

# 8

# INTERNATIONAL GENEVA

To begin ...

## Foreword

Eduki's thematic fact sheets aim to give the reader an overview of the work of international and non-governmental organizations present in Geneva and Switzerland.

The sheets are complements to the thematic files - more complete documentary sources on the same themes - available in French on the website [eduki.ch/themes](http://eduki.ch/themes).

This fact sheet focuses on one of the various fields of international cooperation and allows the reader to discover briefly: a theme, its evolution through history, its stakes and the actors present in Switzerland acting in this field.

## The ABC of International Cooperation



In this thematic sheet, some keywords are in color and underlined. They are listed with their definitions in the "ABC of International Cooperation" available at: [eduki.ch/en/ABC](http://eduki.ch/en/ABC)



## Working on the theme in the classroom

To complete your course on the theme, you can also participate in one of our activities :

- [Visit of an international organization;](#)
- [Guided tour of International Geneva;](#)
- [Workshop about the Sustainable Development Goals, etc.](#)



## To go further

Have a look at our [thematic file n°1](#)

# 8

# INTERNATIONAL GENEVA

## A. Definition, role and issues

### Introduction

This fact sheet allows you to discover the theme of International Geneva and its challenges within international cooperation.

The document contains with the following sections:

A. Definition, role and issues	p.2
B. In numbers	p.3
C. International Organizations	p.4
D. Civil Society	p.5
E. Diplomatic mission, embassy and consulate	p.6
F. The art of diplomacy	p.7
G. League of Nations	p.8
H. United Nations Organization (UNO)	p.9
I. The United Nations in Geneva	p.10
J. International Conferences	p.11
K. Poles of competency	p.12
L. Geneva, an international destiny	p.19
M. Les 43 organisations ayant un accord avec la Suisse	p.21
N. Web Links	p.22

*"For me, Geneva is a community of diverse people working for a common purpose. This might sound naive but I feel that my work truly contributes in making the world a better place."*

Julie, an NGO employee

### International Switzerland...

The country has built an image of credibility, reliability and quality (infrastructure, hospitality) which is certainly a major asset for Switzerland, and which enables the country to enjoy a high reputation for its humanitarian commitments and its policy of mediating between states ([good offices](#)).

#### by Geneva

International Geneva constitutes an important Swiss asset as it is the main global centre in terms of the concentration of international actors and meetings. This gives the country more weight in international relations, thus enabling the objectives of the Confederation to be accomplished effectively.



### A centre of excellence

By attracting many international actors, International Geneva deals with many topics that are generally grouped into 5 key areas:

1. Peace, Security & Disarmament
2. Health
3. Humanitarian Action & Law, Human Rights & Migration
4. Work, Economy, Trade, Science & Telecommunication
5. Environment & Sustainable Development

### International actors

International actors are international governmental or non-governmental organizations as well as diplomatic, academic or private sectors that actively participate in the international cooperation.

### The competition

This unique platform is under pressure from an increasingly diversified competition and growing expectations from international stakeholders. Other countries want to increase their influence on the international scene by benefiting from the positive impact of the activity of international organizations and on the local economy.

## B. In numbers

**40'000**

diplomats and international officials, including CERN family members and scientists

**207'147**

experts and delegates participate in International conferences every year

**4'688**

visits of head of states and governments, ministers and officials per year

**260**

Permanent missions, representations and delegations

**179**

states represented including Switzerland

**38**

International organisations and secretariats signed a headquarters agreement with the Swiss Confederation

**750**

NGOs

**6**

billion Swiss Francs of annual spending by IOs from Geneva

**30'000**

jobs i.e. 1 job out of 10 in the canton of Geneva



Human Rights Room of the UN in Geneva.

Figures by the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office, updated in February 2020

## C. International Organizations

### The common Goal of International organizations

International organizations are created by countries. They have emerged to find solutions to a problem that affects several countries, such as harmonizing telecommunications or developing and enforcing international conventions against the use of weapons for human rights' sake or for humanitarian aid.

International organizations have become key players on the international scene. Most of these organizations have headquarters in Geneva. Their proximity has made it possible to attract other entities that deal with the same themes: non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities, research institutes, etc.

*"CARE International established its General Secretariat in Geneva almost two years ago. The organization made this choice mostly to get closer to its main international partners in the fields of environment, humanitarian aid, health and NGO coordination. [...]"*

Denis Caillaux

Former Secretary General of CARE International

### International Organizations (IO)

#### Conditions

- Association of States
- Founding document
- Permanent bodies
- Achievement of objectives of common interest through cooperation between states

#### Examples

- Switzerland, France, Canada, China, Mexico, etc.
- International treaty
- General Assembly, committee, secretariat, etc.
- Improve global health, achieve education for all, end war, etc.

### Particularity of Switzerland

One of Switzerland's strengths on the world stage is our characteristic of welcoming many international players who, from our country, find solutions to global problems.

Geneva is the heart of this system being the first world centre in terms of concentration and meetings of international actors.



At the beginning of telegraphy, the telegraph lines stopped at the borders of each country, each using a different system. The countries began to develop bilateral or regional agreements. Then, 20 European states decided to meet in order to produce agreement governing international interconnection. These countries also decided to adopt common rules to standardize equipment and to lay down common rules on pricing and compatibility. In 1865, the first headquarters of the International Telegraph Union was set in Bern by the Swiss Federal Council. In 1947, the headquarters of ITU were moved from Berne to Geneva.



Bâtiment de l'UIT

## Definition

According to the UN definition, [civil society](#) includes all legal entities of a national, regional or international nature other than governments and international organizations. Civil society represents an evolution of the international scene where all organizations contribute to the management of international issues. At international conferences, NGOs participate in debates, but do not have the right to vote. However, they do have an important role in mobilizing public opinion and often have unique technical expertise.

## Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO)

### Conditions

- Association of individuals
- Founding Document
- Non-profit and public benefit goals

### Examples

- Elise, Hugo, Ursula, Sébastien, etc.  
 Association statutes  
 Reporting human rights violations, Building schools in Madagascar,  
 Expanding a cooperative in Peru (fair trade), etc.

## Non-governmental delegates

They participate in international conferences independently of governments. They can represent non-governmental organizations, research centers, universities, foundations or even professional associations.

- They are an important source of information and expertise.
- They help to identify problems and relay the demands of the civilian populations concerned.
- They identify effective solutions through good practices.
- They contribute directly to the implementation of the adopted policies.
- They promote the development of the international law.
- They ensure that the commitments made by States are respected.
- They are a direct link between the international scene and the reality on the ground.



**SWISSAID**



Terre des hommes

soir à l'échange / échanges  
 soir à l'échange / échanges / www.tdh.ch

## E. Diplomatic mission, embassy and consulate

### Diplomatic mission

A permanent mission is defined as the diplomatic representation of a State to an international organization. Member countries of international organizations define the topics to be discussed at conferences. Given the number and diversity of conferences, countries are seconding to Geneva diplomatic missions with staff who follow the meetings that take place throughout the year in Geneva. These people, usually diplomats, send reports to their capital to receive instructions for negotiations.

### Embassy

An embassy is the diplomatic representation of a country's government in another country. It represents a country and its government abroad.

Its functions include:

- Representing its government to the authorities of the country where it is located;
- Reporting to its government news from the country of residence in all areas (politics, economic, social, cultural and military);
- Play a promotional role for its country.

### Consulate

A consulate is the representation of public administration of a country in another foreign country. In particular, it allows to:

- Issue and renew passports and other official documents;
- Assist and financially support the compatriots in case of distress;
- Issue entry visas for foreign nationals;
- To promote the economy and defend the country's interests.



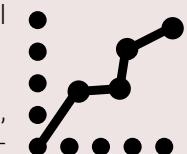
Switzerland also has a diplomatic representation in Geneva to serve the interests of the country in international organizations. As a host state, Switzerland's mission is to manage the status of 40,000 internationals (international civil servants, permanent mission members, as well as members of their families).



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

### Evolution in time

In 1920, 200 diplomats and international civil servants were working in Geneva.



In 2018, they are more than 30,000, adding to that nearly 2,700 non-governmental employees. The international community is therefore very vast and can be compared to the population of a Swiss city as Fribourg or Neuchâtel.

## F. The art of diplomacy

**International conventions**

International conventions provide a framework for finding solutions to global problems in human Rights, Environment, Peace, Health, Science, etc. Their implementation is the result of negotiations between countries that may last for years or even fail.

**From the identification of problems to an operative convention**

1. Problem identification. Improve knowledge of the subject to assess the impact, the risks, and to understand the source of the problem to determine the actions to be taken to address it.
2. Search for consensus on the nature of the problem and on the most appropriate approach to resolve it as part of an international effort. NGOs are able to focus attention on a specific issue and, by raising public awareness, and to put pressure on governments to take measures.
3. Negotiation of an international convention. This stage is characterized by a bargaining process between governments with different interests, in order to reach a consensus on a text. The Governments often form coalitions to gain more weight in negotiations.
4. The process is normally facilitated by the work of a secretariat that produces documents to guide the negotiations. International organizations serve as a forum for government negotiations, provide advice and secretariat services.
5. By signing a convention, a government indicates its intention to join it, but it does not become effective only when it ratifies the agreement - a process that is generally bound for approval at national level (parliament, people, etc.).
6. The implementation of agreements and commitments. A convention is effective if its provisions are strong and also if countries respect them. Each agreement sets out the terms and conditions of its implementation, as well as mechanisms to monitor compliance by the parties as with periodic reports or exams.
7. After the convention has entered into force, a Conference of the Parties shall meet annually or every two years, to evaluate the implementation of the achieved progress.
8. Further negotiations are often necessary to clarify or strengthen the commitments already made.

**Example of Montreal Protocol of 1987**

CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons) are responsible for the depletion of the ozone layer. This atmospheric layer, located 35 kilometres above the ground, protects us from UV rays. These substances are prohibited by the protocol of Montreal.

This treaty is probably the agreement that has given the best results. It generates scientific knowledge and deploys funds to help developing countries to eliminate destructive chemicals of the ozone such as CFCs and halons. But its impact goes beyond the field of public health because it is clear today that like the substances that deplete the ozone are also often potent greenhouse gases.

The treaty also saved the planet and its inhabitants from a more serious warming. This example shows the ability of countries to forget their differences and to make common cause under the guidance of the United Nations when confronted to a global threat.



© Charles Edouard Armand

*Signature of the first Geneva convention*

### The first attempt to make a universal organization of States function.

On January 8, 1918, the First World War was not yet over, the American President Woodrow Wilson proposes a program that he believed would lead to lasting peace. He felt that the main cause of the First World War was secret diplomacy and the failure of the Leagues of Nations. By bringing countries together in a single forum for peace, they would get together when one of them caused trouble. At the end of the war, his project was incorporated into the Treaty of Versailles and became the first of the 440 articles written at the Peace Conference held in Paris in June 1919.

Thanks to Switzerland's neutrality and the humanitarian spirit of the city, Geneva is chosen to become the headquarters of the organization. The arrival of the League of Nations in 1919 would bring the creation of a multitude of organizations in Geneva. Until the late 1920s, the League played a role in the peaceful settlement of several disputes: between Finland and Sweden (Aland islands) or between Germany and Poland (Silesia).

### The weaknesses of the League of Nations

Three weaknesses prevented the League from functioning properly:

1. The links between the Covenant of the League of Nations and the peace settlement of 1919. The League was imposed by the winners.
2. The imperfections of the League's collective security system. The Pact did not explicitly include a total prohibition of the use of force.
3. The key factor in the failure of the League is probably the misconduct of all great powers of the time. The American Congress refused to join the Pact.

Japan invaded China without being sanctioned, and was withdrawn with Germany from the League in 1933.

The organization was shaken by the annexation or dismemberment of a number of its members. Member States until this led to the outbreak of the Second World War and to the end of the League's experiment. The United Nations, which succeeded this first attempt to make a universal organization of States work, has set up measures to avoid weaknesses in the League of Nations (LN).



© Eduki

*Palais Wilson - Former headquarters of the League of Nations in Geneva.*



© Helen Johns Kirtland et Lucian Swift

*Signature of the Treaty of Versailles in the Hall of Mirrors*

### International Labour Organization

The Treaty of Versailles anticipated the creation of the ILO, considering that decent work is a solution to promote peace. It continued to operate despite the decline of the League and still exists today.

## H. United Nations Organization (UNO)

**The purposes of the United Nations, as set out in the Charter of 1945**

- to maintain international peace and security,
- to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples,
- to achieve international cooperation by solving peacefully international economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems,
- to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations towards common ends.

**Based on the experience of the League of Nations, the United Nations is organized as follows:**

- The General Assembly represents all members.
- The Security Council has 15 members, 5 of them are permanent and have the right of veto (Russia, United Kingdom, United States, China, France).
- The Economic and Social Council is responsible for coordinating economic and social activities of the UNO.
- The International Court of Justice is responsible for settling disputes between States.
- The General Secretariat provides the day to day services related to the programmes of United Nations bodies.

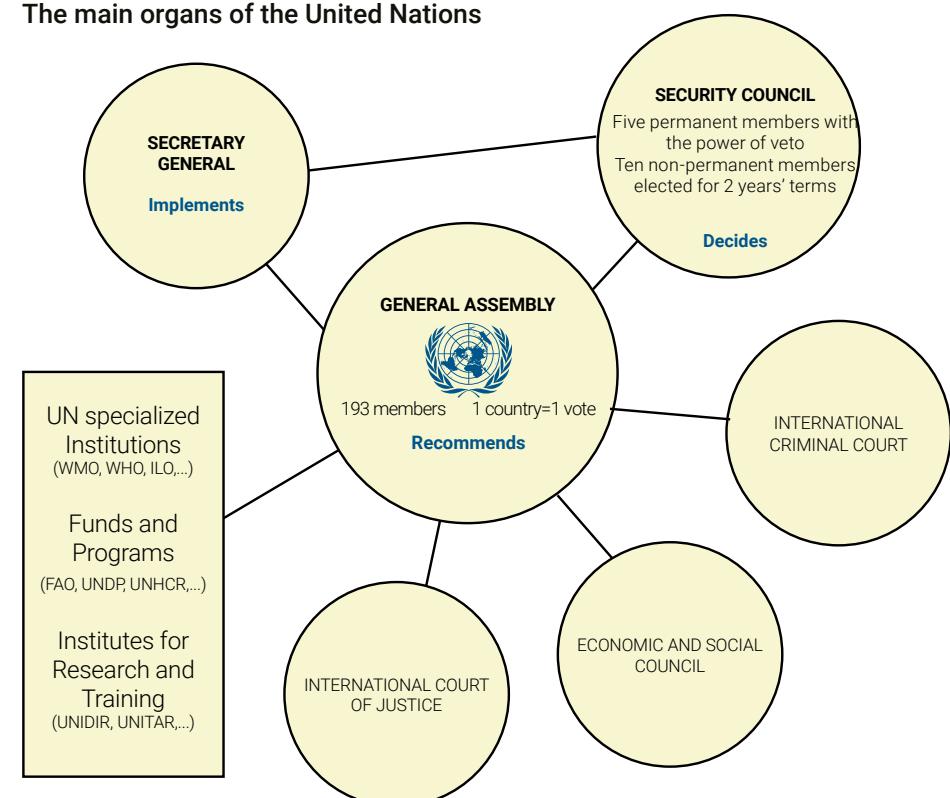


One of the lessons learned by the League of Nations is that without the accession of the most important influential countries, the organism could not function. To ensure their participation in the UN, 5 victorious countries of the Second World War and founders of the organization were given the right to unilaterally oppose any proposal submitted to the Security Council (right of veto).

Unlike the Leagues of Nations, the UN has a military force called the blue helmets.



*Signature of the United Nations Charter in 1945*

**The main organs of the United Nations**

## I. The United Nations in Geneva

### ONOG

The UN headquarters is in New York headed by the Secretary General, and it holds the seats of General Assembly and Security Council. The other three major UN centres are in Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi.

The United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) is the office that represents the Secretary-General in Geneva. As a centre of multilateral diplomacy, UNOG provides conference services for more than 11,000 meetings a year, making it one of the most active conference centres in the world. About two thirds of the United Nations system activities take place in Geneva.

100'000

meetings per year in  
the UN Geneva office

The other UN  
centre in Europe is  
in Vienna



### Mondial impact

The decisions taken in Geneva have an incomparable impact on the lives of everyone on the planet. For example:

- Health: Millions of people are vaccinated every year thanks to health organizations based in Geneva.
- International law: The Human Rights Council, the main intergovernmental body in charge of Human Rights, has the role of strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide and to make recommendations regarding violations.
- Peace: The primary purpose of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security. All the UN's work is focused on taking effective collective action to prevent and remove threats to peace.
- Standardization: It is thanks to the standardization efforts that have been undertaken here that road signs are the same everywhere.

### Main actors of International Geneva

In addition to the role of the United Nations in Geneva, other actors must also be considered. 40,000 people work together in International Geneva. This concentration of international actors, as well as the diversity of the subjects they deal with, is unparalleled. It allows you to have a global vision of the problems of our century and to approach them in a transversal way.

### Some organizations of the United Nations system

- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- Universal Postal Union (UPU)
- Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
- International Bureau of Education (IBE)
- International Trade Centre (ITC)
- International Computing Centre (ICC)
- Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
- United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)
- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

*This list is not exhaustive and does not give any indication on the status of each entity.*

## J. International Conferences

**Introduction**

Being a neutral country and the cradle of the Red Cross, Switzerland has become the host of international organizations and also various international conferences. The logistics and exceptional organisation of the first of them, the Conference in Indochina, brought those that followed.

**Hard power** is coercive power based on law and respect of decisions.

**Soft power** is persuasive power derived from attraction.



Credit : EU Photo/pool

An agreement on Iran's nuclear programme had been found on 24 November 2013 in Geneva

**Geneva Initiative**

Geneva was also a place of meetings and summits for the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Geneva Initiative, or Geneva Agreement, was signed in 2003 and aims to find a solution to the conflict between Israel and Palestine that has lasted for over 70 years. It is a peace plan that includes major concessions from both sides (for example, the sharing of sovereignty over Jerusalem). The initiative was negotiated secretly for nearly three years and was made public after the failure of the Camp David negotiations in July 2000 and the Taba negotiations in 2003. The meeting helped push both parties to formulate new proposals. Since its presentation, the Geneva Initiative has become a reference in the search for a concerted two-state solution.

*"Switzerland is not a negligible quantity from a political point of view. She has what is sometimes referred to as soft power, namely esteem, prestige and credibility gained through its long experience of democracy, pluralism and humanitarian tradition."*

Mme Micheline Calmy-Rey, 2007  
Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs from 1 January 2003 to 31 January 2003 December 2011



Credit : UN Photo / Elma Okic

Staffan De Mistura during the intra-Syrian discussions, 22 April 2016, Geneva

**Conference of Indochina**

On 26 April 1954, delegates from 19 nations participated in Geneva Conference to resolve conflicts between Korea and Indochina. This is the first major diplomatic conference in which People's Republic of China, declared in 1949 by Mao Zedong, participated. This conference could only take place in a neutral country as the United States does not recognize the Government of Mao Zedong and the Government of French does not recognize the Republic of Vietnam of Ho Chi Minh. For Switzerland, this is the ideal opportunity to strengthen close relations with the representatives of the big five powers and delegates from other countries participating in the conference.



©US Army Photograph/wikipedia commons  
The conference took place in the Palais des Nations

## K. Poles of competency

**Pole 1: Peace, Security & Disarmament**

Neutrality and impartiality enable Switzerland to build bridges on the international scene. Many conflicts could be avoided or resolved in Geneva. States regularly come here to conduct important negotiations in a space suitable for dialogue.

After 40 years of the Cold War, during the Disarmament Conference of November 1985, the handshake between the President of the United States Ronald Reagan and Soviet Union leader Mikhail Gorbachev marks a turning point in the history of international relations.

**Maison de la paix**

Headquarters of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies housed in the "Maison de la Paix" welcomes organizations which are active in the international field, including three centres supported by the Swiss Confederation :

- Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF)
- International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP)

For both the Institute and the centres, the 'Maison de la paix' has become a framework for international expertise which represents a contribution from Geneva and Switzerland to the promotion of peace and international cooperation.

**Conference on Disarmament**

The Conference on Disarmament, established in 1979, is the single multilateral forum for negotiations in the field of disarmament. Its mandate covers practically all the issues related to the limitation of disarmament at the global level.

[www.unog.ch/cd](http://www.unog.ch/cd)

**International Peace Office**

International Peace Office was founded in 1891, and it was awarded the [Nobel Peace Prize](#) in 1910. Its main activity was to promote the [resolution](#) of international conflicts by coordinating the activities of the various associations working for peace. Its headquarters moved from Bern to Geneva in 1924.

[www.ipb.org](http://www.ipb.org)



© Federal Government of USA  
Ronald Reagan et Mikhail Gorbatchev, November 1985, Geneva.



© UN photo/Jean-Marc Ferré

GICHD | CIDHG



**GCSP**  
Geneva Centre for  
Security Policy

**swiss  
peace**

**UNIDIR**

**pbi**  
making space for peace

**ri**  
Interpeace  
INTERNATIONAL  
ORGANIZATION  
FOR PEACEBUILDING

**IPB**

**GRADUATE  
INSTITUTE  
GENEVA**

## K. Poles of competency

**Pole 2: Health**

The World Health Organization (WHO) connects all actors in international cooperation to the health sector (Funds, Non-Governmental Organizations and Specialized Institutions) in order to improve health at the global level and to oversee health security. Geneva is thus a major centre in the field of public health. A set of institutions, coalitions, networks and funds have been created around the WHO that addresses concrete problems such as malaria, tuberculosis, AIDS or for research or vaccine production.

**World Health Organization**

At the end of the 19th century, it was agreed that the consequences of infectious diseases extended beyond borders and present a problem that requires common measures to be taken by all countries. The creation of the WHO in 1948 provided genuine international cooperation at health level. WHO's mission is «to bring all the peoples to the highest possible level of health ». Health being defined by the Organization as a «state of complete physical, mental and social well-being ». Today, diseases can be spread everywhere through travelling and international trade. In this context, WHO is the lead authority which coordinates global health security and defines standards and procedures to be followed in case of health emergency by its Member States, the private sector, civil society, the media and individuals.

**UNAIDS**

The United Nations decided to create UNAIDS in 1996 which is in charge of gathering resources and networks to fight against AIDS and coordinating the work of 10 specialized UN agencies.

**The Global Fund**

It is an association that fights AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. These diseases cause the death of more than 6 million people each year. Their objective is to collect, manage and distribute resources in order to reduce the number of infections, morbidity and mortality.



WHO's mission is "to bring all people to the highest possible level of health".

Health is defined by the Organization as a "complete state of physical, mental and social well-being".



© qimono/Pixabay



© Geralt/Pixabay



© qimono/Pixabay

## K. Poles of competency

**Pole 3.1: Humanitarian Action and Law**

Since the creation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 1863, coordinating assistance to victims of natural disasters and conflicts has been done from Geneva. Considered as a true humanitarian platform, this coordination makes it possible to provide rapid and effective assistance to those who need it. In accordance with its humanitarian tradition, its status as a State Party to the Geneva Conventions and its function as the Depositary of the Geneva Conventions, Switzerland actively contributes to the promotion of the [international humanitarian law](#).

### United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

Its mission is to coordinate the intervention of the Nations United to extreme [humanitarian emergencies](#) and to encourage the efforts of prevention and advanced planning.



### International Committee of the Red Cross

The ICRC is a pioneer humanitarian organization. Thanks to its impact, the international humanitarian law was taken into consideration, particularly with the first Geneva Convention in 1864.

The International Movement includes the Red Cross (CIRC created in 1863), 186 National Societies, and the International Federation of Red Cross Societies and Red Crescent (created in 1919).



### United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for Refugees

Over the years, the work of international organizations dealing with [refugees](#) has been adapted depending on the evolution of conflicts. As a result, UNHCR no longer deals exclusively with refugees as defined by the Convention of 1951 on the status of refugees. It also handles internally displaced people, repatriated persons, asylum seekers and stateless persons



## K. Poles of competency

**Pole 3.2: Human Rights & Migration**

Geneva is an essential place for the promotion and protection of human rights with the presence of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Human Rights Council and the human rights secretariats of various international treaties, main NGOs active in the field, as well as world-renowned experts.

Further to humanitarian and human rights action, the theme of migration holds an important role in promoting orderly migration under decent conditions.

**Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**

OHCHR brings together the activities of the United Nations in the field of Human Rights. Its main office is in Geneva and supports the entire UN human rights system including:

- The agencies of the [Charter of the United Nations](#);
- The eight human rights treaty bodies (committees).

States have given OHCHR the responsibility to implement the United Nations Programme for Human Rights. OHCHR works with Governments to ensure that they fully respect all the human rights. It also helps individuals to assert their rights.



association pour  
la prévention  
de la torture

**International Organization for Migration**

IOM laid down the principle that migration being carried out in good order and in compliance with the [human dignity](#) are beneficial for both migrants and society. As a member of the leading international organization in the field of migration, IOM works with its partners in order to:

- contribute to meet the growing challenges caused by migration flows;
- Better understand migration issues;
- promote economic and social development through migrations;
- and work for the respect of human dignity and the well-being of migrants



Crédit : ©Eduki

Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue



In 1924, the League adopted the Declaration of Geneva. It is a historical text that recognizes and claims for the first time the existence of specific rights of children, but above all the responsibility of adults towards them. The British Eglantyne Jebb designed the statement during a walk in the Salève mountain. With her sister, Dorothy Buxton, she founded « Save the Children » in 1919 in London.



### *Déclaration de Genève*

*(Adoptée par le Conseil général de l'Union Internationale des Sociétés des Enfants  
dans ses séances du 10 février 1924, après分歧lement par le Comité exécutif  
en session du 9 mars 1924, et signée par les membres du Conseil général le 10 février 1924.)*

*Pour la présente Déclaration des Droits de l'Enfant, des Déclarations  
des, les hommes et les femmes de toutes les positions, reconnaissent que l'humanité  
veut à l'enfant ce qu'il a de meilleur, offrant leurs denrées, en déshors de toute  
distinction de race, de nationalité et de origine :*

*L'Enfant doit être mis au moyen de se développer dans son caractère moral, physique  
et spirituellement.*

## K. Poles of competency

**Pole 4.1: Labour, Economy & Trade**

The protection of workers' rights and world trade are discussed in Geneva. The two major gigantic actors are The World Trade Organization and the International Labour Organization. In the private sector, Geneva's reputation is known for its banks, but often less on trading. 40% of the entire raw materials market (coffee, sugar, cereals, petroleum products, etc.) is in Geneva. Important structures have developed around this trade over decades. The city is full of law firms, financiers, consultants, freight specialists and SGS, the world's leading goods surveillance.

**World Trade Organization**

WTO primary purpose is to promote and strengthen free trade in the world. The Organization's mission is to monitor business practices worldwide, organize trade negotiations and establish a set of legal rules.

**International Labour Organization**

ILO mission is to work for social peace, which is essential for prosperity and social progress. It is dedicated to developing international labour standards, mainly focusing on working conditions, and to ensuring their implementation. ILO is responsible for promoting the right to work, creating decent work, improving social protection and strengthening social dialogue to solve problems related to the world of work.

**International Organization for Standardization**

ISO offers more than 20,000 standards in its catalogue covering road safety, food and technology. For example, a standard defines the size and shape of credit cards and the characteristics of the chip to make them work anywhere in the world.



ILO building in Geneva

Crédit : ©Eduki

**UNCTAD**

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) aims to integrate developing countries into the world economy to promote their development.



The well-known Davos Forum, a meeting place for world leaders in business and politics, is the General Assembly of the World Economic Forum (WEF), which has been based in Geneva since 1971.



## K. Poles of competency

**Pole 4.2: Science and Telecommunication**

Geneva is a recognized academic and intellectual hub, where researchers and experts share their knowledge on a daily basis in a research-friendly environment. As the headquarters of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), Geneva is at the forefront of fundamental research that explores the origin of the universe. Technical standards for telecommunications or electronics that are valid worldwide are negotiated and implemented from Geneva.

**European Organisation for Nuclear Research**

CERN has become one of the most prestigious scientific laboratories in the world. Its works on the elementary particles have won numerous awards and several researchers have been awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics. The development of particle research does not concern only fundamental research, it has many other applications as well including energy production and the sterilization (food, medicine, biological wastes, etc.), computer applications with the development of the World Wide Web, and many medical applications that have gave birth to a new discipline called medical physics.

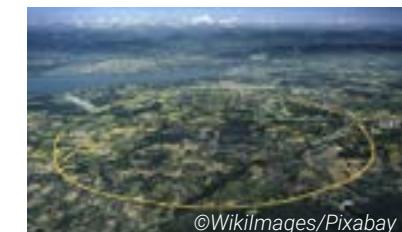
**International Telecommunication Union**

The aim of ITU is to develop infrastructure information. It regulates and plans telecommunications worldwide, for example, establishing standards (prices and standards) and defining indicative telephone numbers per country. It also aims to address the digital divide between countries.

**International Electrotechnical Commission**

The IEC is an international organization in charge of standardization in the fields of electricity and electronics. It is complementary to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), which is responsible for other areas. The IEC has been the instrument for the development of unit standards for measuring as gauss, hertz, and weber.


©CERN

©Wikimedia/Pixabay

©Wikimedia/Pixabay

*Circumference of the underground particle gas pedal.*



At CERN, more than 100m underground, huge accelerators recreate the intense energy conditions of the first moments of the universe - a few fractions of a second after the Big Bang.

## K. Poles of competency

**Pole 5: Environment & Sustainable Development**

International WWF and the World Conservation Union (IUCN), two greater non-governmental environmental action, and the secretariat of the Convention on the Protection of Wetlands (Ramsar) are based in Gland in the canton of Vaud. Geneva is home to WMO, the UNEP European Office and many NGOs. Several key conventions for the protection of the environment have their secretariats in Geneva as the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the Convention on the Export of Hazardous Wastes (Basel Convention), and the Convention on Transboundary Air Pollution.

**International Environment House**

The International Environment House brings together international and non-governmental organizations under one roof to strengthen and encourage collaboration between environmental organizations and sustainable development.

**IPCC**

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), founded by WMO and UNEP, is responsible for assessing the state of scientific knowledge on the causes and consequences of global climate change. Its reports are a reference for decision-makers.

**WMO**

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) is the leading authority on issues related to global weather, climate and water resources. It facilitates international cooperation by establishing a network of meteorological, hydrological and geophysical observation stations.

**IUCN**

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is made up of more than 1,000 organizations and nearly 11,000 scientists and experts. Its mission is to influence societies around the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature. IUCN maintains the Red List of Threatened Species, classified according to the extinction risk.



©Raul65 - Wikipedia commons

Okapi has been on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species since 2013.

## L. Geneva, an international destiny

13th century

**Between the 13th and 15th centuries,**

Fairs made Geneva known in Europe. Before becoming a religious capital in the 16th century, Geneva had, for the first time, an international reputation for its role in the economy.

1536

**The Reform**

In July 1536, a twenty-seven-year-old Frenchman (from Picardy) named Jean Calvin made a stop in Geneva. He was already a famous author of the «Institutes of the Christian Religion», one of the great theological works of Protestant theology. Guillaume Farel managed to retain him to help him consolidate the Reformation and transform Geneva into a living city according to the Gospel. Calvin made Geneva famous by elevating it to the rank of «Protestant Rome». His action was immense and extended to all fields: religion, culture, politics, and economics. The Reformation made Geneva an intellectual city. In 1559, Calvin created the "Collège" and the "Académie", two fundamental institutions of cultural revival.



©Schweiz41/wikipedia commons  
Reformers Wall in Geneva

1685

**Revocation of the Edict of Nantes**

Over the centuries, Geneva has been able to welcome successive waves of refugees who were quickly integrated and greatly contributed to its economic development and international influence. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV, which outlawed Protestantism in 1685, brought a wave of refugees to Geneva that included many craftsmen, merchants and liberal professions. They will contribute strongly to the development of key sectors in the Geneva economy of the 18th century mainly in watchmaking, Indian fabric and banking. The total population increased between 1690 and 1710, from 16,000 to more than 19,000 inhabitants.

In the 19th and 20th centuries, Geneva continued this tradition of welcoming many political exiles. In particular, attention should be paid to the students who joined the university founded in 1847 and which welcomed many foreign students. The "Plainpalais" district is home to many Russian emigrants, who fled the Tsarist secret police. Among them was Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, who later became Lenin, who first came to Geneva in 1895 and lived there from 1903 to 1908.



©Jan Luyken/wikipedia commons  
Revocation of the Edict of Nantes

1757

**Geneva in the Encyclopaedia**

In 1757, the article on Geneva in Diderot and d'Alembert's Encyclopaedia described the city as a model of reason, wisdom and tolerance. Geneva is also a scholarly city that provides a significant number of scientists to the various Academies of Europe's major cities. Many writers have passed through Geneva as Jean-Jacques Rousseau who was born there in 1712, and Voltaire who lived there from 1755 to 1778.



© Marie Eleonore Godefroid  
Germaine de Staél was exiled in Switzerland and made the castle of Coppet the «roundabout of European intelligence».

## L. Geneva, an international destiny

1815

**The Congress of Vienna: perpetual neutrality in Switzerland**

Switzerland chose to remain neutral in the 16th century after the battle of Marignan (1515). Non-interference in international affairs was the foreign and security policy position that allowed the Confederation to preserve its independence from the great antagonistic European powers. But neutrality was also an imperative of internal politics in a confederation of states of different faiths and divergent interests. In 1815, at the Congress of Vienna, the European powers recognized that «the perpetual neutrality of Switzerland and its territorial integrity are in line with the true political interests of Europe», according to a text by Charles Pictet de Rochemont of Geneva.



Act of the Congress of Vienna 9th June 1815

1815

**Geneva joins the Swiss Confederation as 22nd canton.**

1863

**International Committee of the Red Cross: humanitarian action**

Horrified by the death of thousands of fighters and the pain of tens of thousands of injured people during the battle of Solferino (northern Italy) in 1859, Henry Dunant tried to organize emergency rescue on the spot with the help of local people. Back in Geneva, he wrote "A Memory of Solferino", published in 1863. The same year, with the Genevans Guillaume-Henry Dufour, Louis Appia, Gustave Moynier and Théodore Maunoir, he founded the International Committee for the Relief of injured soldiers, which would take the name International Committee of the Red Cross in 1876. The signing of the first Geneva Convention in 1864, marked the birth of international humanitarian law.



© Adolphe Yvon

The Battle of Solferino

1872

**Alabama Arbitration: Centre for International Mediation and Negotiation**

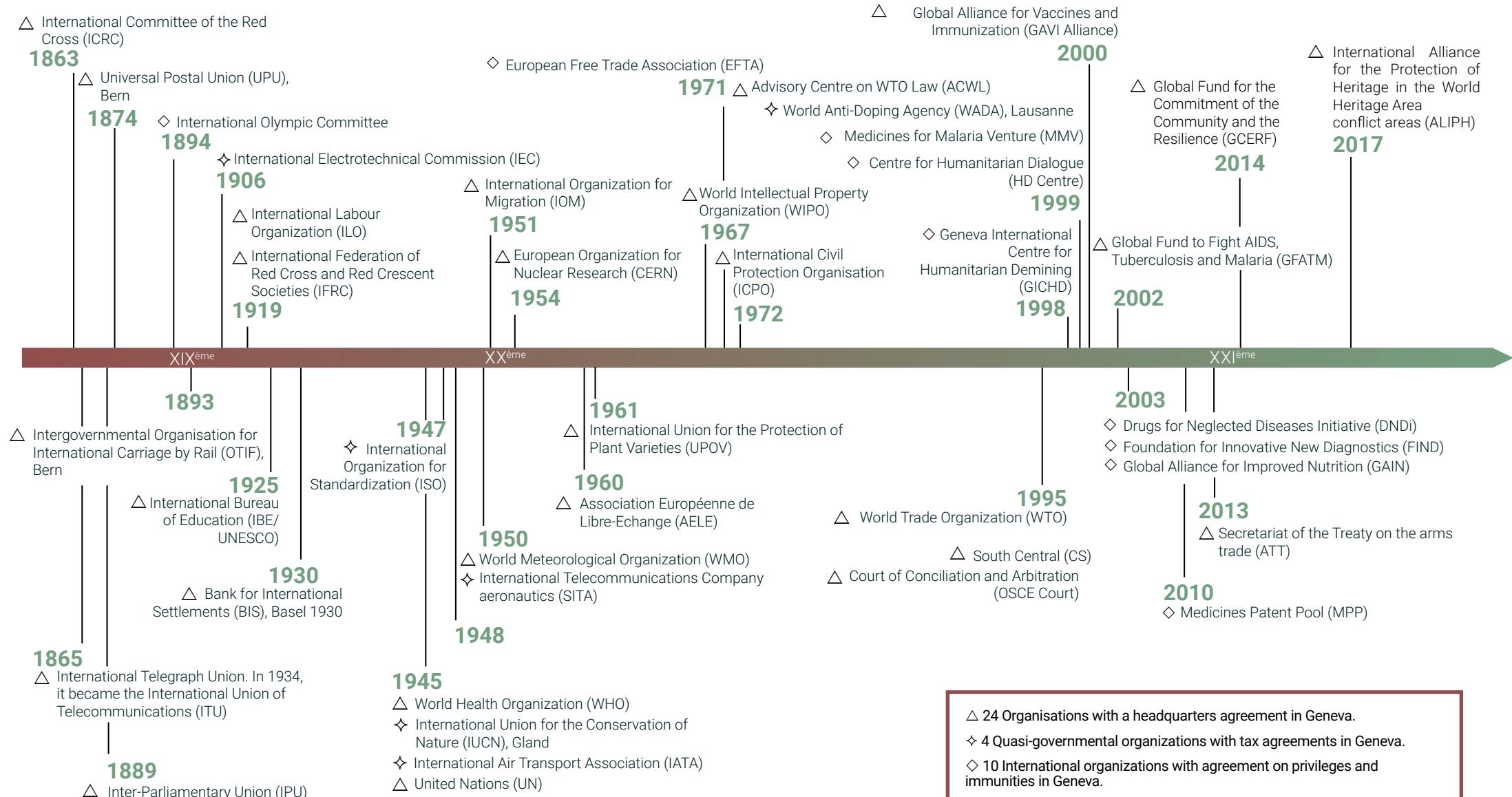
The Alabama arbitration is the first example of a peaceful resolution of a conflict between two great world powers: the United States and Great Britain. The origin of the dispute dates back to the US Civil War, which opposed the northern states to the southern states between 1861 and 1865. When the conflict ended, the United States government accused the British of having allowed military ships delivered to Southerners to be built in its ports, causing considerable losses to Northern commercial ships. After several years of difficult negotiations, the conflict was submitted to international arbitration, which was rendered on the 14th September 1872 in the room of the City Hall in Geneva, which today bears the name "Salle de l'Alabama" (Alabama Room). Great Britain was ordered to pay compensation to the United States.



©Traumrune/Wikipediacommons  
Commemorative plaque in front of the Alabama Room at the City Hall in Geneva.

# 8) INTERNATIONAL GENEVA

## M. Les 43 organisations ayant un accord avec la Suisse



Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights (1993), Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (1951), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (1947), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (1964), etc.

- △ 24 Organisations with a headquarters agreement in Geneva.
- ❖ 4 Quasi-governmental organizations with tax agreements in Geneva.
- ◇ 10 International organizations with agreement on privileges and immunities in Geneva.

\* Dates of creation of the organizations  
Updated in August 2020

## N. Web Links

**Eduki Foundation**

Thematic files on global issues : <https://eduki.ch/en/themes-list>

Overview of international cooperation professions : <https://eduki.ch/en/panorama-professions>

**Federal Department of Foreign Affairs**

International organizations in Switzerland : <https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/fdfa/foreign-policy/international-organizations.html>

**Permanent Mission of Switzerland - Facts and figures about International Geneva:**

Webpage : <https://www.eda.admin.ch/missions/mission-onu-geneve/en/home/geneve-international/faits-et-chiffres.html>

Document : [https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/mission-onu-omc-aele-geneve/en/documents/GI-en-chiffres\\_EN.pdf](https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/mission-onu-omc-aele-geneve/en/documents/GI-en-chiffres_EN.pdf)

**International Geneva Office - State of Geneva**

<http://www.geneve-int.ch/about-us>

**City of Geneva**

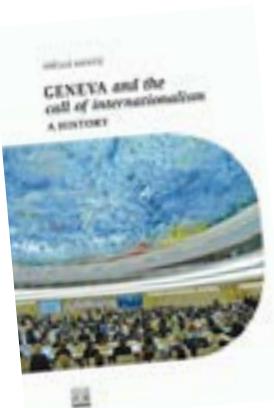
International Geneva : <https://www.geneve.ch/en/themes/international-geneva>

**United Nations Office at Geneva**

<https://www.ungeneva.org/en>

**International Geneva Welcome Centre (CAGI)**

<https://www.cagi.ch/en/home.php>

**A book to read**

Geneva and the call of internationalism, a history  
Joëlle Kuntz, Editions Zoé, Geneva, December 2011

**Swissinfo – The changing face of International Geneva**

<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/the-changing-face-of-international-geneva/45809974>

**Graduate Institute – International Geneva**

<https://graduateinstitute.ch/discover-institute/international-geneva>

**Switzerland's good offices**

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/aboutswitzerland/en/home/politik/die-schweiz-und-die-welt/die-guten-dienste-der-schweiz.html>

**History - League of Nations**

<https://www.geneve.ch/fr/faire-geneve/decouvrir-geneve-quartiers/histoire-geneve/geneve-internationale/societe-nations>

**International Geneva for Switzerland**

[https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/explainer\\_international-geneva--why-is-it-so-important-to-switzerland-/45382970](https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/politics/explainer_international-geneva--why-is-it-so-important-to-switzerland-/45382970)

**The 5 key sectors**

<https://www.geneve-int.ch/fr/secteurs-cle-repondre-aux-problemes-mondiaux>