authorities, national liberation movements and non- or partially internationally recognized States.

Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment*: a unique instrument

To promote ANSA adherence to, and ownership of, international standards, Geneva Call has developed an innovative mechanism which allows ANSAs to undertake to respect specific humanitarian norms by signing a *Deed of Commitment*. To date, Geneva Call has developed three such documents:

- *Deed of Commitment for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines and for Cooperation in Mine Action (Deed of Commitment banning AP mines), launched in 2000*
- *Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict (Deed of Commitment protecting children in armed conflict), launched in late 2010*
- *Deed of Commitment for the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict and towards the Elimination of Gender Discrimination (Deed of Commitment prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination), published in June 2012*

"[A]greements and undertakings by non-State armed groups to respect international norms should be in writing to allow the groups to disseminate, monitor and enforce the norms within their ranks. Impartial external monitoring of the actions of the groups is critical. Acknowledgement of improved compliance is also important, as it can enhance respect for international norms."

Report of the United Nations Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, May 2012, Art. 43¹

The three *Deeds of Commitment* reflect international standards. They provide ANSAs with the opportunity to express their willingness to abide by humanitarian norms and take ownership of these rules. In addition, signatory ANSAs agree to take the necessary enforcement measures (orders, sanctions, training measures) and to cooperate with Geneva Call in the scrutiny of their compliance. They also recognize that pursuant to Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions, adhering to the *Deed of Commitment* does not affect their legal status.

The *Deeds of Commitment* are signed by the ANSA leadership and countersigned by Geneva Call and the Government of the Republic and Canton of Geneva, usually at a ceremony in the Alabama Room in Geneva's City Hall, where the first Geneva Convention was signed in 1864. The *Deeds of Commitment* are deposited with the Canton of Geneva, which serves as custodian.

For Geneva Call, engaging ANSAs does not end with signatures. These require monitoring, follow-up and assistance in ensuring that commitments translate into actual practice. The signing of the *Deed of Commitment* does not in itself guarantee a better respect of humanitarian norms, but provides a useful tool to hold signatories publicly accountable for their pledge. Where ANSAs are not yet ready to sign the *Deed of Commitment*, or undertake a similar commitment, Geneva Call favours a progressive step-by-step approach to reduce the impact of conflict on civilian populations.

And it works...

By the end of 2012, seven ANSAs had signed the *Deed of Commitment* for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict, five had already signed the most recent *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination, and 42 had signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. ANSAs' record of implementation and compliance with the *Deeds* is good. Engagement with ANSAs on these *Deeds of Commitment* is ongoing and several more will join in 2013.

The complete texts of the *Deeds of Commitment* can be found on pages 44-49 of this report. A table showing all ANSAs being engaged, and those that have signed the *Deed of Commitment* can be found on pages 50 and 51.

Activities in AFRICA

- The Justice and Equality Movement became the 42nd signatory of the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. Geneva Call engaged this and other ANSAs operating in SUDAN on the AP mine ban and the protection of children.
- The Mouvement National pour la Libération de l'Azawad, from MALI, requested assistance to help improve their knowledge of, and respect for, humanitarian norms. Geneva Call established contact with the ANSA as a result of this request.
- Geneva Call prepared for engagement with ANSAs in the east of DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO on the protection of children and prohibition of sexual violence in armed conflict.
- Geneva Call prepared for a coordination meeting between the Government, the National Center for Mine Action in Senegal and the Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance to take place in Guinea Bissau in 2013. This will be the first time the parties will have met.
- Geneva Call continued to monitor compliance with the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines in SOMALIA and WESTERN SAHARA. The Puntland Mine Action Centre destroyed 151 AP mines captured in 2012 from Al-Shabaab.

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

Eastern DRC has been plagued by insecurity and armed conflict for 20 years and, in the absence of a strong State apparatus, many Congolese ANSAs have emerged as militias to protect their local communities and ethnic groups. Rwandan, Burundian and Ugandan opposition ANSAs are also present in eastern DRC, out of reach of national armies. In April 2012, a new ANSA emerged, the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23), and in November briefly took control of the eastern city of Goma.

Large areas of Eastern DRC remain under the *de facto* control or influence of ANSAs. Many ANSAs are responsible for IHL violations, including grave violations against children as mentioned in the Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict. Extremely brutal forms of sexual violence are also widespread. As research shows, crimes of sexual violence are committed as opportunistic acts, as retaliatory measures and are used by some groups as a tactic of



A woman recovers from rape in a hospital in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo, November 2012. © Kate Holt/IRIN

warfare. Another alarming trend that may stem from the climate of impunity within the community is the increase in sexual violence perpetrated by civilians.

In May, and again in December, Geneva Call travelled to DRC, building on the encouragement by stakeholders and clear indications that its approach could add value, and that dialogue would be possible with some of the ANSAs, both directly with their leadership and through the communities. While victims of the conflict, communities also maintain complex family and ethnic solidarity relationships with some of the armed groups.

“Many Congolese and international NGOs thought that dialogue with armed groups was not possible on protection issues, but ... we can see from Geneva Call’s quite special and inclusive approach that you make sure to reach out to both the potential violators and protectors of human rights in order to prevent violations against civilian populations.”

Anonymous, local NGO, North Kivu, 2012

As a neutral, independent organization, and with no humanitarian assistance mandate to preserve, Geneva Call has comparative advantages to engage ANSAs on improving their behaviour during hostilities. The organization will focus on the protection of children and prevention of sexual violence, and plans to engage with ANSAs and in parallel work through traditional community networks.

Niger

Starting in 2007, Geneva Call engaged the Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice (MNJ) on the issue of AP mines until a ceasefire was agreed between the MNJ and the Government in 2009. Conflict areas in the north of the country are still mined however. Since the fall of the regime of Colonel Qaddafi in Libya in 2011, weapons and combatants have moved across the Sahel region, particularly towards neighbouring Mali. This massive flow of weapons, and the increase in intensity of the conflict in Mali, have put considerable strain on the fragile stability prevailing in Niger.

In 2011, Geneva Call brought together former MNJ commanders and Government officials at a workshop

in Agadez to share information and cooperate for more effective demining. The workshop’s key recommendations were implemented in 2012, notably the successful integration of former MNJ combatants – who had laid mines during the 2007-2009 conflict – into Government demining teams alongside military engineers active in the Niger armed forces during the same period. 50 former rebels were recruited as community liaison officers and participate today in the mapping of hazardous areas. 15 others have received mine clearance training and are taking part in the demining operations.



Workshop with MNJ and Government forces of Niger. © Geneva Call

Such successful developments in the post-conflict period, as promoted and facilitated in this case over several years by Geneva Call, are not only symbolic, but serve as real-life examples of cooperation between ANSAs and Government authorities on mine action. There is a direct benefit for the livelihoods and reintegration of former combatants, which in turn produces greater security for the civilian population living in conflict areas². Geneva Call has commissioned an article on the subject to be published in 2013.

Mali

The fall of the Qaddafi regime in 2011 heralded big changes for the long-running rebellion by Tuareg ANSAs in Mali. Many Malian deserters from Libya’s former army returned to their home country with large amounts of weaponry. An insurgency erupted in Northern Mali in early 2012. The Mouvement National pour la Libération de l’Azawad (MNLA) took up arms for the independence of the northern region. The

insurgency was taken over by militant Islamist ANSAs, and the northern part of the country was overrun in mid-year. The Government of Mali requested military intervention by France.

MNLA leaders contacted Geneva Call in October 2012 and several meetings were held on the basis that the ANSA is seeking ways to adapt its conduct in the field to comply with IHL. During the year, Geneva Call followed the situation closely, building also on its existing contacts with former MNJ commanders in Niger who share ethnic links with Tuareg ANSAs in Mali. A field assessment to the region will take place in 2013 to consider opportunities for engagement with ANSAs.

Senegal

The conflict that broke out in 1982 between the separatist Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance (MFDC) and the Government of Senegal is one of the longest Africa has seen. Despite several ceasefire and peace agreements, the most recent in 2004, sporadic clashes continue in the Casamance region between MFDC rebels and the Senegalese armed forces.

AP and anti-vehicle (AV) mines have been used throughout the conflict. In addition to the more than 800 mine victims reported by the National Centre for Mine Action in Senegal (CNAMS), tens of thousands of people have been displaced from their fertile land or have taken refuge in Gambia and Guinea Bissau.

Geneva Call has been engaging the MFDC on the AP mine ban since 2006³. The MFDC is a fragmented movement, composed of a (divided) political wing and two main military factions. Geneva Call was able to convince the southern Kassolol faction led by César Atoute Badiate to accept humanitarian demining in inhabited areas that are not close to its bases. Mine clearance operations have expanded since, but both factions still reserve the right to use AP mines for self-defence.

As demining operations neared the MFDC military bases, and the danger increased that, as before, MFDC would attempt to stop mine clearance by force, Geneva Call and its local partner, l'Association pour la Promotion Rurale de l'Arrondissement de Nyassia –

Solidarité, Développement et Paix (APRAN-SDP), began advocating for an agreement between the MFDC Kassolol faction and the Senegalese Government on additional zones that could be demined. Progress stalled as the former Government insisted it would only meet the MFDC inside Senegal. Yet the election in April of a new President willing to allow a meeting with the MFDC on foreign soil has opened up new opportunities. Geneva Call subsequently met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister to advocate a direct coordination between the CNAMS and the MFDC Kassolol faction, and this was finally approved by the Government.

A meeting is planned for March 2013 in Guinea-Bissau. This will be the first time that the two parties will have met to discuss humanitarian demining. The situation is certainly fragile, but Geneva Call hopes that the parties will begin to build the confidence necessary for mine clearance to move forward.



Geneva Call and its local partner APRAN-SDP in discussion with the Senegalese Minister of Foreign Affairs, 2012. © Geneva Call

Somalia

2012 saw the swearing-in of a new Parliament, a new President in September and a 10-person cabinet aiming to reunite the country under one federal administration. Though conflict continues between Government forces, the militant Islamist group Al-Shabaab, and other active ANSAs in South and Central Somalia, one of the new Government's priorities is to integrate all the existing allied militias into the national armed forces. Several of these are signatories of Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines, and are now progressively integrating the new Government. The humanitarian situation in parts of the country never-

theless remains severe, and significant violations of IHL by ANSAs continue to negatively impact the populations under their influence or control.

Geneva Call's role since its initial engagement in 2002 has consisted in advocating for the ban on AP mines, monitoring compliance with the *Deed of Commitment* signed by active ANSA signatories⁴, facilitating the deployment of mine action NGOs and the destruction of stockpiled AP mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). In 2012, Geneva Call continued to monitor Somaliland's implementation of the AP mine ban legislation which it had helped to draft in 2007. In September 2012 the Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC) launched a public awareness campaign aimed at informing the local communities about the legislation and collecting retained mines and ERW. Several hundred items were handed over and destroyed. In addition, the Somaliland army declared that it has no stockpiled AP mines.

Also in September, Geneva Call assessed options to initiate dialogue with Al-Shabaab, but found that the conditions were not ready for a sustained dialogue on IHL issues.

In compliance with the Geneva Call *Deed of Commitment*, the Puntland authorities destroyed 151 AP mines captured in 2012 from other ANSAs, notably Al-Shabaab. Geneva Call invited the Puntland Mine Action Centre (PMAC) to present its work and lessons learned at the 12th Meeting of States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention in December. The Director of PMAC was part of the official Somali Government delegation, indicating that the Puntland authorities now consider themselves bound by the AP Mine Ban Convention. He complimented Geneva Call for its interventions at a time when there had been no functioning central Government, stating that this had enabled the Puntland authorities to move forward on mine action and start collaborating with demining operators. He also highlighted the instrumental role played by Geneva Call in advocating the norms of the AP Mine Ban Convention in Somalia.



Destruction of AP mines in Puntland, Somalia.
© C. Marsh/MAG Somalia



Woman warning children about the dangers of unexploded ordnance hidden beneath branches, Somaliland. © Geneva Call

Sudan

In 2011, the main ANSAs active in Sudan formed a coalition known as the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF)⁵ to fight the central Government, notably in the Darfur region, and in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states bordering the new Republic of South Sudan. Access to conflict areas is hampered by insecurity and/or travel restrictions. Government forces and ANSAs have been under international scrutiny due to the recruitment and use of children in the conflict.

In 2012, Geneva Call initiated dialogue with the leadership of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement – North (SPLM-N). The SPLM-N is reported to possess

AP mines captured from Government forces and to be using children. The ANSA denied the allegations when questioned by Geneva Call, which continues to seek clarity on this matter. Geneva Call proposed an agenda for training on humanitarian norms and steps that could lead to the signature of Geneva Call's *Deeds of Commitment*. The SPLM-N leadership has welcomed Geneva Call's engagement work on compliance with humanitarian norms.

Geneva Call's engagement: from yesterday's SPLM/A to today's SPLM-N

Geneva Call's involvement in Sudan dates back to its engagement with John Garang's SPLM/A (Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army) which, in 2001, became one of the first ANSAs to sign the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. The *Deed of Commitment* was ultimately transformed into succession to the AP Mine Ban Convention in 2011 by the Republic of South Sudan. This was the first treaty that the new State joined, no doubt as a result of the work done with Geneva Call several years previously.

However following the independence of South Sudan in 2011, a faction of the SPLM in the Sudanese regions of South Kordofan and Blue Nile continued to fight the Government of Sudan and created the SPLM-N.

In April, Geneva Call's engagement with the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) led to their signing the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. This is the second armed opposition group from Sudan to pledge non-use of AP mines since the SPLM/A (the army of South Sudan) renounced the weapon in 2001. Shortly after the signing ceremony, the Small Arms Survey reported that JEM and/or the South Sudanese army had seized AP mines after occupying a Sudan armed forces base in Heglig during fighting in April. JEM undertook inspections in various military units and reported to Geneva Call that no AP mines were found. The Government of South Sudan also denied having these AP mines. Due to access difficulties, Geneva Call is working with third parties, as well as with JEM's humanitarian commission, to monitor compliance.

The representative of the Justice and Equality Movement from Sudan signing the Deed of Commitment banning AP mines, April 2012. © Geneva Call



Western Sahara

JEM pledged to include the AP mine ban in its internal code of conduct and to cooperate with Geneva Call in IHL dissemination and training. JEM was also proactive in introducing Geneva Call to the other members of the SRF.

Geneva Call has begun dialogue with JEM on issues of child protection, and sexual violence and gender discrimination. The group is again listed in the UN Secretary-General's 2012 report on children and armed conflict as recruiting and using children. An initial Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on child protection was signed between JEM and the UN in 2010. In 2012 JEM submitted to the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) a unilateral plan to prohibit child recruitment. While the effectiveness of these initiatives needs to be assessed, Geneva Call will continue its on-going engagement with JEM on the issue, provided there is added value in doing so, bearing in mind its complementarity with other efforts, such as those being undertaken by UN agencies.

Geneva Call has also continued its dialogue during the year with two factions of the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army known as SLM/A Abdel Wahid al-Nur (SLM/A-AW) and SLM/A Minni Minnawi (SLM/A-MM), which were also listed in 2012 by the UN Secretary-General as using children in armed conflict. The leadership of both ANSAs has told Geneva Call that they do not have child combatants or AP mines. Geneva Call is currently assessing options to adequately monitor compliance with international norms in the areas under the control of these two factions of the SLM/A.

The conflict over Western Sahara broke out in 1975 between Morocco, Mauritania and the Sahrawi independence movement, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario Front). A UN-brokered ceasefire agreement was signed in 1991. Since then, however, the final status of Western Sahara has remained unresolved. The territory is still being contested between Morocco and the Polisario Front.

As a result of the conflict, Western Sahara is heavily contaminated by AP mines and ERW. The Polisario Front signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines in 2005. During 2012, Geneva Call, together with its local partner the Sahrawi Campaign to Ban Landmines (SCBL), continued to monitor implementation of the *Deed of Commitment* and to encourage the destruction of remaining AP mine stocks. To date, the Polisario Front, with the technical assistance of Action on Armed Violence (AOAV), has destroyed more than 10,000 stockpiled AP mines. AOAV has cleared over 14 million square metres of land in Western Sahara since 2006 and, in 2012, in partnership with the Sahrawi Association for the Victims of Mines (ASAVIM), conducted a survey to assess the needs of victims of ERW and the services available. In 2012, Geneva Call brought the SCBL to the 12th Meeting of States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention, in order to promote mine action in Western Sahara and meet donors and partners. The SCBL formalized a partnership with Norwegian People's Aid to start MRE activities.

Though the conflict over Western Sahara remains frozen, Geneva Call finds that it is important to continue engagement with the Polisario Front on its obligations under IHL, and plans to give training in IHL to its senior military commanders in 2013, following an initial course provided in 2011.



AP mine stockpile destruction – Western Sahara. © Geneva Call

Activities in ASIA

- The Karenni National Progressive Party/Karenni Army of BURMA/MYANMAR, listed by the UN as persistently recruiting and using children in armed conflict, signed the *Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict*.
- The New Mon State Party/Mon National Liberation Army signed the same *Deed of Commitment*.
- Geneva Call completed an assessment in AFGHANISTAN and is preparing for a programme of engagement on AP mines and IEDs, and on the protection of children.
- With the support of Geneva Call, partner organization Sustainable Peace and Development Organization issued a comprehensive report on *Addressing the Impact of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War in PAKISTAN*.
- In the PHILIPPINES, Geneva Call and local partner trained its senior staff from 30 base commands and three front commands on the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's internal regulation banning AP mines in accordance with its signature of the *Deed of Commitment*.

Afghanistan

According to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), overall civilian casualty rates decreased during 2012. However, casualties from insurgency activities increased by 9%, accounting for 81% of all civilians killed and injured as a result of the armed conflict.

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) were the single largest threat to civilians in 2012, with targeted killings a close second. The recruitment and use of children by ANSAs in the armed conflict, including in suicide attacks, has also been reported. In the last few years, the Taliban has stated concern for the protection of civilians, and has publicly denied using victim-activated AP mines. The Taliban's forces have reportedly recruited and used children and, as such, are listed in the UN Secretary-General's 2012 report on children and armed conflict.

Lack of dedicated funding delayed Geneva Call's planned activities in 2012. Late in the year, Geneva Call partnered with The Liaison Office (TLO), a local NGO, to further explore how it might be feasible to work through community leaders to engage the Taliban and other ANSAs on the protection of civilians, in a context in which community leaders themselves are known to come under extreme pressure from ANSAs. The feasibility study aims to identify the civilian protection issues they would be comfortable raising with ANSAs, and how their capacity might be built in order to engage effectively. The results of this study will help shape a strategy for activities that will be undertaken in 2013.

Burma/Myanmar

Ceasefires and peace processes between the Government and all but one of the main ANSAs had been initiated or consolidated by the end of 2012. However, the situation on the ground in the various ceasefire areas varied significantly, and beyond the ceasefires themselves only limited progress on substantive political issues had been made by the parties to the talks. Towards the end of the year fighting between the Kachin Independence Organisation/Kachin Independence Army (KIO/KIA) and Government forces reached an intensity not seen for many years in the country.

Though most of the major ANSAs that Geneva Call has engaged have not signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines, step-by-step improvements have taken place to reduce the impact of AP mines on civilians.

With ceasefires now in place, there is a need to consider that those displaced by the fighting will want to return home. In this context the issue of AP mines has become a matter of priority. This is well recognized by the Government and most stakeholders, but there are still challenges to overcome before systematic mine action activities can begin. In its engagements with ANSAs, Geneva Call has also encouraged ANSAs to seek agreements at the negotiating table to address the AP mine problem in areas under their control.

In a significant development, at the request of the Karen National Union (KNU), Geneva Call held a workshop on mine action in the context of peace processes



Workshop on AP mines with the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). © Geneva Call

with its military wing the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Geneva Call focused on sensitizing senior officers from each brigade of the KNLA on the opportunities that the new situation offers to address the AP mine problem. Geneva Call also gave several workshops for other ANSAs and community-based organizations (CBOs), encouraging them to consider the roles they might play in facilitating mine action under the changing circumstances.

Where possible, Geneva Call facilitated introductions of mine action operators new to the country to the relevant ANSA leadership. For the first time, Geneva Call was invited by the Government to participate in a Mine Risk Education (MRE) workshop held by the Ministry of Social Welfare, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and DanChurchAid (DCA) in December in Naypyitaw.

During 2012, Geneva Call also continued to engage the leadership of seven ANSAs on the protection of children in armed conflict, and held in-depth workshops with four of them⁶ during the year. The Karenni National Progressive Party/Karenni Army (KNPP/KA) is one of the six ANSAs listed in the UN Secretary-General’s 2012 report on children and armed conflict as violators in recruiting and using children⁷. The group signed the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict in August. A second ANSA, the New Mon State Party/Mon National Liberation Army (NMSP/MNLA), also signed at the same time.

Geneva Call has followed up with both ANSAs on their implementation plans. These plans are internal to each ANSA and fully cover their obligations on the level of

doctrine, policy, training and sanctions regime. Geneva Call will continue dialogue with non-signatory ANSAs on the protection of children during 2013.

Several ANSAs have requested information and training on gender-based violence in order to ensure that their own forces are informed about the appropriate standards that apply to them while they remain under ceasefire, and to support the development of a strategy to bring relevant issues to the negotiating table with the Government. Geneva Call began engagement with the KNU/KNLA and Chin National Front/Army (CNF/CNA) on its new *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination. Members of these two ANSAs had previously attended a Geneva Call workshop on sexual violence⁸. In August, Geneva Call trained CNF/CNA leaders on this *Deed of Commitment*, and will do the same for the KNU/KNLA in 2013 with a view to signature of the instrument by both ANSAs.



The representatives of the New Mon State Party signing the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict in 2012. © Geneva Call

India

A number of ANSAs are in conflict with the Government, or with each other, in several states across the country. Civilians have suffered the most from the conflicts, AP mines and IEDs are used frequently, and CBOs have reported that rape has been used by some ANSAs.

Three ANSAs active in Northeast India are signatories to the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines: the Kuki National Organization (KNO), the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isac/Muivah faction) (NSCN-IM) and the Zomi Reunification Organization (ZRO). Two more ANSAs, the Hmar People's Congress-Democracy (HPC-D) and the NSCN (Khole Kitovi faction), have expressed interest in signing the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines, and Geneva Call expects this to take place in 2013.

Geneva Call engaged the ZRO on the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination during the year; the ANSA is expected to sign the *Deed* in early 2013.

India is one of few States that does not allow Geneva Call direct access to ANSAs. Geneva Call therefore meets the groups outside the country, or works through email and phone, and through local partners to monitor compliance with the *Deed of Commitment*. In 2012, Geneva Call gave training to the United NGOs Mission Manipur (UNMM), an umbrella structure of Indian civil society organizations operating in Manipur region, on humanitarian mine action and on other humanitarian norms. Indeed, many ANSAs active in Manipur are reported to use AP mines, recruit and use children in armed conflict and, in some cases, appear to have allowed the rape of women committed by members to go unpunished. UNMM has agreed to work with Geneva Call in moving these issues forward.



Geneva Call workshop with UNMM. © Geneva Call

Pakistan

Pakistan has one of the world's highest casualty rates due to AP mines, IEDs and ERW. Most accidents occur near the country's borders with India and Afghanistan, and as a result of the escalating conflict between the army and ANSAs in Pakistan's tribal areas (Pakthun Khwa Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas) and in Baluchistan. The highest number of AP mine and ERW victims for 10 years was reported for 2011; 223 people were killed and 413 injured. Almost 70% of all accidents occurred in the tribal areas. These areas are near inaccessible to humanitarian organizations due to the conflict and, in part, because the Government has not given permission. This also means that very little humanitarian mine action has been implemented to address the problem and assist survivors.



ADDRESSING THE IMPACT OF LANDMINES AND EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR IN PAKISTAN

November 2012



In December 2012, Geneva Call's partner, Sustainable Peace and Development Organization (SPADO) – with the support of Geneva Call – produced a report entitled *Addressing the Impact of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War in Pakistan* to draw international attention to the issue. The report was launched during the 12th Meeting of States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention in December. It presents the scope and impact of the AP mines and ERW problem, and explores concrete steps that the Government of Pakistan

and other actors, including ANSAs, can take to combat the threat. The report has been translated into Urdu and was released in Pakistan in early 2013 to great interest. Geneva Call hopes that international donors will continue to fund mine action in affected areas to help alleviate the suffering caused by the scourge of AP mines and IEDs in the country.

Addressing the Impact of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War in Pakistan is available on www.genevacall.org in English and in Urdu.

Philippines

The signing of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro in October was a significant breakthrough in the peace process between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Geneva Call hopes that this will be pivotal on the path to peace.

The MILF is a signatory to Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. In partnership with the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies (IBS), Geneva Call supported the MILF in its internal dissemination of its *General Order No. 3*, which was issued in 2011 as a direct response to recommendations made by a

Geneva Call-led verification mission following 2008 allegations of use of AP mines⁹. In accordance with the *Deed of Commitment, General Order No. 3*, prohibits the use of AP mines by the MILF's military wing, the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF).

In September, Geneva Call and the IBS, working with the General Staff of the BIAF, gave a training of trainers to 42 senior representatives from all 30 BIAF base- and three front-commands, and members of the BIAF General Staff. In cooperation with Geneva Call, the General Staff and IBS trainers then trained 1,028 field-level forces on the *General Order No. 3* and the BIAF's obligations, in 10 base commands. As these latter sessions were scheduled to take place immediately after the MILF signed the Framework Agreement with the Government, Geneva Call readily agreed to also allow the MILF leadership to use these gatherings to explain the scope of the agreement to its forces.

Geneva Call will continue to support the programme for field-level dissemination to the other base commands in 2013.

As a result of continued dialogue with the MILF on the issue of the protection of women and the prohibition of sexual violence in conflict, the MILF expressed an interest in Geneva Call facilitating workshops on the topic with its members in 2013.



Training organized by Geneva Call with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front on the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. © Geneva Call

Activities in LATIN AMERICA

- The Ejército de Liberación Nacional issued statements recognizing a need to improve on questions of AP mine use, sexual violence and child protection, and identified three areas that could be demined for humanitarian purposes, as a result of advocacy from Geneva Call.
- Geneva Call engaged directly with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia in Havana after many years of restrictions and indirect dialogue.
- Geneva Call continued its Mine Risk Education with indigenous peoples in Southwest Colombia – 94% of those surveyed reported changing their behaviours to stay safer.

Colombia

Against a background of increased armed violence, serious IHL violations continued in Colombia during the year. ANSAs known to recruit and use children in combat include the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo and new paramilitary groups such as Paisas, Rastrojos, and Urabeños. Acts of sexual violence are attributed to these paramilitary groups, and to a lesser extent ELN and FARC, while the use by ANSAs of improvised AP mines and other IEDs continues on a regular basis.

On a positive note, direct talks began during 2012 in Cuba between the Government and the FARC seeking an end to the conflict; it is hoped that ELN will also follow suit. In this new context, Geneva Call has increased engagement with ANSAs on the protection of civilians, as this remains a serious need, and as a contribution to the peace process, since violations of humanitarian norms could negatively impact peace talks.

Geneva Call's engagement with the ELN led the ANSA to publicly declare, on two occasions in 2012, its policies on AP mines, children and armed conflict and sexual violence. The ANSA explained that errors were committed in regard to the use of AP mines, and that it is open to finding solutions to the problem. ELN has also identified three areas where its mines affect communities and which they would be willing to clear. With regard to child recruitment, ELN stated that its internal regulations allow for "incorporation into guerilla structures" once a person turns 16¹⁰.

Since its activities in Colombia began in 2003, Geneva Call has engaged with the FARC, mostly through indirect means due to governmental restrictions.

From September 2012, for the first time in five years, Geneva Call was again able to meet directly with FARC representatives. Geneva Call's message to both ELN and FARC has been to humanize the conflict, advocating for compliance with humanitarian standards, and promoting other steps to reduce negative impact of the armed conflict on the population – with or without a ceasefire agreement. When Geneva Call met the FARC delegation in Cuba, the ANSA expressed interest in working towards the goal of humanization of the conflict. The ELN has also said this on numerous occasions.

Research conducted by the Gender School of the National University of Bogotá, in collaboration with Geneva Call, on ANSA violence against women and girls in the departments of Cauca, Nariño and Putumayo, was presented in July 2012. The summary and conclusions were shared with the ELN and FARC. One of the key findings was that no solid evidence could be found for widespread strategic use of sexual violence by ANSAs during the period in question (2000 – 2011). The ELN stated in response that sexual violence is considered a crime, and that it would investigate and take appropriate measures in case of non-compliance.

Geneva Call is also engaging with the FARC and ELN on the question of child protection. Detailed information about patterns of recruitment and use per ANSA is not available, so Geneva Call has begun research into this, initially covering parts of Cauca, so as to inform engagement work in 2013.

Civil society and CBOs play a role in self-protection from the impact of conflict, and in humanitarian advocacy towards ANSAs. In Colombia, CBOs and

grassroots groups often already have *de facto* informal dialogue with ANSAs, and some directly engage ANSAs on humanitarian problems in order to improve the living conditions of their communities, notably in remote areas. In Cauca, Nariño and Putumayo; in Bogotá with participants from several conflict-affected regions; and in Arauca and Norte de Santander, Geneva Call gave eight in-depth training sessions with partners and local media to build knowledge and capacity, and to provide tools they need to better protect themselves from the effects of the armed conflict, and to advocate towards ANSAs for better conduct.

In October, Geneva Call brought together key stakeholders in Bogotá to discuss and propose solutions for better protection of civilians within the conflict, and in the context of a peace process. ELN responded to an invitation to the event by providing a statement of its humanitarian policy and announced that it was ready to cease hostilities and discuss humanitarian issues at peace talks with the Government. Recommendations from the Bogotá conference will be published in 2013 and communicated to the peace delegations of the Colombian Government and the FARC, and to the ELN.



In October 2012, Geneva Call held a conference that brought together Government representatives and civil society in Bogotá.
© Geneva Call

Mine Risk Education (MRE) reduces risk behaviours

For several years, Geneva Call has trained and developed a grassroots-level MRE capacity among the Awá, Inga, Nasa, Pasto and Siona peoples in Cauca, Nariño and Putumayo departments. 20 indigenous leaders have been trained and are now being mentored as they train new multipliers. The project will be handed over to local organizations in spring 2014.

A Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices survey in 2012 found that 94% of interviewees reported changing from risky behaviours after receiving the training. Respondents had stopped going to areas where fighting had taken place, picking up strange objects, walking at night and straying from the main paths. 60% reported that other families or community members had also stopped taking such risks. 50% of interviewees reported no accidents during the previous 10 months (since the project began).



Indigenous leaders in Putumayo learning how to disseminate MRE messages. © Geneva Call

Activities in the MIDDLE EAST and EUROPE

- Five Kurdish ANSAs from IRAN signed both the *Deed of Commitment for the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict and towards the Elimination of Gender Discrimination* and the *Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict*.
- Geneva Call trained cadres of the Palestinian National Security Forces operating in refugee camps in LEBANON on their obligations as bearers of weapons.
- In SYRIA, Geneva Call engaged with ANSAs and provided trainings on IHL to commanders, and began the *Fighter not Killer* campaign.
- Geneva Call monitored the PKK's compliance with the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines and engaged with the ANSA on the protection of children.

Iran

During 2012, engagement continued on child protection with five Iranian Kurdish ANSAs – the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI); the Kurdistan Democratic Party-Iran (KDPI); the Komalah-Kurdistan's Organisation of the Communist Party of Iran; the Komala Party of Kurdistan, and the Komala Party-Iranian Kurdistan. They finally signed the *Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict* in December 2012 in Geneva. Their signing of the *Deed of Commitment* strengthens their standards in child protection and sends a signal to other groups active in the Middle East whose practice, in respect of the protection of children in armed conflict, may fall short of international standards. For one of the new signatories, for example, the military recruitment age was raised from 16 to 18 years of age. Geneva Call will continue engagement on child protection with the one Iranian ANSA that has not signed, the Free Life Party of Kurdistan (PJAK), in 2013.

In December, the same five ANSAs became the first signatories to Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment on the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict and towards the Elimination of Gender Discrimination*. At the joint signing ceremony, the ANSA delegations were made up of 50% women. Two of the delegations were headed by women who signed the *Deed* on behalf of their respective organizations. While these ANSAs already have policies in place prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination, they have committed to promoting greater political participation for women as well, and to addressing these issues within Kurdish society.

The Iranian Kurdish ANSAs maintained the suspension of their military activities, though some sporadic armed clashes did occur in 2012 between Iran's security forces and PJAK. Several mine casualties were reported due to the existing minefields along the border dating back to the 1980s war between Iran and Iraq.

All five above-mentioned ANSAs and the PJAK are signatories to Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. Two of them reported awareness activities conducted in 2012 through their media (TV, radio and newspapers) on the risks posed by AP mines and on the needs of survivors.



Representative of the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan signing the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination in December 2012. © Geneva Call

Lebanon

Tensions from the conflict in Syria are rippling across Lebanon sparking occasional armed violence, and affecting the fragile balance of power within the Palestinian refugee camps. Over 416,000 registered Palestinian refugees live in Lebanon, half of them in 12 official camps across the country. These camps are controlled not by the Lebanese State but by ANSA-led Popular Committees. Internal security within the camps is the responsibility of the Palestinian National Security Forces (PNSF), run by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Ain al-Hilweh is the largest camp, housing up to 67,000 people in an area of just two square kilometres. Such a high population density and extreme poverty put great pressure on the community's economic, social and political fabric, leading to higher levels of violence. 16 Palestinian ANSAs compete for power and influence in Ain al-Hilweh, and the risk of further armed confrontation related to the increasingly polarized conflict in Syria is very real.

Geneva Call is seeking to reduce the impact of armed violence in the camps by informing and training ANSAs on their obligations towards civilians when using weapons. Over the past two years, Geneva Call has

given training on humanitarian norms to armed security officers at the request of PNSF. In 2012, Geneva Call began to train trainers from among the PNSF cadres. The training of trainers was given to a mix of military and civilian wings of PNSF, which included representatives of civil society and of political organizations. The trainers will follow up in 2013, under Geneva Call supervision, and instruct the security forces in the implementation of humanitarian standards and disseminate these norms to the broader community.

In parallel with these initiatives, Geneva Call and its local partner Nashet held a roundtable on the protection of civilians in June with all Palestinian ANSAs active in Ain al-Hilweh. 22 representatives of the Palestinian political parties attended, including all ANSAs from both PLO and Islamic factions. Many of them were meeting for the first time. At the meeting, the ANSAs acknowledged their responsibility towards the community, and discussed potential differences between Islamic standards of protection and international norms. A further roundtable is planned for January 2013 to move forward and consider the causes and drivers of insecurity.

The Palestinian Girls' Club

The Palestinian Girls' Club, launched by Geneva Call and Nashet in Ain al-Hilweh in late 2010, continued to provide a protected space for young girls at risk from armed violence, and reach out to their families and the community. 60 girls between 7 and 15 in Ain al-Hilweh and its environs have directly benefited from the *Palestinian Girls' Club* this year. Children's participation in cultural and remedial classes, and the provision of appropriate psycho-social care, have helped develop their skills and build their self-confidence. These activities also helped raise awareness within the wider community on issues such as children's rights. Partners' joint fundraising efforts to sustain the *Girls' Club* have led to German development organization *Brot für die Welt* taking over support for the *Girls' Club* for the next two years.

This type of project may appear to be outside Geneva Call's central focus, however it is affording

the organization a degree of confidence amongst ANSAs in the camp, which leads to continued and developing engagement for the longer term. Enabling such projects indeed helps Geneva Call, albeit indirectly, to achieve its core mission.



Educational and psycho-social support to the girls in Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp in Lebanon. © Geneva Call

Training of arms bearers

Geneva Call trained trainers from among the PNSF cadres in order to improve their behaviours as arms bearers in situations of armed violence that do not amount to armed conflict. The trainees, from the camps of Rachidye, Burj Shamali, al-Buss, Ain al-Hilweh, Beddawi and Mieh wa Mieh, represented various ANSAs, including Fatah, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Fida party, Nidal Front, Tahrir Front and Arabic Front.

The workshop covered many topics including –

Defining armed conflict and qualifying as international/non-international conflict and which laws are applicable in each case; defining situations of armed violence that do not amount to armed conflict; non-derogable human rights; minimum humanitarian standards; respect for human rights in policing operations; arrest and treatment of detainees; humanitarian assistance and humanitarian access; protection of children.

Occupied Palestinian Territory

In November, Geneva Call carried out an assessment of the interest of ANSAs in Gaza in humanitarian engagement and training. It was not possible to also visit the West Bank at the time. Geneva Call and the Hamas-led Palestinian National Authority-Gaza discussed needs and gaps in policy and legislation regarding IHL and the protection of children. Geneva Call is not aware of any allegations of ANSAs using child combatants; however no public commitments have been made to respect international standards. Geneva Call does not currently have the resources to prioritize work on this aspect.

Syria



2012 saw the rebellion become an internal armed conflict, pitting a diverse and divided armed opposition against the Government. The conflict is still intensifying, and severe violations of international humanitarian norms continue, with devastating effects on the civilian population.

The armed opposition has no central command structure and each of the main groupings (Free Syrian Army brigades, militant Islamist groups and Kurdish forces) is made up of autonomous factions. Some civilian coordination in relation to the FSA has been in place through Local Coordination Committees (LCCs) since 2011 and it was, in fact, the Damascus-area LCCs that initiated contact with Geneva Call out of concern for the protection of civilians in the conflict, and to seek advice on drafting a code of conduct that the LCCs would then promote among armed opposition groups and brigade commanders.

Geneva Call began initial engagement in collaboration with the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre) and made a strategic assessment for a longer-term engagement with ANSAs. With this objective, Geneva Call gave two IHL training sessions for FSA members, together with the LCC. The first of this series was carried out in collaboration with HD Centre. Geneva Call also began dialogue with the Kurdish Party of Democratic Union/Popular Protection Unit (PYD/YPG).

Further engagements and training are planned for 2013, and will make use of improving coordination among ANSAs to disseminate international humanitarian norms seeking a change in attitudes and behaviour on the ground. In late 2012, Geneva Call devised and produced an innovative set of simple IHL messages in Arabic specific to the conflict context. The campaign, called *Fighter not Killer*, will be disseminated through booklets, TV and social media to reach a broad range of fighters, their supporters and members of civil society. 2013 will see far wider dissemination of these messages.



Syrian fighters reading Geneva Call booklet on International Humanitarian Law. © Geneva Call

Yemen

During the year, Geneva Call monitored the situation in the country. It plans to conduct a field visit in 2013, provided that conditions for access improve and that funds are available. Geneva Call also wishes to pursue further dialogue with the ANSA following 2011 listing for violation against children in armed conflict by the UN Secretary-General. Engagement plans also include the question of AP mines and notably mine clearance. To questions from Geneva Call, both exiled leaders and the spokesperson of Al-Houthi inside Yemen (contacted by phone), agreed that they would support mine action in the areas they control.



Geneva Call's *Fighter Not Killer* video campaign in Syria – Do not target or attack civilians. © Geneva Call



Geneva Call's *Fighter Not Killer* video campaign in Syria – Do not target or attack civilian property or public buildings. © Geneva Call

South Caucasus and Moldova

Over several years, Geneva Call has engaged with the non- or partially internationally recognized authorities of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria/Pridniestrovie on international humanitarian norms. Due to a lack of funding, Geneva Call unfortunately was obliged to suspend its activities there even though a significant need remains, notably to address the question of the trafficking of women which continues in part due to gaps in relevant legislation and policies.

Turkey



Combatant of the People's Defence Forces/HPG, 2012.
© Geneva Call

Conflict between the Kurdistan People's Congress/ People's Defence Forces (Kongra Gel/HPG), also known as the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), and the Government of Turkey intensified in 2012 causing several hundred deaths on both sides. In late December 2012, it was announced that the Government had initiated pre-peace talks with Abdullah Öcalan, PKK's jailed leader, and on 21 March 2013, he called for a ceasefire as a precursor to peace negotiations.

During 2012, Geneva Call continued to monitor compliance with the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines signed by the Kongra Gel/HPG in 2006. Geneva Call found no evidence of new AP mine use. PKK admits to using command-detonated AP mines, which are not prohibited under the *Deed of Commitment*, or under the AP Mine Ban Convention.

During the year, Geneva Call conducted several rounds of in-depth discussion with the PKK on the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict. Geneva Call has also started work with the PKK women's wing, the Yekitiya Jinen Bilind – Supreme Union of Women of Kurdistan – (YJB) on the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination.

Geneva Call raised with the PKK leadership reports of IHL violations, and discussions on the matter were held at the highest level. This was followed up with interactive and participative training on the rules and obligations of IHL for 20 high-ranking commanders. In order to improve the quality of monitoring and information on these issues, Geneva Call provided relevant documentation on IHL to Kurdish media reporting on issues related to the conflict. Geneva Call also continued to translate and make available documentation on IHL in Turkish.

Sexual violence in armed conflict

- Geneva Call launched the *Deed of Commitment on the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict and towards the Elimination of Gender Discrimination*.
- Five ANSAs signed the *Deed* in 2012.
- 12 ANSAs were engaged in 2012 on the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict.

Engaging ANSAs on the prohibition of sexual violence in armed conflict, and towards the elimination of gender discrimination

Sexual violence is widespread in many armed conflicts and has reached appalling levels in some countries despite repeated calls by the international community for it to stop. It is increasingly acknowledged that efforts towards ending sexual violence in situations of armed conflict should focus more on prevention, and not only on providing assistance to victims after the fact. This is where Geneva Call can contribute significant and practical added value on the ground through its engagement with ANSAs.



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A definition of conflict-related sexual violence

Conflict-related sexual violence refers to incidents or patterns of sexual violence, that is: rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity against women, men or children. Such incidents or patterns occur in conflict or post-conflict settings or other situations of concern (e.g. political strife).

UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict's Analytical and Conceptual Framing of Conflict-related Sexual Violence, p3.

A ground-breaking step forward in Geneva Call's efforts to respond to sexual violence in armed conflict by ANSAs was the July launch of its third *Deed of Commitment*. The *Deed of Commitment under Geneva Call for the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict and towards the Elimination of Gender*

Discrimination was developed over a 12-month period, with input from a broad range of experts from NGOs, UN bodies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), academics and lawyers. Geneva Call also sought the perspectives of ANSAs operating in Burma/Myanmar, Philippines, Sudan, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Turkey.

Prior to launch, Geneva Call had already begun engaging selected ANSAs on the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict. A workshop took place at the end of 2010 to explore the problem in depth with eight ANSAs from Asia. Since then, Geneva Call has engaged on the issue with 12 ANSAs, several of these signing the new *Deed* during the year.

Five Kurdish ANSAs from Iran became the first to sign the *Deed of Commitment* (see pages 46-47), and several more from Burma/Myanmar and from India are in the wings for early 2013.

Geneva Call is stepping up its contribution to the prevention of sexual violence in armed conflict by building the awareness and capacities of ANSAs to prevent or stop such violations. The *Deed of Commitment* is one engagement tool towards this goal. Others include training with ANSA-specific training modules, workshops, drafting and implementation support to improved codes of conduct and other internal rules. Workshops and focus groups have been organized in 2012 with signatory and non-signatory ANSAs in Burma/Myanmar and Iraq (for ANSAs operating in Iran and Turkey).

As part of a process of monitoring of incidents of sexual violence related to armed conflicts, and to raise awareness of communities on international standards, Geneva Call conducted workshops on sexual violence in several locations in Colombia with CBOs. In Lebanon, with its local partner Nashet, Geneva Call has supported the *Palestinian Girls' Club* in Ain al-Hilweh refugee camp over several years, providing

educational and psycho-social support to 60 girls affected by armed violence in the camp. This activity has enabled Geneva Call to work within the camp on this and other issues with the many ANSAs represented (see pages 21-22). In 2012, German organization Brot für die Welt took over from Geneva Call and continues to support the initiative.

Geneva Call's conference held in Bogotá in October with CBOs and national entities to the conflict made the following recommendations to all parties:

- To recognize the key role played by women in situations of armed conflict and post-conflict, and ensure their meaningful participation in these processes
- To guarantee justice and assistance to victims of conflict-related sexual violence
- To establish a truth commission which will give priority to dealing with issues of sexual violence and other forms of violence against women and girls
- To take into account the experience, views, needs and abilities of women ex-combatants
- To decentralize the dialogue so that the voices of victims of conflict-related sexual violence can be heard

Aware of the need to gain more evidence-based information on the issue of sexual violence in the armed conflict in Colombia to guide its engagement methodology with armed groups, Geneva Call produced some research on sexual violence in Colombia, together with the University of Bogotá. The research has resulted in the collection of more specific data on sexual violence related to the conflict. No evidence was found of widespread or systematic sexual violence committed by the two main guerilla groups, rather opportunistic acts. As mentioned above, ELN has already responded to this conclusion and stated that it would investigate and sanction cases of sexual violence committed by its forces.

Geneva Call is preparing to commence operations in the DRC and is awaiting final approval from the national authorities by spring 2013. Geneva Call will conduct a thorough mapping of ANSAs and patterns of violation, and of the communities involved, establishing collaboration with other actors involved in the prevention and response to sexual violence. Engagement should begin in 2013 with selected ANSAs operating in North Kivu province, and with affected communities and their leaders (see pages 8-9).



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Protection of children in armed conflict

- The first 7 ANSAs signed the *Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict* during the year.
- 20 ANSAs were engaged in 2012 on the protection of children in armed conflict.

Engaging ANSAs on the protection of children in armed conflict

There is a “need to pay greater attention ... to working with parties to conflict to change the way they conduct themselves in order to better protect children (for example standard operating procedures for armed forces).” Protecting children affected by armed conflict: advancing the agenda of the last 10 years, March 2012, Conference report, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Wilton Park

A total of seven ANSAs signed the *Deed of Commitment* during the year, including the Karenni National Progressive Party/Karenni Army (KNPP/KA) of Burma/Myanmar, one of the groups listed by the UN Secretary-General in its 2012 report on children and armed conflict. KNPP/KA signed in August. The New Mon State Party/Mon National Liberation Army (NMSP/MNLA) also signed the *Deed of Commitment* at the same time, followed in December by five Iranian ANSAs: Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan, the Komala Party of Kurdistan, the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan, the Komalah – Kurdistan Organization of the Communist Party of Iran and the Kurdistan Democratic Party – Iran.

Geneva Call is engaging ANSAs to ensure children in situations of armed conflict receive special respect and protection. One of the ways it does so is to prevent the recruitment and use by ANSAs of children under 18 in armed conflict, and to prohibit the practice where it is already occurring. Tens of thousands of children under the age of 18 are recruited into ANSAs, and are playing a more or less active role in combat operations¹¹. 32 parties are listed in the Annexes to the UN Secretary-General’s 2012 Report on Children and Armed Conflict as persistent violators of children’s rights; most of these are ANSAs.

For Geneva Call, it is not just the ANSAs listed as grave violators that can and should play a role in the protection of children, and so Geneva Call does not engage only with listed entities. The table on pages 50-51 shows

the status of Geneva Call’s engagement with a variety of ANSAs around the world. Geneva Call engaged 20 ANSAs in 10 countries this year on child protection. One of the key tools of engagement is the *Deed of Commitment under Geneva Call for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict* which was launched in 2010. Depending on the situation, Geneva Call has integrated child protection into many of its engagements with ANSAs, and is at different stages of dialogue with groups about their obligations to protect, and potential signature of the *Deed*.

In Colombia, Geneva Call held training workshops on the protection of children in several locations with CBOs and media. The information and training provided is designed to help and support local communities to self-protect from the effects of the conflict, and to advocate for protection in their contacts with ANSAs. Workshops were also given with ANSAs operating in Iran and Turkey, and five of the Iranian groups went on to sign the *Deed of Commitment* as previously mentioned. In Burma/Myanmar, Geneva Call held four workshops for 84 members of ANSAs¹² and CBO representatives of their ethnic communities. These training sessions took place at the request of the ANSAs themselves, which wish to ensure an appropriate framework for their forces in the current ceasefire context, and raise these issues at the negotiating table with the Government.

Geneva Call will begin to engage with ANSAs on international norms relating to the protection of children in DRC. As described above (pages 8-9), Geneva Call will engage with selected ANSAs operating in the east of the country, and with the affected communities and their leaders.

During the year, Geneva Call contributed to the Global Child Protection Working Group on Minimum Standards, providing technical input and ensuring recognition of the potential to harness ANSAs as contributors to child protection. The resultant document, Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, will be distributed widely.

Geneva Call also provided input into the Draft Lucens Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict, which is an initiative of the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack. This, and other work in international fora, remain part of Geneva Call's public advocacy programme which seeks to make the case for engagement with ANSAs, and to promote their compliance with, and ownership of, international standards.

Complementarity with other initiatives

There is a growing acknowledgement that complementary approaches need to be taken to implement effective child protection measures according to different contexts.

M23 rebels interacting with local children in North Kivu, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. © Mark Darrough/Demotix



“More effective measures regarding non-State armed actors must be taken [...] Alternatives exist and they must be encouraged in situations where States prevent the cooperation between non-State armed actors and the United Nations. Switzerland would like to use this opportunity to commend the outstanding work of Geneva Call [and] therefore invites all parties to encourage complementary activities of States, international organisations and civil society for the benefit of the child victims on the ground.”

Statement by Switzerland on UN Security Council Resolution 2068 (2012), 19 September 2012

As it has long-term relationships and has built significant confidence with many ANSAs on this and other issues, Geneva Call seeks to coordinate with UN agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders in the interests of the protection of children affected by conflict.

AP mines and other explosive devices

- One further ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. A total of 42 ANSAs have signed the *Deed* since 2000.
- Geneva Call is monitoring compliance with the *Deed of Commitment* by the 22 active signatories.
- Geneva Call is engaging 18 non-signatory ANSAs on the use of AP mines and IEDs.

Engaging ANSAs on AP mines & other explosive devices

According to Landmine Monitor, in 2011-12, ANSAs used AP mines and victim-activated IEDs in Afghanistan, Burma/Myanmar, Colombia, Pakistan, Thailand and Yemen. There are also as yet unconfirmed allegations that ANSAs in Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan captured AP mines in 2012. It is difficult to estimate the numbers of mine victims due to ANSA-laid mines, but it is clear that numbers are considerable. Geneva Call's ongoing engagement with 40 ANSAs is a direct and concrete contribution towards the universalization of the AP mine ban norm.

In 2012, Geneva Call worked on the issue with ANSAs operating in Burma/Myanmar, Colombia, India, Iran, the Philippines, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Turkey, Western Sahara and Yemen. In April, the Sudanese JEM signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines, bringing the total number of signatures of this *Deed* to 42. JEM subsequently facilitated meetings for Geneva Call with other ANSAs that are members of the SRF, notably the SPLM-N. In addition, two Indian ANSAs have expressed interest in signing the *Deed of Commitment*.

Conducting effective mine action in ANSA-influenced areas presents the mine action community with significant additional challenges. During the year, Geneva Call carefully engineered an unprecedented meeting between Senegal's National Mine Action Centre (CNAMS) and the separatist MFDC, to establish direct communication and coordination. The meeting was to finally take place in spring 2013 (see page 10). In Burma/Myanmar, Geneva Call continued to educate and inform ANSAs about mine action, and worked with mine action agencies to introduce them to ANSAs and facilitate mine action in areas under their control. In a breakthrough with the KNU/KNLA in Burma/Myanmar, Geneva Call was invited to train senior officers from seven brigades on the relevant AP mine norms and the opportunities for mine action that the peace process offers.

Geneva Call and its partners continued regular monitoring of signatories to the *Deed of Commitment* to ensure compliance and follow-up on the implementation of their commitments. As part of these efforts, monitoring visits took place to signatory ANSAs active in Burma/Myanmar, India, Iran, the Philippines, Somalia, Sudan, Turkey and Western Sahara. During the year, Geneva Call found no evidence that any of the signatories had violated their obligations under the *Deed*. Geneva Call also strengthened the capacity of local civil society, media and other stakeholders to assist in the monitoring process.

In the Philippines, Geneva Call and its local partner trained 42 senior trainers from the military wing of the *Deed* signatory MILF, who then helped to train 1,028 members of its forces on the MILF's *General Order No. 3* banning AP mines. In Somalia, the Puntland authorities destroyed 151 AP mines in compliance with the *Deed of Commitment*, while Somaliland authorities embarked upon a major awareness campaign to inform the general public about the AP mine ban legislation adopted in 2009 at the initiative of Geneva Call.



Mine Risk Education by Geneva Call in Colombia. © Geneva Call

Even if ANSAs do not fully commit to the AP mine ban, Geneva Call pushes for step-by-step changes that reduce the impact on civilian populations, such as mine clearance, marking, information about mined areas for local people, and so on. For example, in October, as a result of Geneva Call's indirect engage-

ment (through CBOs and indigenous organizations), Colombia's ELN recognized publicly mistakes it had made in the past and stated that it would do more to reduce AP mine impact on civilians. As mentioned above, ELN has identified areas where mines that affect communities may be cleared. Discussions on AP mine use also began directly with the FARC in late 2012.

Together with SPADO Geneva Call launched *Addressing the Impact of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War in Pakistan*, focusing on recommendations for further action by ANSAs and by the Government of Pakistan, amongst other stakeholders¹³. The report was also published in Urdu and launched in Islamabad by SPADO.

Geneva Call is an active member of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and continued to work closely with mine action organizations and national Mine Action Centres in relevant countries. Geneva Call also participates in global-level coordination of mine action activities through the UN-led Global Protection Cluster Area of Responsibility on Mine Action.

In 2012, Geneva Call hosted several side-events during expert meetings and State Parties meetings of the AP Mine Ban Convention. At the Convention on Conventional Weapons, it presented the work done to facilitate cooperation between parties to the 2007-2009 conflict in Niger on the removal of AV mines.



Mined area, Casamance, Senegal. © Geneva Call

- International humanitarian norms
- Displacement of civilians
- Humanitarian space
- Theirwords.org

- Geneva Call engaged with 15 ANSAs specifically on international humanitarian standards, and provided relevant training at the request of their leadership.
- Geneva Call completed four training manuals for its staff to use when providing ANSA-specific training in international norms. The training takes into account ANSAs' specific field realities.
- An online directory of almost 400 ANSAs humanitarian commitments was made available.
- Geneva Call continued its work on humanitarian space, and to monitor issues around the criminalization of engagement with ANSAs.

Training ANSAs on international humanitarian norms

Geneva Call is asked more and more by *Deed of Commitment* signatories and non-signatories alike to provide assistance in understanding and implementing humanitarian norms. Towards this end, Geneva Call led workshops during the year on IHL/IHRL with a number of ANSAs to introduce international standards, help prepare the ground for policy development and compare international standards to the ANSAs' own standards, codes of conduct and practices. These activities are described within the relevant country sections of this report.

Working with adult education specialists and practitioners, Geneva Call has created a set of modular tools to support training of ANSAs on humanitarian norms. These training modules are for the most part based on the *Deeds of Commitment* and seek to also address ANSAs' real and practical concerns when implementing international standards in their operating contexts.

The modules cover sexual violence in armed conflict and gender discrimination; the protection of children from the effects of armed conflict; obligations under international law regarding AP mines and ERW and an introduction to the Law of Armed Conflict. They are

available in Arabic, Burmese, English, French, Spanish and Turkish. The modules are 'living documents' and were piloted during the first part of the year towards ANSAs, civil society and local media in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, and have been adapted to other situations of armed violence such as Palestinian refugee camps in the Lebanon.

The training tools were developed in partnership with FSD, with funding from the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department.

The country sections of this present report give many examples of training workshops where these modules have been used. As they are developed and refined with experience, these unique documents will continue to be used as part of Geneva Call's engagement and training work with ANSAs for many years to come.



ANSAs and the displacement of civilians in armed conflict

Geneva Call is increasingly working on a broader range of humanitarian norms, many of which relate, or are relevant to issues around the displacement of civilians in armed conflict. The situation is not black and white. ANSAs are the main agents of displacement in more than a quarter of situations of displacement; for example, for reasons of military operations in civilian areas thus forcing people to flee, opposing the return of displaced populations, or occupying civilian buildings.

However, there are also examples where ANSAs have played a positive role, for example in providing protection to the displaced, allowing humanitarian access to camps in areas they control and/or support for their return where Governments are unable or unwilling to do so. In other words ANSAs can impact, negatively or positively, the entire displacement cycle. Under IHL, ANSAs have clear obligations towards displaced

persons. In short, ANSAs can be part of the prevention of and/or the solution to displacement.

Humanitarian actors are confronted with a diversity of ANSAs, ranging from non- or partially internationally recognized States, to armed insurgents and militias, to powerful criminal gangs. Their structures and motivations differ considerably, which can have an important bearing on how their behaviour might be influenced, how the situation of displaced populations is affected, how and when ANSAs can help and give protection and how humanitarian assistance is delivered effectively and without risk for aid providers. Geneva Call commissioned research starting in 2012 to further explore the nexus between ANSAs and displacement, in order to provide better engagement strategies for the prevention, benefit and protection of displaced people. This research will be published in mid-2013.

Humanitarian space at risk

Lack of access to ANSAs and to areas they control is often an obstacle to humanitarian relief agencies, as it is to Geneva Call, and to organizations concerned with peace-building. Access is restricted or denied by some Governments. Some States have adopted counter-terrorism measures and/or introduced funding conditions that restrict, if not criminalize, dialogue with proscribed ANSAs. The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (DG ECHO) supported Geneva Call to present and discuss such challenges. Geneva Call, with FSD, brought together representatives and practitioners from European institutions, I/NGOs and donors¹⁴ in Brussels in November for a roundtable on the subject. A comprehensive, albeit fictitious, scenario set the scene for discussing the operational dilemmas faced by humanitarian agencies, and ways to solve them.

"I stress my ongoing concern about counter-terrorism legislation and other measures that criminalize the engagement of humanitarian organizations with certain non-State armed groups or that otherwise impede principled humanitarian action."

Report of the UN Secretary-General to the Security Council on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, May 2012

A very small number of States does not allow Geneva Call access to ANSAs on their territory. They believe that the work of Geneva Call is in contradiction with the fight against terrorism, and have tried hard to limit Geneva Call's engagement. This point highlights the importance of the preservation of humanitarian space to engage with ANSAs in the interests of the protection of civilians, and the crucial need for participation by NGOs in international fora to bring to State-led diplomatic processes their knowledge and experience of community impact in the field.

www.theirwords.org a unique directory of armed non-State actor commitments

In November, Geneva Call launched www.theirwords.org, a unique online collection of commitments and policies made by ANSAs on IHL and IHRL issues. The directory includes unilateral declarations and statements, internal rules and regulations and agreements made by ANSAs with Governments, inter-governmental or humanitarian organizations. The database is a tool for comparing ANSAs' actual behaviour with their stated intentions, and for holding them accountable to what they have committed or agreed to. The publication of such documents does not mean endorsement by Geneva Call, nor that the commitments made by ANSAs are compliant with IHL and IHRL, or that they have been implemented and respected in practice.

www.theirwords.org contains almost 400 online documents and will grow to over 500 in 2013. It fills a gap in available resources, and will serve to better understand ANSA views on IHL and IHRL.



Karen soldiers prepare for a patrol to guard the perimeter of their camp in Karen state in Burma/Myanmar. © Steve Sandford/IRIN

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

“The umbrella organization, InterAction, held a seminar recently on how to measure results and impact of protection work. One of the best presentations we heard by far was on the work that Geneva Call is doing to track results, and the very impressive frameworks it has developed. I remain a huge fan of Geneva Call.”

Dr Carrie Santos, Executive Director of International Response and Programs, American Red Cross

Geneva Call has begun to make use of Theory of Change methodology to better plan, monitor and evaluate its programmes. This methodology will articulate the logic behind Geneva Call's work at a general and project-specific level in support of more traditional logical framework models. Theories of Change show how Geneva Call and its approach contribute to changes – in the knowledge, attitudes, policies and, ultimately, behaviours – of ANSAs, and hence contribute to bringing about substantive improvements in conditions for civilians in armed conflict.

This work with Theories of Change also helps to map a variety of assumptions and risks that are inherent in Geneva Call projects. Addressing these in a considered way can impact upon expected outcomes and minimize the risk for unintended negative outcomes. Geneva Call shows how it has envisioned changes to political and on-the-ground circumstances and how project planning takes this into account. M&E tools are therefore being developed to help to improve baselines and conflict analysis that is the basis for before / after assessments and other evaluation methodologies. Geneva Call is operating in situations of armed conflict and other situations of armed violence, where circumstances change and actors

shift positions frequently. Geneva Call therefore needs to build an intervention logic that mitigates risk when changes happen frequently, yet still aims to articulate the positive impact which the programme is contributing to.

Geneva Call is also seeking ways to express its impact and achievements in a way that is accessible and understandable, considering that to change behaviours of ANSAs is a long-term process taking place in a world where there is often a high expectation of rapid impact. The process of developing new indicators will help the organization to assess how its work is progressing towards the results it wants within the given time-frame of a project. In other words, Geneva Call will be able to see trends and make adjustments accordingly.

Given that change may not result from one action but from a series or a critical mass of actions, and other external contributory factors, it is not a simple task to attribute behaviour change to any one factor, or to any one actor in the process. Monitoring impact and results is also limited by insufficient access. This therefore creates challenges both in the data collection process in these areas, and in verifying milestones over time. As advocacy and behaviour change take time, this approach also responds to the need to adapt to institutional donor requirements, to show results mapped over time and to contribute to internal knowledge and learning.

Geneva Call has been fortunate to work with Integrity Research during the year to develop its M&E methodologies, and is grateful for its helpful and positive guidance.

Communication and Public Advocacy

Recognized for its innovative and unique approach to engagement with ANSAs, Geneva Call is often invited to attend and speak at conferences and workshops, to contribute to several advisory boards and to share its experience and expertise with policymakers, key decision makers, academic and research institutions, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, Governments and foundations. Geneva Call is also frequently requested to write articles and contribute to research projects and reports. These contributions are listed here. Further information, papers and other documentation are available at www.genevacall.org

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

- **Las violencias hacia las mujeres, adolescentes y niñas en los departamentos del Cauca, Nariño y Putumayo cometidas por actores armados no estatales en Colombia**, Gender School of the University of Bogotá and Geneva Call, Colombia, 2012
- **Le gouvernement et l'ex-rébellion ensemble dans la lutte contre les mines. Rapport de l'atelier technique sur la coopération au déminage humanitaire**, April 2012
A report in French on this unique workshop on humanitarian demining cooperation that took place in Agadez in October 2011 between the Government of Niger and former MNJ rebels.
- **Standards of Proof in International Humanitarian and Human Rights Fact-Finding and Inquiry Missions**, May 2012
This research project was undertaken under the auspices of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.
- **Addressing the Impact of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War in Pakistan**, SPADO with the support of Geneva Call, December 2012 in English, and March 2013 in Urdu.

CONFERENCES, ROUNDTABLES, FOCUS GROUPS

- **Protecting children affected by armed conflict: advancing the agenda of the last 10 years**, Wilton Park, UK, March 2012
- **Engaging with armed non-State actors in the Broader Middle East on the Protection of Civilians**, Broumana, Lebanon, 30-31 March 2012
Together with Permanent Peace Movement, Geneva Call hosted this conference to bring together experts and practitioners to share views and experiences on the question. The report will be published in 2013.
- **Children and Armed Conflict**, Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, Geneva Call and several key child protection actors, New York, April 2012
The meeting developed upon a recent Issue Brief published by the International Peace Institute (IPI) on the question of complementarity with UN processes, and concluded that alternatives to the MRM were increasingly necessary.
- **Cooperation between the former rebels of Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice and the Government of Niger**, Convention on Conventional Weapons, Meeting of Experts, Geneva, April 2012
Geneva Call presented the work it has done to facilitate cooperation between parties to the 2007-2009 conflict in Niger on the removal of AV mines.
- **Humanitarian Impacts**, Statement by Geneva Call on the occasion of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons Meeting of Experts on Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines (MOTAPM), 4 April, 2012

- **Reclaiming the Protection of Civilians under International Humanitarian Law**, Kampala, Uganda, 25 – 26 April, 2012

At this workshop, organized by Uganda and Norway, one of several regional workshops on the issue that will culminate in an international conference in Oslo in 2013, Geneva Call presented on the question *How can compliance with IHL be improved among non-State armed groups?*

- **Thematic Workshop on Humanitarian Engagement with non-State actors: Challenges and Opportunities**, Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance in Protection (PHAP), Bangkok, 24-25 May 2012
Geneva Call provided some of the training during this workshop.

- **Web seminar on Engaging Armed Groups**

On the occasion of the publication of *Engaging Armed Groups* (Volume 93, No. 883), the International Review of the Red Cross and the Harvard Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (HPCR) hosted a live web seminar with ICRC and Geneva Call, 26 June 2012

- **Protección a la población civil en el marco del conflicto armado y los diálogos de paz: Experiencias y propuestas**, Bogotá, co-organized with SUIPPCOL, October 2012

- **Humanitarian Space at Risk?**, Brussels, November 2012
Organized under the aegis of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department by Geneva Call and FSD.

- **Effectiveness of the Protection of Children's Rights in Conflict and Post-Conflict Environments** University of Khartoum, French Embassy in Sudan, and the University of Strasbourg, Khartoum, 20-21 November 2012
Following this regional symposium, Geneva Call contributed a research article on *Armed Non-State Actors and Child Protection* to be published in 2013.

- **Successes and challenges faced by current and former armed non-State actors in implementing their mine ban commitments**, 12th Meeting of States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention, Geneva, December 2012
Geneva Call presented cases studies from the Philippines and Somalia with speakers from the

Government of the Philippines and from the Puntland Mine Action Centre.

- **La participation des Femmes en Politique: partage d'expériences francophones**, Dakar, Senegal, December 2012

Geneva Call was invited to present its experience at this conference organized by the Friends of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie in cooperation with the Government of Senegal

- **Addressing the Impact of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War in Pakistan**, with SPADO, 12th Meeting of States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention, Palais des Nations, Geneva, December 2012

ARTICLES

- **Engaging Armed Non-State Actors to Protect Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict: When the Stick Doesn't Cut the Mustard**, Journal of Human Rights Practice, OUP, March 2012

This article provides narrative of the development of Geneva Call's programme on Children and ANSAs, and highlights some of the challenges faced.

- **Engaging non-State Armed Groups on the protection of Children: Towards Strategic Complementarity**, International Peace Institute and Geneva Call, Issue Brief, April 2012

The article's purpose is to generate discussion with NGO and UN counterparts on the most effective way to utilize the comparative advantages of different actors.

- **Monitoring armed non-state actor compliance with humanitarian norms: a look at international mechanisms and the Geneva Call *Deed of Commitment***, International Review of the Red Cross, 883 *Engaging armed groups*, June 2012

This article examines the strength of international compliance mechanisms that address the conduct of ANSAs and focuses on Geneva Call's experience with the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines.

- **Armed Non-State Actors and Humanitarian Norms: Lessons from the Geneva Call Experience**, in *Modern Warfare, Armed Groups, Private Militaries, Humanitarian Organizations and the Law*, UBC Press, August 2012

COMMUNIQUÉS

- **Geneva Call in the world's Top 100 Best NGOs**, January 2012
- **Sudan: the Justice and Equality Movement pledges against anti-personnel mines**, April 2012
- **Geneva Call launches a new *Deed of Commitment* towards an end to sexual violence and gender discrimination**, July 2012
- **Burma/Myanmar: Two armed groups undertake not to use child soldiers: the first to sign Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment* on children**, August 2012
- **THEIR WORDS www.theirwords.org**, November 2012
- **Iranian Kurdish armed non-State actors commit to a prohibition on sexual violence in armed conflict and to improving child protection**, December 2012

ADVISORY BOARDS

- **Education under Attack, Advisory Group of the Use of Schools Working Group**
Geneva Call is contributing on ANSA issues to this working group which is creating guidelines on the military use of schools.
- **The Ownership of Norms Project and the ANSA Reaction to International Humanitarian Norms Project**
Geneva Call is member of the Advisory Group for this research project led by the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.
- **Study on the Impact of Counter-terrorism Measures on Principled Humanitarian Action**, Advisory Group of Experts for the Norwegian Refugee Council and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

NEWSLETTERS

Several newsletters were published during the year, in May, November and December 2012 to coincide with specific events.

The documents can be found on www.genevacall.org



Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF) members share a meal at Camp Salahuddin on the Philippines island of Mindanao.
© Guy Oliver/IRIN

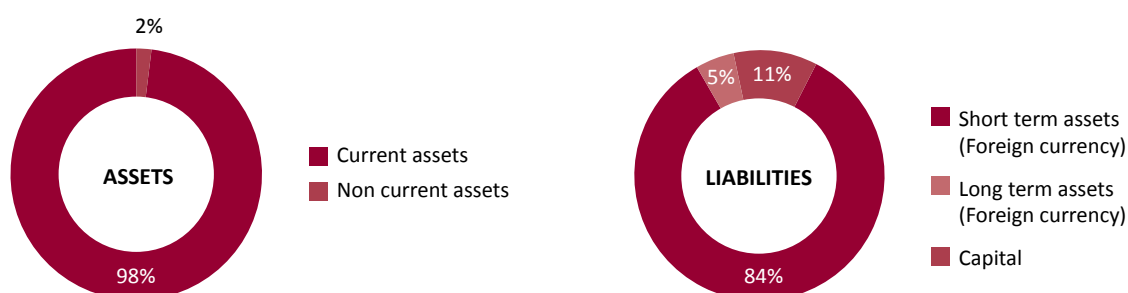


Two MILF soldiers listen to Geneva Call's presentation on banning AP mines at the camp Salahuddin on the Philippines island of Mindanao. © Guy Oliver/IRIN

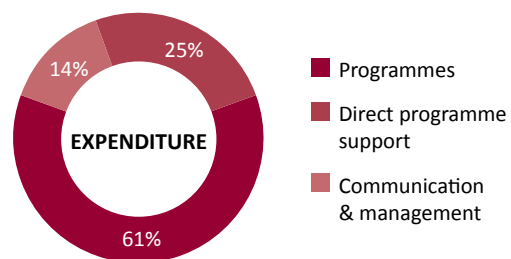
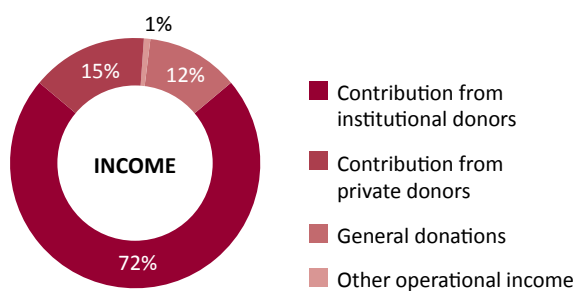
Financial results

The systems, processes and procedures implemented by Geneva Call ensure that funds are used properly and effectively. New financial indicators, a unique information system and a process of internal financial control were implemented during the year. In 2012, Geneva Call completed the two-year transition of its accounting process, from a cash basis method to an accrual basis method. This means that comparison between years becomes difficult.

BALANCE SHEET	BALANCE 31.12.2012	BALANCE 31.12.2011
CURRENT ASSETS	2,304,112	434,798
– Cash & cash equivalent	1,214,629	348,814
– Other current assets	80,197	7,266
– Receivables	5,206	3,818
– Grants receivable	1,002,784	64,626
– Accrued assets	1,296	10,274
NON CURRENT ASSETS	39,928	36,594
– Financial assets	36,631	36,594
– IT infrastructure	3,298	–
TOTAL ASSETS	2,344,040	471,392
SHORT TERM ASSETS (FOREIGN CURRENCY)	1,961,146	433,817
– Accounts payable	166,516	106,765
– Grants received in advance	1,786,630	322,060
– Accruals liabilities	8,000	4,992
LONG TERM ASSETS (FOREIGN CURRENCY)	114,000	114,000
– Reserve	114,000	114,000
CAPITAL	268,894	-76,425
Result	145,319	-76,744
Reserve	200,000	–
Deferred result	-126,425	-49,681
Capital	50,000	50,000
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,344,040	471,392



STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS	BALANCE 31.12.2012	BALANCE 31.12.2011
INCOME	3,437,950	2,492,518
– General donations	400,893	23,125
– Contribution from institutional donors	2,466,906	2,084,129
– Contribution from private donors	521,477	357,488
– Other operational income	48,674	27,777
EXPENDITURES	3,069,513	2,614,633
– Programmes	1,682,464	1,447,123
– Direct programme support	1,013,821	700,474
<i>Operational expenditures</i>	<i>2,696,286</i>	<i>2,147,597</i>
– Communication & management	373,227	390,128
– International secretariat	–	76,908
RESULT FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES	368,438	-122,115
Realized foreign exchange loss	-23,118	-14,629
Allocation of provision	–	60,000
Allocation of reserve	-200,000	–
OPERATING RESULT	145,319	-76,744



Financial results (continued)

CASH FLOW STATEMENT	2012	2011
– Net surplus / Deficit for the year	145,319	-76,744
– Depreciation	1,624	–
– Provisions	200,000	-60,000
– Increase / decrease in other current assets	-72,931	17,226
– Increase / decrease in receivables	-1,388	25,439
– Increase / decrease in grants receivable	-938,158	190,456
– Increase / decrease in accrued assets	8,978	28,084
– Increase / decrease in accounts payable	59,752	50,683
– Increase / decrease in grant contracts	1,464,569	65,944
– Increase / decrease in accrued liabilities	3,008	-36,957
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	870,774	204,130
– Financial investment	-37	-61
– IT investment	-4,922	–
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES	-4,959	-61
– Increase / decrease in loan	–	–
– Increase / decrease in equity	–	–
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	–	–
INCREASE / DECREASE IN CASH & CASH EQUIVALENT	865,815	204,069
– Cash & cash equivalent, beginning of year	348,814	144,745
– Cash & cash equivalent, end of year	1,214,629	348,814
INCREASE / DECREASE IN CASH & CASH EQUIVALENT	865,815	204,069

Staff and Partners

LOCAL PARTNERS

AFRICA

- Association pour la Promotion Rurale de l'Arrondissement Nyassia – Solidarité, Développement, Paix (APRAN- SPD), Senegal
- Campagne Sénégalaise contre les Mines, Senegal
- Institute for Practical Research and Training (IPRT), Somalia/Somaliland
- Sahrawi Campaign to Ban Landmines (SCBL), Western Sahara

ASIA

- Burma Partnership, Burma/Myanmar
- Committee for Internally Displaced Karen People (CIDKP), Burma/Myanmar
- Human Rights Education Institute of Burma (HREIB), Burma/Myanmar
- Institute for Bangsamoro Studies (IBS), the Philippines
- Karenni Social Welfare Development Center (KSWDC), Burma/Myanmar
- Sustainable Peace and Development Organisation (SPADO), Pakistan
- The Liaison Office (TLO), Afghanistan
- United NGO Mission of Manipur (UNMM), India

LATIN AMERICA

- Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Pueblo Siona (ACIPS), Colombia
- Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas Norte Cauca (ACIN), Colombia
- Cabildo Mayor Awa de Ricaurte (CAMAWARI), Colombia
- Compromiso Humano, Colombia
- Escuela de Estudios de Género de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia (Bogotá), Colombia
- Escuela de Derecho Propio de los Pastos Laureano Inampué Cuatin, Colombia
- Organización Zonal Indígena del Putumayo (OZIP), Colombia
- SUIPPCOL (Programa Suizo para la Promoción de la Paz en Colombia)
- Unidad Indígena del Pueblo Awa (UNIPA), Colombia

MIDDLE-EAST

- Nashet Association, Lebanon
- Institute of Political and Moral Guidance for Palestinian National Security Forces, Lebanon
- Permanent Peace Movement, Lebanon

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NGOS

- Action on Armed Violence (AOAV)
- Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Center)
- Child Soldiers Initiative (CSI)
- DanChurchAid (DCA)
- Global Coalition to Prevent Education from Attack
- Global Protection Cluster areas of responsibility for
 - Child Protection,
 - Gender-based Violence,
 - Mine Action.
- Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)
- International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action / Fondation Suisse de Déminage (FSD)
- Swisspeace / KOFF
- UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)
- United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)
- UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict

ACADEMIC INSTITUTES, RESEARCH CENTRES, UNIVERSITIES

- Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights (ADH)
- Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP)
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva (IHEID)
- Harvard University, Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research (HPCR)
- International Peace Institute (IPI), New York
- Sanremo International Institute of Humanitarian Law (IIHL)
- Small Arms Survey (SAS), Geneva
- University of Bogotá, School of Gender Studies
- University of Geneva

REGULAR STAFF

- Maud **Allegrini**, Assistant to the President, from 1 June to 31 August
- Mehmet **Balci**, Programme Director, Caucasus, Middle East and Latin America
- Sami **Ben Ayed**, Head of Finance and Administration
- Latifa **Benmou**, Housekeeping
- Nadia **Berrada**, Financial Controller
- Judith **Binzegger**, Assistant to the President, until 31 May 2012
- Pascal **Bongard**, Programme Director, Africa & Policy Advisor; Head of Operations since July 2012
- Maud **Bonnet**, Project Coordinator
- Tim **Carstairs**, Head of Communications and External Relations
- Elisabeth **Decrey Warner**, President
- Carole **Frampton de Tscherner**, Programme Director, Africa
- Adrian **Goodliffe**, Programme Officer, Africa
- Beytul **Gorkem**, Programme Assistant, Middle East
- Karima **Jambulatova**, Programme Officer, Caucasus until February 2012
- Armin **Köhli**, Programme Officer, Middle East
- Katherine **Kramer**, Programme Director, Asia & Landmines and Other Explosive Devices Coordinator
- Aurélie **Lamazière**, Gender Issues Coordinator
- Reno **Meyer**, Programme Officer, Asia
- Thomas **Payot**, Bookkeeper
- Chris **Rush**, Senior Programme Officer, Asia
- Alessio **di Sanzio**, Communications & Events Officer
- Kim **Schautz**, Office Assistant
- Ann-Kristin **Sjöberg**, Senior Programme Officer, Latin America
- Jonathan **Somer**, Children and ANSAs Coordinator & Legal Advisor

The equivalent full-time staff level in 2012 was 18.27 as some staff work part-time. Three of the staff above ended their contracts during the year, and several new staff joined. Pascal Bongard became Head of Operations in July initially sharing responsibilities 50:50 with the President who was acting as Head of Operations *ad interim* until that time.

CONSULTANTS

Nora Allgaier, Helder da Silva Carvalho, Vicken Cheterian, Nick Cumming-Bruce, Eric Filippino, Annie Hylton,

Kathleen Morf, Delli Mawazo Sesete, Michael Siegrist, Sonia Pezier, Wissam Saliby, Youssef Wehbeh.

The staff of Geneva Call's local partner in Colombia, Compromiso Humano: Yolvi Lena Padilla, Carlos Alberto Guarín, Marylin Pachón Ortiz, Luz Marina Mora Chaparro.

Colombia consultants: Julián Espinosa, Carolina Acosta, Helmer Guevara, Mirtha Rodriguez Valenzuela.

INTERNS

Edison Aldaz, Marion Bruschi, Gaetane Cornet, Carolina Espinoza, Paroma Ghose, Valeria Guerra, Mirko Hoff, Pamela Annie Hylton, Maryam Al-Jawahiry, Laura Messinger, Maria Beatrice Montesi, Thomas Morgan, Arnaldo Rabolini, Joana Racine, Tilman Rodenhäuser, Marica Tamanini, Maud Vuille, Katherine Weir.

BOARD

- **Prof. Marco Sassòli**, Chair of the Board, Professor of International Law at the University of Geneva
- **Priscilla Hayner**, Vice-Chair of the Board, Independent Consultant; Senior Advisor, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
- **Bertrand Reich**, Secretary of the Board, Lawyer, Member of the Geneva Bar Association
- **Micheline Calmy-Rey**, former Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, President of the Swiss Confederation in 2007 and 2011, Visiting Professor at the University of Geneva
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- **Prof. Vera Gowlland-Debbas**, Emeritus Professor of International Law at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies
- **Tom McCarthy**, former Senior Advisor to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
- **Alexander C. Notter**, Chairman of the Board of Directors AP Anlage- und Privatbank AG, Zurich; Founding Partner, CFM Partners AG, Zurich; Member of the Board, Reyl & Cie SA, Geneva; Board Member of Trinity Street Asset Management, London
- **Ruth-Gaby Vermot**, former Member of the Swiss Parliament and of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Acronyms

AOAV Action on Armed Violence	MFDC Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance
ANSA Armed non-State Actor	MILF Moro Islamic Liberation Front
AP mine Anti-Personnel mine	MNJ Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice
APM Convention Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention	MNLA Mon National Liberation Army
APRAN-SDP L'Association pour la promotion rurale de l'arrondissement de Nyassia – Solidarité, Développement et Paix	MNLA Mouvement National de Libération de l'Azawad
AV mine Anti-Vehicle mine	MRE Mine Risk Education
BIAF Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces	MRM Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism
CBO Community-based organization	NGO Non-governmental organization
CNAMS Centre National Antimines du Sénégal	NMSP New Mon State Party
CNF Chin National Front	NSCN-IM National Socialist Council of Nagalim-Isac/Muivah faction
DCA DanChurchAid	NSCN-KK National Socialist Council of Nagalim/Khole-Kitovi faction
DFLP Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine	PDKI Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan
DRC Democratic Republic of Congo	PFLP Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
ELN Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN – National Liberation Army)	PHAP Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection
ERW Explosive Remnants of War	PJAK Party for Freedom and Life in Kurdistan
FARC Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP – Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army)	PKK Kurdistan Workers' Party
FSD Swiss Foundation for Mine Action / Fondation suisse de déminage	PLO Palestine Liberation Organisation
GICHD Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining	PMAC Puntland Mine Action Centre
HPC-D Hmar People's Congress-Democracy	PNLO Pa'O National Liberation Organisation
HPG People's Defence Forces	PNSF Palestinian National Security Forces
IBS Institute of Bangsamoro Studies	PSLF Palaung State Liberation Front
ICBL International Campaign to Ban Landmines	PYD Party of Democratic Union
ICRC International Committee of the Red Cross	SAS Small Arms Survey
IED Improvised Explosive Device	SLM/A MM Sudan Liberation Movement/Army Minni Minnawi
IHL International Humanitarian Law	SLM/A WW Sudan Liberation Movement/Army Abdel Wahid al-Nur
IHRL International Human Rights Law	SCBL Sahrawi Campaign to Ban Landmines
I/NGOs International non-governmental organization	SMAC Somaliland Mine Action Centre
JEM Justice and Equality Movement	SPADO Sustainable Peace and Development Organization
KA Karenni Army	SPLM/A Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army
KDPI Kurdistan Democratic Party-Iran	SPLM-N Sudan People's Liberation Movement - North
KDA Kachin Defense Army	SRF Sudan Revolutionary Front
KIA Kachin Independence Army	SSA-S Shan State Army - South Shan
KIO Kachin Independence Organization	TLO The Liaison Office
KNLA Karen National Liberation Army	UN United Nations
KNO Kuki National Organization	UNAMA United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
KNU Karen National Union	UNAMID United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur
KNPP Karenni National Progressive Party	UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund
KONGRA-GEL Kurdistan People's Congress/People's Defence Forces (HPG)	UNMM United NGO Manipur Mission
LCC Local Coordination Committee(s)	UWSA United Wa State Army
M23 Mouvement du 23 mars	YJB Yekitiya Jinen Bilind – Supreme Union of Women of Kurdistan
MAG Mines Advisory Group	YPG Yeze Parastny Gel - Popular Protection Unit
MoU Memorandum of Understanding	ZRO Zomi Reunification Organization

Deed of Commitment under Geneva Call for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict

WE, the (NAME OF THE NON-STATE ACTOR),
through our duly authorized representative(s),

Concerned with the harmful and widespread impact of armed conflict on the physical and mental development of children and the long-term consequences this has for human security, durable peace, and development;

Affirming our determination to protect the civilian population, in particular children, from the effects or dangers of military actions, and to respect their right to life, to human dignity, to education and to development, with the best interest of the child as a primary consideration;

Recognizing that children associated with armed forces are at particular risk of exposure to attacks by opposing forces;

Taking due account of the varying standards within international law instruments providing special protection for children affected by armed conflict, in particular the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and determined to clarify our responsibilities on the recruitment and use in hostilities of persons under 18 years of age;

Mindful that the Statute of the International Criminal Court criminalizes the act of conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities;

Rejecting the notion that any cause, for whatever reason, may justify unlawful treatment of children in armed conflict;

Accepting that international humanitarian norms apply to and oblige all parties to armed conflict;

Stressing that the present Commitment protects all children, both girls and boys; *And understanding that for the purposes of this Deed of Commitment:*

“children” are defined as persons under the age of 18, and where there is doubt as to whether a person has reached the age of 18, (s)/he will be treated as a child;

HEREBY solemnly commit ourselves to the following terms:

1. TO ADHERE to a total ban on the use of children in hostilities.
2. TO ENSURE that children are not recruited into our armed forces, whether voluntarily or non-voluntarily. Children will not be allowed to join or remain in our armed forces.
3. TO NEVER COMPEL children to associate with, or remain associated with, our armed forces. By associate, we mean any type of direct or supporting activity whether combat related or otherwise. In the event that children have been compelled to do so, they will be released at the earliest possible opportunity in accordance with Article 6 of this *Deed of Commitment*.
4. TO ENSURE that children do not accompany our armed forces during our military operations and to take all feasible measures so that children in areas where we exercise control are not present during military operations.
5. TO TREAT humanely children who are detained or imprisoned for reasons related to the armed conflict, in accordance with their age and gender specific needs, recognizing that deprivation of liberty may be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time. The death penalty will not be pronounced or executed on a person for any offense committed while a child.
6. The release or disassociation of children from our armed forces must be done in safety and security, and whenever possible, in cooperation with specialized child protection actors.



APPEL DE GENÈVE GENEVA CALL

7. TO FURTHER ENDEAVOUR TO PROVIDE children in areas where we exercise authority with the aid and care they require, in cooperation with humanitarian or development organizations where appropriate. Towards these ends, and among other things, we will:
 - i) take concrete measures towards ensuring that children have access to adequate food, health care (including psycho-social support), education, and where possible, leisure and cultural activities;
 - ii) protect children against sexual and other forms of violence;
 - iii) facilitate the provision of impartial humanitarian assistance to children in need;
 - iv) facilitate efforts by impartial humanitarian organizations to reunite children with their families;
 - v) avoid using for military purposes schools or premises primarily used by children.
8. TO ISSUE the necessary orders and directives to our political and military organs, commanders and fighters for the implementation and enforcement of our commitment, including measures for information dissemination and training. Commanders and superiors are responsible for their subordinates. In case of non-compliance, we will take all necessary measures to cease violations immediately, initiate appropriate investigations and impose sanctions in accordance with international standards.
9. TO ALLOW AND COOPERATE in the monitoring and verification of our present commitment by Geneva Call and other independent international and national organizations associated for this purpose with Geneva Call. Such monitoring and verification include visits and inspections in all areas where we operate, and the provision of the necessary information and reports, as may be required for such purposes in the spirit of transparency and accountability.
10. TO TREAT this commitment as one step or part of a broader commitment in principle to the ideal of humanitarian norms, particularly of international humanitarian law and human rights, and to contribute to their respect in field practice as well as to the further development of humanitarian norms for armed conflict.
11. *This Deed of Commitment* shall not affect our legal status, pursuant to the relevant clause in common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949.
12. We understand that Geneva Call may publicize our compliance or non-compliance with this *Deed of Commitment*.
13. We see the desirability of attracting the adherence of other such armed actors to this *Deed of Commitment* and will do our part to promote it.
14. This *Deed of Commitment* complements, or supersedes, as the case may be, any existing unilateral declaration of ours on children and armed conflict.
15. Any reservation to this *Deed of Commitment* must be consistent with its object and purpose, international humanitarian law, and the minimum obligations of State parties to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. It must be expressed in writing upon signature and will be periodically reviewed towards attaining the highest possible respect for the rights of children. Geneva Call will be the final arbiter on the permissibility of any reservation.
16. This *Deed of Commitment* shall take effect immediately upon its signing and receipt by the Government of the Republic and Canton of Geneva which receives it as the custodian of such deeds.

Deed of Commitment under Geneva Call for the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict and towards the Elimination of Gender Discrimination

WE, the (NAME OF THE NON-STATE ACTOR),
through our duly authorized representative(s),

Concerned with the life-long physical, psychological and social impact that sexual violence has on victims, their families and communities, especially in situations of armed conflict, and the threat that it presents to human security and sustainable peace;

Affirming our determination to protect the civilian population and other persons no longer taking part in hostilities from the effects or dangers of military operations, and to respect their fundamental rights;

Confirming our obligation to treat all persons taking no active part in hostilities humanely and without adverse distinction;

Mindful that women, men, girls and boys can be perpetrators as well as victims of sexual violence, and *recognizing* that women and girls are particularly targeted and face additional risks;

Taking due account that international law prohibits all forms of sexual violence, and recognizing that acts of sexual violence may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide;

Resolved to play a role in ending impunity for sexual violence;

Recognizing that sexual violence is a form of cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment or punishment, and accepting that such treatment or punishment of any person cannot be justified under any circumstance;

Recognizing that international law requires respect for the principles of equality and non-discrimination;

Bearing in mind that policies and practices that discriminate on the grounds of gender, in particular those against women and girls, are conducive to other forms of violence;

Acknowledging the importance of participation and involvement of both women and men in decision-making processes at all levels;

Reiterating that international humanitarian norms apply to and oblige all parties to armed conflict;

HEREBY solemnly commit ourselves to the following terms:

1. TO ADHERE to an absolute prohibition of sexual violence against any person, whether civilian, member of State armed forces or member of an armed non-State actor.
2. TO TAKE all feasible measures towards effectively preventing and responding to acts of sexual violence committed by any person, in areas where we exercise authority.
3. TO ENSURE that persons deprived of their liberty are protected from sexual violence.
4. TO FURTHER ENDEAVOUR to provide victims of sexual violence with the assistance and support they require in order to address the impact of such violence. Towards this end, and among other things, we will encourage and facilitate:
 - access to services, including medical, psychological, social and legal services, in cooperation with humanitarian and development organizations where appropriate;
 - rehabilitation programmes and actions that facilitate social reintegration of victims;
 - the provision of reparations to victims.



APPEL DE GENÈVE GENEVA CALL

Confidentiality of the victim(s) of sexual violence will be ensured, to the extent possible and at every stage, including in the process of reporting, making investigations, taking disciplinary measures and providing assistance to victims.

5. TO FURTHER ENDEAVOUR, in addition to our obligation to treat all persons taking no active part in hostilities humanely and without adverse distinction, to eliminate any act or practice of discrimination between men and women in our policies and processes. Towards this end, we will take concrete measures to ensure, among other things, equal protection before the law, equal enjoyment of rights and remedies, equal access to health care and services and equal access to education.
6. TO FURTHER ENDEAVOUR to ensure increased participation and involvement of women in our decision-making processes at all levels.
7. TO ISSUE the necessary orders and directives to our political and military organs, commanders and fighters for the implementation and enforcement of our commitment embodied in the present Deed, including measures for information dissemination and training. Commanders and superiors are responsible for their subordinates. In case of non-compliance, we will take all necessary measures for the immediate cessation of violations, initiate appropriate and swift investigations and impose sanctions that reflect the severity of the violation, in accordance with international standards, with a view to preventing their recurrence.
8. TO ALLOW AND COOPERATE in the monitoring and verification of our present commitment by Geneva Call and/or other independent international and national organizations associated for this purpose with Geneva Call. Such monitoring and verification include visits and inspections in all areas where we operate, the right to interview our members, possible victims and their family members without witnesses, and the provision of the necessary information and reports, as may be required for such purposes in the spirit of transparency and accountability.
9. TO TREAT this commitment as one step or part of a broader commitment in principle to the ideal of humanitarian norms, particularly of international humanitarian law and human rights, and to contribute to their respect in field practice as well as to the further development of humanitarian norms for armed conflict.
10. *This Deed of Commitment* shall not affect our legal status, pursuant to the relevant clause in common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949.
11. We understand that Geneva Call may publicize our compliance or non-compliance with this *Deed of Commitment*.
12. We see the desirability of attracting the adherence of other armed actors to this *This Deed of Commitment* and will do our part to promote it.
13. This *This Deed of Commitment* complements, or supersedes, as the case may be, any existing unilateral declaration of ours on the prohibition of sexual violence and on the elimination of gender discrimination.
14. This *This Deed of Commitment* shall take effect immediately upon its signing and receipt by the Government of the Republic and Canton of Geneva which receives it as the custodian of such Deeds.

Deed of Commitment under Geneva Call for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines and for Cooperation in Mine Action

WE, the (NAME OF THE NON-STATE ACTOR),
through our duly authorized representative(s),

Recognising the global scourge of anti-personnel mines which indiscriminately and inhumanely kill and maim combatants and civilians, mostly innocent and defenceless people, especially women and children, even after the armed conflict is over;

Realising that the limited military utility of anti-personnel mines is far outweighed by their appalling humanitarian, socio-economic and environmental consequences, including on post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction;

Rejecting the notion that revolutionary ends or just causes justify inhumane means and methods of warfare of a nature to cause unnecessary suffering;

Reaffirming our determination to protect the civilian population from the effects or dangers of military actions, and to respect their rights to life, to human dignity, and to development;

Resolved to play our role not only as actors in armed conflicts but also as participants in the practice and development of legal and normative standards for such conflicts, starting with a contribution to the overall humanitarian effort to solve the global landmine problem for the sake of its victims;

Accepting that international humanitarian law and human rights apply to and oblige all parties to armed conflicts;

Acknowledging the norm of a total ban on anti-personnel mines established by the 1997 Ottawa Treaty, which is an important step toward the total eradication of landmines;

NOW, THEREFORE, hereby solemnly commit ourselves to the following terms:

1. TO ADHERE to a total ban on anti-personnel mines. By anti-personnel mines, we refer to those devices which effectively explode by the presence, proximity or contact of a person, including other victim-activated explosive devices and anti-vehicle mines with the same effect whether with or without anti-handling devices. By total ban, we refer to a complete prohibition on all use, development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, and transfer of such mines, under any circumstances. This includes an undertaking on the destruction of all such mines.
2. TO COOPERATE IN AND UNDERTAKE stockpile destruction, mine clearance, victim assistance, mine awareness, and various other forms of mine action, especially where these programs are being implemented by independent international and national organisations.
3. TO ALLOW AND COOPERATE in the monitoring and verification of our commitment to a total ban on anti-personnel mines by Geneva Call and other independent international and national organisations associated for this purpose with Geneva Call. Such monitoring and verification include visits and inspections in all areas where anti-personnel mines may be present, and the provision of the necessary information and reports, as may be required for such purposes in the spirit of transparency and accountability.
4. TO ISSUE the necessary orders and directives to our commanders and fighters for the implementation and enforcement of our commitment under the foregoing paragraphs, including measures for information dissemination and training, as well as disciplinary sanctions in case of non-compliance.



APPEL DE GENÈVE GENEVA CALL

5. TO TREAT this commitment as one step or part of a broader commitment in principle to the ideal of humanitarian norms, particularly of international humanitarian law and human rights, and to contribute to their respect in field practice as well as to the further development of humanitarian norms for armed conflicts.
6. This *Deed of Commitment* shall not affect our legal status, pursuant to the relevant clause in common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949.
7. We understand that Geneva Call may publicize our compliance or non-compliance with this *Deed of Commitment*.
8. We see the desirability of attracting the adherence of other armed groups to this *Deed of Commitment* and will do our part to promote it.
9. This *Deed of Commitment* complements or supercedes, as the case may be, any existing unilateral declaration of ours on anti-personnel mines.
10. This *Deed of Commitment* shall take effect immediately upon its signing and receipt by the Government of the Republic and Canton of Geneva which receives it as the custodian of such deeds and similar unilateral declarations.

Geneva Call is engaging 49* active ANSAs on four thematic areas

REGION	COUNTRY	ORGANIZATION	ACTIVE	THEMATIC AREAS				
				AP mine ban	Child protection	Prohibition of sexual violence and elimination of gender discrimination	International humanitarian norms*	
AFRICA	BURUNDI	Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie-Forces de Défense de la Démocratie (CNDD-FDD)	no	✓				
	MALI	Mouvement National pour la Libération de l'Azawad (MNLA)	yes					
	NIGER	Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice (MNJ)	yes					
	SENEGAL	Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance (MFDC)	yes					
	SOMALIA	Banadiri		no	✓			
		Hiran Patriotic Alliance / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (HPA/SRRC)	no	✓				
		Jowhar Administration	no	✓				
		Juba Valley Alliance (JVA)	yes	✓				
		Puntland State of Somalia (PSS)	yes	✓				
		Rahanweyn Resistance Army / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council – Sheykh Adan "Madobe" (RRA/SRRC-Madobe)	no	✓				
		Rahanweyn Resistance Army / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council – Hassan Mohamed Nur "Shatigudud" (RRA/SRRC-Shatigudud)	no	✓				
		Somali African Muki Organization / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council - Nakuru (SAMO/SRRC/Nakuru)	no	✓				
		Somali National Front / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SNF/SRRC)	yes	✓				
		Somali Patriotic Movement / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council – Aden Abdullahi Nur "Gabyow" (SPM/SRRC-Gabyow)	no	✓				
		Somaliland authorities	yes					
		Southern Somali National Movement / BIREM (SSNM/BIREM)	no	✓				
		Southern Somali National Movement / Somalia National Army / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (SSNM/SNA/SRRC)	no	✓				
		Transitional National Government (TNG)	no	✓				
		United Somali Congress / North Mogadishu / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (USC/North Mogadishu/SRRC)	no	✓				
		United Somali Congress/ Somali Salvation Army (USC/SSA)	no	✓				
		United Somali Congress / Somalia National Army / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council (USC/SSA/SRRC)	yes	✓				
	United Somali Congress / Somalia National Army / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council / Nakuru (USC/SSA/SRRC/Nakuru)	yes	✓					
	SUDAN	Justice and Equality Mouvement (JEM)	yes	✓				
		Sudan People's Liberation Movement / Army (SPLM/A)	no	✓				
		Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement – North (SPLM-North)	yes					
		Sudan Liberation Movement / Army – Abdel Wahid al-Nur (SLM/A-AW)	yes					
		Sudan Liberation Movement / Army – Minni Minnawi (SLM/A-MM)	yes					
WESTERN SAHARA	Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario Front)	yes	✓					

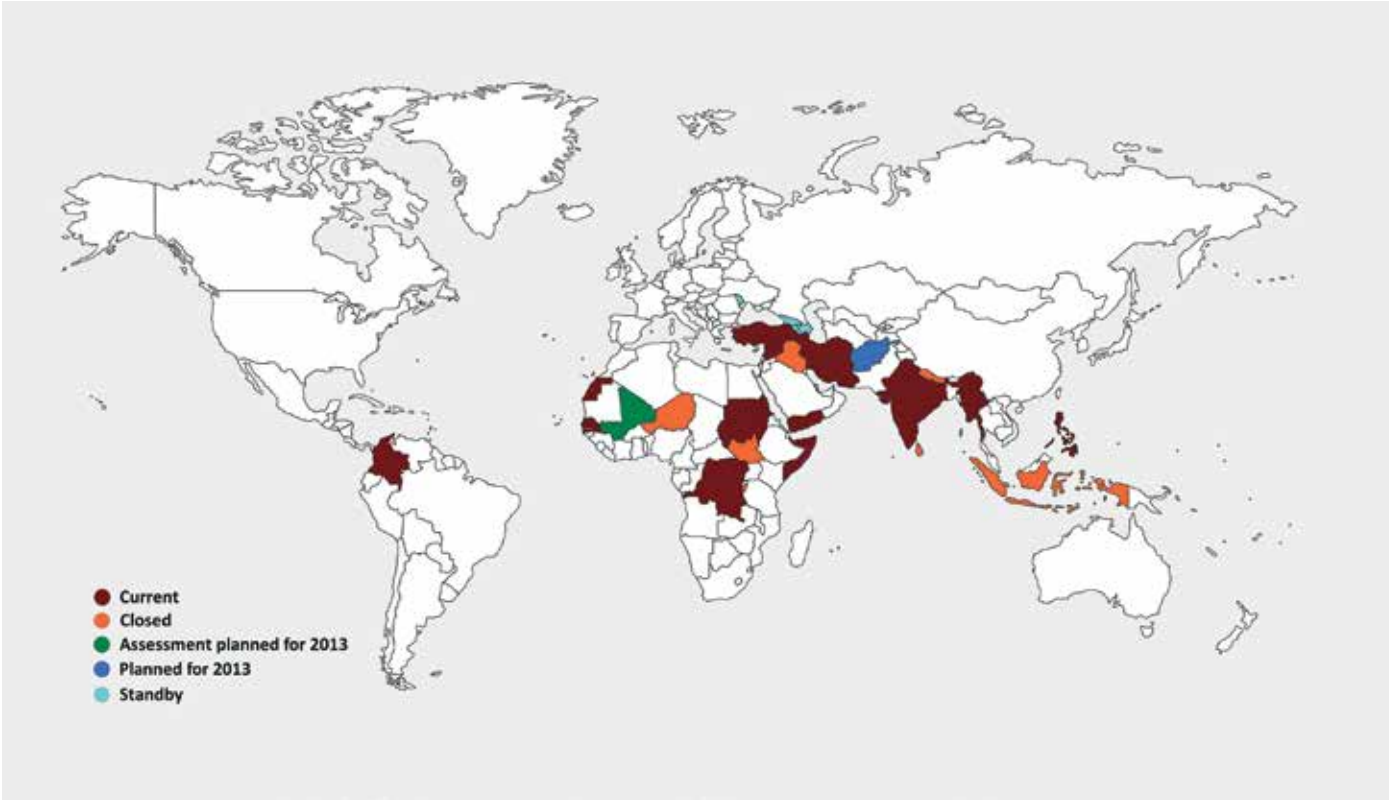
*Three of these 49 ANSAs are being engaged confidentially on international humanitarian norms.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The ANSA has signed the <i>Deed of Commitment</i> on this thematic area
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The ANSA signed the <i>Deed of Commitment</i> on this thematic area in 2012
<input type="checkbox"/>	The ANSA has been engaged by Geneva Call in 2012 on this thematic area

Signatories since 2000	DEED OF COMMITMENT		
	AP mine ban	Child protection	Prohibition of sexual violence and elimination of gender discrimination
	42	7	5

REGION	COUNTRY	ORGANIZATION	ACTIVE	THEMATIC			
				AP mine ban	Child protection	Prohibition of sexual violence and elimination of gender discrimination	International humanitarian norms*
ASIA	BURMA/ MYANMAR	Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO)	no	✓			
		Chin National Front / Army (CNF/CNA)	yes	✓			
		Kachin Independence Organisation / Army (KIO/KIA)	yes				
		Karen National Union / Karen National Liberation Army (KNU/KNLA)	yes				
		Karenni National Progressive Party / Karenni Army (KNPP/KA)	yes		✓		
		Lahu Democratic Front (LDF)	no	✓			
		National Unity Party of Arakan (NUPA)	no	✓			
		New Mon State Party / Mon National Liberation Army (NMSP/MNLA)	yes		✓		
		Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF)	yes	✓			
		Pa'O National Liberation Organization / Pa'O National Liberation Army (PNLO/PNLA)	yes				
		Pa'O Peoples Liberation Organisation (PPLO)	no	✓			
		Restoration Council of Shan State / Shan State Army (South) (RCSS/SSA-South)	yes				
	INDIA	Hmar Peoples Congress-Democracy (HPC-D)	yes				
		Kuki National Organisation (KNO)	yes	✓			
		National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang) (NSCM-K)	yes				
		National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khole-Kitovi) (NSCM-KK)	yes				
		National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isaac Muivah) (NSCM-IM)	yes	✓			
		Zomi Re-unification Organisation (ZRO)	yes	✓			
	PHILIPPINES	Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)	yes	✓			
		Revolutionary Workers Party of Mindanao (RPM/RPA)	yes	✓			
		Revolutionary Workers Party of the Philippines / Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Bocayo Brigade-Carapali Lualhati (RPM/RPA-ABB-Carapeli)	yes	✓			
Revolutionary Workers Party of the Philippines / Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Bocayo Brigade-Nilo de la Cruz (RPM/RPA-ABB-de la Cruz)		yes	✓				
LATIN AMERICA	COLOMBIA	Ejercito Liberation Nacional (ELN)	yes				
		Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Colombianas (FARC)	yes				
MIDDLE EAST	IRAN	Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI)	yes	✓	✓	✓	
		Free Life Party of Kurdistan / Liberation Forces of Eastern Kurdistan (PJAK)	yes	✓			
		Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan (KPIK)	yes	✓	✓	✓	
		Komala Party of Kurdistan (KPK)	yes	✓	✓	✓	
		Komalah-Communist Party of Iran (Komalah-CPI)	yes	✓	✓	✓	
		The Kurdistan Democratic Party – Iran (KDP-Iran)	yes	✓	✓	✓	
	IRAQ	Kurdistan Regional Government-Erbil (KRG-Erbil)	no	✓			
		Kurdistan Regional Government-Sulaimanyia (KRG-Sulaimanyia)	no	✓			
	LEBANON	Hezbollah	yes				
		Palestinian National Security Forces (PNSF) and other factions	yes				
	OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES	Hammas	yes				
	SYRIA	Free Syrian Army / National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces / Other affiliated groups (NCSROF/FSA)	yes				
		Party of Democratic Union (PYD) / Popular Protection Unit (YPG)	yes				
	TURKEY	Kurdistan People's Congress / People's Defence Forces (Konghra Gel / HPG also known as PKK)	yes	✓			

Where Geneva Call has worked since 2000



AFRICA

- Burundi
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Niger
- Mali
- Senegal
- Somalia
- South Sudan
- Sudan
- Western Sahara

ASIA

- Afghanistan
- Burma/Myanmar
- India
- Indonesia
- Nepal
- Pakistan
- Philippines
- Sri Lanka

LATIN AMERICA

- Colombia

MIDDLE EAST and EUROPE

- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Georgia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Lebanon
- Moldova
- Occupied Palestinian Territory
- Syria
- Turkey
- Yemen

Footnotes

Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment: a unique instrument – p7

¹ Quoting from Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, "Rules of Engagement: Protecting Civilians through Dialogue with Armed Non-State Actors" (Geneva, 2011), a report to which Geneva Call contributed.

AFRICA – Niger – p9

² There have been other examples of such cooperation and reintegration into mine clearance teams of former 'enemies', for example in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Iraq, Kosovo, and Sudan.

AFRICA – Senegal – p10

³ In addition to direct engagement with the MFDC, Geneva Call conducted nine advocacy sessions in 2010 on the AP mine ban reaching nearly 700 community leaders with the message that they could in turn advocate the ban to the MFDC combatants. Two further sessions were held in refugee communities in neighbouring Gambia and Guinea Bissau.

AFRICA – Somalia – p11

⁴ In 2001, 17 Somali ANSAs signed the Deed of Commitment banning AP mines. Today, only a handful of these ANSAs remain active.

AFRICA – Sudan – p12

⁵ The Sudan Revolutionary Front is composed of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement - North (SPLM-N), Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), Sudan Liberation Movement/Army Minni Minnawi (SLM/A-MM) and Sudan Liberation Movement/Army Abdel Wahid al-Nur (SLM/A-AW).

ASIA – Burma/Myanmar – p15

⁶ Karenni National Progressive Party/Karenni Army (KNPP/KA), Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army (RCSS/SSA), the Chin National Front/Chin National Army (CNF/CNA) and the Pa-o National Liberation Organisation/Pa-O National Liberation Army (PNLO/PNLA).

⁷ Other ANSAs listed in 2012 are Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, Kachin Independence Army (KIA), Kachin Defense Army (KDA), Shan State Army South (SSA-S) and United Wa State Army (UWSA). The Government army, known as the Tatmadaw, is also listed.

⁸ http://www.genevacall.org/resources/conference-reports/f-conference-reports/2001-2010/GC_2011_GEND_WKS_RPT_LIGHT.pdf

ASIA – Philippines – p17

⁹ For more information on the verification mission, see <http://www.genevacall.org/resources/research/f-research/2001-2010/2010-GC-Report-Philippines-Web.pdf>

LATIN AMERICA – Colombia – p18

¹⁰ The full statement, made for the ELN Central Command by Nicolás Rodríguez Bautista, Commander-in-Chief, on 10 September 2012 can be found on www.theirwords.org

Protection of children in armed conflict – p27

¹¹ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, http://www.child-soldiers.org/about_the_issues.php

¹² CNF/CNA, members of Chin civil society organizations. KNPP/KA, Pa-O National Liberation Organisation/Army (PNLO/PLNA) and members of Pa-O civil society organizations, Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army (SSA-S), and members of Shan civil society organizations.

AP mines & other explosive devices – p30

¹³ http://www.genevacall.org/resources/research/f-research/2001-2010/122363_GENEVACALL_rapportPakistan_light.pdf

Humanitarian space at risk – p32

¹⁴ The roundtable was hosted together with DG ECHO, and with the support of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

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