



APPEL DE GENÈVE  
GENEVA CALL



# ANNUAL REPORT 2013

PROTECTING CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT

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Follow us on:



www.theirwords.org

a unique directory of armed non-State actor humanitarian commitments

www.theirwords.org is an online collection of commitments and policies made by armed non-State actors (ANSAs) on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL) issues. It includes unilateral declarations and statements, internal rules and regulations, and agreements made by ANSAs with Governments, inter-governmental or humanitarian organizations.

www.theirwords.org contains almost 400 online documents and will grow to over 500 in 2014. It fills a gap in available resources, and will serve to better understand ANSA views on IHL and IHRL.

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, nor that they have been implemented and respected in practice.

Graphic Design: www.kathleenmorf.ch  
Cover Photo: Discussions with an ANSA. © Geneva Call  
Back Page Photo: ANSA fighter helps a woman to safety during fighting in Aleppo, 2012. © Reuters/Goran Tomasevic  
Printed by: Imprimerie VILLIERE, www.imprimerie-villiere.com  
Paper: Report printed on FSC recycled paper using organic inks

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The recent *War Report* describes 27 on-going non-international armed conflicts in 24 States or territories, all involving armed non-State actors (ANSAs), most of them unequivocally subject to International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Violations of international humanitarian norms are widespread in all of these conflicts, with civilians consistently suffering the most. Many IHL violations – though not all – are committed by ANSAs. Indeed, ANSA lack of compliance with IHL has been repeatedly identified as one of the five most critical challenges to the protection of civilians by the United Nations Secretary-General. On this basis, engaging ANSAs towards a decrease in civilian suffering is a humanitarian imperative.

Geneva Call is one of few organizations to respond specifically to this challenge. Over the past 14 years, Geneva Call has developed its skills, know-how and experience, and is today recognized as a key contributor in the engagement of ANSAs on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. For example, the European Union’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, noted the EU’s support to “leading organisations in the field of IHL, such as the ICRC or Geneva Call.”

The organization is today running over 60 projects in around 20 countries with just 18 full-time staff engaging 48 ANSAs. 59 *Deeds of Commitment* have been signed since Geneva Call’s beginnings, and require monitoring, directly in the field and with partners. More commitments are expected to be made in 2014 and several new ANSA engagements are to take place.

Yet Geneva Call cannot just rest on its laurels. At present, Geneva Call has started to work with ANSAs on the differences and similarities between IHL and Islamic Law, and the increasing use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The organization is responding more and more to requests from ANSAs, partners and international organizations to train them and share its experience on these topics. And for the future, questions are being raised about potential developments such as, for example, to offer ANSAs the opportunity to engage more formally on international humanitarian standards, and on issues such as the displacement of populations .

**“The Security Council recognizes the need for consistent engagement by humanitarian agencies with all parties to armed conflict for humanitarian purposes, including activities aimed at ensuring respect for international humanitarian law.”**

President of the UN Security Council, 12 February 2013.

Geneva Call is grateful to its dedicated staff, board, partners and donors for their trust and support. It is confident that the positive impact its activities have on the protection of civilians and alleviation of their suffering will reinforce donor confidence and enable the organization to pursue its sustainable development and its humanitarian mission.



**Geneva Call operations:**

- Current operations
- Previous operations

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Headquarters  
Geneva, Switzerland

Key:



Child protection



Gender issues



Humanitarian norms



Landmine ban

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IN 2013, THANKS TO THE WORK OF GENEVA CALL,  
AND WITH THE SUPPORT OF ITS PARTNERS:

**48 ANSAs**  
from **16 countries**  
and **territories** have been  
engaged towards compliance  
with international humanitarian  
norms

**5 new signatures**  
of Geneva Call's *Deeds of  
Commitment* have been secured

**several thousand  
ANSA fighters**  
have been sensitized and/or  
trained on broad international  
humanitarian norms

all **24 signatory  
ANSAs** still active  
in 2013 have been monitored  
on the implementation  
of the *Deeds of Commitment*

**9 additional ANSAs**  
made similar undertakings  
or took measures (such as  
mine action activities)  
to increase the protection  
of civilians

in **8 countries**,  
civil society actors were trained  
to build their capacity to engage  
with ANSAs and monitor  
commitments

AND IN 2013 GENEVA CALL ALSO:

Facilitated unprecedented meetings  
between Governments and their opposing  
ANSAs and promoted the integration of  
humanitarian issues in peace negotiations

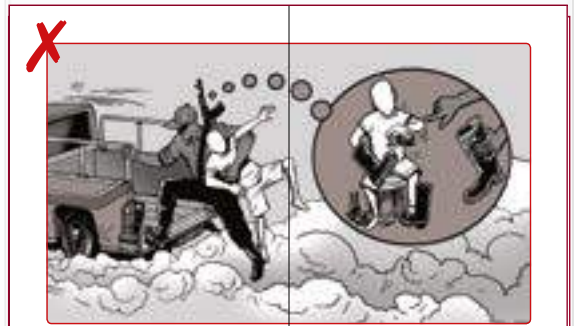


Joint meeting between governmental representatives and  
an opposing ANSA on humanitarian demining. March 2013.  
© Geneva Call

Published research on ANSAs and  
displacement in armed conflict



Developed a set of innovative tools  
(mobile phone application, video clips  
and illustrated booklets) to disseminate  
international humanitarian norms to  
ANSAs and civil society organizations



3 Do not force children to associate  
with armed forces in any manner

Illustration from the booklet "Key rules from Geneva Call's  
Deed of Commitment protecting children in armed conflict"  
© Geneva Call

Contributed its expertise and experience at  
14 international conferences and seminars

In September, Elisabeth Decrey Warner,  
President of Geneva Call, was awarded  
the Légion d'Honneur, France's highest  
distinction, rewarding her life's work, and  
the success of Geneva Call which she was  
instrumental in launching in 2000.





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



## GENEVA CALL'S MISSION

Geneva Call is a neutral and impartial non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to promoting respect by ANSAs in armed conflict and other situations of violence, for international humanitarian norms, in particular those related to the protection of civilians. Geneva Call is currently focusing its efforts on banning the use of anti-personnel (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 requests from ANSAs to help build their knowledge of, and capacity to implement, international humanitarian norms, and provides training and technical advice. In addition, the organization may provide other assistance and services within communities where ANSAs operate.

Geneva Call subscribes to the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence, and seeks to ensure transparency by informing stakeholders, including the States concerned, of its engagement efforts with ANSAs.

## WHAT IS AN ANSA?

The term ANSA may encompass a variety of actors. In the context of its mission, Geneva Call focuses on organized armed entities that are involved in armed conflict, which are primarily motivated by political goals and which operate outside State control, thereby lacking legal capacity to become party to relevant international treaties. These include armed groups, national liberation movements and *de facto* governing authorities. Geneva Call also works with non-recognized States as well as in situations other than armed conflict if it is deemed that its action can positively impact beneficiaries and lead to better protection for civilians.

## GENEVA CALL'S *DEEDS OF COMMITMENT*: A UNIQUE INSTRUMENT

ANSAs are increasingly involved in contemporary warfare and are responsible for many of the IHL violations taking place. However, the State-centric nature of international law poses challenges when it comes to addressing their behaviour. Existing treaties, and their compliance mechanisms, remain predominantly focused on States. In some cases, they impose different standards on States and on ANSAs, which leaves little incentive for ANSAs to abide by IHL. Even though they have obligations under IHL, ANSAs cannot become parties to relevant international treaties, and are generally precluded from participating in norm-making processes. Thus, ANSAs may not feel bound to respect rules that they have neither put forward nor formally adhered to. Sometimes, they are simply not aware of their obligations under IHL.

In contrast, Geneva Call's approach to ANSAs is inclusive and constructive. It seeks to influence ANSAs through a sustained process of engagement in dialogue, advocacy, and capacity-building, to bring their policies and practice into compliance with international standards.

To promote ANSA adherence to, and ownership of, international standards, Geneva Call has developed an innovative instrument – the *Deed of Commitment* – which allows ANSAs to formally undertake to respect specific humanitarian norms. 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)*
- *Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict (Deed of Commitment protecting children in armed conflict)*

- *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 in armed conflict and against gender discrimination)*

The *Deeds of Commitment* mirror international standards. They 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 adopted in 1864. The signed documents are deposited with the Canton of Geneva.

For Geneva Call, engaging ANSAs does not end with signatures. Geneva Call supports and monitors the implementation of signed *Deeds* to ensure that commitments translate into actual practice. The signing of a *Deed* does not in itself guarantee a better respect of humanitarian norms, but provides a useful tool to hold signatories publicly accountable for a pledge which they have made their own. In some circumstances, Geneva Call also proposes other tools such as unilateral declarations, codes of conduct, or special agreements.

When ANSAs are not prepared to commit to abide by international standards, Geneva Call pursues a step-by-step approach, seeking incremental improvements of their policies and behaviour.

The complete texts of the *Deeds of Commitment* can be found on pages 42-47 of this report.



Signed Deed of Commitment  
© Geneva Call





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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, perpetrated by Government forces, ANSAs and other military entities, and has reached appalling levels in some countries. It is largely agreed that efforts towards ending sexual violence in situations of armed conflict should focus more on prevention, and not only on providing assistance to victims. This is where Geneva Call adds significant and practical value on the ground through its engagement with ANSAs. As such, Geneva Call’s work on sexual violence and gender discrimination contributes to international efforts to implement the six United Nations (UN) Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security: 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), and 2122 (2013).

During 2013, Geneva Call engaged 17 ANSAs on the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict and gender discrimination. Two signed the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence in armed conflict: the Zomi Reunification Organization (ZRO) from India, and the Karen National Union / Karen National Liberation Army (KNU/

KNLA) of Burma/Myanmar, who signed in May and July respectively, bringing to seven the total number of signatories in the first full year of implementation of the *Deed*. All of them have prepared their plans to implement the *Deed* within their respective organizations. Four more ANSAs have indicated that they will sign in 2014, or make a public statement on the subject.

Geneva Call’s approach is through building the awareness and capacity of ANSAs to prevent or stop violations. The *Deed of Commitment* is one engagement tool towards this goal. Others include training, dissemination materials, and implementation support to help ANSAs draft or improve their Codes of Conduct and other internal rules. Workshops, focus groups, and discussions were organized in 2013 with signatory and non-signatory ANSAs, and/or Community-based Organizations (CBOs) from Burma/Myanmar, Colombia, India, Iran, Philippines, Sudan, Syria, and Turkey (due to difficulties of access for Geneva Call to some ANSAs, meetings were held in third countries).

In Colombia, Geneva Call held a workshop with a network of women former combatants and discussed their motivations and roles within ANSAs. The meeting produced a number of recommendations to the negotiating parties (Government and FARC) and to the ELN. The resulting document – *Carta por la Paz* – was published and presented in June at the City Hall of Bogotá, and relayed to the Government and ANSAs. Geneva Call also undertook a series of initiatives to support the inclusion of women combatants and gender issues in the peace negotiations.

*“History calls, and we have to follow this call. We cannot stay silent. We have to express ourselves in small and big arenas, despite the risks, thinking that we do not want others to go through what we have gone through. These processes need to be conducive to citizenship and a pluralist, inclusive and open political space.”* Woman former combatant at Geneva Call workshop, 2013

Geneva Call trained 16 CBOs across all regions as part of the process of monitoring incidents of sexual violence

related to armed conflicts, to raise awareness of international standards within communities, and developing local capacities to advocate in support of international norms. In India, for example, Geneva Call concluded a formal partnership with the United NGOs Mission Manipur (UNMM), a network body of 103 NGOs representing various ethnic communities in Manipur, in order to support efforts to monitor the compliance of ANSAs with Geneva Call’s *Deeds of Commitment*.

As part of its work in disseminating international humanitarian norms as widely as possible, Geneva Call created drawings to illustrate the key points contained in the *Deed of Commitment*. These drawings have been made into booklets and translated into a number of other languages and used with ANSAs, as well as CBOs, for distribution amongst the rank and file.

*More specific activities and achievements are described in the relevant country sections of this report.*

1

Sexual violence is strictly prohibited – at all times

Illustration from the booklet “Key rules from Geneva Call’s Deed of Commitment prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination”



ENGAGING ANSAs ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICT

Despite repeated calls by the international community to put an end to grave violations against children’s rights in situations of armed conflict, the list contained in the UN Secretary-General’s annual report has grown to 55 perpetrators, of which 46 are ANSAs. Both boys and girls under the age of 18, from conflict-affected areas, are recruited into ANSAs, and play a more or less active role in combat operations

Just three years ago, Geneva Call began implementation of its *Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict*. In 2013, Geneva Call engaged with 23 ANSAs on child protection, and provided support and follow-up for the seven existing *Deed of Commitment* signatories, and to the two ANSAs that signed during the year: the KNU/KNLA and the People’s Defence Forces/Kurdistan Workers’ Party (HPG/PKK). The latter is the first ANSA to make a reservation upon signature. Details of this reservation can be found on page 35.

*“We will make every effort to ensure that all 16-18 year olds are separated and kept away from combat zones. We are also ready to cooperate with Geneva Call and provide access to these young persons. We sign the Deed of Commitment for the cause of children and because it*

*is our conviction.” Delal Amed, woman commander of HPG/PKK, 5 October 2013*

Several other ANSAs, including Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), People’s Protection Units (YPG), the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Tahaluf, prohibited the recruitment of children under 18 through other means (unilateral declaration, command order, Code of Conduct). YPG reportedly released 17 children from military service into civilian organizations after making this commitment. In addition, five other ANSAs have expressed the wish to sign the *Deed* or make similar undertakings in 2014.

Geneva Call and its partners continued to support and monitor implementation of the *Deed of Commitment* by signatories from Burma/Myanmar, India, Iran and Turkey, including the two new signatories of 2013. This was conducted either through phone calls or field visits, to check on progress in compliance with the *Deed of Commitment* and potential challenges encountered. Examples of measures taken by signatory ANSAs, with support and advice from Geneva Call, to implement the *Deed of Commitment* include: issuing of orders/directives, review and introduction of amendments in internal regulations, dissemination of obligations under the *Deed*



13 year-old fighter in Aleppo, Syria, October 2013  
© Molhem Barakat – Reuters



 <p>2 Do not use children in combat or</p>	 <p>combat-related activities – even if they volunteer</p>
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Illustration from the booklet “Key rules from Geneva Call’s Deed of Commitment protecting children in armed conflict”

to the rank and file and constituencies, and revision of military/political training curricula. Signatories have been trained by Geneva Call to complete their compliance report and have been guided through the process of establishing their own internal monitoring mechanisms. A key element of these mechanisms is the identification of focal points to centralize information.

Geneva Call consolidated its monitoring systems this year through capacity-building and establishing local monitoring partnerships, and has begun developing a protection monitoring framework. This is particularly important in contexts where Geneva Call has limited or no access to areas of ANSA operations. Civil society is increasingly involved in the monitoring of ANSA compliance, and therefore Geneva Call is creating training modules specific to the needs of local monitors and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Monitors are either community-based groups, often with limited knowledge

and experience in protection monitoring, or networks of human rights organizations that are actively involved in ongoing monitoring and advocacy work at the local and international levels. Additional in-depth training will be given in 2014.

Geneva Call’s approach to the protection of children in armed conflict is complementary to the work undertaken by the UN, international NGOs, and other stakeholders involved in the strengthening of a protective environment for children in situations of armed conflict. In 2014, Geneva Call will consolidate and expand its partnerships, both at the global and field level, to improve information-sharing on ANSAs’ behaviour towards children, and to gain support for the referral of at-risk children, or child victims, to appropriate services and rehabilitation programmes.

*More specific activities and achievements are described in the relevant country sections of this report.*



ENGAGING ANSAs ON AP MINES AND OTHER EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

According to Landmine Monitor 2013, ANSAs used AP mines and victim-activated IEDs in 2012 in Afghanistan, Burma/Myanmar, Colombia, Pakistan, Syria, Thailand, Tunisia, and Yemen. This is the greatest number of countries to be named in five years. Continued ANSA use of AP mines is recognized to be one of the major challenges to the universalization of the AP mine ban norm, and conducting effective mine action in ANSA-influenced areas presents the mine action community with significant additional difficulties. Geneva Call is a member of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, and continues to work closely with mine action providers and national Mine Action Centres in relevant countries.

In 2013, Geneva Call worked with 33 ANSAs operating in 11 countries on the issue of AP mines. In August, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines, bringing the total number of signatories of this *Deed* to 43. Three further ANSAs have pledged that they will sign the *Deed* in 2014. It is noteworthy that the implementation plan, drafted by SPLM-N following signature of the *Deed*, includes the creation of a local NGO, the Sudan Humanitarian Demining Service. This new organization will focus initially on victim assistance and non-technical survey.

Geneva Call's Mine Risk Education (MRE) project in Southwest Colombia has reached more than 12,000 people affected by the conflict. Geneva Call is preparing to hand over the project in spring 2014 to the local indigenous populations, trained by Geneva Call, who will continue the activity.

A significant addition to Geneva Call's training activity this year has been the development of its work on mine action in peace processes. ANSAs are encouraged to raise and negotiate issues, within formal dialogue with Government representatives, to promote humanitarian mine action. This has been particularly relevant this year in Burma/Myanmar, where several important agreements have been reached so that effective mine action can begin. In Colombia, there is room to achieve significant forward movement in 2014.

Geneva Call continued the regular monitoring of signatories to the *Deed of Commitment*, to ensure compliance and follow-up on the implementation of their commitments. For example, in the Philippines, 2,156 staff and combatants from the Moro Islamic Liberation Front/Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (MILF/BIAF) received training on General Order n°3 banning AP mines. As part of monitoring efforts, visits took place to active signatory ANSAs, including those operating in Iran, the Philippines, Somalia, Sudan, and Turkey. Several of these visits took place in third countries. Geneva Call found no evidence that any of the signatories had violated its obligations under the *Deed*. Nine active signatory ANSAs provided their compliance reports under the *Deed*. Geneva Call also worked with local civil society, media, and other stakeholders to assist in the monitoring process. This is a particularly useful addition to Geneva Call's ability to monitor ANSAs, notably in areas where access is problematic.

*More specific activities and achievements are described in the relevant country sections of this report.*

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8 Cooperate actively in mine clearance

Illustration from the booklet "Key rules from Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment banning AP mines"

MINE ACTION IN PEACE PROCESSES

The programme, devised by Geneva Call, includes insight into how mine action has been addressed in the context of peace processes in various countries, and contributions from international mine action agencies, giving ANSAs an understanding of the different aspects and techniques of mine action. In Geneva Call's experience, mine action can also contribute to confidence building between parties to conflict. Recommendations resulting from recent workshops organized by Geneva Call include:

- Mine action cannot wait until a formal peace agreement is signed, but can be viewed as a precursor to peace and a confidence-building measure
- Non-technical mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) surveys should be conducted urgently to identify priorities

- Humanitarian mine action should be a precursor to refugee or internally displaced persons (IDP) returns to affected areas
- Population and resettlement areas should be cleared of mines and ERW as a priority
- Mine and ERW clearance of agricultural areas and trade routes should be encouraged in order to develop economic activity
- MRE should be facilitated for at-risk populations
- If conditions are not conducive for comprehensive mine clearance, pilot projects should be explored

Geneva Call stresses that these activities ideally should be carried out in all areas under the influence or control of ANSAs, notwithstanding the existence of a peace process.



## ENGAGING ANSAs ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN NORMS

The UN Security Council has called for the training of armed groups on IHL, IHRL, and refugee law, and in its President's February 2013 statement, has "recognized the need for consistent engagement by humanitarian agencies with all parties to armed conflict for humanitarian purposes, including activities aimed at ensuring respect for international humanitarian law." Even so, to achieve this, there is a need for greater understanding of the specific challenges which ANSAs face in the field in complying with the legal and normative framework. Indeed, assisting ANSAs to understand, respect, and implement international humanitarian norms is essential if these norms are to remain relevant in contemporary conflict.



Illustration from the booklet "15 key rules of behaviour for fighters in internal armed conflict"

*Deed of Commitment* signatories and non-signatories alike increasingly request Geneva Call to train them to understand and implement humanitarian norms. Geneva Call has designed the training it provides specifically for ANSAs, distilling the complex sources of humanitarian norms into a digestible set of 15 rules of behaviour for ANSA fighters. This helps ANSAs to better understand the relevance of humanitarian norms to their reality, and what they need to do to comply.

In some cases, especially where Geneva Call's current themes of engagement are not priority concerns or best starting points for dialogue, activities around general humanitarian norms can serve as an alternative approach for engagement.

During the year, Geneva Call trained numerous ANSAs from Burma/Myanmar, Colombia, Lebanon, Sudan and Syria on IHL to introduce international standards; help prepare the ground for policy change; and compare

international standards to the ANSAs' own standards, Codes of Conduct, and practices. There has been significant discussion this year, for example with trainees in Syria, of the differences and similarities between Islamic Law and IHL, how to navigate between the two, and how to practically apply these rules on the ground.

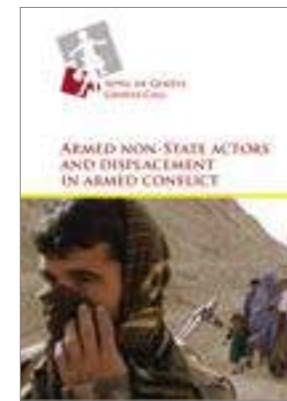
Geneva Call regularly contributes its expertise to processes aimed at improving the respect of humanitarian norms. In the future, Geneva Call plans to initiate an annual conference to help focus expert attention towards the most relevant challenges in improving ANSA compliance with humanitarian norms. Geneva Call continues its involvement in international efforts to ensure that the humanitarian space remains open, particularly for efforts to engage ANSAs on humanitarian norms, and that it is not obstructed by counter-terrorism legislation.

More specific activities and achievements are described in the relevant country sections of this report.

## 15 RULES OF BEHAVIOUR IN ARMED CONFLICT FOR ANSA FIGHTERS

1. Do not attack civilians, their property or public buildings.
2. Reduce civilian collateral damage during attacks.
3. Take necessary precautions before and during attacks to protect civilians.
4. Do not use weapons which are prohibited by law, and do not use illegal methods of war.
5. Take care of the wounded and the dead, whether friends or enemies.
6. Treat all people under your control humanely.
7. Do not take hostages and do not use human shields.
8. Do not displace civilians unless it is for their safety.
9. Respect civilian property. Do not loot or steal.
10. Respect women. Do not commit or permit rape or sexual abuse against anyone.
11. Never recruit children into your armed forces and do not use them in hostilities. Ensure their protection.
12. Respect medical personnel and protect their safety. Do not misuse any of the protective symbols.
13. Allow impartial humanitarian aid to civilians.
14. Violations by the enemy never justify your violations of the law. Abstain from acts of vengeance.
15. Prevent violations of the law, investigate violations when they occur, and punish the perpetrators according to the law.

## ANSAs AND THE DISPLACEMENT OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT



Geneva Call has begun working on humanitarian norms relevant to the displacement of civilians in armed conflict. ANSAs are the main agents of displacement in more than a quarter of conflict situations. However, there are also examples of ANSAs playing a positive role, for example in providing protection to the displaced, and in allowing humanitarian access to camps in areas which they control, and/or support for their return.

In October, building on an earlier conference co-organized with the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), Geneva Call published its research in *Armed non-State Actors and Displacement in Armed Conflict*. The study, authored by Héloïse Ruaudel, explores the dynamics at play between ANSAs and displaced people and provides an overview of the legal and normative frameworks applicable to ANSAs in displacement contexts. It provides also the basis for consideration of engagement strategies for the protection of displaced people. This will serve as the groundwork for further discussion in 2014 as to the value added of Geneva Call engaging ANSAs on the issue

The study can be found at: <http://bit.ly/1rhiBCs>

## INNOVATION IN COMMUNICATING INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN NORMS

It is not enough to engage with ANSAs, reach the point of signature to a *Deed of Commitment*, or give a course or lecture about IHL. To be effective, the obligations that the ANSA leadership commits to must be disseminated throughout the ranks, and communicated in such a way that they are *understood, integrated and followed*. Whilst leaders are educated and have an awareness of the international context, sometimes the individuals that make up ANSA forces have had little access to schooling, and few are likely to take an interest in international legal concepts and theory.

An aspect of Geneva Call's dissemination and follow-up strategy is to work with CBOs and local community leaders from within the ANSAs' ethnic and political constituencies. Geneva Call, therefore, is continuously seeking to make its

training and the dissemination of norms relevant and accessible to a broad audience. Over the past year, Geneva Call has developed a number of new communication tools to address these requirements.

Based on Geneva Call's innovative and down-to-earth 15 rules of behaviour in armed conflict (see page 16), Geneva Call has created a series of drawings and videos to illustrate the *do's and don'ts* of international humanitarian norms. Translated into relevant local languages, these can be assembled, according to context, as booklets, posters, computerized or video presentations, and TV spots. They can be used in a bush classroom under a tree, or in a modern conference room or TV station. The point is that these materials are designed to be used; they can be modulated according to what is happening in the conflict, and of course new drawings can be created if the need should arise to portray a particular problem or violation.



Geneva Call has taken this idea a step further and is looking to harness the one piece of technology that most ANSA fighters possess – the mobile phone. An interactive mobile IHL classroom application for mobile phones has been produced during the year and will be piloted in 2014.





**SENEGAL:** Geneva Call organized unprecedented negotiations with MFDC and the Government to facilitate demining in Casamance.

**DRC:** Geneva Call has prepared the ground to engage with ANSAs and their constituencies, and completed the relevant registration documentation and a framework agreement with the DRC authorities during the year.

**SUDAN:** The SPLM-N signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. Complying with the *Deed*, the ANSA pledged to destroy AP mines captured during 2013.

## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

The east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been plagued by insecurity and armed conflict for decades, and, in the absence of a strong State apparatus, many Congolese ANSAs – notably the Mai Mai – have emerged as militias to protect their local communities and ethnic group. In 2012, a new ANSA surfaced, the Movement of 23 March, but, following significant defeats, eventually surrendered in November 2013. Rwandan, Burundian and Ugandan opposition ANSAs are also present in eastern DRC. Large areas still remain under the *de facto* control of ANSAs, although there has been increased military activity against a number of them, by the Congolese Armed Forces, supported by UN troops from the Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo (MONUSCO).

Many ANSAs are responsible for IHL violations, notably sexual violence and grave violations against children.

Following an assessment mission in 2012, and encouragement by stakeholders that its intervention could add value, Geneva Call has prepared the ground to engage with ANSAs and their constituencies, and completed the relevant registration documentation and a framework agreement with the DRC authorities during the year. It also finalized a mapping of the ANSAs and other stakeholders in affected areas in North and South Kivu. This will enable prioritization on the basis of a clear understanding of the situation on the ground. Whilst this preparation has been crucial, nevertheless the start-up of operations in DRC has been delayed.

As the situation regarding certain ANSAs is also changing, Geneva Call will remain flexible as the programme begins. The organization will focus on the protection of children and the prevention of sexual violence, and plans to engage with ANSAs both directly and through traditional and community leaders. Though themselves victims of the conflict, communities also maintain complex family and ethnic solidarity relationships with many of the armed groups.

*Female fighters from a Mai Mai armed group, North Kivu, DRC, May 2013*  
© Francesca Tosarelli/Flickr



*Tuareg fighters in Mali, April 2012*  
© Maghreb/Flickr

## MALI

The conflict between the Government, Tuareg separatists led by the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), and Islamist ANSAs came to an end in early 2013, when French forces helped the Government stop the advance of ANSAs and regain control of northern regions. A ceasefire is now in place and a preliminary peace process has begun, though foreign-led Islamist ANSAs, Al Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb and Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa, are not part of the process. Anti-vehicle (AV) mines and IEDs were used during the conflict, and have caused over 80 civilian casualties, more than half of them children. Mapping of suspect areas, MRE, and some humanitarian demining is ongoing, though insecurity remains a concern affecting efforts. Violations against children and sexual violence have also been reported.

Following a request from MNLA to help them to improve their knowledge of IHL, Geneva Call mounted an assessment mission to the region to evaluate the ground situation, to follow up with MNLA and former Tuareg rebel leaders from neighbouring Niger, and to consider the value added of Geneva Call engaging with ANSAs active in northern Mali.

Geneva Call's assessment found that MNLA is the best entry point, though ANSA command and control structures need to be further clarified to ensure that the right individuals are addressed for greatest impact.

There are already initiatives being planned to help address ANSAs violations, yet most international and national stakeholders have suggested that Geneva Call's expertise in engaging dialogue with ANSAs on humanitarian norms would be a valuable complement to their own activities, notably with Islamist groups. Geneva Call will keep the situation under review and consider engagement plans for 2014.



MNJ combatant hands over an AV mine to a soldier of the armed forces of Niger

## NIGER

Uprisings by Tuareg groups in the Agadez region in the 1990s, and again from 2007 to 2009, left areas of northern Niger mined or suspected of being mined. Geneva Call's past engagement with the Niger Movement for Justice (MNJ) brought together for the first time Government and ANSA representatives at a workshop in Agadez in 2011, at which former enemies shared minefield information and agreed to integrate former MNJ combatants into demining and community liaison roles within the army.

In 2013, Geneva Call commissioned a brief study of progress since the Agadez meeting, which was then published by the Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) news service in Africa. The article reviewed the initiative, which Geneva Call had instituted, noting the impact of the subsequent demining efforts which had cleared 744 km of main roads, and 1.2 million m<sup>2</sup> along secondary roads, leaving most routes and population centres mine-free. In support of the cooperation between the former rebels and the Government, initiated by Geneva Call, donor support to the project helped to provide training, micro-loans, and a decent wage for deminers, and was viewed as a key to success.

The review also saw similarities in the cooperation that had occurred between former warring parties in neighbouring Chad, and recommended that this model be considered again for the future of demining in Mali. A former military commander of MNJ was quoted as saying, "*If ex-rebels are not part of the clearance process in Mali, it will fail.*" Taking a lesson from the successful collaboration in Niger, another former MNJ commander said, "*Ex-combatants and policy-makers in Mali [should] meet to discuss demining frankly and without anger.*"

IRIN's article on the Geneva Call initiative can be found at <http://bit.ly/RHEwZd>



## SENEGAL

The conflict between the separatist Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) and the Government of Senegal has been ongoing since 1982. Despite several ceasefire and peace agreements, sporadic clashes continue in the Casamance region between MFDC rebels and the Senegalese Armed Forces. AP and 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. MFDC is a fragmented movement, composed of a (divided) political wing and two main military factions: the southern *Kassolol* faction led by César Atoute Badiate, and the northern faction led by Salif Sadio.

Geneva Call has been engaging MFDC on the AP mine ban since 2006, though neither faction is willing to sign the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines, claiming a defensive need for them. In 2008, Geneva Call was able to convince the *Kassolol* faction to accept humanitarian demining in southern inhabited areas of Casamance. With the arrival of new operators, demining operations expanded rapidly and neared MFDC military bases in 2013. The danger increased that, as before, MFDC would attempt to stop mine clearance by force. Geneva Call, and local partner Association pour la Promotion Rurale de l'Arrondissement de Nyassia – Solidarité, Développement, Paix (APRAN-SDP), called for an agreement between the MFDC *Kassolol* faction and CNAMS, on which additional zones could be demined. The initiative was eventually approved by the Government.

The first meeting was brokered by Geneva Call and APRAN-SDP in March 2013 in Guinea-Bissau – the first time that CNAMS and the MFDC *Kassolol* faction had met. The meeting ended with MFDC saying that mine action operators had reached a “red line” and should stop. 12 members of staff of operator Mechem were abducted shortly afterwards by MFDC, on the grounds that they had not respected its warnings. Geneva Call visited the 12 abductees in the bush where they were being held, and urged MFDC to release them without delay. Subsequently, Geneva Call hosted another meeting, also in Guinea-Bissau, between MFDC, CNAMS, and senior members of the Government peace team, in order to break the deadlock. The deminers were eventually released. Direct dialogue continues between MFDC and CNAMS, and several further meetings have taken place between them to ensure coordination, and to avoid further incidents.

Geneva Call and APRAN-SDP also engaged the Salif Sadio faction during the year, and will continue advocacy in favour of the pursuit of mine clearance through 2014.

## SOMALIA

Two decades of conflict between ANSAs and the Government, or with other ANSAs, have led to severe hardship for the people of Somalia. Serious abuses of international humanitarian norms have been committed by ANSAs and the Government alike. In the north, Somaliland has declared itself to be a sovereign state and Puntland an autonomous state, while a new

internationally-backed Government is now in place in the form of the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). In 2013 fighting continued between FGS and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), against the Islamist ANSA Al Shabaab. A number of other ANSAs are still active in South and Central Somalia.

Geneva Call has engaged with many Somali ANSAs since 2002, and 17 of them have signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. Almost all of these have now rallied the Government and integrated its armed forces. Geneva Call considers that their obligations under the *Deed of Commitment* are now subsumed into those of the State, which is party to the AP Mine Ban Convention. Geneva Call continued during the year to monitor compliance by the remaining active signatories. In Somaliland, where Geneva Call facilitated the adoption of a mine ban legislation, British NGO Halo Trust announced in 2013 that 256 clearance tasks remained over a 21 km<sup>2</sup> area. Mine action continues in Puntland and in South and Central Somalia, though this is hampered by insecurity.

## SUDAN

Decades of internal conflict across parts of the country have caused several million civilian deaths; fighting continues today in Darfur, in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. Serious abuses of international humanitarian norms by ANSAs, and the Government alike, continue to be reported.

Geneva Call has been engaged in Sudan since its inception in 2000, first with the then Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) – now the ruling party in South

Sudan – and for the past several years, with JEM, SPLM-N, and the two factions of the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A): Minni Minnawi (SLM/A-MM) and Abdul Wahid al Nur (SLM/A-AW).

SPLM/A was one of the first signatories of the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. Since then two additional Sudanese ANSAs have signed: JEM in 2012 and, most recently, SPLM-N in August 2013. SLM/A-MM and SLM/A-AW have also expressed their willingness to sign this *Deed*.

Following the signature of the *Deed of Commitment*, JEM has set up a humanitarian commission to oversee implementation. This commission visited all combat units and confirmed that AP mines were not present. In March 2013, Geneva Call trained JEM commanders, and members of its humanitarian commission, on the *Deed* provisions and compliance mechanisms, and the ANSA submitted its first compliance report in July. JEM also modified its Code of Conduct to incorporate its obligations under the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines.

When it signed the *Deed*, SPLM-N declared that it possessed AP mines captured during combat operations, which it wanted to destroy in compliance with its obligations. As part of its commitment, SPLM-N also encouraged the creation of a local NGO, the Sudan Humanitarian Demining Service, to undertake humanitarian mine action activities in areas under its control. These activities will initially comprise victim assistance and non-technical survey.

During the year, together with International Refugee Rights Initiative and Amnesty International Netherlands, Geneva Call provided training to human rights monitors from



Discussions with JEM on child protection issues, February 2013. © Geneva Call



The SPLM-N signing Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines, August 2013. © Geneva Call



Joint meeting between the MFDC and the Government of Senegal on humanitarian demining, organized by Geneva Call and APRAN-SDP in São Domingos, Guinea Bissau, June 2013. © Geneva Call



MFDC fighter, Casamance, Senegal.



## WESTERN SAHARA

South Kordofan and Blue Nile. The training addressed child protection and the relevant *Deed of Commitment*, and issues around the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines, so that participants could contribute to its monitoring. The training brought to light that the difference between AP and AV mines had not been clear to participants. Geneva Call was able to clarify which mines are banned, and which are regulated, and how, under international treaties such as the Convention on Conventional Weapons. Some monitoring reports have already been received, showing that the training is being implemented. An introductory MRE session was also provided by DanChurchAid (DCA).

JEM, the two SLM/A factions and SPLM-N are listed by the UN Secretary-General as using children in armed conflict. JEM has prohibited child recruitment internally and has indicated its interest in signing the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict. JEM's humanitarian commission is also overseeing implementation of commitments already made to prohibit child recruitment.

Geneva Call met with the leadership of both SLM/A factions to discuss the protection of children. In 2013, SLM/A-MM issued a command order banning the recruitment and use of children.

In February, Geneva Call conducted a first session on child protection with seven officials of the South Kordofan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, the humanitarian wing of SPLM-N. Following signature of the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines, SPLM-N announced a commission to address child protection issues, which was duly instituted in August, to deal with a broader agenda of the protection of civilians.

Sexual violence in armed conflict has not been a common allegation against Sudanese ANSAs to date, and for this reason Geneva Call has been prioritizing its work on AP mines and child protection. Nevertheless, initial sensitization on sexual violence in armed conflict and gender-based discrimination began in 2013 with a view to more in-depth training in 2014.

In February, as part of its wider vision of international norms, Geneva Call gave introductory training sessions on IHL to senior commanders and representatives of JEM and SPLM-N, and to human rights monitors. Both ANSAs have requested further IHL training for senior officers and instructors in 2014.

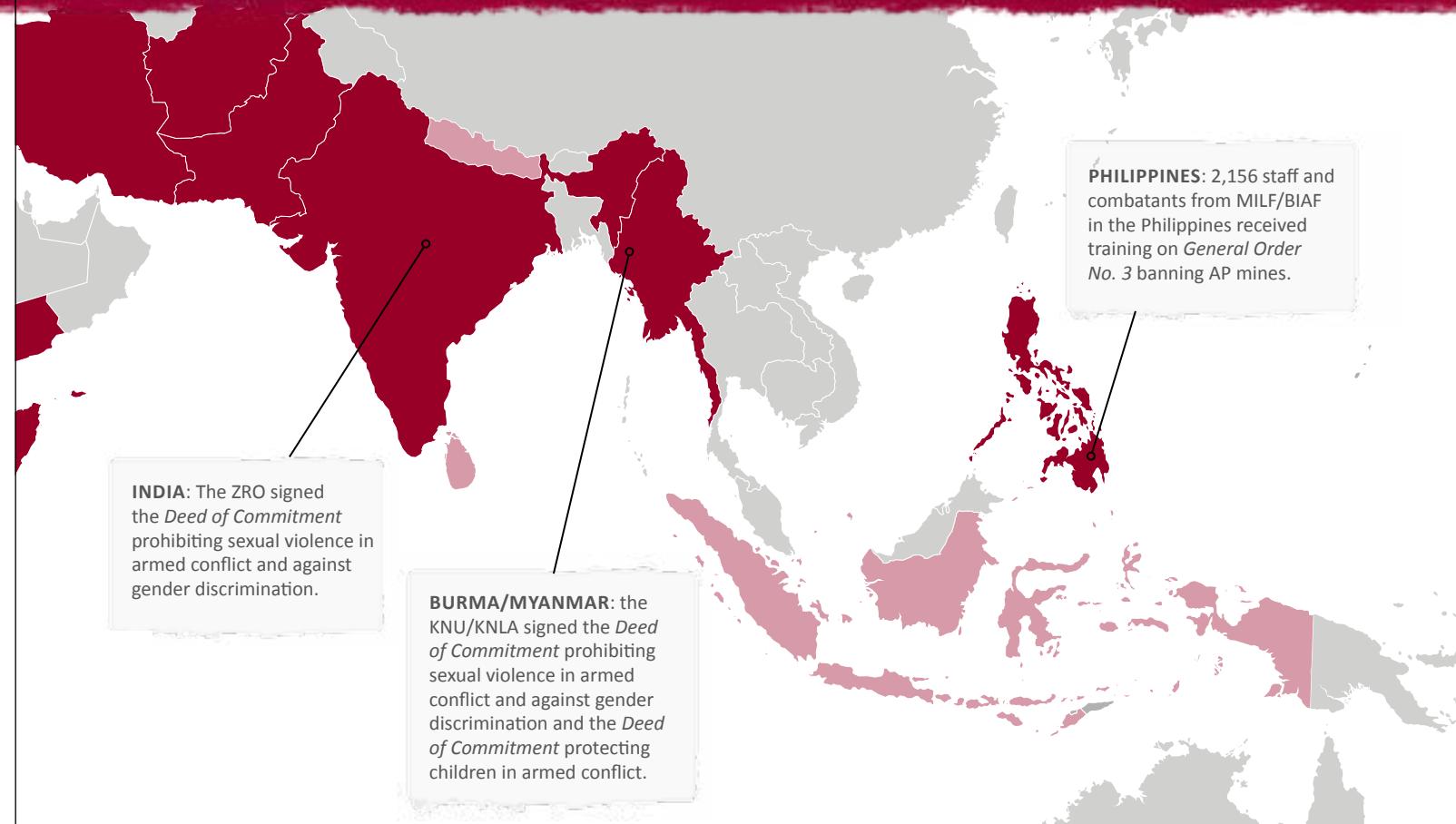
The conflict over Western Sahara broke out in 1975 between Morocco, Mauritania and the Sahrawi independence movement, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario Front). Since the 1991 ceasefire, however, the final status of Western Sahara has remained unresolved. The territory is still contested between Morocco and the Polisario Front. There is heavy contamination by landmines and ERW, and Landmine Monitor states that more than 2,500 people have been killed or injured to the end of 2012. According to the same source, the majority of casualties in recent years have occurred on the Morocco-controlled side of the *berm*, the sand wall built by the Moroccan army that divides the contested territory in two.

The Polisario Front signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines in 2005. During 2013, together with its local partner the Sahrawi Campaign to Ban Landmines (SCBL), Geneva Call continued to monitor implementation of the *Deed* and to encourage the Polisario Front to complete the destruction of any AP mine stocks that may remain. To date, in compliance with the *Deed of Commitment*, the Polisario Front has destroyed more than 10,000 stockpiled AP mines with the technical assistance of Action on Armed Violence (AOAV). So far, AOAV has cleared more than 26 million m<sup>2</sup> of land and destroyed 20,000 items of ERW, including cluster munitions. In August, the Polisario Front established a local mine action coordination centre. Geneva Call brought the SCBL to the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention, in order to promote mine action in Western Sahara, and to meet donors and partners.

Though the conflict over Western Sahara remains 'frozen', Geneva Call finds that it is important to emphasize the ongoing need for mine action, and to continue engagement with the Polisario Front on its obligations under IHL. Plans to follow up an initial IHL course held in 2011, and to give training to its senior military instructors in 2013, were postponed until 2014. This training will include relevant norms on the prohibition of child recruitment, and sexual violence.



Mine destruction in Western Sahara, 2011. © Geneva Call



**INDIA:** The ZRO signed the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence in armed conflict and against gender discrimination.

**BURMA/MYANMAR:** the KNU/KNLA signed the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence in armed conflict and against gender discrimination and the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict.

**PHILIPPINES:** 2,156 staff and combatants from MILF/BIAF in the Philippines received training on *General Order No. 3* banning AP mines.

## AFGHANISTAN

Following the 11 September 2001 attacks in the US, Operation Enduring Freedom was launched in early October to oust the Taliban. The International Security Assistance Force took over leadership of the military intervention, and eventually handed over to NATO in 2003. The Taliban has since reconstituted as an insurgent force. Along with Hizb-e Islami Gulbuddin (HIG), these main ANSAs are contesting large areas of the country, particularly in the east and south. NATO-led troops are now withdrawing, and tentative steps towards a negotiated peace agreement began in 2012.

According to 2014 UN reports, overall civilian casualty rates rose in 2013 after a fall the previous year. Civilian casualties from insurgency activities increased, accounting for 74% of all civilians killed and injured in 2012 as a result of the armed conflict.

The main factor leading to the increase in civilian casualties in 2013 is the targeted killing of civilians and the use of IEDs by ANSAs. The recruitment and use of children by ANSAs in the armed conflict, including in suicide attacks, is also reported. ANSAs are said to have recruited and used children and, as such, the Taliban forces, the Haqqani network and HIG are listed as perpetrators of violations

against children in the UN Secretary-General's 2013 report on children and armed conflict.

An initial scoping study by Geneva Call showed that there is an opportunity to apply the value added of its methodologies in the context of the conflict in Afghanistan, particularly on the issues of AP mines, including victim-activated IEDs, and on child protection. Geneva Call's study found that, in the last few years, the Taliban has stated concern for the protection of civilians. In June 2013, the ANSA announced the establishment of a "*special committee under the supervision of the military commission for the avoidance of civilian losses.*" The committee is tasked with collecting information, and investigating and referring incidents of 'negligence' by Taliban members to a shari'a court. The definition of civilian used by the special committee is, however, not in line with IHL.

Geneva Call has partnered with The Liaison Office, a local NGO, to explore options to work through community leaders to engage the Taliban and other ANSAs on the protection of civilians. However, lack of dedicated funding has delayed Geneva Call's planned activities. Geneva Call has investigated other ways to meet with representatives of the Taliban, and further activity is planned for 2014.





The KNU/KNLA signing Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment protecting children in armed conflict and the Deed of Commitment prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination, July 2013. © Geneva Call



Implementation workshop with the KNU in Burma/Myanmar on the Deed of Commitment protecting children in armed conflict, December 2013. © Geneva Call

## BURMA/MYANMAR

Ceasefires and peace processes between the Government and all main ANSAs, except the Kachin Independence Organization/Kachin Independence Army (KIO/KIA), remain in place and negotiations continue, albeit slowly, both bilaterally and through umbrella entities like the National Ceasefire Co-ordination Team, which was formed in the latter part of the year. Geneva Call enjoys greater access to the country.

While six ANSAs have signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines, many of the major ANSAs that Geneva Call has engaged have not yet signed. Meanwhile however, Geneva Call has worked towards step-by-step improvements to be made by ANSAs to reduce the impact of landmines on civilians. Anecdotal evidence suggests a reduction in AP mine use and in the numbers of new casualties during 2013. KIA, which is reported to be using AP mines, is a priority for Geneva Call, though substantive engagement was not possible in 2013, access being a key obstacle. Geneva Call also began engagements on the issue of landmine use with two other ANSAs: the Klothoobaw Karen Organization/Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (KKO/DKBA), and the Shan State Progress Party/Shan State Army-North (SSPP/SSA-N).

In July, Geneva Call conducted a training workshop on sexual violence and gender discrimination with representatives from KNLA brigades, the Karen National Defence Organization, KNU and CBOs. Following this, KNU/KNLA signed both the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination, and the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed

conflict, in Hpa'an, the capital of Karen State. Senior officials from the local State Government, including the Chief Minister, attended the ceremony. KNU developed an implementation plan and asked Geneva Call for help with field-level dissemination, so, in December, Geneva Call gave a workshop for senior and mid-level KNU/KNLA personnel to help support this. Both the Chin National Front/Chin National Army (CNF/CNA) and the New Mon State Party/Mon National Liberation Army (NMSP/MNLA) are open to further engagement in 2014 on the issue of sexual violence.

Four of the seven ANSAs engaged by Geneva Call on child protection – KIO/KIA, KNU/KNLA, KNPP/KA, and the Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army-South – are listed as violators of children's rights by the UN Secretary-General. Two of these – KNU and KNPP – have signed the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict, and indicated a readiness to cooperate with UN agencies. NMSP has also signed the *Deed*, and CNF/CNA and Pa'o National Liberation Organization (PNLO) are expected to sign in 2014.

Signatory ANSAs have all begun implementing their obligations under the *Deed*, which Geneva Call continues to support with training and workshops, to assist with dissemination of new rules and obligations. In addition to the ANSAs mentioned, Geneva Call will also seek to engage KKO/DKBA, The Karen National Union – Peace Council/Karen National Liberation Army – Peace Council (KNU-PC/KNLA-PC) and SSPP/SSA-N on child protection in 2014.

## MINE ACTION IN PEACE PROCESSES – FIRST SUCCESSES IN BURMA/MYANMAR

*“Point (e) The two parties to coordinate measures on clearing of landmines in places to where internally displaced persons (IDPs) will be relocated ...”*

Extract from the peace agreement signed between the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) and the Government, after talks on 19 and 20 June 2013.

In its engagements with ANSAs, Geneva Call continues to encourage and advise ANSAs to seek agreements at the negotiating table to address the landmine problem, as this is not an issue that should be deferred until a definitive agreement is finally secured. Geneva Call held workshops with NMSP/MNLA, KNPP/Karenni Army (KA), and KNU/KNLA in January, March and December respectively. To further this agenda, Geneva Call brought in international mine action agencies such as DCA and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), as well as local organizations including the Committee for Internally Displaced Karen People and the Karenni Social Welfare Development Centre. In addition, a video entitled *Invisible Enemies*, specific to the national context, was produced by Geneva Call to help promote this strategy. Geneva Call also met with Palaung State Liberation Front/Ta'ang National Liberation Army to monitor its compliance with the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines.

ANSAs are demonstrating an increasingly proactive approach to resolving the impact of mine use. KNU/KNLA has made concrete proposals within its peace negotiations. On their part, KNPP and PNLO have negotiated cooperation with the Government to carry out several demining operations, the former to facilitate IDP return and the latter along a major road. The Government and NMSP agreed to non-technical landmine survey taking place in eight villages in NMSP areas, and this was undertaken by NPA. The KNU-PC/KNLA-PC has also requested mine action support. DKBA and the Border Guard Force are also reported to be conducting limited clearance in Karen State, though the clearance carried out may not meet international standards.

## INDIA

Conflict between ANSAs and the Government, or with other ANSAs, affects several states across the country. Landmines and IEDs are used frequently, and children are recruited and used in hostilities. CBOs have reported that some ANSA members have perpetrated rape in the context of the conflict.

Three ethnic ANSAs operating in northeast India have signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines: the Kuki National Organization, the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah faction), and the ZRO. Following a training session in January 2013, the Hmar People's Convention-Democracy indicated willingness to sign the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. Geneva Call hopes this will take place in 2014.

In May, ZRO signed the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence in armed conflict and against gender discrimination.

Geneva Call meets Indian ANSAs outside the country, or works remotely through email and phone, and through local partners to monitor compliance with the *Deeds of Commitment*. Since 2012, Geneva Call has been working with the UNMM, an umbrella organization of Indian civil society organizations operating in Manipur state. Geneva Call provided a five-day training in September, focusing on AP mines, child protection, and sexual violence. Several participants have since followed up the workshop and discussed relevant themes with target ANSAs.

Geneva Call is currently assessing opportunities for engagement with the Communist Party of India (Maoist) – also known as the Naxalites – which is expected to take place in 2014.



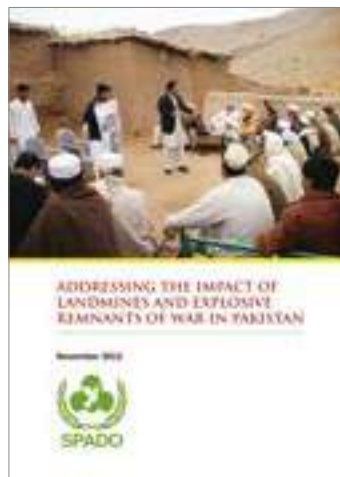
Training with the UNMM on AP mines, child protection and sexual violence, September 2013. © Geneva Call



## PAKISTAN

Pakistan has one of the world's highest casualty rates due to landmines, 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 – Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas – and in Baluchistan. 247 people were killed or injured in 2012, over 90% in these three provinces, which are near inaccessible to humanitarian organizations, in part due to the conflict and in part because the Government has not given permission for access. This also means that very little humanitarian mine action has been implemented to address the problem and assist survivors.

In December 2012, Sustainable Peace and Development Organization (SPADO) – with the support of Geneva Call – produced a report entitled *The Impact of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War in Pakistan* to draw international attention to the issue. The report presents the scope and impact of the problem, and explores concrete steps that the Government of Pakistan and other actors, including ANSAs, can take to address it. The report, launched in English in December 2012, was translated into Urdu and released in Pakistan in March 2013 to great interest.



**“The launch of the report in Pakistan is generating a new momentum regarding the issue of landmines in the country. We are now in consultation with local CBOs and UN agencies to reflect on new strategies and collaborate and coordinate effectively to respond to this crisis.”**

SPADO, 2013

*The Impact of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War in Pakistan* is available in English at <http://bit.ly/1iaBWFP> and in Urdu at <http://bit.ly/1iEK5Kj>

## PHILIPPINES

In January 2014, the last of four annexes to a comprehensive peace agreement was signed between the Government and the MILF. The final agreement was signed in March 2014. While this agreement will hopefully put an end to this conflict, several other ANSAs remain active, notably Abu Sayaf, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, factions of the Moro National Liberation Front, and the New People's Army. Geneva Call plans to step up engagement with several of these ANSAs in 2014.

MILF is a signatory to Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. In 2011, MILF issued *General Order No. 3* to implement the *Deed* and incorporated it into its code of conduct. The order prohibits the use of AP mines by MILF's military wing, the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF).

In partnership with the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies, Geneva Call supported MILF in its internal dissemination of *General Order No. 3* and BIAF's obligations during 2012 and 2013. Working with the General Staff of BIAF, Geneva Call and its partner provided a training of trainers to senior representatives from all BIAF base commands, and members of the BIAF General Staff, who then trained field-level forces in 10 base commands in 2012. January through March 2013 saw 2,156 combatants and staff from the remaining 20 base commands, and headquarters staff, receive training. *General Order No. 3* was also produced by Geneva Call in booklet form in local languages, and some 4,000 copies have been distributed.

As a result of continued dialogue with MILF on the issue of the protection of women and the prohibition of sexual violence, MILF expressed an interest in Geneva Call facilitating workshops on the topic with its members in 2013. The workshops, to be organized with partner United Youth of the Philippines-Women, would also explore women's rights and the role that women can play in the political process. Delays in securing funding meant that these planned activities were postponed until 2014. For Geneva Call and MILF, the project remains relevant in the context of the peace agreement and a future autonomous entity of Bangsamoro.



Signing of the final peace agreement between Philippines Government and MILF, Manila, Philippines, March 2014. © Romeo Ranoco



**COLOMBIA:** Since mid-2010, Geneva Call's Mine Risk Education project has reached 12,000 indigenous beneficiaries in remote conflict-affected areas.

**COLOMBIA:** A Geneva Call workshop with *Red de mujeres excombatientes*, a network of former female combatants in Colombia, resulted in a *Carta por la paz* in which the women relayed their key recommendations to the negotiating parties (Government and FARC), and to the ELN.

## COLOMBIA

Despite peace talks between the Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP), which had begun in 2012, armed violence continued – in some cases increased – in Colombia during 2013, including the use by ANSAs of improvised AP mines and other IEDs. There were also reports of the recruitment and use of children in combat, and of sexual violence. For 2014 there are hopes that the National Liberation Army (ELN) may enter into talks with the Government.

Geneva Call continued engagement with both ANSAs on international humanitarian norms and the protection of civilians. It held several meetings with FARC (in Cuba) and ELN (with its representatives in prison), and shared with them the *Deeds of Commitment* and other information on humanitarian mine action, conflict-related violence against women and girls, women's participation in peace processes, child protection, and IHL. Both ANSAs showed an interest in the exchange and in having further contact. Geneva Call is also seeking to move forward on ELN's 2012 public statement that it would facilitate humanitarian demining in its areas of influence in the southwest of the country. In 2013 several specific areas were tentatively identified with the communities, and separately with ANSA representatives.



Workshop with women ex-combatants in Bogotá, Colombia, April 2013 © Geneva Call

Geneva Call worked with a number of local organizations and individuals to prepare activities and messages to support its dialogue with ANSAs. Notably, a workshop was held with *Red de mujeres excombatientes*, a network of women former combatants, which resulted in the *Carta por la paz* (Letter for Peace) in which the women relayed their key experiences and recommendations to the negotiating parties (Government and FARC), and to ELN. Research was also completed on child recruitment and use in Tambo and Toribío in Cauca Province. The report, which took a gender perspective, found evidence of child recruitment and use in both municipalities, and provided





some details of how this occurs. It will help Geneva Call to plan its advocacy activities on the protection of children by ANSAs. Research on the new 'post-demobilization groups' was conducted in the second half of 2013, providing a mapping of groups and their involvement in sexual violence, and recommendations for future Geneva Call action.

In late 2013, with support from the University of San Buenaventura and independent experts, Geneva Call held an IHL and IHRL course for ten ELN members in the Bellavista prison in Medellín. The participants, several of whom were high-ranking commanders, had previously operated in different regions of Colombia. Over eight daily sessions, they debated with the trainers the normative framework of IHL, IHRL and transitional justice, and the challenges in applying it in the Colombian context. One of the trainers said, "Any trainer who thinks they will be coming here to give a normal course has no idea of the immense challenge that awaits. This is a table of dialogue, an eye opener." Although discussions were sometimes challenging, trainees agreed "As an armed group, we must progressively apply the rules of IHL, not just conform to existing internal regulations, but go beyond that and protect the people." An encouraging outcome of the activity is that trainees agreed to review internal ELN regulations in light of international norms and make recommendations to the leadership for improvements.

**"The training gave us our liberty. Even though we are in prison, the opportunity to do this training**

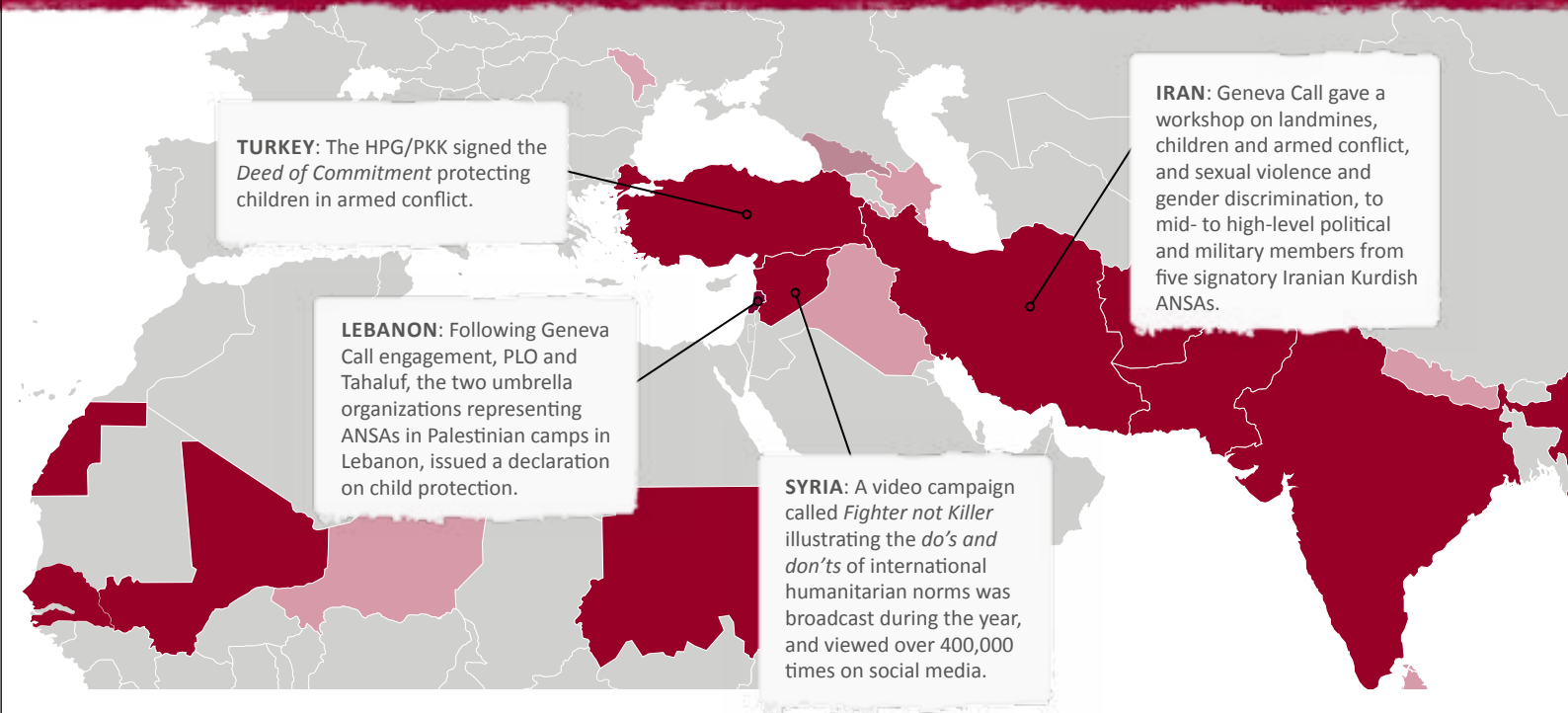


**made us feel free ... it was an enriching opportunity, and paves the way for an informed peace process."**

ELN trainee, Bellavista prison, Medellín, December 2013

In addition to direct engagement with ANSAs, Geneva Call continued to provide local authorities, CBOs and CSOs in some of the most conflict-affected provinces – Arauca, Cauca, and Nariño – with the tools to strengthen their capacity to advocate towards ANSAs, and to better protect themselves from the effects of the armed conflict. Six in-depth training sessions took place, though the mobilization of peasants, workers, and indigenous peoples in project areas caused some delays in implementation.

Geneva Call continued to provide MRE training as part of its approach to self-protection for at-risk communities in the southwestern provinces of Cauca, Nariño, and Putumayo. Since mid-2010, the project has reached out to more than 12,000 beneficiaries in conflict-affected areas. Following the training of trainers and capacity building, this Geneva Call project is now being handed over to the local indigenous organizations representing the Awá, Inga, Nasa, Siona, and Pastos peoples. In 2013 Geneva Call also promoted exchange between local organizations on how to conduct self-protection, in regards to the protection of children and armed conflict, and from sexual violence.



## IRAN

Amid the tense political and military climate in the region, mainly Kurdish ANSAs are opposed to the Islamic Republic of Iran, and demand the rights of ethnic minorities and the creation of a federal democratic State.

Iranian Kurdish ANSAs – the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan, the Kurdistan Democratic Party-Iran, the Komalah-Kurdistan's Organization of the Communist Party of Iran, the Komala Party of Kurdistan, and the Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan - have suspended their military activities. The exception is the Free Life Party of Kurdistan (PJAK), which has not. Occasional armed clashes still occur with Iran's security forces.

AP mines laid during the 1980s Iran-Iraq war still kill and maim. ANSAs' knowledge of international norms is limited, and the behaviour of some towards children and women has fallen short of international standards relating to armed conflict.

All six Iranian Kurdish ANSAs are signatories to Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines. All of them – except PJAK – have also signed the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict and the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and against gender discrimination.

During 2013, Geneva Call monitored their compliance through media, field meetings and correspondence. Five signatories provided compliance reports on progress in implementation. In December, Geneva Call gave a monitoring and implementation workshop on landmines,

children and armed conflict, and sexual violence and gender discrimination, to the focal points assigned by signatory ANSAs for the three thematic areas. Participants were mid- to high-level political and military members from the ANSAs, almost two-thirds of whom were women.

Signatories reported that they had already integrated the *Deeds of Commitment* into respective educational/training systems for combatants. They had also disseminated information internally and externally about the *Deed* signings and the significance of the commitments made.

Geneva Call's engagement on child protection and sexual violence in conflict and gender discrimination continued with PJAK. In late 2013 it announced that it would be interested in signing both *Deeds*. This is expected to take place during 2014.





## LEBANON

Since the end of the civil war in 1990, there has been frequent violence involving ANSAs affiliated with Lebanese political parties, with the current Syrian conflict increasing tensions. This precarious situation is exacerbated by the presence of over 416,000 Palestinian refugees, half of whom live in overcrowded camps, such as Ain al-Hilweh which houses around 66,000 in an area of just 2 km<sup>2</sup>.

Since 2011 there has been an influx into the refugee camps of thousands more Palestinian refugees escaping the conflict in Syria. This situation has worsened security in the camps and made civilian populations even more vulnerable. The camps are controlled by ANSA-led Popular Committees. Internal security is provided by the Palestinian National Security Forces (PNSF), which are run by the PLO.

A fragile balance exists inside the camps, where ANSAs compete for power. Sporadic clashes between different factions and between ANSAs and the Lebanese Army (in charge of the external security of the camps) severely affect the lives of civilians. Children suffer the most, subjected to violence and marginalization, and often associating with ANSAs for protection.

Geneva Call is engaging with factions affiliated to PLO, and factions affiliated to the Forces of the Palestinian National Coalition in Lebanon (Tahaluf).

Since 2011, Geneva Call has given training on international humanitarian norms to armed security officers, and training of trainers to PNSF cadres, with the aim of reducing the level of violence in the Palestinian refugee camps. In 2013, with monitoring by Geneva Call, these trainers gave training on the implementation of humanitarian standards to some 200 PNSF members,

officials and CBO staff in al-Buss, Ain al-Hilweh, Burj Shamali, and Rachidye camps and at the Jal al-Bahr gathering. Training was also given for representatives of CSOs and advocacy bodies active within the camps, as these bodies can also advocate for improvements. In an important development, following Geneva Call's

**On 19 May 2013, an armed group attacked the headquarters of one of the members of PNSF in Ain al-Hilweh. In defending itself and its headquarters, the ANSA, which had received training in IHL from Geneva Call, implemented the lessons it had learned and used weapons in proportion to the objective of defending property and avoiding harm to civilians. The PNSF commander chose to use light weapons only and not to resort to heavier weapons.**

interventions, training on humanitarian norms and obligations towards civilians was made mandatory within PNSF, and is now a condition for advancement in the hierarchy.

**“Geneva Call’s training in humanitarian standards and the principles of the use of force is helping improve accountability and discipline and will directly contribute to improving stability in the camps.”**

Subhi Abu Arab, Head of PNSF, March 2013

**Evaluation of trainees has shown a significant increase in their understanding of their obligations and how to implement them. “Now we know that we are responsible as individuals. It is not just a matter of orders or instructions received from the leadership.” PNSF member, Burj al-Shemali, July 2013**

Geneva Call also engaged Palestinian ANSAs on child protection. In December, Geneva Call invited nine factions from PLO and from Tahaluf, the two umbrella organizations representing the ANSAs, to a roundtable discussion. As a result, PLO and Tahaluf subsequently issued a declaration on child protection on 17 December. In addition, some Tahaluf factions showed interest in training on international humanitarian norms for their joint Security Committees, which Geneva Call will follow up in 2014.

**We similarly condemn the targeting of civilians and their property, of educational and health institutions, and any other public utilities within the camps ... we declare our absolute willingness to cooperate with all concerned parties to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the present declaration.”**

PLO and Tahaluf declaration on child protection, Lebanon, 17 December 2013

<http://bit.ly/1gODbVY>

To attempt to counteract some of the growing tension across Lebanon, and attendant risks to human security and human rights, Geneva Call is working with partner Permanent Peace Movement (PPM) to address the decision-makers of seven major Lebanese political parties (Amal, Free Patriotic Movement, Future, Hezbollah, Kataeb, Lebanese Forces, and Progressive Socialist Party) on international humanitarian norms applicable in situations of armed violence. Geneva Call and PPM also separately engaged key groups (party cadres, youth organizations, and party-affiliated media) from five of these parties in a series of training workshops in May and June.

**“We condemn the use of children in all forms of armed action, regardless of its aims. We pledge to take all practical means to ensure that children under 18 will not take any direct part in hostilities.**

Roundtable with ANSAs in Ain al-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp, Lebanon, January 2013. © Geneva Call



Trainings of trainers in a Palestinian refugee camp, Lebanon, January 2013. © Geneva Call





## SYRIA

The unrest which began in Syria in 2011 as a peaceful demand for reform in the wake of the 'Arab Spring', has since evolved. Protests, demanding the end of Ba'ath regime rule, rapidly escalated into an armed insurrection against the Government. The conflict has since intensified and increasingly polarized along sectarian lines. In the main, the armed conflict currently involves the regime's security forces and its militias; the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and its affiliated groups, mostly composed of civilian volunteers and deserters from the Syrian Army; militant Islamic groups; and Kurdish forces. In 2013, Hezbollah entered the conflict in support of the Syrian Army.

Syrian ANSAs and Government forces are accused of grave violations of international humanitarian norms. By the end of 2013, there have been more than 120,000 casualties reported, and millions of Syrians have been displaced. Abductions, unlawful killings, torture and other forms of mistreatment are among the many crimes committed. There are also serious allegations of sexual violence and use of children in hostilities.

During its activities with Syrian ANSAs and civil society starting in late 2011, Geneva Call discovered from former officers of the Syrian Army that they had not had the opportunity to be trained on IHL. Nor had the armed opposition been exposed in any way to the law of war. Despite the serious limitations on access to the country, Geneva Call has engaged opposition ANSAs, both inside and outside the country, primarily on their understanding of, and obligations under, IHL. Information and training in IHL has been provided to commanders of FSA, YPG and the Syrian Islamic Liberation Front (SILF). SILF is no longer in existence as its main brigades created the Islamic Front in November. Members of other Islamic ANSAs have also attended training sessions.

Significant discussion has taken place with trainees, about the differences and similarities between Islamic Law and IHL, how to navigate between the two, and how to practically apply these rules on the ground.

Discussions on IHL with YPG, Syria, December 2013. © Geneva Call



**“Participants at the training sessions have become shocked and upset on discovering that they have violated IHL and Islamic rules during the fighting, and have shown a strong wish to correct their mistakes and adapt their methods of combat”.**

Geneva Call trainer, 2013

**“If you were fighting and caused civilian losses, even if you had taken all necessary precautions, would you be able to sleep with a clear conscience after that?”**

Syrian ANSA trainee, 2013

Geneva Call has also provided training to Syrian and Kurdish political leaders, NGOs and civil society initiatives that can also then serve as relays of information and advocacy towards combatants. All of them appreciated the opportunity to learn, and asked to receive more training to help them to improve their behaviour. Training of trainers was also held with the Syrian Legal Development Programme, which will disseminate international standards inside Syria, and for the independent Afaq Academy, set up in 2013 to provide legal training and capacity-building to Syrian opposition leaders. At their request, Geneva Call also gave training to international NGOs working on the humanitarian crisis in Syria.

**“We now realize that neither IHL nor Islamic rules have been respected in the fighting”.**

Syrian ANSA trainee, 2013

Geneva Call's training of trainers for the Afaq Academy has already proved useful, the latter's new trainers providing sessions for numerous groups of various affiliations: Ahrar al-Sham, Aleppo Military Council, al-Fatih'un Brigade, al-Tawhid Brigade, Islam Army, Jaysh al-Mujahedin, Jund al-A'ziz, Liwae' Khan Sheykhoun, Nur ad-Din al-Zanki, Salah' ad-Din Revolutionary Council, Soqour al-Sham, Syrian Revolutionary Council, and a group of four judges from the religious courts created by Islamic ANSAs operating within Syria.

Given the difficulties of access, the differing levels of education within target groups, and the ongoing changes within the armed opposition, Geneva Call has also sought new ways to reach out, to simplify the rules of IHL, and to make the messages as easy to understand and realistic as possible. New materials specify key *do's* and *don'ts* in armed conflict, using simple language based on 15 basic rules of IHL (see page 16). A set of seven videos, produced to address serious violations of IHL taking place, have been viewed over 400,000 times. The campaign – *Fighter not Killer* مقاتل لا قاتل – is being disseminated through booklets, TV and social media to reach a broad range of fighters, their supporters, and members of civil society.

(<http://bit.ly/1uv17aj>)



Illustration from the video *Fighter not Killer – Do Not Target or Attack Civilians*. © Geneva Call





Illustration from the video *Fighter not Killer – Respect and Protect Medical Personnel and Objects.* © Geneva Call



Illustration from the video *Fighter not Killer – Do not recruit children or use them in combat or hostilities.* © Geneva Call

Geneva Call directly engaged members of the Syrian National Coalition regarding IHL violations, and YPG on recent allegations of child recruitment and other IHL violations. Pursuing these initial discussions, YPG issued a military order on 14 December prohibiting the recruitment of under-18s, and expressed a willingness to sign Geneva Call's *Deeds of Commitment*. It has been reported that 17 children associated with the YPG's armed forces have been released.

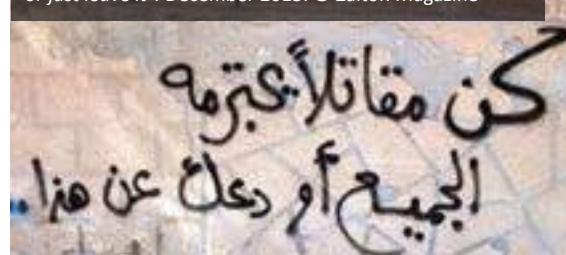
SILF posted a recruitment announcement for the Revolutionary Military Police on its website on 24 June, giving as one of its conditions that candidates must be between 18 and 25.

Illustrating an understanding of Geneva Call's messages, in one of its media statements on 4 May, SILF supported an appeal by the Euro-Mediterranean Network *inter alia* against sexual violence, and honour crimes. SILF also demanded that the Government adhere to its international obligations in this regard, and noted that States have a duty to ensure that violations against women are investigated, and do not go unpunished.

### EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF IHL TRAINING

It is difficult to evaluate the impact of the activities described in the context of the ongoing conflict in Syria. Geneva Call analyzed the rhetoric being used by SILF in 91 press releases and 246 media reports between March and October 2013 – SILF commanders had received IHL training from Geneva Call in April and June. Before merging as the Islamic Front (thus ceasing to publish as SILF), the group sought to make clear that it was engaged in civilian protection: condemning attacks on civilians, their property and homes, public buildings and mosques. The ANSA also drew parallels between the tenets of Islamic Law and IHL, emphasizing how the two bodies of law are close. While Geneva Call was not able to conclude a clear link between the language used by SILF and its training in IHL, it could clearly be seen that SILF had become aware of what is legal and what is not, under IHL, and of its responsibilities toward civilians.

Graffiti in Syria using the same message as Geneva Call's *Fighter not Killer* campaign: "Be a fighter respected by all, or just leave it". December 2013. © Zaiton Magazine



## TURKEY

On 21 March 2013, following talks between the Government of Turkey and Abdullah Öcalan, PKK's imprisoned leader, the latter called for a ceasefire and withdrawal of HPG forces from Turkey as a precursor to peace negotiations. There have been few clashes since. Nevertheless, at the time of writing, the process is still fragile.

On 5 October, after three years of negotiation, HPG/PKK signed the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict. The ANSA entered a reservation in accordance with the *Deed of Commitment* that a new "non-combatant category" would be created by HPG, and that children between 16 and 18 would only be allowed to join this category, and on a voluntary basis. Following signature, HPG created this new category, formalizing the prohibition for children to participate in hostilities. The 16-18 year olds have been reportedly separated from adults and assigned to non-military tasks away from combat zones.

During 2013, Geneva Call continued to monitor compliance with the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines signed by HPG/PKK in 2006, and found no evidence of AP mine use. During the year, Geneva Call strengthened its monitoring of the *Deeds of Commitment* by building the capacity of local journalists and CSOs.

Geneva Call started work in 2012 with the HPG/PKK women's wing, the Supreme Union of Women of Kurdistan, on the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and against gender discrimination. Two further high-level meetings were held in May and in October on the topic. HPG/PKK states that its policy is compliant with the *Deed of Commitment*, and it is hoped that the ANSA will make a unilateral declaration on the issue in 2014. It also agreed to continue working with Geneva Call to further promote the protection and participation of women and girls, and requested further technical advice on the issue.



The HPG/PKK signing Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict, October 2013. © Geneva Call



## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Theories of change in practice

In 2012, Geneva Call took active steps towards monitoring the change it creates through its programmes. Geneva Call decided to apply a Theory of Change (ToC) model to measure the progress and effects of its activities in the long-term. This methodology allows Geneva Call to monitor how its planned activities lead to the desired outcomes (changes in knowledge, attitudes, policy and practices of ANSAs). It is also used to adapt and amend the different engagements according to changing circumstances that are prevalent in conflict situations. In early 2013, Geneva Call resourced the Planning, Monitoring & Evaluation (P,M&E) function to enable better reporting, continuous learning and adaptive programming and is continuously working on developing its “Theory of Change” and the related P,M&E tools in order to improve impact monitoring.

## COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

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 advisory boards; and to share its experience and expertise with policy- and 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. Some of these contributions are listed here. Further documentation is available at [www.genevacall.org](http://www.genevacall.org)

## Research and Publications

### Armed non-State Actors and Displacement in Armed Conflict, Geneva Call and H  lo  se Ruaudel, October 2013

This report is the result of research commissioned in 2012 to explore further the dynamics at play between ANSAs and displacement and to inform engagement strategies for the protection of displaced people. <http://bit.ly/1rhiBCs>

## Conferences, Roundtables, Focus groups

### Focus Group on Children and Armed Conflict

Geneva Call participates in this focus group of the **Child Rights Connect Working Group – Children and Violence**, which informs Geneva-based State missions, and other stakeholders, about the complexities of protecting children from the effects of armed conflict.

### Negotiating Humanitarian Agreements with Everybody: Geneva Call's Experience with Armed Non-State Actors

*Oxford Humanitarian Group, Institute of Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict, University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom, 25 February 2013*

Geneva Call was invited to present its activities and share its experience. The talk is available as a podcast at <http://bit.ly/1jcdYug>

### Facilitating Mine Action in Conflict Affected Countries: Involving Armed non-State Actors, UN Mine Action Team

*annual meeting, Geneva, Switzerland, 12 April 2013*  
The event offered the opportunity to present Geneva Call's work in facilitating mine action, a key aspect of the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines.

### Redressing Violations of International Law, the role of non-State actors in relation to education, London, UK, 22 May 2013

The British Institute of International and Comparative Law held a seminar on the role of non-State actors in redressing education-related violations, to which Geneva Call contributed from the panel.

### Reclaiming the Protection of Civilians under International Humanitarian Law, Oslo, Norway, 23-24 May 2013

An international conference bringing together the work of a series of regional conferences on the issue. Geneva Call presented *Enhancing respect for IHL by non-State armed groups*.

### Education in Conflict and Emergencies in the Context of the post-2015 MDG and EFA Agendas, NORRAG, Geneva, 30 May 2013

Policy seminar to generate strategies for how to advocate for a suitable place for education and training in conflict and emergency settings.

### 36<sup>th</sup> Round Table on current issues of IHL ‘Respecting IHL: Challenges and Responses’, International Institute of Humanitarian Law and ICRC, Sanremo, Italy, 5-7 September 2013

Geneva Call was invited to present *Engaging with Non-State Armed Groups: Lessons Learned*

### Mitigating Humanitarian Impact Through Engagement with Non-State Armed Groups, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and Chatham House, London, UK, 23-24 September 2013

Expert meeting on reducing the humanitarian impact of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. A first discussion of ways to strengthen the protection of civilians from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. The discussions established the parameters of a roadmap for

complementary work streams on this topic for UNOCHA, partner States, UN, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and civil society.

### The protection gap: exploring protective norms and their application in practice, Humanitarian Policy Group/ICRC, Geneva, Switzerland, 14 October 2013

Geneva Call was invited to join leading experts to discuss the gap between the development in international norms around protection of civilians and the challenges faced in realizing these norms in practice.

### Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts, Annual Conference of the Human Security Division of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Bern, Switzerland, 17 October 2013

Geneva Call presented its experience on the *Engagement of armed non-State actors*.

### Monitoring Affected Populations during Humanitarian Crises, Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research of Harvard University, Geneva, 28 October 2013

Geneva Call was invited to input its expertise and experience in relation to monitoring, to a special session of the Harvard Group of Professionals on Monitoring, Reporting and Fact-Finding.

### The Role of Civil Society in Engaging ANSAs, Engaging Armed Groups, Conciliation Resources, London, UK, 1 November 2013

Geneva Call gave an update on its work in Burma/ Myanmar, and on the status of engagement with ANSAs and their willingness to sign the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict.

### Advanced Training Course in International Humanitarian Law, ICRC, Geneva, Switzerland, 7 November 2013

Geneva Call was invited to participate in this conference for University Professors and speak to the session on *Compliance of armed non-State actors with IHL*.

### How To Improve Access for Mine Action in Situations of Armed Conflict, Geneva Call side-event, 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention, Geneva, Switzerland, December 2013

The meeting shared experiences from Afghanistan, Colombia, and Senegal.

## Articles

**Engaging armed non-State actors on humanitarian norms: reflections on Geneva Call's experience**, Humanitarian Exchange Magazine, the Humanitarian Practice Network, Issue 58, July 2013. <http://bit.ly/1tw83U7>

**Armed non-State actors and Child Protection, in Enfants-Soldats et Droits des Enfants en Situation de Conflit et de Post-conflit, R  alit  s et enjeux**, Editions L'Harmattan, November 2013. <http://bit.ly/1gODhg5>

## Working Groups and Advisory Boards

### Child Protection Working Group

Geneva Call is an associate member of the group's **Child Protection Minimum Standards Task Force**.

### Paris Principles Steering Group

Geneva Call contributed to the review of the initial chapters of the group's *Field Handbook on Child Recruitment, Release and Reintegration*.

### Education under Attack, Advisory Group of the Use of Schools Working Group (Lucens process)

Geneva Call contributed on ANSA issues to this working group creating guidelines on protecting schools and universities from military use during armed conflict.

### Reactions to Norms – Armed Groups and the protection of Civilians, Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

Geneva Call contributed to the study as a member of its Advisory Group.

### Counter-terrorism legislation in States hosting humanitarian action, Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

Geneva Call contributed to this study as member of its group of experts.

### Children and armed groups, Child Soldiers International

Geneva Call is a member of the expert board.

### Humanitarian Action under Scrutiny: Criminalizing Humanitarian Engagement, Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research, Harvard University

Geneva Call is a member of the expert group on the project.

### Study of the Impact of Donor Counter-Terrorism Measures on Principled Humanitarian Action

As member of the Advisory Group of Experts, Geneva Call contributed to this independent study commissioned by OCHA and Norwegian Refugee Council.



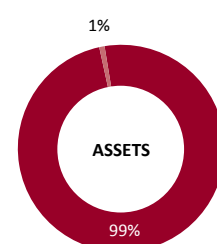
In 2013, Geneva Call reported a total income of CHF 3.59 million compared to CHF 3.43 million in 2012. Grants and contributions from institutional donors amounted to 89% of this revenue. A significant proportion of funding (CHF 2.89 million) was secured by end 2013 for the coming year's operations.

Expenditure increased to CHF 3.59 million compared to CHF 3.06 million in 2012. 87% of expenditure was focused on operations for the protection of civilians in some 20

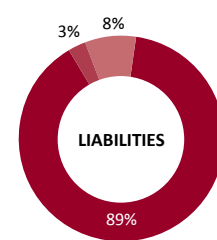
countries. The three largest countries of operations in terms of budget were Burma/Myanmar, Colombia and Syria.

Strict internal financial control, key financial indicators and a unique information system ensure that public funds are respected and used properly and efficiently. Geneva Call is audited by international auditing firm BDO. Geneva Call's audited financial statements are available on [www.genevacall.org](http://www.genevacall.org)

BALANCE SHEET	BALANCE 31.12.2013	BALANCE 31.12.2012
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>3,586,093</b>	<b>2,304,112</b>
Cash & cash equivalents	1,518,131	1,214,629
Other current assets	28,266	80,197
Receivables	42,798	5,206
Grants receivable	1,948,979	1,002,784
Accrued assets	47,918	1,296
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>39,363</b>	<b>39,928</b>
Financial assets	36,652	36,631
IT infrastructure	2,711	3,298
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>3,625,455</b>	<b>2,344,040</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>3,236,543</b>	<b>1,961,146</b>
Accounts payable	359,523	166,516
Grants received in advance	2,869,021	1,786,630
Accrued liabilities	8,000	8,000
<b>LONG TERM LIABILITIES</b>	<b>114,000</b>	<b>114,000</b>
Provisions	114,000	114,000
<b>EQUITY</b>	<b>274,912</b>	<b>268,894</b>
<b>Current operating year</b>	<b>6,018</b>	<b>145,319</b>
Accumulated loss brought forward	18,894	-126,425
Reserve	200,000	200,000
Capital	50,000	50,000
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>3,625,455</b>	<b>2,344,040</b>

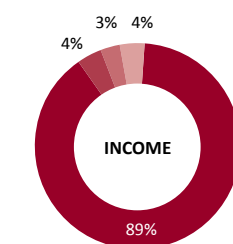


■ Current assets  
■ Non current assets

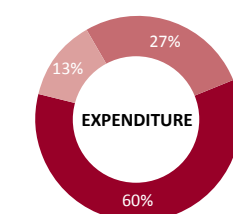


■ Current liabilities  
■ Long term liabilities  
■ Equity

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS	BALANCE 31.12.2013	BALANCE 31.12.2012
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>3,599,628</b>	<b>3,437,950</b>
General donations	134,046	400,893
Contribution from institutional donors	3,206,831	2,466,906
Contribution from private donors	139,057	521,477
Other operational income	119,695	48,674
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>3,592,138</b>	<b>3,069,513</b>
Operational expenditure	3,114,487	2,696,286
Programmes	2,156,435	1,682,464
Direct programme support	958,052	1,013,821
Communication & management	477,651	373,227
<b>RESULT FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>7,490</b>	<b>368,438</b>
Realised foreign exchange loss	-13,413	-23,118
Interest income	757	-
Income & charges of previous years	11,184	-
Malagnou building revenue	63,910	-
Malagnou building expenditure	-63,910	-
Allocation of reserve	-	-200,000
<b>NET OPERATING RESULT</b>	<b>6,018</b>	<b>145,319</b>



■ General donations  
■ Contribution from institutional donors  
■ Contribution from private donors  
■ Other operational income



■ Programmes  
■ Direct programme support  
■ Communication & management

CASH FLOW STATEMENT	2013	2012
<b>NET SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>6,018</b>	<b>145,319</b>
Depreciation	2,135	1,624
Provisions	-	200,000
Increase / decrease in other current assets	51,931	-72,931
Increase / decrease in receivables	-37,593	-1,388
Increase / decrease in grant receivables	-946,195	-938,158
Increase / decrease in accrued assets	-46,622	8,978
Increase / decrease in accounts payable	193,006	59,752
Increase / decrease in grants received in advance	1,082,391	1,464,569
Increase / decrease in accrued liabilities	-	3,008
<b>CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>305,071</b>	<b>870,774</b>
Financial investment	-21	-37
IT investment	-1,548	-4,922
<b>CASH FLOW FROM INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>-1,569</b>	<b>-4,959</b>
Increase / decrease in loan	-	-
Increase / decrease in equity	-	-
<b>CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>INCREASE / DECREASE IN CASH &amp; CASH EQUIVALENT</b>	<b>303,501</b>	<b>865,815</b>
Cash & cash equivalent, beginning of year	1,214,629	348,814
Cash & cash equivalent, end of year	1,518,131	1,214,629
<b>INCREASE / DECREASE IN CASH &amp; CASH EQUIVALENT</b>	<b>303,501</b>	<b>865,815</b>



LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NGOS

AFRICA

- Association pour la Promotion Rurale de l'Arrondissement de Nyassia – Solidarité, Développement, Paix (APRAN- SDP), Senegal
- Sahrawi Campaign to Ban Landmines (SCBL), Western Sahara

ASIA

- Committee for Internally Displaced Karen People, Burma/Myanmar
- Humanity Institute, Burma/Myanmar
- Human Rights Foundation of Monland, Burma/ Myanmar
- Institute for Bangsamoro Studies, the Philippines
- Karenni Social Welfare Development Centre, Burma/Myanmar
- Mon Women’s Organization, Burma/Myanmar
- Mon Youth Progressive Organization, Burma/Myanmar
- Sustainable Peace and Development Organization (SPADO), Pakistan
- The Liaison Office, Afghanistan
- United NGOs Mission Manipur, India

LATIN AMERICA (COLOMBIA)

- Asociación de Campesinos de Arauca
- Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Pueblo Siona
- Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Norte del Cauca
- Cabildo Mayor del Resguardo de Yunguillo
- Cabildo Mayor Awá de Ricaurte
- Compromiso Humano
- Escuela Laureano Inampué Cuantin de Derecho Propio
- Fundación Joel Sierra
- Unidad Indígena del Pueblo Awá
- Red de mujeres excombatientes
- Universidad de San Buenaventura (San Buenaventura University)
- University of Bogotá, School of Gender Studies

MIDDLE-EAST

- Afaq Academy, Syria
- Nashet Association, Lebanon
- Institute of Political and Moral Guidance for Palestinian National Security Forces, Lebanon
- Permanent Peace Movement, Lebanon
- Syrian Legal Development Programme, Syria

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NGOS

- Action on Armed Violence
- Amnesty International
- Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
- Child Soldiers Initiative
- Child Soldiers International
- DanChurchAid
- Global Coalition to Prevent Education from Attack
- Global Protection Cluster areas of responsibility for:
  - Child Protection
  - Gender-based Violence
  - Mine Action
- Human Rights Watch
- Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
- International Campaign to Ban Landmines
- International Committee of the Red Cross
- International Refugee Rights Initiative
- Norwegian People’s Aid
- Norwegian Refugee Council
- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action / Fondation Suisse de Déminage
- Swisspeace
- UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict
- United Nations Development Programme
- United Nations Children’s Fund
- United Nations Mine Action Service
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
- UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict
- Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict

ACADEMIC INSTITUTES, RESEARCH CENTRES, UNIVERSITIES

- Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights
- Geneva Centre for Security Policy
- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
- Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva
- Harvard University, Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research
- International Peace Institute, New York
- Sanremo International Institute of Humanitarian Law
- Small Arms Survey, Geneva

REGULAR STAFF

Mehmet **Balci**, Programme Director, Europe, Middle East, Caucasus and Latin America

Marie Reine **Bayiha Bamseck**, Programme Officer, Africa

Sami **Ben Ayed**, Head of Finance and Administration

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Jonathan **Somer**, Children and ANSAs Coordinator & Legal Advisor

Youssef **Wehbeh**, Programme Officer, Middle East

The equivalent full-time staff level in 2013 was 18.47 as some staff work part-time. A number of the staff above ended their contracts during the year, and several new staff joined.

CONSULTANTS AND TRAINERS

Vicken Cheterian, Hakim Chkam, Luis Ernesto Corredor Portilla, Yani Duque, Rania Fazah, Yehya Hajir, Sarhang Hars, Doris Hernandez, Alfonso Insuasty Rodriguez, Ali Kurdistan, Juan Camilo Lodoño López, Iyad Nasr, Mariana Rivera Palacio, Tilman Rodenhäuser, Héloïse Ruaudel, Khalil Salem, Delly Mawazo Sesete, Michael Siegrist, Wissam Saliby, Francisco Taborda Ocampo, Peter du Toit, Liliana Uribe Tirado, Carlos Arturo Velandia, Youssef Wehbeh.

The staff of Geneva Call’s local partner in Colombia, Compromiso Humano: Yolvi Lena Padilla, Luz Marina Mora Chaparro, Carlos Alberto Guarín, Dora Alicia Villaquiran, Yesid Ariza Zambrano.

INTERNS

Brwa Amin, Beatrice Banafa, Constance Delaveau, Carolina Espinosa, Marketa Fialova, Hardy Giezendanner, Laura Green, Lisa Greminger, Bettina Greuter, Kyle Holec, Fabien Kaufmann, Karin Mathys, Mariana Rivera Palacio, Tilman Rodenhauser, Barbara Sartore, Marica Tamanini, Anna Zuegner.

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**Ruth-Gaby Vermot**, former Member of the Swiss Parliament and of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

*\*Rotated from the Board in 2013*  
*\*\*Interim Chair until the election of Mr Reich*  
*\*\*\*Elected Chair in September 2013*

Geneva Call would especially like to thank **Marco Sassòli** for his long and dedicated commitment to the organization.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Geneva Call created an Advisory Council in 2013. It is made up of leading experts in Geneva Call’s areas of interest and operation and provides advice to Geneva Call’s Board and Directorate on specific issues and projects. Geneva Call would like to thank the Council’s members for their support. Details of Advisory Council membership are provided on [genevacall.org](http://genevacall.org)



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.
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.



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.

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.



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.

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.





- ☒ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
- ☒ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2013
- ☐ The ANSA has been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area

Signatories since 2000	DEED OF COMMITMENT		
	43	9	7

REGION	COUNTRY	ORGANIZATION	ACTIVE	THEMATIC AREAS			
AFRICA	BURUNDI	National Council for the Defense of Democracy – Forces for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD-FDD)	no	✓			
	MALI	National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA)	yes				
	SENEGAL	Movement of Democratic Forces of 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 – Hassan Mohamed Nur "Shatigudud"(RRA/SRRC-Shatigudud)	no	✓			
		Rahanweyn Resistance Army / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council – Sheykh Adan "Madobe"(RRA/SRRC-Madobe)	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)	no	✓			
		United Somali Congress / Somalia National Army / Somalia Reconciliation and Restoration Council / Nakuru (USC/SSA/SRRC/Nakuru)	no	✓			
	SUDAN	Justice and Equality Mouvement (JEM)	yes	✓			
		Sudan Liberation Movement / Army – Abdel Wahid al-Nur (SLM/A-AW)	yes				
		Sudan Liberation Movement / Army – Minni Minnawi (SLM/A-MM)	yes				
		Sudan People's Liberation Movement / Army (SPLM/A)	no	✓			
		Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement – North (SPLM-N)	yes	✓			
	WESTERN SAHARA	Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario Front)	yes	✓			

\*Two of these 48 ANSAs are being engaged discretely on international humanitarian norms, with the knowledge of the Government concerned.

REGION	COUNTRY	ORGANIZATION	ACTIVE	THEMATIC			
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 (KNU) Peace Council / Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) Peace Council	yes				
		Karen National Union / Karen National Liberation Army (KNU/KNLA)	yes		✓	✓	
		Karenni National Progressive Party / Karenni Army (KNPP/KA)	yes		✓		
		Klo Htoo Baw Karen Organization / Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (KKO/DKBA)	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 / Ta-an National Liberation Army (PSLF/TNLA)	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 (RCSS/SSA)	yes				
		Shan State Progressive Party / Shan State Army (SSPP/SSA)	yes				
	INDIA	Hmar People's Congress-Democracy (HPC-D)	yes				
		Kuki National Organisation (KNO)	yes	✓			
		National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak Muivah) (NSCM-IM)	yes	✓			
		Zomi Re-unification Organisation (ZRO)	yes	✓		✓	
	PHILIPPINES	Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) / New People's Army (NPA)	yes				
		Moro Islamic Liberation Front / Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (MILF/BIAF)	yes	✓			
		Revolutionary Workers Party of Mindanao (RPM/RPA)	yes	✓			
		Revolutionary Workers Party of the Philippines / Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayo Brigade (RPM/RPA-ABB)	yes	✓			
	LATIN AMERICA	COLOMBIA					
		National Liberation Army (ELN)	yes				
		Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP)	yes				
	EUROPE & 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	yes	✓	✓	✓
			Komala Party of Kurdistan	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	Forces of the Palestinian National Coalition ('Tahaluf')	yes			
			Hezbollah	yes			
			Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)	yes			
			Palestinian National Security Forces (PNSF)	yes			
	SYRIA	National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces / Free Syrian Army / Other affiliated factions (NCSROF/FSA)	yes				
		People's Protection Units (YPG)	yes				
		Syrian Islamic Liberation Front (SILF)	no				
	TURKEY	People's Defences Forces / Kurdistan Worker's Party (HPG/PKK)	yes	✓	✓		
	YEMEN	Al-Houthi movement / Ansar Allah	yes				



GENEVA CALL IS GRATEFUL TO ALL ITS DONORS AND SUPPORTERS AND EXTENDS ITS SINCERE THANKS TO:

Governments of Australia (AusAID), Belgium, Canada and its Embassy in Thailand, Denmark, France (including through Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining – GICHD), Germany (Foreign Affairs and Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations), Italy through GICHD, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Norway and its Embassies in Thailand and in Lebanon, Sweden (SIDA), Switzerland (Directorate of International Law, Human Security Division, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation/COSUDE

through Compromiso Humano), United Kingdom (FCO) and its Embassy in Burma/Myanmar, the European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid Department (DG ECHO) through Fondation Suisse de Déminage (FSD), Association des Amis de la Fondation pour Genève, City of Geneva, City of Lancy, Fondation Hans Wilsdorf, Fondation Pluralisme, Foundation for the Future (through PPM – Lebanon), Loterie Romande, Peace Nexus, Republic & Canton of Geneva, and United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).

Geneva Call also thanks its private individual donors and those who have invested in Actions Humanitaires.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT GENEVA CALL?

If you would like to support Geneva Call, please use the following bank details:

**Postal account (in Switzerland):**  
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17-695277-4  
**IBAN:** CH76 0900 0000 1769 5277 4

**and for donations in other currencies:**  
Banque Cantonale de Genève  
PO Box 2251 – 1211 Genève 2  
Fondation de l’Appel de Genève  
**SWIFT:** BCGECHGGXXX  
**IBAN:** CH30 0078 8000 0501 3648 0

You can also make a donation at [www.genevacall.org/donation](http://www.genevacall.org/donation)



Actions Humanitaires  
valued at CHF 1,000.–  
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Geneva Call has launched an initiative called *Actions Humanitaires*, literally a play on words as, in French, actions means both stocks and shares, and action! The artist and designer of banknotes for many countries, Roger Pfund, created Geneva Call’s *Actions Humanitaires*, and the Atelier Roger Pfund helped to produce them. Individuals and corporations can now purchase a share in Geneva Call’s humanitarian work, and help towards the protection of civilians in armed conflict. This share plays a role in saving human lives, the lives of women, men, children, innocent victims of wars and conflicts. It is a fair and solid investment in human beings, with a guaranteed humanitarian return.

Actions Humanitaires can be ordered for CHF 1,000 per share on [www.genevacall.org/humanitarian-shares](http://www.genevacall.org/humanitarian-shares). Geneva Call and its staff would like to thank all donors for helping to save lives in the midst of armed conflict.

- AMISOM** African Union Mission in Somalia
- AOAV** Action on Armed Violence
- ANSA** Armed non-State actor
- AP** Anti-personnel (mine)
- APRAN-SDP** Association pour la Promotion Rurale de l’Arrondissement de Nyassia – Solidarité, Développement, Paix
- AV** Anti-vehicle (mine)
- BIAF** Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces
- CBO** Community-based Organization
- CNAMS** National Centre for Mine Action in Senegal
- CNF** Chin National Front
- CSO** Civil society Organization
- DCA** DanChurchAid
- DKBA** Democratic Karen Buddhist Army
- DRC** Democratic Republic of Congo
- ELN** National Liberation Army
- ERW** Explosive Remnants of War
- FARC-EP** Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army
- FGS** Federal Government of Somalia
- FSA** Free Syrian Army
- GICHD** Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
- HIG** Hizb-e Islami Gulbuddin
- HPG** People’s Defence Forces
- ICRC** International Committee of the Red Cross
- IDP** Internally Displaced Persons
- IED** Improvised Explosive Device
- IHL** International Humanitarian Law
- IHRL** International Human Rights Law
- IRIN** Integrated Regional Information Networks
- JEM** Justice and Equality Movement
- KA** Karenni Army
- KIA** Kachin Independence Army
- KIO** Kachin Independence Organization
- KKO** Klohtobaw Karen Organization
- KNLA** Karen National Liberation Army
- KNLA-PC** Karen National Liberation Army – Peace Council
- KNU** Karen National Union
- KNU PC** Karen National Union – Peace Council

- KNPP** Karenni National Progressive Party
- MFDC** Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance
- MILF** Moro Islamic Liberation Front
- MINUSMA UN** Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
- MNJ** Niger Movement for Justice
- MNLA** Mon National Liberation Army (Burma/Myanmar)
- MNLA** National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (Mali)
- MONUSCO** United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
- MRE** Mine Risk Education
- NATO** North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- NGO** Non-governmental organization
- NMSP** New Mon State Party
- NPA** Norwegian People’s Aid
- PJAK** Free Life Party of Kurdistan
- PKK** Kurdistan Workers’ Party
- PLO** Palestine Liberation Organization
- PNLO** Pa’o National Liberation Organization
- PNSF** Palestinian National Security Forces
- PPM** Permanent Peace Movement
- SCBL** Sahrawi Campaign to Ban Landmines
- SLM/A-MM** Sudan Liberation Movement/Army Minni Minnawi
- SLM/A-AW** Sudan Liberation Movement/Army Abdul Wahid al Nur
- SILF** Syrian Islamic Liberation Front
- SPADO** Sustainable Peace and Development Organization
- SPLM/A** Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army
- SPLM-N** Sudan People’s Liberation Movement-North
- SSA-N** Shan State Army-North
- SSPP** Shan State Progress Party
- UN** United Nations
- UNICEF** United Nations Children’s Fund
- UNMAS** UN Mine Action Service
- UNMM** United NGOs Mission Manipur
- UNOCHA** United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- YPG** People’s Protection Units
- ZRO** Zomi Reunification Organization



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