Appel de Genève
Geneva Call

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

PROTECTING CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT

GENEVA CALL'S MISSION

Geneva Call is a neutral and impartial non-governmental organization dedicated to promoting respect, by armed non-State actors (ANSAs) in armed conflict and other situations of violence, for 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 mines, protecting children from the effects of armed conflict, prohibiting sexual violence in armed conflict, preventing displacement 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, 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 stake-holders, including the States concerned, of its engagement efforts with ANSAs.

A UNIQUE DIRECTORY OF ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS' HUMANITARIAN COMMITMENTS

www.theirwords.org is an online collection of commitments and policies made by 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. 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.

www.theirwords.org contains over 500 online documents. It fills a gap in available resources and serves to better understand ANSA views on IHL and IHRL.

FIGHTER NOT KILLER QUIZ: A MOBILE APPLICATION ON THE RULES OF WAR

Can a hospital be targeted if the enemy is inside and targeting you? Can you enrol young people as combatants without ensuring that they are 18? Geneva Call's mobile application quiz is designed to test users on their knowledge of humanitarian norms.

The quiz has two levels of difficulty and 28 scenarios. Users are faced with true-to-life situations and questions related to assisting the wounded, the use of certain weapons, child protection, the conduct of hostilities or war tactics.

Disseminating the law of war to warring parties, and in particular to ANSAs, is essential to ensuring the protection of civilian populations during armed conflicts.

To download, visit:
http://www.genevacall.org/mobile-application-rules-war/

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2017 was marked by at least 38 non-international armed conflicts taking place in 21 States. The ten most significant conflicts in the world were all non-international in nature, involving one or several armed non-State actors (ANSAs).

In this context, Geneva Call's operations led to 16 ANSAs taking actions to improve their respect for humanitarian norms. These actions not only included changing their policies or signing *Deeds of Commitment* with Geneva Call, but also taking concrete measures such as releasing children from their ranks, opening up new areas to humanitarian mine action, destroying stockpiles of anti-personnel mines, disseminating internal rules to their soldiers and training them to abide by humanitarian norms in the conduct of hostilities.

Geneva Call was also able to launch programmes in four new contexts (Libya, Mali, Yemen and Ukraine), where in-depth humanitarian dialogue with local communities and armed non-State actors is key to limiting the huge impact that these conflicts have on civilian populations. Access remains a crucial challenge everywhere, particularly in times of high-intensity fighting.

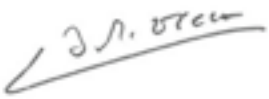
2017 has also marked the start of Geneva Call's ambitious new three-year strategy. From being an organization which essentially worked out of its headquarters, Geneva Call has begun to open a series of field offices, thus ensuring closer contact with the reality in the field and a more sustained follow-up of its activities. This crucial phase in the organization's evolution demands a high level of managerial and structural development. Guaranteeing the necessary set-up to ensure a balance between the standardization of activities and processes remains a challenge during this phase of decentralization. Operational innovation and flexibility will nevertheless remain the organization's trademarks, in order to provide swift, appropriate responses to the humanitarian challenges of our time.

At the end of last year, Elisabeth Decrey Warner retired after twenty years of passionate commitment to the organization. She was one of Geneva Call's co-founders in 1998 and directed the organization until the end of December 2017. Elisabeth built Geneva Call into a respected actor in the humanitarian field. We thank her warmly for her courage and vision; her incredible intuition has not only contributed to enhancing international humanitarian law, but also to saving countless lives.

This work will continue! Geneva Call is proud to carry out this fundamental mission, with the support of all its donors, the Board of Trustees and its committed colleagues in the field and at headquarters. We would like to acknowledge their dedication to Geneva Call's primary objective: the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

We hope that this annual report will show all our donors, partners and friends how valuable their continued support is—support that helps Geneva Call ensure an adequate humanitarian response and a reduction of civilian suffering in armed conflict.

Alain Délétroz
Director General



Bertrand Reich
President of the Board

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2 Mission
3 Foreword
5 Progress towards 2017–2019 Strategy

THEMATIC AREAS
10 International Humanitarian Norms
12 Protection of Children and Education
14 Gender Issues
16 Landmine Ban
17 Displacement
18 Cultural Heritage

AFRICA
20 Regional Priorities
21 Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
24 Libya
26 Mali
28 Western Sahara

ASIA AND EUROPE
32 Regional Priorities
33 Myanmar
36 India
38 Thailand
40 Ukraine

LATIN AMERICA
44 Colombia

NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST
48 Regional Priorities
49 Iran
50 Iraq
55 Lebanon
58 Syria
61 Turkey
63 Yemen

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT
66 Policy and Legal Unit
66 Public Adocacy
67 Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
67 Operational Communication
67 Administration and Finance
68 Abbreviations and Definitions
70 List of Engaged Armed Actors
72 Financial Report
76 How to Support Geneva Call
77 Management

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1
Consolidation and Concentration of Actions

Geneva Call's operations are concentrated in 10 priority contexts of armed conflict and towards ANSAs having the most severe impact on civilian populations; it has developed its tools for engagement and for promoting the respect of humanitarian norms; and it has consolidated the assessment of its results and impact.

By the end of 2017, the planned reinforcement of Geneva Call's interventions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Iraq and Syria had indeed taken place, with additional ANSAs engaged and humanitarian dialogue with them further deepened. However, due to access issues and funding constraints, Geneva Call was unable to pursue its reinforcement in Sudan and South Sudan as initially planned.

Geneva Call's deployment in Yemen was successful, reaching the expected level of development. Just when Geneva Call had started to phase out its intervention in the Philippines, however, with signatory ANSAs in full compliance with their *Deeds of Commitment*, a change in strategy became necessary. In 2017, conflict erupted between the government and the country's radical ANSAs, leading to subsequent humanitarian violations against the civilian population. This presented Geneva Call with new opportunities to engage with newly emerging ANSAs as well as with the more long-established ones which became caught up in the fighting against more radical ANSAs.

In terms of tool development, Geneva Call has progressed in equipping and further enabling its staff to more effectively prioritize which ANSAs should be targeted for engagement. It has also strengthened its planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning capacities, notably by creating a unit dedicated to this in the Department of Operations. Due to conflicting priorities and a lack of human resources, the operational guidelines planned for the end of 2017 will now be finalized in 2018. Although general guidelines for the development of disengagement strategies were also initially planned for the end of 2017 (now anticipated for mid-2018), the Operations Department managed to prepare or implement consistent disengagement strategies throughout the year.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2
Development of Engagement and Thematic and Programme-Related Innovations

Within a renewed and gradually decentralized operational framework, Geneva Call has initiated dialogue with "new generation" ANSAs and/or ANSAs that are difficult to get access to; it has innovated with the adoption of new themes and subjects and the launch of pilot programmes to support its engagement efforts with ANSAs.

By the end of 2017, the development of Geneva Call's operational framework had progressed well. The security framework was further defined and revised with regard to Geneva Call's deployment of its field presence. An in-house security training workshop for field staff was conducted during the annual strategic meeting. External Security training sessions were postponed until 2018 and 2019, as some senior field positions had not yet been filled. Geneva Call successfully developed two field structures, which were officially registered, in Iraq and the DRC. In seven other priority contexts, Geneva Call improved its field presence, thus strengthening its engagement with ANSAs, local communities and State authorities. Geneva Call also developed its work in new priority contexts. In this perspective, assessment missions took place in Libya, Mali and Ukraine, and resulted in the successful launch of programmes in these countries.

Geneva Call developed new training materials on forced displacement and the protection of cultural heritage, which were tested in the field during training sessions with ANSAs. Material on the protection of the medical mission is under development and should be available by mid-2018.

Other themes of Geneva Call's humanitarian engagement with ANSAs were further strengthened throughout the year, especially the protection of schools and universities from military use. Furthermore, the problem of explosive weapons formed an important part of its advocacy work, notably via the publication of a report on this theme.

In addition to its programmes targeting ANSAs, Geneva Call developed a new type of project aimed at strengthening self-protection by organized local civilian communities. Operational guidelines for this work were created, and the organization's staff were then trained on it.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3
Transition of Leadership and Consolidation of Governance

Geneva Call has successfully achieved the transition to a new leadership and its governance suits the development of its objectives and activities.

At the end of 2017, Elisabeth Decrey Warner, Geneva Call's co-founder, retired after twenty years as the organization's Executive President; Alain Délétroz was recruited as Director General, beginning in January 2018. This change was communicated externally, as planned. A consultant specializing in governance and change management accompanied Geneva Call's Directorate throughout the implementation of this change.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4
Communication and Advocacy for Acceptance and Influence

Geneva Call has an overall communications and advocacy strategy, suited to the changes in the organization, which promotes its acceptance and influence among priority audiences.

At the end of 2017, Geneva Call further strengthened its communication team via the recruitment of an additional communication officer to reinforce its positioning and capacities in terms of institutional communication and advocacy; the officer will start work in the first quarter of 2018. Internal roles and responsibilities regarding advocacy are being better defined, as are the priority audiences. In terms of operational communication, mainly at the field level, the organization's communication framework and activities have been strengthened via the creation of a staff position at Geneva Call's headquarters. Effective as of 1 January 2018, this position is dedicated to accompanying field programmes in the definition of their operational communication activities and the reinforcement of communication roles at field level. Material to accompany the development of communication capacity in the field is also being prepared; this will enable Geneva Call's operational staff to be more independent regarding external communication.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5
Successful Management of Growth

Over the three-year period of the strategy, Geneva Call has increased its budget by 33% and its staff by 50% by adapting its financial and administrative management to structural and operational changes and by guaranteeing the motivation and skills of its staff.

By the end of 2017, as part of the organization's objective of increasing fundraising capacity, a person dedicated to private sector fundraising had been recruited to target the three priority audiences defined by Geneva Call: private foundations, high net worth individuals and private companies. Specific fundraising initiatives have been launched towards private foundations and high net worth individuals. New communication tools aimed at private and institutional donors were developed in order to interact more regularly with them and strengthen their adherence to Geneva Call's mission. Fundraising roles and responsibilities were revised and adapted to Geneva Call's new structure (field presence). In this regard, field staff need to be accompanied by headquarters staff, and specific tools will be developed to enable all of Geneva Call's team members to participate in fundraising activities and feel fully able to implement their responsibilities.

Regarding financial and administrative management, new positions were created in the field and at headquarters in order to respond to the organization's new roles and responsibilities in the context of its developing field presence. New procedures and tools are being finalized and will be progressively deployed in the field throughout 2018. Geneva Call's IT infrastructure was fully revised and modernized during 2017 to respond to these structural changes and provide up-to-date equipment and software.

Two additional positions were created dedicated to human resources and staff administration in the face of Geneva Call's rapid growth. Internal rules and policies are also being adapted to the new operational set-up.

HUMANITARIAN NORMS
CHILD PROTECTION
MEDICAL MISSION
AP MINES
GENDER ISSUES
DISPLACEMENT
CULTURAL HERITAGE

Most conflicts in the world today involve ANSAs fighting government forces or other armed groups. Violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) are widespread, perpetrated by all parties to conflict, and civilians are the primary victims. Although ANSAs are also bound by IHL, there is little systematic engagement with them on compliance, and existing treaties and compliance mechanisms remain State-centric.

In addition to engagement on specific thematic priorities, Geneva Call has been engaging ANSAs on the broad rules of IHL since 2010. It has provided training and technical advice to ANSAs on how to incorporate these rules into their internal codes of conduct and regulations, and how to enhance their capacity to implement them.

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Geneva Call initiated humanitarian dialogue on the key rules of IHL with an additional 15 ANSAs in Iraq, Mali, Myanmar and Syria, bringing the total number of ANSAs engaged on this issue to 47.

In-depth assessments were made in Libya, Mali and Ukraine to frame Geneva Call's work there and to start contacting authorities, representatives of the international community and other relevant stakeholders. This enabled Geneva Call to make informed decisions about the added value of launching programmes in those contexts.

Activities to promote IHL were undertaken in 14 contexts: Colombia, DRC, India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine and Yemen.

Geneva Call directly conducted 52 trainings on humanitarian norms for 1,174 ANSA members, including 116 women, from 29 ANSAs in six countries. With support from Geneva Call, two of these ANSAs went on to conduct additional trainings reaching 1,167 of their organizations' members, including 11 women. Geneva Call conducted an additional 48 trainings for 968 civilians, including 370 women, and those trained went on to conduct 10 trainings, with Geneva Call's support, for 153 civilians, including 102 women.

Seven ANSAs in the DRC, Iraq, Lebanon, Thailand and Turkey worked with Geneva Call to revise their internal rules and regulations to be more compliant with IHL.

Geneva Call received word that two Syrian ANSAs, which had previously undertaken trainings with Geneva Call, now made it a point, in advance of major battles, to either make public their commitment to abide by IHL or to include IHL in training for recruits.

In partnership with the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, Geneva Call started a new research project on the practice and interpretation of selected IHL and human rights norms by ANSAs.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE BY ANSAS

In November, Geneva Call held the second edition of its Garance Talks on the administration of justice by ANSAs. Although this is a governmental function par excellence, international law asserts that ANSAs must respect fair trial guarantees when exercising this prerogative. Judicial procedures by these actors are, in fact, a frequent feature of armed conflicts and have existed for decades. However, the enforcement of the law by ANSAs and their capacity to abide by the requirements of certain rules is a topic that has not been addressed thoroughly. The seminar brought together fifteen experts from academia and relevant international organizations to discuss these issues. A former high-level military commander from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia–People's Army (FARC-EP), a judge from an area controlled by the Southern Front, in Syria, and a judge from the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) also participated in the seminar and shared their real-life experiences of administering justice within ANSAs. The event enabled discussions on how the law can be applied practically by these actors in the field.

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Globally, UNICEF has estimated that around 230 million children live in countries and areas affected by armed conflict. Recent reports by Save the Children revealed that one in six children live in conflict zones, and almost 357 million live at risk of grave violations. Similarly, 165 million of these children are affected by high-intensity conflicts. In addition, according to the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, in 21 countries, education was disrupted over the whole ten-year period between 2005 and 2015 as a result of parties to the respective conflicts using or attacking schools and universities. The vast majority of the parties listed in the UN Secretary-General's 2017 annual report on grave violations against children were ANSAs. Geneva Call promotes the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use During Armed Conflict* amongst ANSAs.

Geneva Call has engaged more than 50 ANSAs on child protection issues since 2008. By the end of 2017, 26 ANSAs had signed the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict and had taken measures to enforce their obligations.

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Seven Free Syrian Army brigades signed Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict, and Geneva Call negotiated an implementation plan with each of them to ensure follow-up of their commitment.

Approximately 290 children were released from ANSAs with which Geneva Call had been engaging on child protection in Colombia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) between September 2016 and December 2017.

Child protection activities were undertaken in 11 contexts, including Colombia, DRC, India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Myanmar, Sudan, Syria, Turkey and Yemen. A further five ANSAs were engaged, bringing the total number of ANSAs with which Geneva Call is working on the protection of children to 48.

Several signatories took further measures to implement their *Deed of Commitment* obligations, including: Free Syrian Army brigade, Union Force 21, which validated Terms of Reference for a Joint Monitoring Committee; the People's Protection Units/Women's Protection Units (YPG/YPJ), which reaffirmed the minimum recruitment age in their internal guidelines; and the Pa'O National Liberation Organization (PNLO), which advocated against instances of alleged forced recruitment of children by another ANSA in Myanmar.

Geneva Call undertook specific trainings with seven ANSAs on the protection of schools from military use and attacks. It also integrated this topic into 16 other trainings on the protection of children involving 466 ANSA members and civilians, including 84 women.

The norms relating to child protection were also touched on in 115 training sessions on IHL conducted directly by Geneva Call or indirectly by those trained and supported by Geneva Call. These reached an additional 2,341 participants, including 127 women, from 16 ANSAs.

Field visits were undertaken to YPG/YPJ areas in Rojava and APCLS areas in the DRC to monitor compliance with the *Deed of Commitment* and address cases of violation.

Geneva Call's leading and complementary role to the UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism was acknowledged by key stakeholders, including in the UN Secretary-General's annual report on the protection of civilians and in the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict's (SRSG CAAC) annual report. Moreover, Geneva Call has entered into a partnership agreement with Save the Children and is discussing further collaboration with other child protection actors. Together with the Office of the SRSG CAAC and UNICEF, Geneva Call also briefed the UN Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and contributed to a number of meetings, such as the 2nd International Conference on Safe Schools, in Buenos Aires, and the 10th Anniversary of the Paris Commitments and Principles.

Several publications were released over the course of the year, including: i) Armed non-State actors speak about child protection in armed conflict, the report on a Geneva Call meeting in which 21 ANSAs from 12 countries discussed child protection alongside leading agencies in Geneva (see https://genevacall.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2017//09/CansaReport_web.pdf); ii) case studies as part of a research project on the engagement processes with three ANSAs relating to child recruitment and their use in hostilities (the APCLS, the Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army and the YPG/YPJ) and how they had changed their practices over time; and iii) In Their Words: Armed non-State actors share their policies and practice with regards to education in armed conflict (see https://genevacall.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2017//12/GC-research-on-education.pdf), a consultation of ten ANSAs from four different contexts on their policies and practices of education in armed conflict.

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MEASURES TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT THE *DEED OF COMMITMENT* BY APCLS

The Alliance of Patriots for a Free and Sovereign Congo (APCLS) has made significant progress over the course of the year in implementing its obligations under the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict, which it signed in November 2016. One of its first steps was to nominate a focal point for compliance and interaction with Geneva Call. Furthermore, the group also: adjusted its sanction regime, including the suppression of physical sentences; translated and distributed a code of conduct on child protection to its members; made a commitment to transfer any children who committed a violation of IHRL or IHL to local traditional authorities rather than detain them themselves; translated the *Deed of Commitment* into Swahili; and started training its members on the *Deed of Commitment* and the implementation plan. These developments illustrate the APCLS' ownership of the norms and willingness to translate them into concrete practices.

Although gender discrimination and sexual violence also occur in times of peace, armed conflict and violence tend to exacerbate these practices. While there are no reliable statistics with which to illustrate the magnitude of the problem, anecdotal evidence abounds. According to the UN's report on conflict-related sexual violence, published in April 2017, the list of parties credibly suspected of committing rape and other forms of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict comprises 31 ANSAs in more than eight countries. In addition, female participation in negotiating delegations, which is a good indicator of gender equality, remains dismally low, averaging only 9% of negotiators in 31 major peace processes between 1992 and 2012. Despite the UN's and others' efforts to address these issues, little significant progress has been achieved, particularly in relation to ANSAs.

However, through its engagement with ANSAs, Geneva Call has observed that some armed groups also take positive action, like sanctioning the perpetrators of acts of sexual violence, providing reparation to victims and their families or taking measures against gender discrimination within their structures. To date, Geneva Call has engaged 52 ANSAs worldwide. Of these, 24 have signed the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination and have taken measures to enforce their obligations.

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Eight Syrian ANSAs signed Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and against gender discrimination, and Geneva Call negotiated an implementation plan with each of them to ensure follow-up of their commitment.

Two signatories took additional measures to implement their obligations under the *Deed of Commitmen*t. The Karen National Union (KNU) raised the minimum level of women's participation in high-level positions, and the YPG/YPJ reported on their compliance and highlighted measures they had taken to provide shelter and psychological and legal support to the victims of sexual violence.

Geneva Call conducted activities in nine contexts (Colombia, the DRC, India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Myanmar, Syria, Turkey and Yemen) and initiated humanitarian dialogue with six additional ANSAs in Myanmar and Syria, bringing the total number of active ANSAs currently engaged on gender issues to 39.

Geneva Call conducted seven in-depth trainings on sexual violence and gender discrimination for more than 211 participants (including 19 women) from 12 ANSAs. An additional 115 trainings on IHL touched on the prohibition of sexual violence and were conducted either directly by Geneva Call or indirectly by those trained and supported by Geneva Call. These reached an additional 2,341 participants, including 127 women, from 16 ANSAs.

EIGHT FREE SYRIAN ARMY BRIGADES SIGNED THE *DEED OF COMMITMENT*

Sexual violence, specifically against women and girls, and gender discrimination have become issues of very grave concern in the Middle East. This is especially true in Syria, where certain armed actors have committed egregious violations against woman and girls, in some cases amounting to what could be considered crimes against humanity.

It is within this context that several brigades of the Free Syrian Army signed Geneva Call's *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and gender discrimination. Making a public commitment was a way in which they could give a strong signal to their fighters that breaches of international norms relating to sexual violence and gender discrimination would not be tolerated. It was thanks to Geneva Call's public campaign against sexual violence and gender discrimination, coupled with a sustained humanitarian dialogue and training, that the battalions became more aware of this issue and realized that there was a need for such a public undertaking, both to prevent violations by their members and to send a signal to their constituency.

The 2017 Landmine Monitor reported confirmed instances of ANSAs using anti-personnel (AP) mines in nine countries. Some ANSAs hindered or prevented access for clearance activities and put mine action operators at risk, whereas others facilitated access for mine action operators in areas under their control. According to Action on Armed Violence (AOAV), a total of 60 different ANSAs were recorded as having used explosive weapons in 2016, with civilians making up 77% of the resulting casualties.

To date, Geneva Call has engaged more than 100 ANSAs worldwide on the topic of landmines, and 52 ANSAs have signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines and taken measures to enforce their obligations.

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Geneva Call undertook activities to promote the ban on AP mines in ten contexts: Colombia, India, Iran, Iraq, Myanmar, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, Western Sahara and Yemen. This included conducting 15 training sessions on the mine ban for 588 ANSA members and civilians, of whom 119 were women.

Four additional ANSAs were engaged, bringing the total number of currently active ANSAs engaged by Geneva Call to 43. In 2017, three Syrian ANSAs signed the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines.

New opportunities for mine action opened up in Colombia and Myanmar in areas where five targeted ANSAs operate.

The People's Protection Units/Women's Protection Units (YPG/YPJ) submitted their first compliance report according to their obligations under the *Deed of Commitment*. This document announced the clearance of more than 90,000 AP mines and other explosive devices between 2013 and 2017.

The Polisario Front publically committed to complete the destruction of its remaining stockpiles by October 2018 and undertook the first of this last series of destructions on 3 November. The Polisario Front destroyed 2,446 stockpiled AP mines in Western Sahara, which brought the total number destroyed to 15,454 since the signing of the *Deed of Commitment* in 2005.

A variety of mine action actors, including the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, reported positively on Geneva Call's work and mentioned it in their official statements throughout the year in meetings concerning the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC). During the 16th Meeting of States Parties to the APMBC, Geneva Call organized a well-attended side-event entitled "Humanitarian Mine Action in Areas Controlled by Armed Non-State Actors – Current Challenges and Opportunities for Local Mine Action Agencies". This event was well-received by mine action actors and contributed to consolidating the organization's position in the mine action community.

RESEARCH ON ANSAS AND EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS

As part of its commitment made during the World Humanitarian Summit on explosive weapons, Geneva Call interviewed six ANSAs on their policies and practices with regard to their use of explosive weapons and avoiding harm to civilians, particularly in populated areas. The good practices identified by these ANSAs will inform Geneva Call's continued humanitarian dialogue and advocacy efforts with other ANSAs on this issue. The findings were published in November and circulated widely within the disarmament community, where they were received with great interest (see https://genevacall.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2017/12/Explosive-Weapons.pdf). In order to collaborate more effectively on the issue, Geneva Call has become a member of the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW).

According to the UNHCR, an unprecedented 65.6 million people were forced from their homes in 2016. There were 22.5 million refugees and 40.3 million IDPs as a result of conflict. Recent data collected by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) show that ANSAs are the agents of displacement in 25% of conflict situations.

In several contexts, ANSAs directly and forcefully displaced civilians or used refugee or IDP camps to hide among them, store weapons and recruit fighters, thus further endangering displaced populations. Yet some ANSAs have also played a protective role, in certain situations, by providing some form of safety or security, or by facilitating access to services including the provision of food, shelter, health and education.

Geneva Call has been working on displacement issues for several years. Following a comprehensive study on the topic in 2013, and an internal feasibility assessment, the organization decided to initiate a pilot engagement project on this theme in 2017 with five ANSAs.

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Geneva Call initiated dialogue on displacement with five ANSAs in the DRC, Iraq, Myanmar and Syria, all of which expressed a keen interest in gaining a better understanding of the humanitarian norms related to displacement so that they could improve their practices in this regard.

Specific training material on displacement was developed and field-tested with three ANSAs. Geneva Call's staff were trained on the norms and acquainted with the training material.

The issue of displacement was addressed in 52 trainings on IHL reaching 1,174 participants, including 116 women.

Geneva Call gained visibility within the displacement community, which has responded positively to Geneva Call's first efforts to engage ANSAs on this issue.

Geneva Call's methodology and approach with regard to displacement were further defined during this pilot phase.

Syrian Kurdish refugees crossing into Turkey from Syria. © I. Prickett, UNHCR-IRIN

PILOT PHASE ON DISPLACEMENT

The pilot engagements and testing of training material showed, on the one hand, that this was a topic of great interest to ANSAs—one about which they both need and want to know more information regarding their legal obligations. Furthermore, they demonstrated openness to discussing what is often a very delicate topic. On the other hand, displacement and the protection of the displaced are regulated by a very complex legal framework with only a few norms containing clear-cut, direct obligations for ANSAs under international law. Additionally, especially for some ANSAs with a strong ethnic agenda and whose aim is to defend a territory for their ethnic group at the expense of other groups, forced displacement may, in some cases, not only be an occasional tactic, but a method of warfare or even a *raison d'être*. In such cases, achieving a change of behaviour and practice will be challenging. Nevertheless, Geneva Call is confident that by approaching the topic from different angles, adopting a step-by-step approach, and focusing not only on the legal but also the humanitarian perspective, progress can be achieved.

Over the past few years, cultural heritage has become the target of systematic and deliberate attacks. Historical monuments, religious buildings and other cultural sites have also been damaged or destroyed as a result of fighting between different parties to conflicts. Cultural heritage has been further affected by the illegal excavation of archaeological sites, the widespread plunder of sites and museums, and the illicit trafficking of cultural objects that are taking place on an unprecedented scale and are sometimes organized by ANSAs themselves to provide financial support for their operations.

Geneva Call has been working on issues surrounding the protection of cultural heritage since 2015. Following comprehensive research and an internal feasibility assessment, it decided to expand its engagement work with selected ANSAs on this new theme.

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Geneva Call published an article summarizing the key findings of its research on ANSAs and cultural heritage in the authoritative *International Journal of Cultural Property*. The full study will be released in early 2018.

Geneva Call developed training material on cultural heritage and tested it with five ANSAs in Syria.

Geneva Call's staff was trained on the relevant legal framework and the use of this material in their engagement activities.

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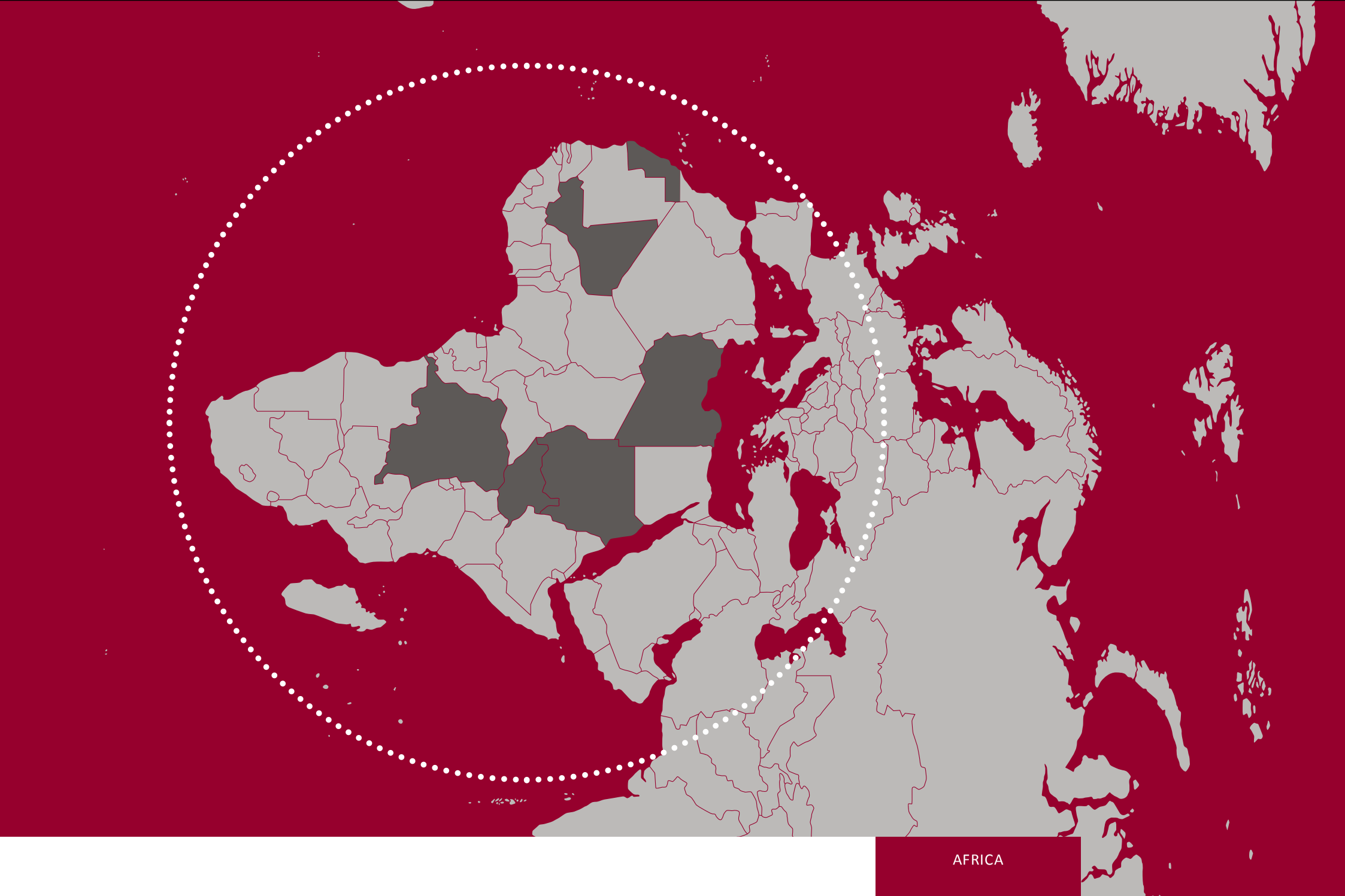
RESEARCH ON ANSAS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Based on desk and field research in Mali, Iraq and Syria, as well as interviews conducted with ANSAs operating in those countries, Geneva Call's research mapped ANSAs' different attitudes towards cultural heritage, identifying examples of both negative and positive practices. Geneva Call also analyzed specialized organizations' responses to the impact of ANSAs on cultural heritage, as well as the risks and opportunities of engaging ANSAs on this theme. The research report concludes with a series of recommendations to enhance ANSAs' respect for cultural heritage, and these will inform Geneva Call's future work on this topic.


AFRICA

WHAT WERE THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS?

In 2017, Geneva Call's Africa region team had to face different challenges, notably a serious shortage of dedicated funding and a subsequent lack in human resources. Despite this, the Africa team was able to monitor regional conflict dynamics and launch two new programmes, in Libya and Mali. Geneva Call also expanded its coordination with other actors in the region, partly by attending a United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) meeting on the definition of its regulations for civilian–military relationships.

During its mid-year review, the Africa team defined three priority countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Libya and Mali. In addition to strengthening its local office in Goma, Geneva Call invested in officializing a local presence in Libya and Mali, mainly by hiring qualified personnel there. Although Geneva Call mainly focused on these three countries, the monitoring of signatory ANSAs in Sudan and Western Sahara continued, and efforts were made to maintain and establish relationships with relevant stakeholders in these two contexts and in South Sudan.

SOUTH SUDAN

Despite concerted efforts and the support of a specialized lawyer based in Juba, Geneva Call was unable to formally register in South Sudan, and it received no response from the authorities as to the reasons for this decision. This made it impossible to conduct any activities inside the country. On a positive note, upon further insistence, representatives of South Sudan's mission in Geneva claimed to be open to a reassessment of the situation in 2018.

Despite this situation, Geneva Call was able to meet the country director of the Relief Organization of South Sudan (ROSS), the humanitarian wing of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition (SPLM-IO). He expressed the SPLM-IO's interest in engaging in a dialogue, and he proposed that Geneva Call organize a workshop for CBOs/CSOs in SPLM-IO-controlled areas. Geneva Call also initiated contacts with another faction of the SPLA-IO, which is currently in a coalition government in Juba. This contact with the Juba-based SPLA-IO faction could improve the likelihood of acquiring access to South Sudan.

SUDAN

At the beginning of the year, internal management issues caused tensions to rise between the two branches of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement–North (SPLM-N). This led to a split, and there are now two factions of the SPLM-N, one under the leadership of Malik Agar, controlling forces in some parts of Blue Nile state, and another led by Abdel Azziz al-Hilu, with troops in South Kordofan but also some parts of Blue Nile state. Geneva Call was able to meet representatives of both factions who explained that they still felt bound by the *Deeds of Commitment* banning AP mines and protecting children that the previously unified SPLM-N had signed. Both factions expressed their readiness to continue their engagement with Geneva Call and to setup new committees/focal points in charge of implementing the *Deeds*.

Due to access issues and funding constraints, Geneva Call was unable to follow up on the implementation of the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines with the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army–Abdel Wahid al-Nur (SLM/A-AW), and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army–Minni Minnawi (SLM/A-MM). However, Geneva Call did maintain contacts with these armed groups.

Geneva Call also strengthened its connections with Sudanese authorities in Geneva, proposing to implement some of its training and awareness-raising activities with the Sudanese Armed Forces, including Public Defense (PDF) and Rapid Response Forces (RSF).

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	202,174
Protection of Children and Education	324,536
Gender Issues	115,589
Landmine Ban	77,534
Overhead	*103,691*
TOTAL	**823,524**

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WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

Despite 2016's Saint Sylvester Agreement, the process of setting up elections stagnated and the institutions in charge claimed that elections could not be held before November 2018. This further delay caused renewed political instability and a vast outcry from Congolese civil society. Social protests took place throughout the year, mainly organized by the youth movement, Lucha (Lutte pour le Changement). The protests were aimed at various governance issues and demanded President Joseph Kabila's resignation.

There was an increase in armed clashes in the eastern part of the DRC, and conflict spread to Maniema province, with all parties to the conflict committing violations of IHL. The CNRD, a Hutu-armed group that split from the FDLR in 2016, was involved in hostilities which led to violations such as a lack of respect of the principle of distinction, child recruitment and the destruction of civilian goods and properties. Following the closure of five bases operated by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in North Kivu, ANSA activities in the province increased.

The humanitarian situation in the Kasai province was catastrophic due to intense fighting between troops from the Armed Forces of the Congo (FARDC) and militias. The most worrying issue in the area was child recruitment.

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

	Acronym						
Alliance des Patriotes pour un Congo Libre et Souverain	APCLS		✔				
Conseil national pour le renouveau et la démocratie	CNRD						
Forces pour la défense des droits humains	FDDH						
Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda	FDLR						
Forces de Défense Congolaises	FDC						
Nduma Defence of Congo	NDC						
Nduma Defense of Congo – Rénové	NDCR						

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Dialogue developed with the CNRD and the FDDH on humanitarian norms, particularly those related to child protection.

131 ANSA members attended six training sessions and improved their knowledge of humanitarian norms. Due to lack of access/availability, many training sessions needed to be postponed until 2018.

The NDCR continued to be most enthusiastic about working with Geneva Call, despite the difficulties in establishing regular contact. The group worked on its Code of Conduct and incorporated Geneva Call's recommendations.

Geneva Call was unable to meet the FDLR face-to-face due to access and security issues. However, the group confirmed that it was working on its Code of Conduct and would share it with Geneva Call for feedback.

The APCLS and Geneva Call reviewed the implementation plan regarding the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children. They also discussed investigation mechanisms and Geneva Call's role in relation to violations of IHL that occurred in 2017.

Geneva Call met with the NDC and gave feedback on its Code of Conduct. However, the ANSA's leader surrendered to MONUSCO during the year and engagement with the group was put on hold.

Following a field mission to Kasai province (Tshikapa and Kananga), Geneva Call decided to start disseminating humanitarian norms there in 2018.

A second *Fighter not Killer* radio campaign was conducted, with ten short advertisements disseminated on four radio stations.

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Protection of Children and Education	268,193
Gender Issues	80,068
Overhead	*50,167*
TOTAL	**398,428**

COMMUNITY LEADERS DISCUSSED THEIR ROLE IN THE DEMOBILIZATION OF CHILD SOLDIERS

The high number of spontaneous demobilizations of child soldiers in Masisi, North Kivu, stirred up a lot of confusion related to their reintegration into the community. Geneva Call therefore organized a workshop with nearly 50 local community leaders to raise awareness of the social and security consequences of child recruitment, to identify measures to prevent this and to explain the role of Geneva Call's local partner in assisting the demobilization process. At the same time, local communities were invited to contribute to efforts to take care of these children.

The participants developed recommendations on the special care required for female ex-child soldiers, against the stigmatization of child soldiers in general and on the roles which local authorities could play in issuing demobilization certificates to former child soldiers.

MORE THAN 100 CHILDREN LEFT ARMED GROUPS

Following in-depth training sessions and humanitarian dialogue with the NDCR, the APCLS and the FDLR throughout 2016, a number of commanders allowed more than 100 children to leave their groups and demobilize. To support this process, Geneva Call liaised with different national and international organizations, ensuring that the children would receive a "demobilization certificate" from the FARDC. To avoid exposure to the risk of renewed recruitment, some of the children were taken in by local families, and Geneva Call's local partner, GSYPAD (Global Synergy for Peace and Development), provided them with basic care.

Some of these children are now benefitting from a new vocational training project, launched by Geneva Call and operated by GYSPAD, which allows them to learn about agriculture, pig farming and sewing. It is hoped that this support will eventually help them to reintegrate into civilian life with some form of concrete job prospects.

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WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

After examining Geneva Call's documentation on violations of IHL, the APCLS was under the impression that Geneva Call planned to accuse the group of such actions, and this created tensions. These were diffused thanks to repeated and detailed explanations of Geneva Call's role, which does not involve publically denouncing violators of IHL. This experience showed, once again, how fragile relationships built on trust can be between Geneva Call and its interlocutors. It also showed the importance of maintaining a regular confidential dialogue with armed actors.

Geneva Call was confronted with the absence of public services and opportunities for the children who spontaneously left ANSAs. To avoid their reintegration into other ANSAs, Geneva Call decided to fill the void and support GSYPAD in identifying host families and providing vocational training to these demobilized children.

A fighter enters a house during an attack on militants. © LIOHN André

WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

Although the ceasefire between the Government of National Accord (GNA) and the Libyan National Army (LNA) appeared to be holding during 2017, clashes continued between the LNA and radical Islamist groups, as well as local armed groups, in strategic areas of the country. Fighting on the ground, coupled with ongoing airstrikes by regional and international actors against radical Islamist groups, continued to take its toll on the civilian population. Libyan society continued to be divided and tense, also resulting in the intimidation and targeting of civil society organizations.

International efforts to strengthen the implementation of the 2015 Libyan Political Agreement between the GNA and the LNA have yet to gain traction. At the same time, the possibility of the agreement leading to lasting peace remained threatened by the fact that several militias, as well as counter-terrorism efforts, remain outside the agreement.

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

The main humanitarian actors, both local and international, were made aware of Geneva Call's programme and provided support to Geneva Call's work in Libya.

Through its networking meetings in Tunis, Tunisia, Geneva Call was able to establish contacts with key humanitarian stakeholders in Libya, especially with national civil society organizations that will later assist Geneva Call in initiating contacts with armed actors there.

Following assessments and networking activities, Geneva Call launched its programme with a first CSO training session on IHL.

The messages and materials of the *Fighter not Killer* campaign were fine-tuned and adapted to the Libyan context. The campaign will be launched in 2018.

Contacts with armed actors and their political wings were not established in 2017, but many of the civilian stakeholders met during the year agreed to facilitate such contacts in 2018.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

The danger posed to the political process, as well as the changing balance of military power in favour of the LNA, confirmed the need for Geneva Call to be very cautious in terms of the sequence of engagement with armed actors. To ensure a balanced and neutral intervention, the organization started planning to establish parallel contacts with different armed groups that are both for and against the peace process.

Geneva Call resolved to operate from Tunis during 2017 due to challenges relating to its formal registration in Libya, and it continued to do so while still assessing the possibility of establishing a limited presence inside the country in 2018. In addition to the problems of access and registration, the security dynamics on the ground in Libya during 2017 also made it difficult to maintain a presence there. This will be assessed again during 2018.

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	39,389
Overhead	*5,674*
TOTAL	**45,063**

FIRST TRAINING SESSION FOR CIVIL SOCIETY IN TUNIS

In December, in Tunis, Geneva Call organized a first training session for civil society on the 15 rules of armed conflict. Nine participants attended from a local network of community activists under the umbrella of a Libyan organization specializing in reconciliation efforts. The training session improved the participants' knowledge of humanitarian norms, and they committed to incorporating IHL into their reconciliation and negotiation strategies and programmes.

The participants felt that the training session was relevant for them and expressed interest in more in-depth training on more specific themes of IHL with direct relevance to their mandate. Moreover, they also expressed the importance of introducing knowledge about IHL to all levels of the country's various military and civil authorities. According to the participants, this could facilitate discussions between parties to the conflict in the future.

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WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

In May, the National Reconciliation Conference concluded that dialogues between the central State and the leaders of Ansar Dine and the Front de Libération du Macina were essential. At the same time, the Malian president, Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta, declared that he would not take into consideration any claims coming from "terrorists". However, he appointed the national leader of the Malian Muslims for a special mission to re-establish a State presence in the city of Kidal and to stabilize the centre of the country, therefore implying that dialogue with the ANSAs concerned was possible. A new law for national reconciliation was also announced, supposedly exempting members of the armed rebellion from prosecution unless they had "blood on their hands".

Although the political will for pacification was tangible, the military reality in the centre of Mali continued to be tense. Armed actors united under the umbrella of the Group to Support Islam and Muslims (GSIM–JNIM) and, as a result, increased their capacity as a fighting force. Several attacks caused civilian and military casualties. At the same time, fighting continued between the Algiers Agreement signatories (the CMA and the Plateforme), and different self-defence forces fought Peul populations in the centre of the country.

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

	Acronym						
Coordination des Mouvements de l'Azawad	CMA						
Plateforme des mouvements du 14 juin 2014 d'Alger	Plateforme						

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	54,028
Overhead	*7,783*
TOTAL	**61,811**

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Geneva Call launched its programme in May.

Following introductory meetings, religious and community leaders showed support for an analysis of the context and potentially for passing messages to ANSAs.

One CMA leader expressed interest in working with Geneva Call and proposed to bring up the pertinent issues with the coalition's leader and to share their charter. The Plateforme also expressed interest in training on IHL.

State authorities expressed support for Geneva Call's work and the process of registration in the country was launched.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

Geneva Call had access to the signatories to the Algiers Agreement and was able to discuss violations of IHL with them. However, some of the ANSAs that were destabilizing the context in the centre and north of Mali in 2017 were inaccessible, mainly for security reasons. Geneva Call will target these groups indirectly in 2018 and beyond through influential local actors and communities.

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WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

The perspectives for peace talks on the situation in Western Sahara were encouraging in 2017, following the appointment of Horst Kohler, from Germany, as the UN Secretary-General's new Personal Envoy. Mr Kohler pushed through a cycle of meetings with the main stakeholders in the area, including Algeria and Mauritania, the two mediators. The Polisario Front also sent out a positive signal when it agreed to evacuate the buffer zone in Guerguerat, next to the Mauritanian border. In April 2017, the UN Security Council subsequently voted to accept a resolution resuming the negotiations.

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

	Acronym						
Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro	Polisario Front				✔		

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Protection of Children and Education	21,191
Overhead	*3,053*
TOTAL	**24,243**

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

In April 2017, the Polisario Front's highest representatives confirmed with Geneva Call that their entire stockpile of anti-personnel mines would be destroyed in three phases between November 2017 and November 2018.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

Geneva Call's most important challenge in this context was securing the necessary funding for Western Sahara, which is considered a "low-level" conflict. The cost of the latest destruction of AP mines was covered directly by UNMAS, whereas Geneva Call contributed core funds to ensure its continued engagement activities with the Polisario Front.

DESTRUCTION OF 2,446 STOCKPILED AP MINES

In November, Geneva Call monitored the destruction of 2,446 stockpiled AP mines by the Sahrawi Mine Action Coordination Office (SMACO), in accordance with the *Deed of Commitment* banning AP mines signed by the Polisario Front in 2005. The event took place near Tifariti in the presence of the Polisario authorities, representatives of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), international demining organizations and UN military observers.

Following the Polisario Front's announcement in April 2017 that it would complete the destruction of all its remaining stockpiles of AP mines by October 2018, this latest event brought the total number of stockpiled AP mines destroyed to 15,454. Former Minister of Defence, Mohamed Lamine Bouhali, stated that the Polisario Front was fulfilling its *Deed of Commitment* pledge to destroy all the mines in its possession. Furthermore, he called for the full clearance of mines and ERW in Western Sahara.

"The signature of the *Deed of Commitment* by the Polisario Front brought the mine issue in Western Sahara to light and allowed international humanitarian organizations, such as the Red Cross, to come and bring support to the victims of AP mines, whereas demining organizations were able to start clearing the land," said Aziz Haidar, President of the Sahrawi Association of Mine Victims.

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ASIA AND EUROPE

WHAT WERE THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS?

Two of the Asian countries where Geneva Call intervenes were affected by new types of security crises in 2017. In **Myanmar**, the severe military response to an attack conducted by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) led to countless civilian casualties, thousands of deaths, hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing the country, the obstruction of humanitarian assistance and an international outcry. Geneva Call followed the situation closely, but its assessment was that ARSA did not yet meet the organization's criteria for engagement (adequate capacity and structure and significant humanitarian impact). Nevertheless, with a view for preventive measures, Geneva Call decided to extend its promotion of IHL to west Myanmar via mass media. Unfortunately, the crisis in Rakhine state also led to decreasing donor interest in other humanitarian hotspots in the country, such as Shan and Kachin states, where 100,000 people were newly displaced in 2017.

At a time when Geneva Call had started to phase out its intervention in the **Philippines**, with signatory ANSAs in full compliance with their *Deeds of Commitment*, a change of strategy became necessary. In 2017, radical ANSAs increased their activities, leading the government to launch unprecedented military operations against them. This presented new opportunities for Geneva Call to initiate a humanitarian dialogue with newly emerging ANSAs as well as with more long-established ones that became caught up in the fight against more radical ANSAs. Although the reasons for radicalization and the contexts were different, there remained a link to the Islamic State group (ISg). Engagement with radical Philippine ANSAs holds the potential for significant institutional learning with regard to how to work with radical Islamist ANSAs globally. Geneva Call also organized a forum in Cotabato to look at the motivations, influences and structures of the country's radical movements. Moreover, the Philippines were chosen to host Geneva Call's regional presence, from which activities in several Asian countries will be conducted.

Throughout 2017, Geneva Call continued to monitor compliance with the *Deeds of Commitment* and the levels of implementation of their respective signatories. This work was pursued in all countries, including **India**, despite Geneva Call's decision to phase out its intervention there and to concentrate on areas where the humanitarian needs are more dire. Indeed, the first steps were taken with regard to a programme in Afghanistan/Pakistan, notably a desk assessment and ANSA profiling. However, the programme's launch had to be postponed to 2018. Geneva Call did manage to launch a new programme in Ukraine, however, and it conducted its first awareness-raising sessions on IHL with security officials, all of whom acknowledged that they needed to build up their capacity to transpose IHL into day-to-day security practice.

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	141,717
Protection of Children and Education	75,129
Gender Issues	85,608
Landmine Ban	160,643
Overhead	*101,777*
TOTAL	**564,874**

Group exercise with the RCSS. © Geneva Call

WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

The peace process lost momentum in Myanmar in 2017 and encountered new challenges. Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) signatories did not progress to the political-dialogue phase of the process, whereas militarily-active non-signatory organizations demonstrated new levels of distrust and disinterest in joining the process by joining the new United Wa State Army (UWSA) negotiation bloc. Myanmar's armed forces (Tatmadaw) created doubts about its commitment to pursue peace, as it frequently clashed with NCA signatories and non-signatory groups.

Humanitarian space shrank drastically. Tensions between the government and INGOs reached new heights following the crisis in Rakhine state. Violence and protests targeted aid deliveries, and the government blocked access to crisis-affected areas and vulnerable populations. The government frequently and publicly condemned international actors, and pending legislation threatens to further curtail NGO operations in Myanmar.

Conflict escalated in Shan and Kachin states, where frequent violations of IHL/IHRL triggered new waves of displacement and ensured that more than 100,000 people displaced in recent years remained unable to return home. Many conflict-affected areas and displaced people throughout those states remained officially off-limits to humanitarians seeking to provide life-saving support there. Tensions were high throughout ethnic areas, including in Mon, Karen, Karenni and Chin states.

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

	Acronym						
Chin National Front/Army	CNF/ CNA		✔	✔	✔		
Democratic Karen Benevolent Army	DKBA						
Kachin Independence Organisation/Army	KIO/KIA						
Karen National Union/ Karen National Liberation Army	KNU/ KNLA		✔	✔			
Karenni National Progressive Party/ Karenni Army	KNPP/KA		✔				
New Mon State Party/ Mon National Liberation Army	NMSP/ MNLA		✔				
Pa'O National Liberation Organization/Pa'O National Liberation Army	PNLO/ PNLA		✔				
Palaung State Liberation Front/Taan National Liberation Army	PSLF/ TNLA				✔		
Restoration Council of Shan State/ Shan State Army (South)	RCSS/ SSA-S						
Shan State Progressive Party/Shan State Army (North)	SSPP/ SSA-N						

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Protection of Children and Education	28,600
Gender Issues	40,765
Landmine Ban	103,360
Overhead	*37,961*
TOTAL	**210,686**

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Dialogue developed with the RCSS/SSA-S, the PSLF/TNLA, the PNLO/PNLA, the SSPP/SSA-N and the KNU/KNLA on humanitarian topics which went beyond the scope of their respective obligations under their signed *Deeds of Commitment*. Initial dialogue on the provisions of IHL related to displacement took place with the PNLO/PNLA.

Senior members of the SSPP launched an IHL training programme with Geneva Call, offering access to political and military leaders and inviting the organization to their HQ. They said: "the time is now to come out of the jungle and learn international norms."

Senior officers from the RCSS/SSA-S participated in a large workshop on child protection, but an additional technical working meeting with commanders will be necessary to finalize the implementation plan for a future *Deed of Commitment*.

The KNU/KNLA committed to holding a workshop focusing on gender and child protection and to exploring means to strengthen implementation of their respective *Deeds*. They also agreed to consider issuing an order banning the loan of uniforms to children during Karen celebrations.

The NMSP/MNLA participated in a meeting with the Mon Women's Organization and agreed to a one-year pilot programme to disseminate the norms of the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and against gender discrimination. Due to competing priorities and a lack of resources, however, Geneva Call handed this project to a partner organization and put its engagement with the NMSP on hold.

Periodic contact with signatory ANSAs was maintained and compliance was monitored, but Geneva Call ceased working with ANSAs outside the Shan and Karen states.

ANSA-CONTROLLED AREAS OPEN TO HUMANITARIAN ACTION AS THE GOVERNMENT CLOSES DOORS

As the government scaled-up its opposition to humanitarian activities, new opportunities to explore humanitarian interventions opened up in areas where ANSAs operate. Faced with the stalling peace process and other challenges, the SSPP/SSA and the RCSS/SSA both became interested in advancing technical discussions on child protection generally and the protection of education in particular. Although neither was poised to make a firm public commitment in 2017—such as signing the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children—both groups invited Geneva Call to conduct trainings for their personnel, visit schools in their areas and strategize to improve the situation of children living in areas under their control and influence, especially those studying at boarding schools linked to their organizations. This new willingness to discuss and address the situation of education in Shan ANSA areas offers Geneva Call an opportunity, in 2018, to work with technical partners to design an intervention to improve the education and protection of more than 5,000 conflict-affected children in Shan state.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

Faced with increasing government opposition to humanitarian activities, many registered organizations that partner with Geneva Call are unable to obtain travel authorizations to project areas. Many humanitarians—particularly Myanmar nationals who work with INGOs—are at continuous risk of arrest.

KACHIN REPRESENTATIVES TRAINED ON HUMANITARIAN NORMS

More than 20 representatives from 14 different CSOs, including several key senior female leaders from Kachin organizations, participated in a workshop on AP mines, child protection, gender and IHL. Participants included former women soldiers and the founders of the Kachin Women's Association (under the KIO) and the Kachin Women's Association in Thailand (its sister organization). Throughout the workshop, participants thought critically and creatively about how best to use IHL as a tool to better the lives of civilians in their areas.

The most senior and influential leaders, whom Geneva Call had only expected to attend the first session as a courtesy, actually participated in all the sessions. Indeed, they helped to set and maintain an atmosphere of open and careful reflection by eagerly contributing to discussions. These leaders offered to facilitate access for Geneva Call to KIO/KIA leaders and areas in 2018.

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WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

The peace process between the government and the KNO/United Peoples Front, in which the KNF and the Zomi Re-unification Organisation (ZRO) play prominent roles, appeared to be progressing well. The NSCN-IM's peace process continued to move forward, with six other factions joining the process under the umbrella of the Naga National Political Group, and the government indicating that the signing of an agreement was imminent. This would leave the National Socialist Council of Nagaland–Khaplang (NSCN-K) as the only Naga ANSA not engaged in a peace process.

Despite the fact that most Naga ANSAs were covered by ceasefire agreements, they remained militarily active in 2017, although the level of violence was low. Manipur experienced some unrest, but incidents of armed violence were isolated. The NSCN-K clashed with government forces close to the border between India and Myanmar; this caused casualties, including among civilians.

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

	Acronym						
Kuki National Front	KNF			✔			
Kuki National Organisation	KNO		✔	✔	✔		
National Socialist Council of Nagaland–Khole Kitovi	NSCN-KK		✔	✔	✔		
National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak Muivah)	NSCN-IM			✔	✔		

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Protection of Children and Education	29,190
Gender Issues	27,504
Landmine Ban	39,944
Overhead	*21,238*
TOTAL	**117,876**

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Geneva Call enquired into allegations of a potential *Deed of Commitment* violation by the KNO. The KNO co-operated fully with the enquiry process, and no violation could be proven.

International organizations contacted by Geneva Call to help identify solutions for children associated with the KNF were unable to respond positively. Meanwhile, the KNF and civil society actors were encouraged to explore local solutions.

Activities planned with the Revolutionary People's Front/People's Liberation Army (RPF/PLA) and the NSCN-K were suspended due to lack of funds and a change in strategy with regard to Indian ANSAs.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

Geneva Call's ongoing lack of access to the country in general, and to conflict-affected areas in particular, had an adverse impact on all aspects of the programme. Lack of access, funding constraints and a change in strategic priorities led to Geneva Call's decision to phase out its India programme. However, Geneva Call will continue to monitor compliance with the *Deeds of Commitment* by their respective signatories.

NAGA COMMUNITIES DISSEMINATED HUMANITARIAN NORMS

Two seminars were held to discuss humanitarian norms and plan the dissemination project for Naga communities. These brought together 200 key stakeholders from among Naga tribes, women leaders, CSOs, politicians, the media, social workers, student leaders and non-Naga indigenous peoples. All showed support for the humanitarian standards that were promoted and expressed interest in participating in the project. Another positive aspect of the first seminar was the attendance, as observers, of the NSCN-IM and the NSCN-KK, who were reportedly impressed by the actions taken by civil society on the issues raised. They publically undertook to redouble their efforts to meet their obligations as signatories to *Deeds of Commitment*.

Posters for the campaign were designed by a local artist, and they portrayed people and issues in a way easily understood by local people and very strongly conveying their respective messages. The posters were displayed in different communities towards the end of 2017.

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Participants at the CSO workshop. © Geneva Call

WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

Although the level of violence in the south of Thailand has diminished from its historic highs at the end of the last decade, 235 people were nevertheless killed and 356 injured in 545 incidents across the deep south in 2017. In all, nearly 7,000 people have been killed and more than 13,000 injured since the conflict's resurgence in 2004. Although there has been a reduction in egregious violations of IHL in recent years, such incidents still occur.

The peace process between the Government of Thailand and MARA Patani, the umbrella group of southern separatist groups, did not significantly advance beyond agreeing on a framework for district-wide safety zones. At year's end, each party blamed the other for the delays in putting these zones in place.

The main faction of Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN)—which is considered to control most of the fighters on the ground—remains outside of the peace process. A rare public statement in April, attributed to the BRN and widely considered to be genuine, criticized the ongoing Malaysian-facilitated peace process and demanded wider participation from the international community. There have been no substantive changes to the ongoing process since that statement was made and no indications that the BRN will join it.

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

	Acronym						
Barisan Revolusi Nasional	BRN						
Majlis Syura Patani	MARA Patani						

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	81,538
Overhead	*17,920*
TOTAL	**99,458**

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

The BRN reported that its internal dissemination efforts were continuing and were supported by the revised version of the booklet on the 15 rules of IHL and the adapted videos.

The BRN shared two drafts of a code of conduct and requested Geneva Call's feedback and recommendations, many of which were incorporated. The code of conduct had yet to be finalized and brought into force at year's end.

In discussion with MARA Patani, Geneva Call decided to focus on a training of trainers for representatives of the five constituent organizations rather than for the umbrella group's leadership. Due to the availability of funds this training activity was postponed to early 2018.

Geneva Call trained 12 CSO activists from organizations close to the BRN during an event organized by Asia Foundation/Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, in Cambodia. The training focused on the rights of civilian populations in armed conflict.

According to one expert observer, "The insurgents now rarely intentionally target civilians, certainly within the urban areas. Almost every IED was placed on a rural road to target security forces. And security forces are the primary target."
(http://bit.ly/2BIoY1m)

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

Although the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continues to support and facilitate interventions, the military in the south continues to be wary of, and less open to, international actors.

Key members of the working group set up to support the CSO workshop in August were unavailable to plan its follow-up. However, Geneva Call identified one of the CSOs, which has agreed to enter into a formal partnership in 2018, to take on the role of facilitator and be the interface between Geneva Call and grassroots-level CSOs and communities.

Geneva Call communication materials had to be rewritten to take into account certain sensitivities and identified risks. They will be ready for dissemination in the first quarter of 2018.

FIRST CSO WORKSHOP TAKES PLACE IN THAILAND

After a lengthy delay because of the difficulties in securing the necessary permissions, a workshop on humanitarian norms took place with CSOs in August. Twenty participants, eight of whom were women, from a variety of organizations attended and subsequently stated that they had acquired a good understanding of the norms and were prepared to disseminate them at the community level.

This training was important as it was a first step towards community-level dissemination of humanitarian norms in the deep south of the country. However, its significance was even greater considering that it was the first activity undertaken by Geneva Call in-country with the approval and facilitation by the authorities.

© Geneva Call

Donetsk area. Maryinka city, school. View of children during class. Sand bags block the windows to reduce the shelling debris. © ICRC/Anastasia Vlasova

WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

Despite a prisoner exchange in December, little progress occurred within the terms of the 2015 Minsk Agreement, which aimed to turn a ceasefire between the warring parties in Ukraine into a peace deal. The political process was on hold, and the ceasefire was regularly breached. The Normandy contact group seemed to be the only instrument keeping the situation from escalating. The humanitarian situation of the population living along the 500 km-long contact line deteriorated throughout the year; people living close to or intending to cross the contact line were exposed to shelling and stray bullets. Education remained under threat. IDPs and the population living near the contact line faced difficulties in meeting their basic needs, such as accessing local services.

After four years of hostilities, the government increasingly acknowledged that Ukraine was in a situation of armed conflict and that IHL was applicable. The Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs (MTOT) and the Ukrainian parliament's Human Rights Commission were mandated to develop policies aimed at protecting civilians and persons *hors de combat*. In this context, Geneva Call provided recommendations to armed actors on how to translate legal rules into concrete actions to protect civilians from arbitrary behaviour.

ARMED ACTORS

	Acronym						
Nationalist battalions							
Donetsk People's Republic	DPR						
Luhansk People's Republic	LPR						

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	42,840
Overhead	*9,415*
TOTAL	**52,255**

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Geneva Call's assessment phase of operations closed and, based on encouraging feedback from various local and international stakeholders, the organization launched its programme in Ukraine and set up an official representation.

Following discussions with the MTOT, an agreement was reached to conduct sessions on IHL to battalions supporting the Ukrainian army (with a focus on urban conflict) and to promote the *Fighter not Killer* campaigns amongst troops.

The DPR, LPR and nationalist battalions were informed about Geneva Call's mission. Former fighters from the DPR and LPR agreed to advocate the importance of such dialogue within their networks. Regional advocacy was considered to have increased access to these intermediaries.

Geneva Call also launched the process for formal registration in Kiev.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

Access to the non-government controlled areas (NGCA) of Ukraine remained restricted, and only a handful of international organizations were able to implement activities there, with few or no protection activities. Geneva Call established a partnership with one international organization with the aim of promoting IHL, including respect for principled humanitarian action.

A FIRST TRAINING SESSION ON IHL AND IHRL WAS CONDUCTED

More than 40 security officials attended a training session on the international humanitarian norms that are applicable in armed conflict. This was part of a long-term training programme for state officials. The level of knowledge on IHL/IHRL was consistently good, but the participants were less confident about ways of integrating the laws into their doctrines, education and military training.

The participants found the training to be highly relevant, and they proposed to collaborate with Geneva Call to develop additional training material and tools that could be adapted to the realities facing the armed actors operating in Ukraine.

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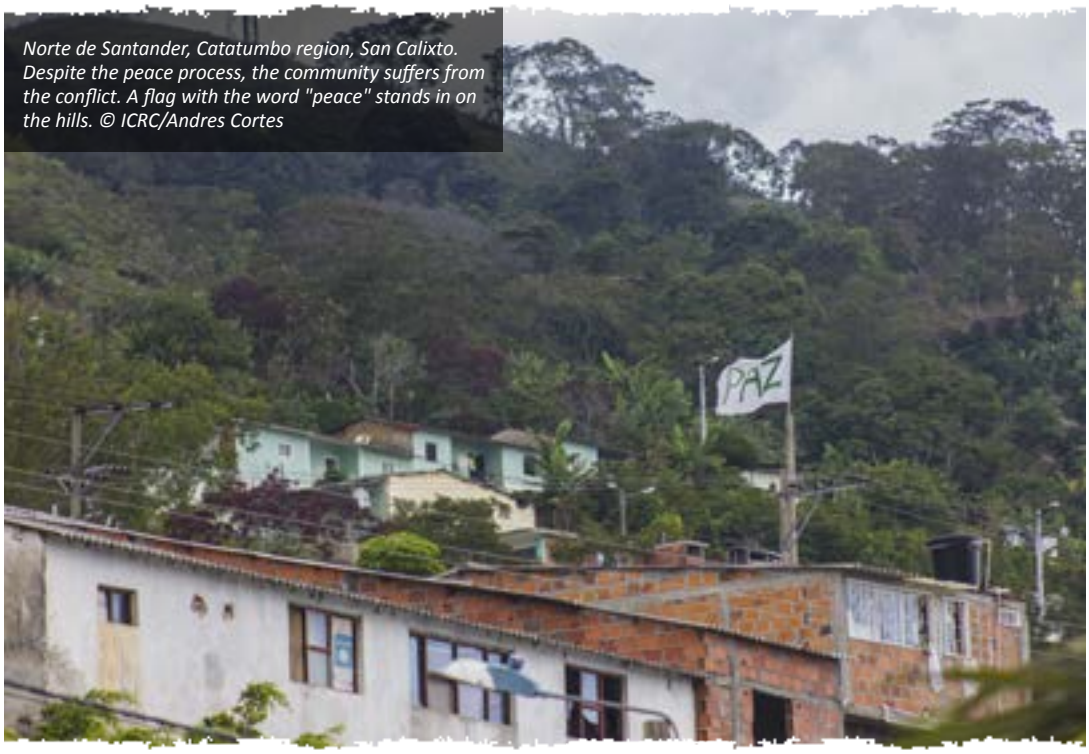
LATIN AMERICA



Norte de Santander, Catatumbo region, San Calixto. Despite the peace process, the community suffers from the conflict. A flag with the word "peace" stands in on the hills. © ICRC/Andres Cortes

WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

The implementation of the peace agreement between the FARC-EP and the Colombian government faced major challenges because of continued violence. Despite this, the FARC-EP's status changed, on 1 September 2017, from armed actor to political party, and it started to prepare for its participation in the April 2018 election. As such, the FARC-EP ceased to be a target for engagement for Geneva Call and only sporadic contacts were maintained.

Moreover, the slow pace of the implementation of the peace agreement had a negative impact on confidence in the process, and this even spread to the peace process between the government and the ELN. Clashes between FARC-EP dissidents and the ELN were reported in Nariño; other clashes between the ELN and post-demobilization groups continued too, notably in Chocó, and these strongly affected the civilian population. Tensions reportedly also increased towards the end of the year and after the end of the temporary bilateral national ceasefire between the government and the ELN on 9 January 2018. On top of that, social mobilization took place in many rural areas because of discontent with certain government policies. This overall context meant that Geneva Call's work remained highly relevant in departments of Nariño and Chocó, among other areas.

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	4,469
Protection of Children and Education	33,893
Gender Issues	42,839
Landmine Ban	84,827
Overhead	*23,926*
TOTAL	**189,953**

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

	Acronym						
National Liberation Army	ELN						

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Following frequent meetings and training events, including in prisons, the ELN expressed its interest in signing the *Deeds of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict and prohibiting sexual violence and against gender discrimination; it also confirmed that protocols were being drafted for the implementation of humanitarian demining in Nariño.

In the cease-fire agreement with the government, the ELN had insisted on including provisions on AP mines and children.

Concrete steps were taken in conjunction with the government to prepare a humanitarian demining pilot project in Samaniego municipality. Local communities requested continued support from Geneva Call, and a meeting was organized with representatives from the proposed areas who identified a number of actions that would help facilitate this process.

As a result of several workshops, meetings and a regional humanitarian forum, local actors in affected communities strengthened their knowledge and skills on mine risk education (MRE) and discussed community participation in mine action.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

Social protests in many of the target areas caused difficulties in scheduling events and a significant increase in related budgets. Geneva Call had to adapt its plans several times but managed to secure additional funding from the Swedish Folke Bernadotte Academy to cover higher travel costs, among other expenses.

DEMOBILIZATION OF CHILD SOLDIERS FROM THE FARC-EP

From September 2016 to August 2017, 122 children left the FARC-EP through a process agreed upon with the government. Geneva Call had been invited by the FARC-EP to monitor this process, together with other international child protection organizations. Geneva Call also worked on the development of this process and attended several releases of children from different concentration areas.

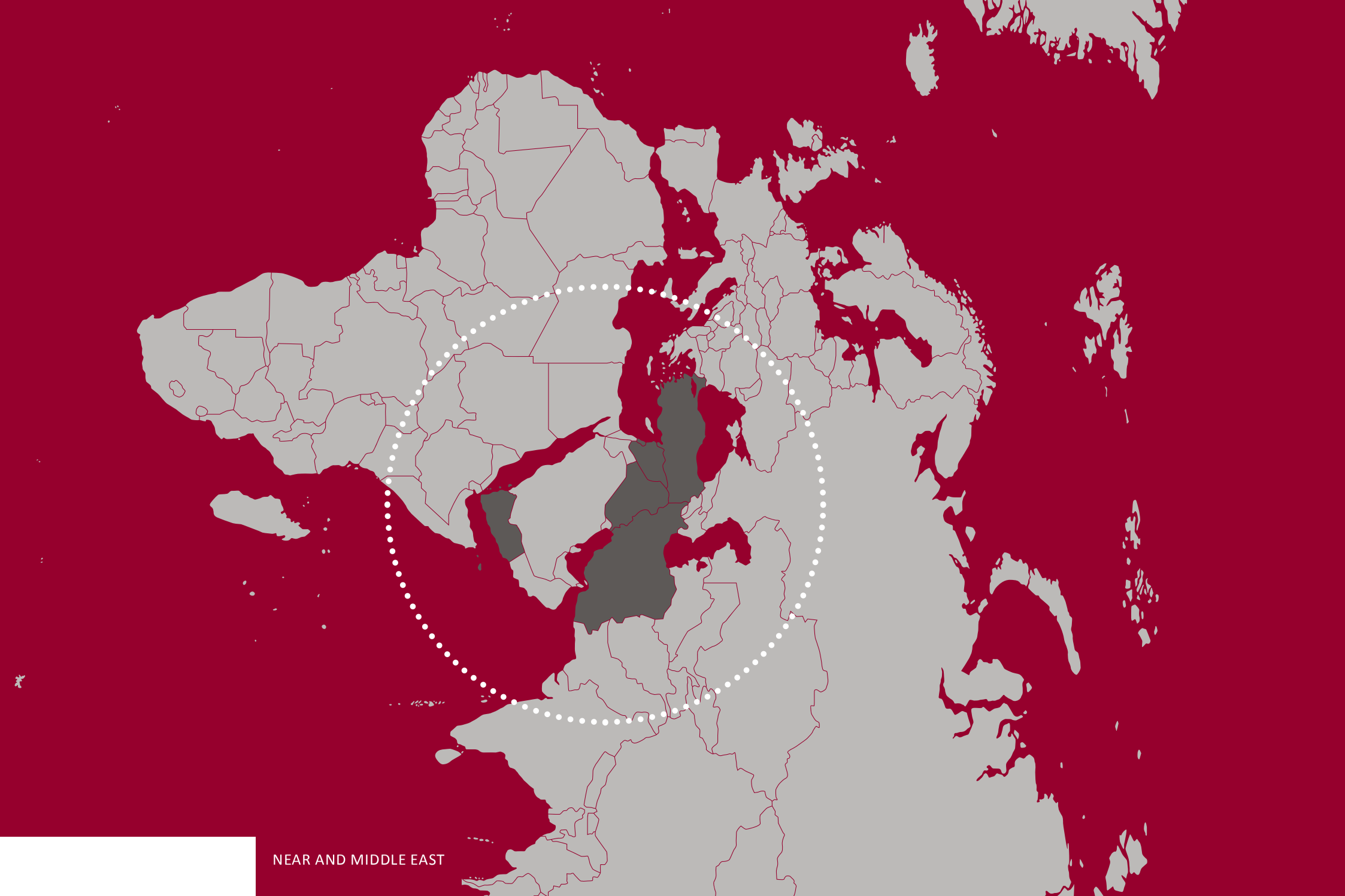
Despite the high relevance of these activities and the FARC-EP's request for Geneva Call to play a monitoring role, the organization decided to withdraw its participation in the releases and to only continue coordination activities from Bogotá. In addition to being able to contribute to the release process, the experiences and lessons learned from this endeavour have also been enriching as they have informed Geneva Call's advocacy work with the ELN.

LOCAL COMMUNITIES MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS SUGGESTING INCLUSIVE HUMANITARIAN ACTION

More than 60 representatives of indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities participated in a regional forum on peace processes, the protection of humanitarian space and related challenges in the south-west and Pacific departments.

Despite the challenges linked to political unrest in the target region and the unavailability of ELN and government representatives, the forum was held successfully and participants adopted a final declaration with several concrete recommendations and suggestions for the ELN and the government. Among others, communities requested MRE and humanitarian demining in areas where the ELN was present, and they insisted on their involvement in consultations related to such activities. At the request of affected communities and the Lutheran Federation, Geneva Call conducted an MRE training of trainers (ToT) for 36 leaders (including nine women) of the indigenous Wounaan and Embera communities. The ToT was carried out using a differential ethnic perspective, encouraging and using their own language, culture and tradition.

© Geneva Call


NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST

WHAT WERE THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS?

For seven years, the Near and Middle East region has been witnessing several layers of armed conflicts causing hundreds of thousands of deaths and injuries, mainly among civilian populations. All the major world and regional powers are involved, directly or indirectly, in these ongoing armed conflicts. Several million people have been displaced and their homes destroyed; they are in need of humanitarian aid and protection. ANSAs play a very important role in these conflicts and commit grave violations of human rights and IHL. However, political solutions to these armed conflicts are not foreseen in the near future. An impartial humanitarian dialogue on respecting IHL, with the regions' ANSAs and, indeed, with all influential national and local actors, has become more and more crucial to saving lives.

Geneva Call has been increasingly recognized as a key actor active in humanitarian dialogue with ANSAs in the region, with international and national stakeholders stating the relevance of its work in filling an important niche. Important international and national stakeholders have stated that the organization "filled a niche" and that its work was "so relevant". Thanks to this support, which translated into increased funding, Geneva Call was able to expand its work. Throughout the year, Geneva Call experienced the growing realization that its presence in the field was becoming ever more necessary to address issues pertaining to the protection of civilians.

In 2017, Geneva Call conducted new assessments for Yemen, re-launched its programme there, and started the process of officializing its presence in the country. Overall, the organizations' Near and Middle East (NAME) team continued to grow, with a strengthened presence in Baghdad, Erbil, Beirut and Amuda (north-east Syria) and a new presence in Yemen. The team at headquarters was also reinforced to coordinate the high number of activities.

Geneva Call participated in various regional conferences and events to present its work and advocate support for it. In February, Geneva Call staff spoke at a conference organized by the National Commission of Human Rights in Qatar and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Doha to address the protection of education. Geneva Call organized a workshop in Iraq entitled "Humanitarian Assistance at the Frontlines", which was targeted towards international NGOs. Geneva Call also started to do the groundwork for setting up "Friends of IHL" networks in collaboration with national stakeholders. These networks aim to bring together various actors to strengthen respect for humanitarian norms for the improved protection of civilians in situations of armed conflict and violence.

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	1,466,198
Protection of Children and Education	250,415
Gender Issues	127,899
Landmine Ban	127,480
Overhead	*285,552*
TOTAL	**2,257,544**

© KurdekiBenav

WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

Formerly inactive Iranian ANSAs took up arms against the Islamic State group (ISg) and also increased their activities against Iran in 2017. Several clashes took place and led to many causalities. In March, six Iranian Kurdish ANSAs convened to coordinate their military actions against Iran, including the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI), KDP Iran and the Komalas. In May and November, two separate clashes between members of the PJAK and Iranian security forces caused several casualties on both sides.

Iran was involved in the different operations against the ISg in Iraq and Syria, and it supported the Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces and the Iraqi army. At the same time, the ISg became more active in Iran and claimed responsibility for a pair of attacks in June on Iran's parliament and the tomb of its revolutionary leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, which killed at least 12 people and wounded more than 40. This was the first major ISg operation on Iranian soil and happened just after the presidential elections in May. Hassan Rouhani was re-elected for a second term.

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

ANSA	Acronym						
Free Life Party of Kurdistan	PJAK		✔		✔		
Kurdistan Freedom Party	PAK		✔	✔	✔		
The Kurdistan Democratic Party–Iran	KDP-Iran		✔	✔	✔		

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	10,722
Protection of Children and Education	10,946
Gender Issues	6,886
Landmine Ban	7,820
Overhead	*5,267*
TOTAL	**41,642**

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Given the many other priorities in the Middle East, Geneva Call dedicated its efforts to the more active ANSAs in Iraq and Syria. However, the organization continued its monitoring activities regarding implementation of the signed *Deeds of Commitment* and maintained communication with the leaderships of all target groups.

No violation of the *Deeds*, by any signatory, was reported by third-party sources, however concerns about possible underage recruitment by the PJAK remained. Because of the difficult security situation, however, no verifications could be conducted. For the same reasons, Geneva Call was unable to train PJAK commanders on IHL and other thematic priorities, nor was it able to pursue the discussions on their intention to sign the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and against gender discrimination.

Geneva Call decided to postpone its training sessions for PAK, PDKI and KDP-Iran commanders/fighters until 2018 to avoid hurting any political sensitivities at a time of tension between the Kurdistan Regional Government and Iraqi central authority.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

Active fighting and worsened security conditions had a direct impact on Geneva Call's engagement work with some of the Iranian Kurdish ANSAs, especially limiting opportunities to implement and monitor the *Deeds of Commitment*.

Given Iran's role in other conflicts of the region, Geneva Call's engagement work with Iranian Kurdish ANSAs might have an impact on the organization's dialogue with Iranian-backed armed actors in Iraq.

70 KDP-IRAN CADRES WERE TRAINED ON HUMANITARIAN NORMS

Geneva Call organized a seminar for KDP-Iran's military and political cadres, including high-ranking military commanders. The main rules of IHL were presented and one session focused on refreshing their knowledge about their obligations under the *Deeds of Commitment*. 70 cadres attended and showed great interest in IHL, requesting appropriate advanced training on IHL for all their members.

© Geneva Call

Training with the Sun Girls Brigade. © Geneva Call

WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

The political and security landscape changed considerably in 2017 after the military defeat of the Islamic State group (ISg), and Iraqi security forces and the PMF consolidated their grip over formerly contested areas. Enormous numbers of well-trained and battle-hardened ANSAs of different ethnic and religious backgrounds were present all over Iraq.

The referendum conducted by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in September suddenly brought the Iraqi government in Baghdad and its allied PMF into confrontations with Peshmerga forces. Grave human rights violations were reported in several locations where they clashed. The situation calmed down thanks to ongoing efforts by both sides to resolve outstanding issues through dialogue and find mutually acceptable solutions. Many other armed actors with different legal statuses, especially from territories bordering the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI), were careful not to align themselves with either one of the parties during this crisis. The 2016 law establishing the PMF as an independent organization within the Iraqi army created some ambiguities about the relationships and chain of command protocols between the PMF and Iraqi Security Forces. More than 56 PMF militias were in operation across central and southern Iraq.

More than 2 million IDPs were living in highly stressful conditions in 2017. They were unable to return to their homes because there was no assurance that their fundamental needs and security could be guaranteed—the Iraqi government simply lacked the capacity to deliver these.

ARMED ACTORS

	Acronym						
Ezidkhan Protection Forces	HPE						
Kurdistan Democratic Party – Liwa 80	Liwa 80						
Patriotic Union of Kurdistan –Liwa 70	Liwa 70						
Kurdistan Regional Government– Peshmerga Forces	Peshmerga Forces						
Popular Mobilization Forces	PMF						
Sunni Popular Mobilization Forces	Sunni PMF						
Sinjar Resistance Units	YBS						

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	556,215
Protection of Children and Education	56,525
Gender Issues	26,455
Landmine Ban	31,779
Overhead	*97,160*
TOTAL	**768,133**

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

The 16 Peshmerga instructors who had been trained and coached by Geneva Call ran 46 dissemination sessions on IHL for 925 men from different Peshmerga brigades. After a series of discussions, the KRG Ministry of Peshmerga prepared a draft code of conduct that reflected humanitarian norms.

Trusting relationships were built with all the key PMF militias, their representatives attended several training sessions on IHL and discussions took place on adapting their internal regulations.

Further initial trainings on IHL were provided to commanders and officers from other Shia, Sunni, Yazidi and Christian ANSAs. The HPE from Sinjar stated its interest to sign the *Deed of Commitment* protecting children in armed conflict. The Nineveh Guards, one of the key ANSAs in Nineveh governorate, had discussions with Geneva Call about signing an MoU on training their high command and senior officers on IHL.

More than 250 representatives from civil society, including CSOs and media representatives, were trained on humanitarian norms through a number of specifically designed workshops. Some of the CSOs, like Harikar and Al Threer, applied this new knowledge in their activities and programme design and are now successfully implementing civilian protection programmes in IDP camps and communities located near front lines. As a result of its trainings, one Yazidi organization developed a project on preventing child recruitment in the Sinjar area.

Two trainings for INGOs were provided, one for country directors of the organizations and the other one for senior staff. Afterwards, Geneva Call received a number of requests from many other international organizations to train their staff on IHL and its application in the field.

After a series of meetings and deliberations with like-minded organizations, six NGOs from the KRI and adjacent governorates committed to being part of part of Geneva Call's "Friends of IHL" network in Iraq, which will be officially launched in 2018. Similar consultations took place to launch such a network in central and southern Iraq.

A number of conferences and workshops were organized on critical issues ranging from the challenges faced by humanitarian organizations during the Mosul operations to the protection of civilians, especially child recruitment. These events not only contributed to raising awareness of these issues and challenges but they also generated a wider debate on how to develop cohesive strategies to address concerns related to humanitarian access and the protection of civilians.

Two *Fighter not Killer* campaigns reached approximately 1.9 million views on social media and more than 2 million interactions.

Geneva Call established and maintained a presence in all the key locations in Iraq, including the KRI.

CONFERENCE ON ISLAM AND THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN NAJAF

In February, in partnership with the Islamic University of Najaf, Geneva Call organized a conference entitled "Islam and the Protection of Civilians". The event gathered more than 40 participants, including 16 representatives from different PMF brigades, religious and community leaders, and representatives of international organizations such as UNICEF, the Norwegian Refugee Council and the European Union's Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection. Over two days, Geneva Call and its local experts gave presentations on different aspects of civilian protection including the conduct of hostilities and the protection of children.

"In Islam, civilians are protected. Islam is not only a religion of peace and compassion but also of human ethics," one of the religious leaders at the conference declared. The participants adopted a set of recommendations to reaffirm their commitments to the main principles of the law of armed conflict, but they also recommended that the PMF facilitate cooperation with Geneva Call. Furthermore, they named a focal point to coordinate action with humanitarian organizations. Geneva Call and the University decided to continue collaborating to produce guidelines and a code of conduct for PMF fighters. These documents will explain the main humanitarian rules on the protection of civilians and show how they relate to traditional and religious rules.

© Geneva Call

FIRST TRAINING SESSION WITH THE SUN GIRLS BRIGADE, A UNIT OF FEMALE YEZIDI FIGHTERS

In response to the violent abuses suffered by the Yezidi community, a famous Yezidi singer created an all-female armed unit—the Sun Girls Brigade—as part of the Yezidi Peshmerga Forces. In July, Geneva Call provided training for 20 female fighters from this brigade on the respect of humanitarian norms and the protection of civilians during hostilities. Through different sessions, trainers presented all the main topics of the law of armed conflict. They also initiated challenging discussions, notably about the kidnapping of women and girls, sexual slavery and the killing of men and boys by the ISg. The session about the prohibition of revenge raised many questions, particularly about the effectiveness of existing mechanisms to bring the perpetrators of abuses against civilians to justice.

The 20 participants included the founder of the brigade who explained that the training was essential for its fighters and that more in-depth training would help these rules become part of their military culture.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

Given that the PMF are under the authority of the Prime Minister's Office, Iraqi army forces are under the Defense Ministry and Peshmerga Forces are under the KRG, different specific authorizations had to be requested from each actor to get access to project locations. This created wearisome administrative processes for humanitarian actors.

The tense political situation leading to the closure of Erbil airport, and the need for a visa for travel to Iraq, limited the number of international journeys made by Geneva Call staff. Towards the second half of the year, however, Geneva Call's local office had strengthened its human resources capacities and activities were more easily implemented from within the country.

Although Geneva Call managed to engage with some of the PMF militias not operating under the umbrella of the PMF commission, reaching out to all of them remained a challenge due to their political differences with the mainstream PMF and because of Geneva Call's lack of capacity at the time. Geneva Call needs to consolidate its interventions with the PMF militias that it is already engaging.

Training with Sunni leaders on IHL and Islamic Law. © Geneva Call

WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

An end to the 29-month presidential vacuum, at the beginning of 2017, saw a lessening of the political tensions in Lebanon. The former army commander, Michel Aoun, was elected president, and parliamentary elections were scheduled for 2018, according to a new electoral law. However, in November, Prime Minister Saad Hariri announced his resignation and then later reversed that decision, sparking political turmoil.

On several occasions, fighting took place between the Lebanese army and Syrian militants along the country's north-eastern border with Syria. In Arsal, suicide bombings targeted Lebanese army troops who were conducting raids in Syrian refugee camps. Many refugees were arrested, and there were reports of deaths during torture. In July, Hezbollah launched its ground offensive against Syrian militants holding Arsal's outskirts.

Heavy clashes repeatedly rocked the Ain al-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp. The Joint Security Force (JSF), composed of members of national and Islamic factions and tasked with promoting stability inside the camp, was dismantled in February 2017; the Joint Force (JF) was established as its successor. The JF's deployment in the camp's hotspots also led to violent clashes, which had a particularly worrying impact on children as different factions used schools and fighting led to the displacement of families. These events highlighted the need to increase efforts to protect civilians, particularly children and education.

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

	Acronym						
Forces of the Palestinian National Coalition	Tahaluf						
Hezbollah							
Islamic Forces in Ain al-Hilweh	IF						
Palestinian Liberation Organization/ Palestinian National Security Forces	PLO/ PNSF						

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area

The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017

✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area

✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	292,666
Protection of Children and Education	43,123
Overhead	*48,624*
TOTAL	**384,413**

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

The Legal Support Unit (LSU) to the PLO/PNSF (including Fatah, the Popular Front and the Democratic Front, among others) worked on a code of conduct and a code of ethics for the PNSF, to be reviewed by Geneva Call.

The head of the PNSF in the Beddawi camp, in Tripoli, informed Geneva Call that the Forces had undergone a significant shift in their perception of their own role in the camp. They now use more caution in their security operations in order to reduce tension and avoid harming and frightening civilians.

The LSU held discussions with commanders and leaders to find out their opinions on gender, the inclusion of women in the security forces and enhancing women's roles in protection. Focus group discussions were held in different regions of the country, with women active in the political and social sphere, on whether and how well women might be accepted in leadership positions and the security forces.

The LSU succeeded in providing the JF with training on the basic principles of the use of force and firearms in security operations—a move which had been unsuccessfully attempted by other international organizations.

An interactive session on protection in the Palestinian camps was held in conjunction with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). A number of follow-up actions were identified and aimed to improve the situation there, especially with regard to the protection of children, education and medical facilities.

Three political parties strengthened their knowledge of humanitarian norms in a training of trainers (ToT), and they committed to conducting coached practice sessions in the future. Others attended meetings to discuss specific protection issues. Seven political parties and representatives from parliamentary committees, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the army, and international and national NGOs attended a roundtable to discuss the protection of children. This included prohibiting their involvement in armed conflict and the status of the government's ratification of the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC). An inter-party child protection taskforce was created at the end of the roundtable, and its meetings took place to discuss child protection issues throughout the year.

Multiple Syrian CSOs and activists, along with two sheikhs who had also attended a ToT on IHL, carried out training sessions with the support of Geneva Call trainers. Several of the ToT graduates created their own action plans for the dissemination of humanitarian norms and held training sessions on IHL within the Syrian community.

SUNNI LEADERS PARTICIPATE IN TRAINING SESSIONS ON IHL AND ISLAMIC LAW

The Sunni Mufti of Dar al Ifta', in Tripoli, introduced Geneva Call to a new grouping of Muslim sheikhs in east Lebanon (Bekaa), and a first encounter took place with the Mufti of Baalbeck and Hermel. The group was known for being very difficult to contact because its members were from the regions bordering Syria that were the battleground for the Lebanese Army and Hezbollah against the Islamic State group. These sheikhs are an important target group for Geneva Call, because they offer the potential for direct contact with armed actors.

Despite their reputation as hardliners, Geneva Call was able to organize two trainings with these religious leaders, including female religious teachers. By highlighting the connections between IHL and Islamic law, the trainer was able to convince the participants of IHL's legitimacy, leading them to request additional and more advanced training on the subject.

Following these trainings, Geneva Call was received by a leading Mufti in the region who praised its activities and suggested replicating them in different parts of Bekaa with other religious leaders in the future.

LAUNCH OF THE FIRST FRIENDS OF IHL NETWORK

In November, Geneva Call launched the *Friends of IHL* network, the first of its kind in the region, bringing together Lebanese, Syrian and Palestinian stakeholders from various backgrounds—from academics to refugees—along with representatives from local and international organizations. This network aims to combine its members' efforts to strengthen humanitarian norms for more efficient protection of civilians in situations of armed violence. During the launch event, an expert panel led the discussion on the protection of children in armed conflict. The network committed to enhancing and promoting expertise in the field of IHL and creating a platform for exchange and the sharing of resources and opportunities. As such, it will contribute to a better understanding of past and current violations of IHL in Lebanon and neighbouring countries, with a focus on supporting reconciliation processes by generating accountability and advocating for public policies and laws related to IHL and their implementation.

Feedback from the participants was very positive, with many stakeholders stating that they had been waiting for "something like this".

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WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

Because of the approaching Lebanese parliamentary elections, some parties stated that it would be practically impossible for them to conduct any coached training sessions to follow up on the ToT and that the sessions would have to be postponed. Meetings of the child protection taskforce were postponed for the same reason. Geneva Call continues to look for suitable opportunities to discuss humanitarian norms and refresh the parties' knowledge by inviting them to relevant events and proposing less demanding activities.

The clashes and tensions in the Ain al-Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp led to the postponement of several activities and training sessions planned by Geneva Call in conjunction with the LSU. Geneva Call has started a process to study the existing mediation and de-escalation mechanisms in Ain al-Hilweh with the aim of reducing tensions inside the camp. The results of the study and its concrete action points will be followed-up on in 2018.

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WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

Syria continued to be affected by multiple armed conflicts, both non-international and international. The involvement of foreign states, with their conflicting agendas, further complicated the picture. Fighting and military pressure increased in north-east and north-west Syria, and access to these areas remained limited. On the other hand, there was less pressure in the south of Syria, and the FSA-SF became more available for dialogue. At the political level, while the Geneva talks stalled, the Astana talks decided on four "de-escalation" zones. The subsequent cessation of hostilities and air strikes in these areas led to fewer casualties.

The Raqqa operation finished in October with the Islamic State group (ISg) losing its "capital". Heavy clashes continued in Deir ez-Zor even after the SDF and coalition forces took control of Raqqa city. The evacuation of opposition ANSAs from the Lebanese–Syrian border region to Idlib province, and the drone strikes targeting the JFS, led to a reshuffling of alliances between ANSAs and the consolidation of the two largest ones in this region: the new Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham is now composed of the JFS and other jihadist groups and the FSA alliance. Efforts were made to unify all the FSA-affiliated ANSAs under one command.

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	498,855
Protection of Children and Education	101,963
Gender Issues	70,976
Landmine Ban	35,476
Overhead	*102,416*
TOTAL	**809,686**

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

	Acronym						
Ahrar al-Sham	AAS						
Democratic Self-Administration in Rojava/People's Protection Units/ Women's Protection Units	YPG/YPJ		✔	✔	✔		
Free Syrian Army – Al-Mu'tasim Brigade	FSA-AMB		✔	✔	✔		
Free Syrian Army – 51st Brigade	FSA-51B		✔	✔	✔		
Free Syrian Army – Hamza Division	FSA-HD			✔	✔		
Free Syrian Army – 21st Force Union	FSA-21FU		✔	✔			
Free Syrian Army – 23rd Division	FSA-23D		✔	✔			
Free Syrian Army – Central Division	FSA-CD		✔	✔			
Free Syrian Army – First Coastal Division	FSA-FCD		✔	✔			
Free Syrian Army – Izzah Army	FSA-IA						
Free Syrian Army – Southern Front	FSA-SF						
Free Syrian Army – Al Watan Liberation Movement	FSA-AWLM		✔	✔			
Islam Army	FSA-HD						
Raqqa Internal Security Forces	RISF						
Rojava Peshmerga Forces	RPF						
Syrian Democratic Forces	SDF						

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

In February, Geneva Call organized a three-day meeting in Geneva for six FSA brigades and the Islam Army. Its objectives were to increase their knowledge of international standards pertaining to child protection and the protection of education, as well as to identify practical steps which ANSAs could take to enhance compliance with humanitarian norms.

Following the signing of *Deeds of Commitment*, the Al-Mu'tasim Brigade provided its new recruits with training on IHL and protection, and the Al Watan Liberation Movement shared all their internal documents with Geneva Call and requested recommendations on how to improve them. Additional FSA brigades participated in training sessions which contributed to deepening the dialogue initiated with them. The 23rd Division, the 21st Force Union, the Central Division and the First Coastal Division decided to create a joint monitoring committee for the implementation of their obligations under the *Deeds*.

In October, following a workshop on the three *Deeds* with officers from the FSA's Southern Front, leaders from the main brigades decided to sign the *Deed of Commitment* prohibiting sexual violence and against gender discrimination. At the request of these leaders, a training on IHL was held for 13 high-level commanders.

Because of access difficulties, an online training on IHL was organized for the Islam Army in eastern Ghouta. Feedback received from them later detailed their interest in continuing the dialogue with Geneva Call.

Training sessions for 36 cadres and representatives of women's organizations affiliated to the Kurdistan Democratic Party-Syria (KDP) created support for further training with the Rojava Peshmerga Forces.

A two-day training on IHL, focusing on the conduct of hostilities and civilian protection, was held for the SDF in September in Raqqa governorate. Around 100 high- and middle-ranking participants attended, thereby increasing their knowledge of IHL.

In September, Geneva Call organized a two-day training on IHL, focusing on the protection of civilians, for the newly created Raqqa Internal Security Forces. Fourteen commanders from five sectors attended the training and more sessions were requested for their sectors' forces.

Multiple Syrian CSOs and activists in Lebanon participated in a training of trainers on IHL in order to disseminate these norms among Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

A poster campaign was run in the north-west and north-east of Syria, where over the course of three weeks, 10,000 posters were disseminated. Two Syrian television channels (Aleppo Today and Deir ez-Zor TV) broadcasted six videos carrying the *Fighter not Killer* messages every day for two months.

ENGAGEMENT WITH THE YPG/YPJ WAS STRENGTHENED

Despite limited access to north-east Syria, engagement with the YPG/YPJ continued to be strengthened. Geneva Call was also able to follow up on the implementation of the *Deeds of Commitment* and to monitor the situation on the ground first hand, including in the centres for demobilized children in Hassake and Derik and the one in charge of recruitment in Qamishli.

For the first time, high-ranking commanders participated in a training on IHL, and Geneva Call maintained a high level of dialogue with YPG/YPJ leadership. More than 100 members of the Asayish forces, the police forces of Rojava, were also trained during a two-day training on IHL focussing on child protection.

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EIGHT FSA BRIGADES SIGNED *DEEDS OF COMMITMENT*

Eight brigades or units of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) signed one or more *Deeds of Commitment*, thereby pledging to respect international standards to protect civilians in armed conflict. The new signatories were: the 23rd Division, the 21st Force Union, the Central Division, the First Coastal Division, the 51st Brigade, the Al-Mu'tasim Brigade, the Hamza Division and the Al-Watan Liberation Movement.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

One of the main challenges facing Geneva Call remained getting access to north-central and south Syria. Geneva Call nevertheless managed to maintain its dialogue with Syrian ANSAs and CSOs thanks to its local partners and ANSA representatives outside the country. The increased military pressure in north-east and north-west Syria also hampered engagement work with ANSAs operating in those areas, and follow-up with signatories regarding the necessary monitoring of their *Deeds of Commitment* remained limited.

ANSAs frequently merged with other ANSAs or shared each others' bases temporarily, sometimes without changing their own structure. This made efforts at humanitarian dialogue difficult as the focal points changed or the role of past focal points became unclear in the new structures. Geneva Call regularly updated its ANSA profiles in order to reach out to the correct decision makers within them.

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WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

In 2017, the conflict between the Turkish armed forces and the HPG/PKK continued. There were daily military operations, with targeted bombings by government forces of areas controlled by the PKK/HPG and guerrilla warfare conducted outside cities by the HPG/PKK. This group was also active in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) in the fight against the Islamic State group (ISg), especially in the regions of Sinjar and Kirkuk. After an independence referendum in the KRI in September, the Peshmerga Forces, including the HPG/PKK, withdrew their troops from Kirkuk.

In April, Turkey voted a new constitution giving increased power to its president. The state of emergency put in place by the Turkish government after the failed coup of 2016 continued to place severe restrictions on the media, academia and civil society, and some opposition politicians were arrested. The regional dimension to the conflict between the Turkish army and the HPG/PKK became ever more significant, with Turkey continuing to attack the YPG/YPJ in Syria, viewing them as an extension of the HPG/PKK.

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS

	Acronym						
People's Defence Forces/ Kurdistan Worker's Party	HPG/PKK		✔	✔	✔		

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	13,105
Protection of Children and Education	13,379
Gender Issues	8,417
Landmine Ban	9,557
Overhead	*6,438*
TOTAL	**50,895**

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

Meetings were held with high-ranking HPG/PKK members in Europe and Iraq, and they responded to a report prepared by Geneva Call on its concerns with regards to allegations of the recruitment of children under 16 years old. They accepted that there were still non-compliance issues in relation to the signed *Deed*. However, due to the security situation, Geneva Call could not travel to those areas and discuss these concerns, nor give its recommendations on improving implementation of the *Deed of Commitment*.

In 2014 and 2015, Geneva Call provided military instructors from the HPG/PKK with an advanced training on IHL. Through an analysis of the HPG/PKK's communications during 2017 (in comparison to 2016), the group has shown an increased understanding of its obligations under the *Deeds of Commitment* and under IHL. Even though the group identified non-compliance issues, it expressed the different ways that it felt bound by the *Deeds of Commitment*.

Geneva Call continued its monitoring work via a special process also put in place in previous years. Due to a lack of funding, no monitoring staff could be hired to work in the KRI.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

The poor security situation brought on by intense fighting, together with the funding situation, caused several activities to be postponed or cancelled, and thus some of the goals expected for 2017 were not met. Despite this, all the stakeholders involved in the Turkey context continue to be interested in participating in the activities proposed by Geneva Call and have included them in their plans for 2018.

FIGHTER NOT KILLER CAMPAIGN RAISED AWARENESS OF HUMANITARIAN NORMS

The *Fighter not Killer campaign* was launched during heavy clashes between the HPG/PKK and Turkish security forces to raise awareness of humanitarian norms and the obligations faced by all armed forces under IHL. These messages reached more than 2 million people and more than 1 million watched the videos and interacted on social media. CSOs contributed to this endeavour by disseminating the material through their social media accounts.

Child standing in rubble, Sana'a. Ali, 13 years old, stands in the middle of destroyed buildings in his neighbourhood. © ICRC/Yeyha Arhab

WHAT WAS THE CONTEXT?

Ansar Allah/Al-Houthi and the General People's Congress (GPC), led by former president, Ali Abdallah Saleh, continued to fight pro-Hadi forces and Popular Resistance Committees in the south throughout 2017. The influence of other forces, including Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the Islamic State group (ISg), gradually increased and their presence on the ground expanded. Al-Hirak also got involved in the conflict; they rose to prominence in 2015, when they allied with the exiled president, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, against the Ansar Allah/Al-Houthi and pro-Saleh militias. Al-Hirak joined with different groups on behalf of a popular resistance movement when Ansar Allah/Al-Houthi occupied most of the southern governorates, including Aden. Ansar Allah/Al-Houthi and its allied forces were then pushed out of these governorates in 2015–2016.

Tensions constantly grew between pro-Saleh forces and Ansar Allah/Al-Houthi and in December, when Ansar Allah/Al-Houthi partisans attempted to take over a GPC-owned mosque, clashes occurred, resulting in many casualties on both sides. After four days of continuous fighting, the violence ended in the killing of former president Saleh. The main reason for these clashes was reportedly that Saleh had changed his attitude towards Saudi Arabia and had become open to negotiations with them. After his killing, most of his supporters fled areas controlled by Ansar Allah/Al-Houthi and the situation in these locations stabilized. However, the Saudi-led Coalition (SLC) continued and even intensified its airstrikes.

ARMED ACTORS

	Acronym						
Ansar Allah/ Al-Houthi Movement	Ansar Allah/ Al-Houthi						
Southern Movement	Al-Hirak						

The ANSA has been engaged on this thematic area
The ANSA has newly been engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017
✔ The ANSA has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area
✔ The ANSA signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

EXPENDITURES

BY THEMATIC PRIORITY	CHF
Humanitarian Norms	81,318
Protection of Children and Education	11,161
Gender Issues	1,847
Landmine Ban	29,531
Overhead	*17,935*
TOTAL	**141,792**

WHAT DID GENEVA CALL ACHIEVE IN 2017?

The *Fighter not Killer* campaign, targeting all conflict areas, exceeded Geneva Call's expectations by reaching nearly 2 million video views and interactions on social media. CSOs liked the campaign's messages and shared it widely, contributing to the general positive response.

Ansar Allah/Al-Houthi supporters also appreciated the campaign videos on the protection of schools and the medical mission. However, Geneva Call received negative feedback from them regarding its videos on child recruitment and sexual violence, supposedly because the group felt targeted by the messages contained in them.

Geneva Call's local consultants reached out to several international, national and local actors to present the organization's plans for working on the protection of civilians through the preservation of the humanitarian space in collaboration with local communities and its plan to open field offices.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID GENEVA CALL FACE IN THIS CONTEXT?

Geneva Call's request for a visa to visit areas controlled by the Hadi government in the south was delayed, and the visa and registration procedures for Sana'a were not finalized in 2017. This created some delays in the implementation of certain other activities.

Geneva Call's international staff member was unable to reach the country in order to initiate direct engagement, but the de facto authorities in Sana'a were informed about Geneva Call's initiatives by its consultants and partners.

16 YEMENI WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS LEARN ABOUT INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN NORMS SUGGESTING INCLUSIVE HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Seventeen women, representing 16 Yemeni women's organizations, attended a workshop in Amman, Jordan, on international humanitarian norms. The focus was on the prohibition of sexual violence, the prevention of gender discrimination, child protection and the ban on anti-personnel mines.

Some of them had to travel for days and across several checkpoints. They came from different areas—whether controlled by Ansar Allah/Al-Houthi, the government or southern groups—and represented varied political sensitivities. Despite this, Geneva Call was able to avoid political debates by highlighting the humanitarian considerations that had brought them together. The participants themselves were impressed on how Geneva Call could gather such a varied audience.

The participants took up the issue of the protection of civilians with enthusiasm and committed to disseminating humanitarian norms among their constituencies. Six organizations received further training in Beirut and became Geneva Call's implementation partners for the conduct of awareness-raising activities according to action plans adapted to their areas.

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HEADQUARTERS
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND
OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

POLICY AND LEGAL UNIT (PLU)

As part of its role in supporting operations, Geneva Call's Policy and Legal Unit (PLU) delivered training sessions for ANSAs on IHL or other specific themes, in the field and in Geneva. It also provided technical input to country programmes and conducted briefings on legal and policy issues for Geneva Call's operational staff. The PLU also developed new resource documents, most notably guidelines on Community Based Protection (CBP). The purposes of these guidelines are to define cases in which Geneva Call should engage in CBP activities, what the criteria and modalities for this are, and how CBP projects complement Geneva Call's other activities, which mainly involve direct engagement with ANSAs. Moreover, in order to assist Geneva Call's operational staff—especially new staff—the PLU started to develop internal methodological guidelines on how to prepare and conduct humanitarian engagement with ANSAs. As a part of Geneva Call's decentralisation process and growth, there is a need to ensure a transfer of know-how from headquarters to field offices, as well as to strengthen institutional memory. The PLU also continued to liaise with key international stakeholders, build partnerships and maintain a network of experts in numerous fields. It participated in relevant conferences and seminars and contributed to working groups and coalitions, sharing Geneva Call's experience and advocating for humanitarian engagement with ANSAs. Finally, the PLU continued to explore new thematic areas of work, particularly the protection of medical care in armed conflict.

PROTECTION OF MEDICAL CARE

In recent years, it has become increasingly common for medical personnel and facilities to come under attack. Although comprehensive worldwide data is missing, the reality on the ground is unequivocal. There are different consequences to this type of violence, such as loss of life, injury, destruction and deprivation of vital care. Besides their immediate impact, attacks against medical personnel and facilities can also paralyse the delivery of emergency services and disrupt access to health care for the wider civilian population and even wounded fighters. Attacks may also lead to healthcare staff leaving conflict areas, thus further exacerbating the trend.

Geneva Call started working on the protection of medical care in armed conflicts as part of its 2017–2019 strategy. Its engagement has been welcomed by key stakeholders, which recognize its added value. During 2017, Geneva Call liaised actively with the WHO, the ICRC and MSF Switzerland to build collaboration and synergies. It also briefed the informal Group of Friends of UN Security Council Resolution 2286, in Geneva, and the Group of Friends on the Protection of Civilians, in New York, and it participated in various Human Rights Council side events as well as in the Humanitarian Day held by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

PUBLIC ADVOCACY

Conducting principled humanitarian engagement with ANSAs remained a problematic issue in certain contexts where authorities deny access to humanitarian organizations. Furthermore, some donor states have policies in place that restrict dialogue with ANSAs. Geneva Call therefore continued to place a high priority on advocacy work to foster a better operational environment on the ground and maintain space for engagement with ANSAs; it by spoke at conferences and events to promote that engagement, such as the Munich Security Conference.

MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING (MEAL)

In 2017, Geneva Call shifted its monitoring and evaluation activities over to its Operations Department and created the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Unit. The Unit developed a number of new tools and processes, piloted throughout the year, for situation analysis, planning, monitoring, reflection, evaluation, and internal reporting on analysis and learning. As a result of these efforts, the organization has developed a more precise understanding of its MEAL needs: staff have started to reflect on their work more formally, are better able to capture programme outcomes and are more aware of how MEAL can benefit them. Lessons learned in 2017 will be integrated into the adaptations to be made to tools and procedures planned for 2018.

OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATION

To support the dissemination of the law of armed conflict, Geneva Call carried out public awareness-raising campaigns in three countries and totalled more than 3.5 million video views on social media. In addition, it further developed its campaign material to adapt it to local contexts, particularly in the DRC and Asia, and it created posters for street campaigns. The organization also started to build communication capacity at its local offices with the recruitment and training of a communication officer in Iraq.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Geneva Call undertook an overhaul of all its different financial procedures and systems. New accounting standards were adopted, and new software was introduced to strengthen financial management and integrate best practices. An assessment of internal control systems was conducted, and the organization launched the development and implementation of stronger or additional procedures.

Furthermore, in order to strengthen data security and better support operations, including in the field, Geneva Call adopted a new IT system on which to run its new software. This also contributed to better knowledge and skills transfer from the headquarters to local structures.

ABC	ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
A	ANSA	armed non-State actor: 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 of violence other than armed conflict if it is deemed that its action can have a positive impact on beneficiaries and lead to better protection for civilians
	AP Mine Ban Convention	Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, 18 September 1997
	AP	anti-personnel
	armed conflict	international and/or non-international armed conflict(s), as governed, inter alia, by the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and their two Additional Protocols of 1977 and by customary international law
C	CBO	community-based organization
	CHF	Swiss francs
	civilian	a civilian is anyone who is not a member of State armed forces or of an organized armed group. Civilians are protected under IHL from the effects of armed conflicts. In particular, they cannot be directly targeted if they do not participate in hostilities. In addition, IHL also protects those who have been placed
	CSO	civil society organization
D	DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration: the objective of the DDR process is to contribute to security and stability in post-conflict environments so that recovery and development can begin. The DDR of ex-combatants is a complex process, with political, military, security, humanitarian and socio-economic dimensions. It aims to deal with the post-conflict security problem that arises when ex-combatants are left without livelihoods or support networks – other than their former comrades – during the vital transition period from conflict to peace and development. This occurs through a process of disarming combatants, which takes them out of military structures and helps them to integrate socially and economically into society.
	Deed of Commitment banning AP mines	*Deed of Commitment for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines and for Cooperation in Mine Action*
	Deed of Commitment protecting children in armed conflict	*Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict*
	Deed of Commitment prohibiting sexual violence and against gender discrimination	*Deed of Commitment for the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict and towards the Elimination of Gender Discrimination*
E	ERW	explosive remnants of war
G	1949 Geneva Conventions	Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field, 12 August 1949 Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea, 12 August 1949 Convention (III) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, 12 August 1949 Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, 12 August 1949
H	humanitarian norms	Geneva Call uses the term *humanitarian norms* to refer to both IHL and those norms of IHRL, which should govern the conduct of ANSAs in situations of armed conflict or other situations of violence – regardless of their binding nature – in order to improve the protection of civilians and other protected persons (persons not/no longer participating in hostilities) and the enjoyment of human rights.
I	ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
	IDP	internally displaced person
	IED	improvised explosive device

ABC	ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
I	IHL	international humanitarian law: IHL is a branch of international law that regulates armed conflict situations. It seeks to limit the effects of armed conflict by protecting persons who are not, or no longer, taking part in hostilities, and by restricting the means and methods of warfare. Amongst other things, this means that civilians and combatants *hors de combat* must not be the target of attacks or subjected to acts of violence such as killing, maiming, torture and other forms of ill-treatment, forced recruitment and hostage taking. Civilian property must be respected. The forcible displacement of civilian populations is also prohibited unless required for the safety of the population or imperative military reasons. IHL also calls on parties to armed conflict to allow impartial humanitarian relief for populations in need. All parties to armed conflicts – whether States or ANSAs – are bound by the relevant rules of IHL.
	IHRL	international human rights law: IHRL is a branch of international law that can provide protection beyond IHL. In times of armed conflict, States may suspend a number of human rights in situations of emergency. However, certain fundamental rights – such as the right not to be arbitrarily deprived of life, the prohibition of torture and inhuman punishment or treatment – must be respected in all circumstances. Specific population groups, such as women and children, benefit from additional protection. In addition to this international legal framework, the UNSC has adopted a number of relevant resolutions, including on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, on women, peace and security and on children affected by armed conflict.
	international norms	legally binding rules, which may or may not be codified in treaties, that States are obliged to comply with if they are applicable to the situation in a given context (e.g. customary norms of international law, which are binding on States regardless of whether or not they are party to the pertinent treaty, and which provide legal protection to the people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence in cases where there are no applicable treaty provisions).
M	mine action	activities which aim to reduce the social, economic and environmental impact of mines and ERW, including unexploded sub-munitions. Mine action is not just about demining; it is also about people and societies, and how they are affected by landmine and ERW contamination. The objective of mine action is to reduce the risk from landmines and ERW to a level where people can live safely; in which economic, social and health development can occur free from the constraints imposed by landmine and ERW contamination, and in which the victims' different needs can be addressed. Mine action comprises five complementary groups of activities: mine-risk education; humanitarian demining; victim assistance; stockpile destruction; and advocacy against the use of AP mines.
	MRE	mine-risk education
N	NGO	non-governmental organization
O	OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
	Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child	Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, 25 May 2000
	(other) situations of violence	situations of collective violence below the threshold of an armed conflict but generating significant humanitarian consequences, in particular, internal disturbances (internal strife) and tensions. The collective nature of the violence excludes self-directed or interpersonal violence.
U	UN	United Nations
	UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
	UNSC	United Nations Security Council
W	weapon contamination	pollution by landmines, cluster munitions and other ERW

GENEVA CALL ENGAGED 69 ANSAS ON 6 THEMATIC AREAS

Landmine Ban · Child Protection · Gender Issues · Displacement · Humanitarian Norms · Cultural Heritage

REGION	COUNTRY	ARMED ACTOR	THEMATIC AREAS					
			Humanitarian Norms	Child Protection	Gender Issues	Landmine Ban	Displacement	Cultural Heritage
AFRICA	DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO	Alliance des Patriotes pour un Congo Libre et Souverain (APCLS)		✔				
		Conseil national pour le renouveau et la démocratie (CNRD)						
		Forces pour la défense des droits humains (FDDH)						
		Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda (FDLR)						
		Forces de Défense Congolaises (FDC)						
		Nduma Defence of Congo (NDC)						
		Nduma Defense of Congo – Rénové (NDCR)						
	MALI	Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad (CMA)						
		Plateforme des mouvements du 14 juin 2014 d'Alger (Plateforme)						
	SOUTH SUDAN	Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army – in Opposition (SPLM/A-IO)						
	SUDAN	Justice and Equality Mouvement (JEM)				✔		
		Sudan Liberation Movement/Army – Abdel Wahid al-Nur (SLM/A-AW)				✔		
		Sudan Liberation Movement/Army – Minni Minnawi (SLM/A-MM)				✔		
		Sudan People's Liberation Movement – North (SPLM-N)		✔		✔		
	WESTERN SAHARA	Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario Front)				✔		
ASIA AND EUROPE	MYANMAR	Chin National Front/Army (CNF/CNA)		✔	✔	✔		
		Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA)						
		Kachin Independence Organisation/Army (KIO/KIA)						
		Karen National Union Peace Council/Karen National Liberation Army Peace Council (KNU-PC/KNLA-PC)						
		Karen National Union/ Karen National Liberation Army (KNU/KNLA)		✔	✔			
		Karenni National Progressive Party/Karenni Army (KNPP/KA)		✔				
		New Mon State Party/ Mon National Liberation Army (NMSP/MNLA)		✔				
		Pa'O National Liberation Organization/ Pa'O National Liberation Army (PNLO/PNLA)		✔				
		Palaung State Liberation Front/ Taan National Liberation Army (PSLF/TNLA)				✔		
		Restoration Council of Shan State/ Shan State Army-South (RCSS/SSA-S)						
		Shan State Progressive Party/ Shan State Army (North) (SSPP/SSA-N)						
	INDIA	Kuki National Front (KNF)			✔			
		Kuki National Organisation (KNO)		✔	✔	✔		
		National Socialist Council of Nagaland–Khaplang (NSCN-K)						
		National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khole Kitovi (NSCN-KK)		✔	✔	✔		
		National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak Muivah) (NSCN-IM)			✔	✔		
		Revolutionary People's Front/People's Liberation Army (RPF/PLA)						
		United National Liberation Front (UNLF)						
		Zomi Re-unification Organisation (ZRO)		✔	✔	✔		
	THE PHILIPPINES	Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF)						
		Moro Islamic Liberation Front/ Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (MILF/BIAF)				✔		
	THAILAND	Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN)						
		Majlis Syura Patani (MARA Patani)						
	UKRAINE	Nationalist battalions						
		Donetsk People's Republic (DPR)						
		Luhansk People's Republic (LPR)						

The Armed Actor was newly engaged on this thematic area

The Armed Actor was engaged by Geneva Call on this thematic area in 2017

✔ The Armed Actor has signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area

✔ The Armed Actor signed the *Deed of Commitment* on this thematic area in 2017

REGION	COUNTRY	ARMED ACTOR	THEMATIC AREAS					
LATIN AMERICA	COLOMBIA	National Liberation Army (ELN)						
NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST	IRAN	Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (PDKI)		✔	✔	✔		
		Free Life Party of Kurdistan (PJAK)		✔		✔		
		Komala Party of Iranian Kurdistan (KPIK)		✔	✔	✔		
		Komala Party of Kurdistan (KPK)		✔	✔	✔		
		Komalah – The Kurdistan Organization of the Communist Party of Iran (Komalah-CPI)		✔	✔	✔		
		Kurdistan Freedom Party (PAK)		✔	✔	✔		
		The Kurdistan Democratic Party–Iran (KDP-Iran)		✔	✔	✔		
	IRAQ	Ezidkhan Protection Forces (HPE)						
		Kurdistan Democratic Party –Liwa 80 (Liwa 80)						
		Patriotic Union of Kurdistan –Liwa 70 (Liwa 70)						
		Kurdistan Regional Government–Peshmerga Forces						
		Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF)						
		Sunni Popular Mobilization Forces (Sunni PMF)						
		Sinjar Resistance Units (YBS)						
	LEBANON	Forces of the Palestinian National Coalition (Tahaluf)						
		Hezbollah						
		Islamic Force in Ain al-Hilweh (IF)						
		Palestinian Liberation Organization/ Palestinian National Security Forces (PLO/PNSF)						
	SYRIA	Ahrar al-Sham (AAS)						
		Democratic Self-Administration in Rojava/People's Protection Units/Women's Protection Units (YPG-YPJ)		✔	✔	✔		
		Free Syrian Army–Al-Mu'tasim Brigade (FSA-AMB)		✔	✔	✔		
		Free Syrian Army–51st Brigade (FSA-51B)		✔	✔	✔		
		Free Syrian Army–Hamza Division (FSA-HD)			✔	✔		
		Free Syrian Army–21st Force Union (FSA-21FU)		✔	✔			
		Free Syrian Army–23rd Division (FSA-23D)		✔	✔			
		Free Syrian Army–Central Division (FSA-CD)		✔	✔			
		Free Syrian Army–First Coastal Division (FSA-FCD)		✔	✔			
		Free Syrian Army–Izzah Army (FSA-IA)						
		Free Syrian Army–Southern Front (FSA-SF)						
		Free Syrian Army–Al Watan Liberation Movement (FSA-AWLM)		✔	✔			
		Islam Army (IA)						
		Raqqa Internal Security Forces (RISF)						
		Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)						
	TURKEY	People's Defences Forces/ Kurdistan Worker's Party (HPG/PKK)		✔	✔	✔		
	YEMEN	Ansar Allah/Al-Houthi Movement						
		Southern Movement (l-Hirak)						

THEMATIC AREAS						
Total of ANSAs engaged in 2017	47	48	39	43	11	5
Total of active ANSAs already signatories to the *Deed of Commitment*		26	23	23		
ANSAs which became signatories in 2017		7	8	3		

							Overhead	TOTAL
AFRICA								
Coordination	27,885	27,885	27,885	27,885			16,067	127,608
Democratic Republic of the Congo		268,193	80,068				50,167	398,428
Libya	39,389						5,674	45,063
Mali	54,028						7,783	61,811
South Sudan				21,191			3,053	24,243
Sudan	21,161	28,458	7,635	28,458			12,347	98,059
Western Sahara	59,710						8,601	68,311
Sub total	202,174	324,536	115,589	77,534			103,691	823,524
ASIA and EUROPE								
Coordination	17,339	17,339	17,339	17,339			15,243	84,600
Burma/Myanmar		28,600	40,765	103,360			37,961	210,686
India		29,190	27,504	39,944			21,238	117,876
Thailand	81,538						17,920	99,458
Ukraine	42,840						9,415	52,255
Sub total	141,717	75.129	85,608	160,643			101,777	564,874
LATIN AMERICA								
Colombia	4,469	33,893	42,839	84,827			23,926	189,953
Sub total	4,469	33,893	42,839	84,827			23,926	189,953
NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST								
Coordination	13,317	13,317	13,317	13,317			7,714	60,983
Iran	10,722	10,946	6,886	7,820			5,267	41,642
Iraq	556,215	56,525	26,455	31,779			97,160	768,133
Lebanon	292,666	43,123					48,624	384,413
Syria	498,855	101,963	70,976	35,476			102,416	809,686
Turkey	13,105	13,379	8,417	9,557			6,438	50,895
Yemen	81,318	11,161	1,847	29,531			17,935	141,792
Sub total	1,466,198	250,415	127,899	127,480			285,552	2,257,544
OPERATIONAL SUPPORT								
Sub total	492,083	197,061	111,941	145,967	63,128	58,793	191,594	1,068,973
TOTAL	2,306,640	881,034	483,875	596,451	63,128	58,793	706,540	5,611,408

Humanitarian norms

Child protection

Gender Issues

Landmine Ban

Displacement

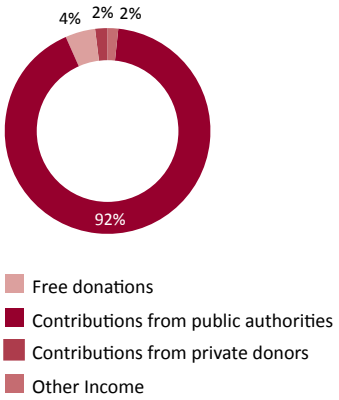
Cultural Heritage

In 2017, Geneva Call's total income was CHF 5.7 million, compared to CHF 5.5 million in 2016. Grants and contributions from institutional donors amounted to 92% of its revenue (92% in 2016). A significant proportion of its 2018 funding (CHF 4 million) was secured before the end of 2017. Expenditure for 2017 increased to CHF 5.6 million, compared to CHF 5.5 million in 2016, and 68% of Geneva Call's expenditure (69% in 2016) was spent on interventions for the protection of civilians in 17 contexts. The 3 contexts with the largest budgets were Syria, Iraq and the DRC. Since the 2016 fiscal year, Geneva Call's financial statements have been presented according to Swiss GAAP RPC 21 recommendations, the common accounting standard for NGOs.

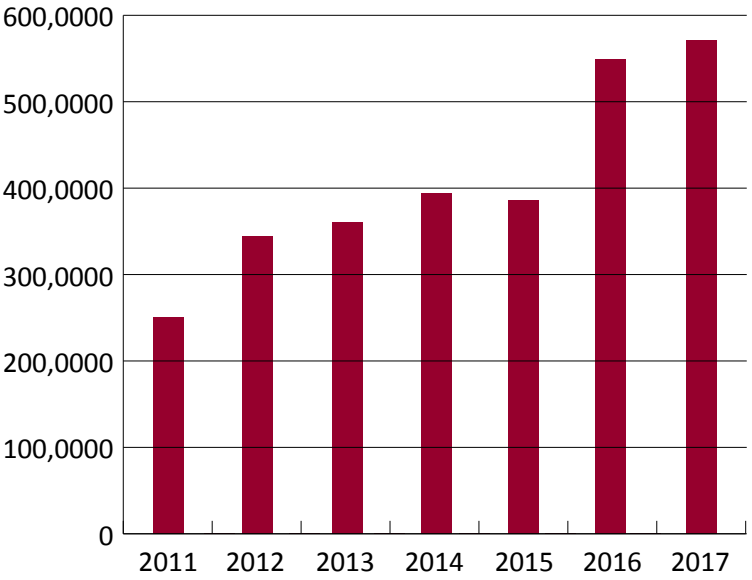
BALANCE SHEET	BALANCE 31.12.2017	BALANCE 31.12.2016
Cash and cash equivalent	894,458	439,188
Current accounts	13,545	
Receivables from donors	375,162	1,730,094
Other receivables	794	62,888
Prepayments and accrued income	48,289	58,118
CURRENT ASSETS	**1,332,248**	**2,290,288**
Fixed assets	38,854	17,905
NON CURRENT ASSETS	**38,854**	**17,905**
TOTAL ASSETS	**1,371,102**	**2,308,193**
Payables from goods and services	107,169	190,766
Other liabilities	40,324	128,659
Accruals expenses	29,133	27,343
CURRENT LIABILITIES	**176,626**	**346,768**
RESTRICTED FUNDS	**976,448**	**1,806,477**
Organization capital		
– Initial capital	50,000	50,000
– Free capital	200,000	200,000
– Net accumulated deficit	-95,052	-95,052
– Net accumulated benefit	63,080	
TOTAL ORGANIZATION CAPITAL	**218,028**	**154,948**
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND ORGANIZATION CAPITAL	**1,371,102**	**2,308,193**

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS	BALANCE 31.12.2017	BALANCE 31.12.2016
OPERATING INCOME		
Free donations received	96,695	89,264
– restricted	96,695	
– unrestricted		89,264
Restricted contributions from public authorities	5,244,289	3,776,084
Restricted contributions from private donors	261,466	839,008
Other income	108,943	126,394
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	**5,711,393**	**4,830,750**
PROGRAMME EXPENDITURES	**5,611,409**	**5,422,080**
Direct expenditures	4,904,868	3,815,166
Support expenditures	706,541	1,606,914
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	**5,611,409**	**5,422,080**
VARIATION OF RESTRICTED FUNDS / CHANGE IN FUND CAPITAL	-123,688	730,238
NET OPERATING RESULT AFTER VARIATION OF RESTRICTED FUNDS /	-23,704	138,908
FINANCIAL RESULT	**86,784**	**-127,038**
Financial charges	-16,573	-6,908
Exchange loss	-269,515	-190,828
Exchange gain	372,872	70,698
RESULT OF THE YEAR	**63,080**	**11,869**

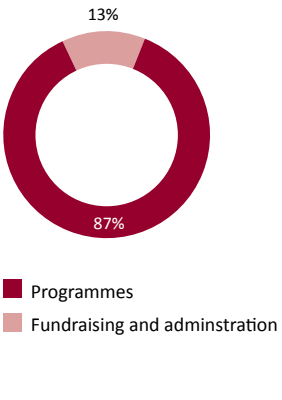
Sources of funding



Evolution of income since 2011



Expenditure



CASH FLOW STATEMENT	2017	2016
RESULT FOR THE YEAR	**63,080**	**11,869**
Change in capital of restricted funds / Change in fund capital	-830,029	-658,158
Depreciation	24,505	16,549
Increase (-) / Decrease (+) Receivables from services	1,354,932	711,106
Increase (-) / Decrease (+) Prepayment and accrued income	9,829	-41,573
Increase (-) / Decrease (+) Other short-term receivables	48,549	84,345
Increase (+) / Decrease (-) Other short-term liabilities	-88,335	83,532
Increase (+) / Decrease (-) Payables from goods and services	-83,597	-6,657
Increase (+) / Decrease (-) Accruals expenses	1,789	0
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	**500,724**	**200,913**
Investment (-) in tangible fixed assets	-45,454	-25,153
Disinvestment (+) of financial assets	–	–
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	**-45,454**	**-25,153**
INCREASE (+) / DECREASE (-) IN CASH & CASH EQUIVALENT	**455,270**	**175,759**
Cash & cash equivalent, beginning of year	439,188	263,428
Cash & cash equivalent, end of year	894,458	439,188
INCREASE (+) / DECREASE (-) IN CASH & CASH EQUIVALENT	**455,270**	**175,759**

GENEVA CALL IS GRATEFUL TO ALL ITS DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

- The governments of Australia (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade), Finland, France, Italy (through the GICHD), Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), Switzerland (Human Security Division and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Department for International Development) through its embassy in Myanmar and Thailand.
- The European Commission (Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department, including through Danish Church Aid and Save the Children Norway), UNESCO, UNICEF and UNMAS.
- The Commune of Anières, the Commune of Bernex, the Commune of Chêne-Bougeries, the City of Geneva and the Republic and Canton of Geneva.
- Association des Amis de la Fondation pour Genève, Mrs and Mr Demole, The Education Above All Foundation, the Folke Bernadotte Academy, Quaero Capital, Stiftung Usine and the Swiss Network for International Studies.

SUPPORT US

Finding new financial resources represents a continuous challenge for Geneva Call. To address this, Geneva Call particularly seeks guaranteed multi-year funding, as this is a significant aid to overall planning and human resources commitments. It also reduces administrative costs, thereby allowing more resources to be dedicated to field activities. Finally, it continues working towards a more diversified donor base.

Geneva Call is greatly appreciative of its donors and particularly those who give an element of core funding; this allows the organization greater flexibility and responsiveness to emerging needs. Geneva Call wishes to thank its current donors for continuing to fund it in this manner and hopes that new donors will consider doing so over the coming years.

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Chocó. Population of rural area of Chocó. © ICRC/Laura Aguilera

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