



The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Quaker United Nations Office and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung cordially invite you to a side event on the occasion of the 32nd session of the Human Rights Council

Prevention and Early Warning of Conflict – The Role of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

32nd Session of the Human Rights Council Side Event
Wednesday, 29th June 2016 13.00-15.00
Palais des Nations Room XXIII

Theme

There is increasing evidence that violations of human rights, and in particular of economic, social and cultural rights are causes, consequences and often even predictors of social unrest and conflict. Violations of economic, social and cultural rights stem from a variety of factors, including unequal power distribution, discrimination and inequality. ; For example, the unrest in Tunisia in late 2010 and in 2011 that led to the “Arab spring” was triggered by the suicide of a street vendor as a sign of protest. However, the underlying causes of the subsequent turmoil encompassed long-standing inequality, high unemployment, limited and precarious access to livelihoods as well as a lack of abilities to redress the status quo.

Acts of violence, social unrest and conflict may break out in countries with various levels of development, political and governance systems, and population demographics. For example, the recent riots in Ferguson and Baltimore in the United States of America, while triggered by the death of young black men at the hands of the police, were linked to frustration over systemic discrimination. The lack of equal access to jobs, quality education and health care for racial minorities, in other words the denial of economic and social rights for large segments of society.

There has been a proliferation of initiatives within the UN and its various agencies, including the UN’s ‘Rights Up Front’ initiative, which encourage early, coordinated action to prevent violations of human rights or humanitarian law. However, despite this increase in attention no unified methodology has been developed to aid early identification of tensions and allow more specific and targeted interventions, particularly in the area of economic, social and cultural rights. Articulating the decisive factors leading to violent conflict in terms of human rights is crucial in identifying responsibilities and accountabilities of actors involved, and ensuring that right-holders are able to claim their rights.

NB: valid UN accreditation for the HRC session is needed to attend the event. Please notify the organizers at least 3 working days before the event should you need accreditation to access the Palais des Nations via dcullen@quno.ch

Objectives

- To explore the links between economic, social and cultural rights and the prevention of destructive conflict and violence
- To share experience from Somalia and Kenya of the role of social, economic and cultural rights in the development of violent conflict
- To consider the place of economic, social and cultural rights in approaches to sustaining peace
- To launch OHCHR's June 2016 Report on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Early Warning of Conflict. This report demonstrates the links between violations of economic, social and cultural rights and violence, social unrest and conflict. It further suggests that an analysis of the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights could inform early warning efforts for effective preventive action.

Speakers

- Jyoti Sanghera, Section Chief of Human Rights and Economic and Social Issues, UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Zaina Kisongo, Country Representative for Somalia, American Friends Service Committee
- Amanda Cahill Ripley, Lecturer in Law, University of Lancaster, UK

Moderator

- Hannah Peters, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Geneva

∞ Sandwiches and light refreshments will be served prior to the event ∞