



Wilton Park

Concept: Strengthening human rights in the crisis of peace and security

WP3013 | Monday 16 – Wednesday 18 January 2023

To be held in person at Wilton Park, UK

“recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”

Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

Context

Seventy five years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, armed conflict and insecurity in regions around the world have increasingly put the international human rights framework to the test. Some of the most serious human rights abuses take place in times of crisis, impacting thousands of civilians and with a disproportionate effect on women and girls as well as persons and communities in vulnerable positions.

Overall, the multi-lateral system is under pressure with critics questioning its legitimacy and some states challenging the founding principles. These threats are compounded by rapidly shifting and increasingly polarised political stances around the world. In this context- and with some states robustly offering their own interpretation- human rights appear increasingly fragile. However, global responses to the invasion of Ukraine have highlighted the importance of the existing international architecture, demonstrating the need for swift action as well as revealing some shortcomings.

This conference will consider the effectiveness of human rights mechanisms and responses in the context of international crises in peace and security, drawing on learning from a range of countries and regions affected by conflict. In particular it will focus on: the ability of the UN system to address serious human rights violations in conflict, the relationship between the UN Human Rights Council, the UN Security Council and related mechanisms; the need to further embed human rights based approaches in conflict response; and ways in which to address gaps in protection through the complementarity between international humanitarian law and human rights.

This invitation only [Wilton Park](#) conference, the 17th in the annual series, is being developed in partnership with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

In partnership with:



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra



Ministry for Foreign
Affairs of Finland

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

Format and purpose

The participatory format of the meeting, encompassing roundtable discussion during plenary sessions, time spent in smaller breakout groups and informal exchanges in the margins of the meeting, are designed to generate fresh insights and analysis. It will be held on the basis of non-attributable discussion in a neutral environment, designed for the promotion of open and constructive exchange. Drawing on the experience and expertise of participants, and learning from conflict affected regions and countries, the meeting aims to:

- Identify examples of good practice and highlight potential for improved responses
- Generate proposals and recommendations for ways in which human rights can be strengthened in response to conflict and insecurity
- strengthen links amongst key agencies and actors across a spectrum of policy-makers, human rights experts and civil society organisations
- generate activity amongst expert networks to take forward emerging actions and proposals

Participation

The in person meeting, which will be conducted in English, will convene up to 50 policy makers and practitioners drawn from a selection of countries and including government officials, civil society organisations, human rights defenders, academics, business and relevant international and regional bodies.

Potential topics for discussion

- What's worked and what hasn't
- Models of effective responses in crises and conflict (Commissions of Inquiry, rapid evidence gathering of human rights abuses)
- Local responses- need for greater interface between peacebuilding and human rights committees
- How to ensure voices and experiences of human rights defender, institutions and civil society actors are heard in multi-lateral and bi-lateral fora
- How to secure gender-balance and active roles for women and girls while also addressing their particular rights and needs in conflict situations
- Inclusive responses, addressing needs of those in the most vulnerable situations, including children and youth, persons with disabilities and various minorities.

About Wilton Park

Wilton Park is a not for profit executive agency of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. Established in 1951 and located in a 16th century mansion house located in a discreet residential retreat in the South Downs National Park, we run around 70 events a year, facilitating dialogue on key global issues.

Previous meetings in the series include [Human Rights, Peace and Security](#), [Re-energising the narrative: human rights in the digital age](#), [Human Rights and Agenda 2030](#) [Human Rights 2022](#)

Intended outcomes

Meeting outcomes will be captured in a brief note summarising recommendations and best practice, which will be widely circulated to interested parties and posted on Wilton Park and other websites.

Monitoring and evaluation

An electronic questionnaire will be completed by all participants during the meetings.

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