Geneva Peace Forum

Think the Present, Lead the Future

PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT



Press Contact

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About the Forum

WHAT

The Geneva Peace Forum (GPF) is one of the longest-standing annual gatherings dedicated to peacebuilding in the international calendar, bringing together organisations based in Geneva and their international partners to exchange knowledge and practice on a diverse range of issues related to peace across contexts and disciplines.In 2026, Geneva Peace Week became the Geneva Peace Forum, reflecting the evolution of the platform and its ambition to further strengthen its role as a space for exchange, dialogue and collaboration across the international peacebuilding community.

The 2026 edition takes place under the thematic direction “Choose Peace”, exploring the choices, actions and collective efforts needed to build and sustain peace.

WHEN

From 12 to 15 October 2026

WHERE

CICG — Centre International de Conférences Genève. Rue de Varembé 17, 1211 Genève

WHY

In a world marked by uncertainty and division, the international community still has agency. Governments, organisations, communities, and individuals can choose dialogue over confrontation, cooperation over fragmentation, and prevention over crisis response.

OUR MAIN EVENTS

Geneva Peace Forum High-Level Opening

Monday 12 October · 09:00–09:45 · Plenary A

The inaugural Geneva Peace Forum opens under the theme "Choose Peace", with institutional remarks and a keynote address by H.E. Julius Maada Bio, President of Sierra Leone, setting the tone for four days of dialogue, prevention and shared responsibility.

Geneva Peace Forum: A Ceremony for Peace

Monday 12 October · 17:00–18:00 · Plenary A

The Forum's flagship public moment, combining a Peace Message on mediation with artistic interludes on culture and peacebuilding. Followed by a cocktail.

2026 Geneva PeaceTalks: Choose Peace

Tuesday 13 October · 16:00–18:00 · Plenary A

Personal stories from peacebuilders, community leaders and artists choosing peace in neglected crises, on the frontlines and in daily life, using storytelling to turn the abstract into the human. Founded by Interpeace, UNOG and the GPP. Followed by a cocktail.

"Ambassade": The Power of Quiet Diplomacy – Then and Now (Documentary)

Tuesday 13 October · 14:00 - 15:45 · Plenary B

Swiss director Daniel Wyss’s Ambassade (2019) revisits the 444-day Iran hostage crisis that began with the seizure of the US Embassy in Tehran in 1979, through the experiences of two Swiss diplomats posted in Iran at the time.

Sustainable Peace in Central Asia: Lessons learned from the Khujand Declaration on Eternal Friendship

Tuesday 13 October · 12:30 -13:30 · Plenary B

For the first time, a representative of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation will speak at a public event in Geneva on the Khujand Declaration and the role of regional cooperation, trust and preventive diplomacy in strengthening peace and stability in Central Asia.

Muganga - Celui qui Soigne (Movie Screening)

Wednesday 14 October · 17:00–19:30 · Plenary A

Screening of the 2025 film on Dr Denis Mukwege's fight against conflict-related sexual violence, followed by a discussion with director Marie-Hélène Roux and Danaé van der Straten Ponthoux (Global Survivors Fund), moderated by Pierre Hazan.

Closing Ceremony: 2026 Kofi Annan Peace Address

Thursday 15 October · 17:00–18:30 · Plenary A

The Forum's closing event: the 2026 Kofi Annan Peace Address by Dr Denis Mukwege, 2018 Nobel laureate, followed by the inaugural Kofi Annan Geneva Youth Peace Prize and an intergenerational conversation on building peace. Followed by a cocktail.

Programme highlights

The full programme is available on our website: www.genevapeaceforum.ch

Monday 12 October

10:00–11:00	Peace Mediation Today: Do Norms Still Matter?
11:30–12:30	Choosing Peace in Europe: Building the Next Peace and Security Architecture
11:30–13:00	How Should Mediation Adapt to an Increasingly Transactional World?
13:30–14:30	The Human Cost of Conflict: giving visibility and paving the way for accountability
15:00–16:00	The Middle East at a Turning Point: Ceasefires, Transitions, New Alliances – and the Role of Regional and European Partners
16:00–16:50	Civilian Voices: Roundtable at the Geneva Peace Forum 2026 (with Ukrainian victims)

Tuesday 13 October

11:00–12:00	Peacebuilding in an Era of Geopolitical Fracture
15:00–16:30	Lessons from mediating with criminal armed groups

Wednesday 14 October

09:00–10:30	Disinformation as a shared emergency: how can local media, peace, humanitarian and development actors improve cooperation?
11:00–12:30	Beyond Security: Multisectoral Responses to Armed Violence and Weapons Proliferation
13:00–14:30	Humanitarian Diplomacy Across Parallel Tracks: Aligning Protection of Civilians and Peace Processes
13:00–14:30	The Åland Example: Inclusive Governance for Sustainable Peace
15:00–16:30	The Security Landscape in the Middle East: Challenges and Opportunities
15:00–16:30	Championing the use of Water for Peace from Geneva

Thursday 15 October

11:00–12:30	Do We Have to Mourn the Death of State-building?
13:00–14:30	The BEYOND game: A training tool for empathy, protection and peace
13:00–14:30	Bridging the Debate ‘Peace versus Justice’: Peace Diplomacy Amid International Arrest Warrants

Speakers (alphabetical order)

Political leaders, ambassadors, international organisations, human rights advocates and artists will take the floor at the Geneva Peace Forum. These are some of the voices to hear from 12 to 15 October.



H.E. Mohamed Al-Khulaifi

State Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State of Qatar

Doctor of law (UC Berkeley), formerly Qatar's Deputy Foreign Minister for Regional Affairs and dean of law at Qatar University.



H.E. Julius Maada Bio

President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

Three decades in peace and security: ECOMOG peacekeeping in Liberia, then peace talks and elections as Head of State in 1996.



Awa Dabo

United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

Human rights lawyer specialised in crisis recovery and peacebuilding; formerly at the UN Peacebuilding Support Office.



Élisabeth Decrey Warner

Director, Geneva Conventions World Tour

Swiss peacebuilder and founder of Geneva Call, internationally recognised for her work engaging armed non-State actors to protect civilians in conflict.



Amb. Tim Enderlin

Ambassador and Head of the Peace and Human Rights Division, FDFA

Diplomat since 1997; formerly Swiss Ambassador to Myanmar and diplomatic advisor to the President of the Confederation.



H.E. Alexandre Fasel

State Secretary, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)

Career diplomat with ambassador posts. His work centres on multilateral cooperation and Switzerland's mediation tradition.



David Harland

Executive Director, Humanitarian Dialogue

Leads the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue since 2011; former UN official and author of the UN report on Srebrenica.



Pierre Hazan

Senior Advisor, Geneva Peacebuilding Platform

Specialist in justice, amnesty and truth commissions; author on mediation; coordinates the Mediation in Focus track.



Amb. Franz Perrez

Ambassador and Legal Advisor and Head of the International Law Directorate, FDFA

Expert in international environmental law, former Swiss Ambassador for the environment.

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Denis Mukwege

Founder and President, Panzi Foundation; Nobel Peace Prize Laureate (2018)

Congolese gynaecologist who founded Panzi Hospital in 1999 to care for survivors of sexual violence. Member of The Elders.



Rossy de Palma

Goodwill Ambassador, UNESCO

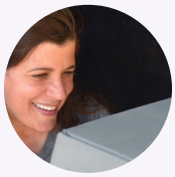
Actor and artist known for her roles in Pedro Almodóvar's films; UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Cultural Diversity since 2022.



Mona Rishmawi

International human rights lawyer

Led the UN Human Rights Office's rule of law branch until 2022; member of the UN fact-finding mission on Sudan.



Marie-Hélène Roux

Screenwriter-Director, Petites Poupées Production

Award-winning, socially engaged films, including MUGANGA, inspired by Dr Denis Mukwege.



Ahmad Saidmurodzoda

Deputy Secretary General, Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Deputy Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation; making his first public appearance in Geneva.



Elizabeth Spehar

Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding and Peace Support

Senior United Nations official with over 35 years of experience in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and political affairs.



Tatiana Valoyava

Director-General, the United Nations Office at Geneva

Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva; first woman to hold the position; advocate for multilateralism and international cooperation.

Other events and activities

PODCASTS

The Peacemakers Podcast / Les faiseurs de paix



Hosted and coordinated by Dr. Pierre Hazan in collaboration with the Geneva Peace Forum, Mediation in Focus and the Peacemakers / Les faiseurs de paix podcast bring listeners directly into conversations with negotiators, mediators and practitioners working to prevent and reduce conflict.

A senior adviser with the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and former diplomatic correspondent for Libération and Le Temps, Dr. Hazan is a practitioner and author specialising in armed conflict mediation, transitional justice and international affairs. His work draws on direct experience of peace processes and explores the political, legal and ethical dilemmas faced by mediators.

The Hummingbird Collective Podcast



The Geneva Peace Forum will host a live recording of the Hummingbird Collective podcast, Creating in a World on Fire: Art, Imagination, and Peacebuilding, on 12 October 2026.

With artist Seif Kousmate and Christopher Bailey, Co-Founding Director of the Jameel Arts and Health Lab, the conversation will explore how artistic practice, imagination and human connection can contribute to peacebuilding in times of conflict and division. Moderated by Sarah Noble of the Caux Initiatives of Change Foundation, the episode will be recorded before an intimate audience and later shared through the Hummingbird Collective podcast.

ART

Exhibition 1 — “When the Dove Arrives”



12–15 October · CICG, ground floor — Presented by Galerie GOWEN. Eight artists — Pablo Picasso and seven contemporary voices — all from the gallery’s own Geneva collection. Taking Picasso’s 1956 Colombe de la Paix as its starting point, the exhibition explores the dove as a symbol of hope and shared humanity through photography, painting and drawing, unfolding across three dialogues on peace. **Guided visits on Tuesday 13, 14:00–16:00, in French, English and German**.

Exhibition 2 — “Voices of Peace”

12–15 October · CICG, ground floor — Presented by the CCDP, Everyday Peace Indicators and Interactive Things. Since 2013, EPI has gathered more than 20,000 community-written peace indicators across 21 countries — small, concrete signs of whether peace, security and justice are improving. Suspended from the ceiling, thousands of these indicators invite visitors to walk among them, touch them and read them by hand.

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