

PRESS RELEASE

Zurich, 05 May 2026

Geneva Forum at the Palais des Nations: A Call for Consequences in Response to the Collapse of the Multilateral Legal Order

*Geneva Forum on the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.
Announced: "The Geneva Statement of 24 April 2026"*

Geneva, 24 April 2026. On the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, representatives from academia, diplomacy and civil society convened publicly at the European Headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva for two sessions of deliberation; on institutional threats to international justice, on ongoing and systematic violations of international humanitarian law in armed conflicts worldwide, and on what these developments have in common: the politically orchestrated erosion of the multilateral legal system.

At the centre of discussions was the unbearable situation facing Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territories, including the legal assessment of what the UN Commission of Inquiry on the OPT, leading international law scholars and a growing number of states, including through proceedings before the ICJ, have qualified as genocide, and the question of how Israel's Death Penalty for Terrorists Law, enacted on 30 March 2026, an instrument incompatible with core norms of international humanitarian law, international human rights law and the prohibition of apartheid, fits into this broader picture of systematic norm violations. Further ongoing conflicts around the world were also addressed.

"The International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace highlights a fundamental truth: no country can solve today's challenges alone. Dialogue, diplomacy and multilateral solutions provide the surest path to a peaceful and just world."

— UN Secretary-General António Guterres, 2024

The first session focused on the independence and effectiveness of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) under increasing political pressure: sanctions against officials of international courts, the systematic refusal to enforce arrest warrants, and non-compliance with judicial orders. Participants were united in their assessment: these developments do not merely undermine individual proceedings, they constitute attacks on the very foundations of the multilateral justice system.

A second, independent afternoon session examined the growing compliance failures of states in ongoing armed conflicts, with regard to international humanitarian law, international criminal law, human rights law and the prohibition on the use of force, as well as the structural mechanisms by which states seek to evade their obligations under international law.

In the following weeks, the Geneva Forum will culminate in “*The Geneva Statement of 24 April 2026*”, a call rooted in international law for immediate and concerted state action to uphold the UN Charter, international humanitarian law and international criminal law, as well as the institutional protection of international courts.

The “**Geneva Forum: Safeguarding Multilateral Justice**” was held in sponsoring partnership with Global Human Rights Defence (GHRD) and with the support of Deutsche JuristInnen für das Völkerrecht (DJfV – German International Law Initiative).

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