



Geneva Reporter

Leading up to the COP26 climate negotiations in Glasgow

In this issue:

Legal arms trade and
human rights
page 2

Trade and
sustainability
at the WTO
page 2

News in brief
page 2

Stepping up?
The HRC and
dehumanizing
treatment of
migrants
page 3

Recent
publications
page 3

QUNO Q&A with
Daniel Cullen
page 4

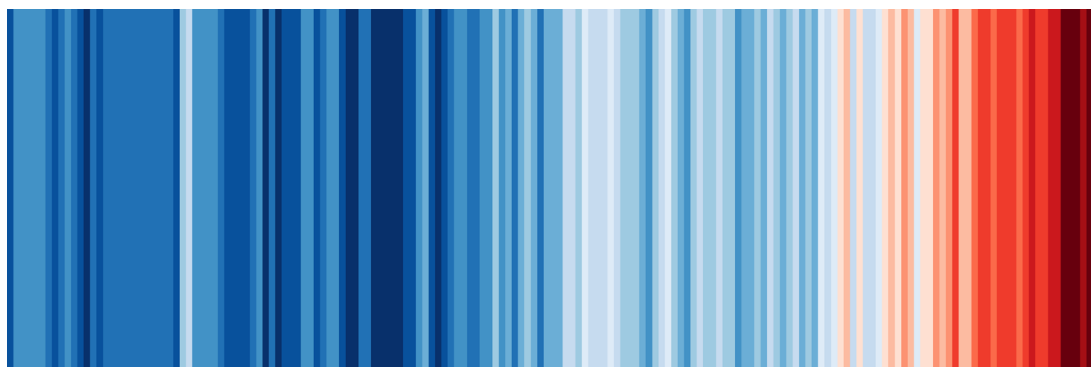
Quaker United Nations Office

13 Avenue du Mervelet
1209 Geneva
Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 748 4800
Fax: +41 22 748 4819

quno@quno.ch
www.quno.org

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Visualization showing global temperature change from 1901-2020

Lindsey Fielder Cook, Representative for Climate Change

QUNO's preparation for the upcoming Climate Conference of Parties (COP26) in Glasgow has been intense and multilayered. Throughout the year we have been drawing together our work at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Human Rights Council (HRC)—to call for urgent, ambitious and human rights based climate action across multilateral efforts.

We have continued our offering of frequent and strictly off-the-record quiet diplomacy online meetings for a diverse group of climate negotiators. The aim of these meetings is to help build communication and understanding between countries on issues sensitive to the negotiations. The latest meeting, in early September, focused on the question, "What shared elements of a road map could we advise our political leaders, that could strengthen accountability in finance delivery and in turn build trust for effective compliance decisions?"

For distribution at COP26, we prepared our [Climate Empowerment Trilogy](#), three publications to reach different audiences—government officials, people already active in climate change issues, and people who are uncertain about what is happening, why, and what can be done to help. These publications are available at quno.org and printed copies can be sent upon request. We have also been very active in support to UK civil society, Quakers and inter-faith groups, as they prepare their advocacy for the COP26. Where possible, we have spoken in webinars and met with groups from a range of interests to help communicate what success would be for this COP, and share ideas of how they can help.

Throughout all of our climate change work, QUNO seeks to integrate the latest climate science. In August, as an accredited observer of the IPCC, we participated in a two week virtual meeting where States met to negotiate and adopt the Summary for Policy Makers of Working Group 1, which covers the physical science. Our [ten interventions, which are posted on our website](#), focused primarily on clear messaging for pathways to hold temperature rise to a 1.5C limit and on clarity about the consequences to the planet and our species of insufficient action.

The latest IPCC findings are a stark reminder of the need for ambitious, effective and fair decisions at the upcoming COP26 in Glasgow.

Legal arms trade & human rights

Florence Foster,
Representative for Peace & Disarmament

As part of our Peace & Disarmament work, QUNO strives to engage the multilateral system to prevent the worst harms caused by the ongoing trading of weapons around the world. In our [oral statement delivered to the 47th session of the HRC in June](#), we highlighted how weapons, and the defence industry more broadly, lead to human rights violations and heighten the risk of destructive conflict. The June session saw a resolution on the [Impact of Firearms Transfers](#) negotiated and passed. While we welcomed the resolution's focus on children and youth, we noted with concern the resistance of Member States to meaningfully focus on legal arms transfers beyond those diverted, unregulated or illicitly traded. We deeply believe that the negative human rights impacts of *all* arms transfers should be of concern.

This follows QUNO's engagement on a UN project that sought to clarify the practical steps that States and business enterprises should take to implement the [Guiding Principles in conflict and post-conflict contexts](#). The outcome report highlighted the need for heightened action both throughout the conflict cycle as well as throughout the business cycle. Importantly, the report challenged the assumption that the provision of jobs and investments by companies in post-conflict contexts is always positive—highlighting that businesses are not neutral in conflict settings. We plan to continue working on this issue, with specific focus on the defence industry, with the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights.

News in brief

Following an international search process, the Quaker UN Office is delighted to announce that [Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge has been selected as the incoming Director of QUNO Geneva](#). Nozizwe, a South African national, is a member of the Quaker Community in the Western Cape Meeting. She has broad experience in her home country and distinguished and influential service in government, civil society and advocacy. Nozizwe has an honorary Doctorate of Law from Haverford College, diplomas in microbiology and adult education, a degree in social science and an honours degree in philosophy.

QUNO Geneva's governing Committee plans a careful handover from outgoing Director Jonathan Woolley, who will retire by year end 2021, to Director Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, whom we intend will be in post by November.

Trade & sustainability at the WTO

Joachim Monkelbaan,
Representative for Sustainable & Just Economic Systems (SJES)

The most [exciting development over the past few months in our SJES programme](#) has been the establishment of a new working group on trade and environmental sustainability in the World Trade Organization (WTO). More than 50 WTO members have realized a need to foster trade policies that enable sustainable development. This group is rallying around the Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions (TESSD). Some key topics for the TESSD will likely be trade and climate change, trade and circular economy, fossil fuel subsidy reform, and green aid for developing countries. The work programme for TESSD for the next few years will be discussed at [the delayed twelfth ministerial conference of the WTO \(MC12\)](#), which will take place in Geneva from 30 November to 3 December 2021, and is set to be adopted shortly thereafter.

TESSD could be a microcosm of how the WTO could function in a more inclusive and innovative manner. The working group is uniquely open to civil society—which is a first for the WTO. Beyond our interest in the topic of trade and environmental sustainability itself, we see that the TESSD could set new standards for the WTO as a whole in terms of accessibility and constructive engagement on trade policies that foster sustainable development and both economic and environmental justice.

QUNO was invited as one of only three NGOs at the inaugural and following meetings of the TESSD. This invitation was the result of our involvement in previous discussions in this area and our experience as a trusted partner that can facilitate constructive discussions through quiet diplomacy. QUNO has begun convening a series of workshops for diplomats and other stakeholders on the different topics to be discussed in the TESSD going forward.

Support QUNO



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Stepping up? The HRC and dehumanizing treatment of migrants

Laurel Townhead
Representative for Human Rights & Refugees

Discussions in multilateral meetings can often feel detached from the realities of human rights violations people are experiencing, so, while it makes for hard reading, we welcome the report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants focussing on [pushbacks of migrants on land and at sea](#) and the discussion following its presentation at the 47th session of the HRC. The report concludes that:

The practice of “pushbacks” is widespread and exists along most migration routes. Pushbacks manifest an entrenched prejudice against migrants and demonstrate a denial of States’ international obligations to protect the human rights of migrants at international borders.

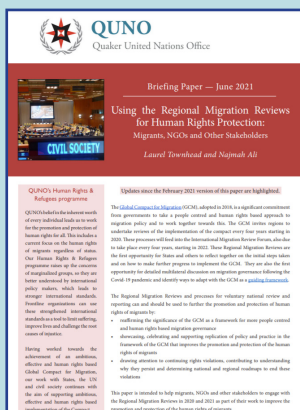
In [statements to the HRC](#), we have sought to highlight both the scale of loss of life in migration and the individuals and families impacted by these deaths. The Special Rapporteur calls out the importance of independent monitoring at borders, echoing a call from the High Commissioner for

Human Rights, who has expressed dismay over what she describes as lethal disregard for the lives of people on the move. In June, [over 50 organizations](#) joined a call for the HRC to establish further independent monitoring to complement and build on the work of the Special Rapporteur.

While this call has not yet been met, the HRC did return to the [adoption of a resolution](#) on the human rights of migrants that outlines particular concerns and mandates follow up action. The focus on situations of vulnerability and the impact of COVID-19 is timely and the emphasis on the role of States in preventing the creation and exacerbation of situations of vulnerability, as well as in responding to them, is important.

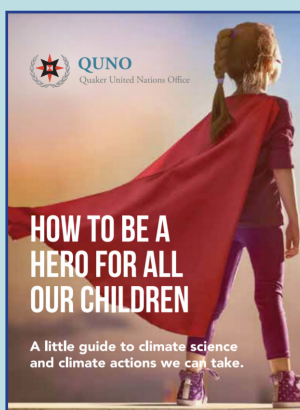
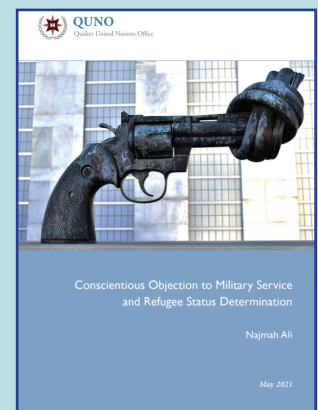
The resolution mandates a one-day discussion on human rights of migrants in vulnerable situations and, significantly, requests a particular focus on the experiences of migrants. This should provide space for the HRC to hear more directly from migrants and base its next steps on their expertise and experience, hopefully closing that gap between lived realities and multilateral discussions.

Recent publications



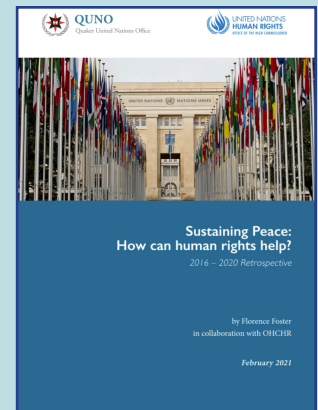
Briefing Paper—Using the Regional Migration Reviews for Human Rights Protection: Migrants, NGOs and other stakeholders
Laurel Townhead and Najmah Ali (June 2021)

Conscientious Objection to Military Service and Refugee Status Determination
Najmah Ali (May 2021)



How to be a hero for all our children (A6 version): A little guide to climate science and climate actions we can take.
Prepared by Lindsey Fielder Cook (April 2021)

Sustaining Peace: How can human rights help? 2016-2020 Retrospective
Florence Foster with OHCHR (February 2021)



All publications are available at: quno.org/recent-publications.

QUNO Q & A with Daniel Cullen



Daniel Cullen

In QUNO Q&A, we feature interviews with alumni. For this issue, we spoke with Daniel Cullen, the 2015-2016 Human Rights & Refugees (HRR) Programme Assistant (PA). Since QUNO, he has worked with a number human rights and multilateral organizations, and currently conducts death penalty research at the University of Oxford. We spoke with Daniel about his experience at QUNO and subsequent career path.

What led you to apply to QUNO?

I'd already had some awareness of QUNO as an institution, but not of the PA positions. When I was packing up to move to Geneva, I found an old notebook from 2012 where I'd noted down the details of the summer school, which felt very serendipitous. I was drawn to the idea of QUNO itself—my impression was that in working from the perspective of Quaker values, its character seemed more “personal” than that of other organizations, and I appreciated that the programmes described their work in a way which reflected interconnections between different thematic issues. Furthermore, since it was an entry level position with a year-long contract, I saw this as an extremely rare opportunity. Similar roles in international affairs are usually either unpaid or are based on much shorter temporary contracts.

What do you remember the most about your PA experience?

One of the most memorable aspects of my work as a PA was undoubtedly having the opportunity to deliver oral statements at the UN Human Rights Council. As a young person, speaking to a room full of diplomats for the first time was a moment of huge personal pride for me, and one that I felt I might never have had if I wasn't working at QUNO.

In beginning to work in the international system in Geneva, there was a huge amount to learn, both intellectually and practically. I found that it could be quite challenging to fully take on board the complexities of everything that was happening around me, and to reflect on this in order to form my own views. At the same time, I think that this challenge was connected to what I found most rewarding about my time as a PA—that it was possible to witness the machinery of international relations in action, with overlapping layers of diplomacy, bureaucracy, negotiation and individual personalities all at play. Working at QUNO helped me to see this system from a more emotional, human-centred perspective—as embodied in the QUNO method of “quiet diplomacy.”

Tell us about your post-QUNO journey.

Immediately after QUNO, I moved back to London to begin a qualifying Master's degree in Law. I completed this part-time over three years, and alongside my studies worked with [HURIDOCs](#), a Geneva-based NGO specializing in the development of technology for human rights organizations, and Amnesty International. I recently moved to Oxford to begin a new role as a Research Officer at the university, focusing on the [death penalty](#). During my time in London, I was also a Resident Quaker (RQ) at the Quaker Meeting House

in Muswell Hill in north London. This was a voluntary residential post shared with two others, overseeing the management of the building and arranging the hire of rooms to various groups. The role allowed me to develop a close connection to the community in Muswell Hill and to continue my own spiritual development by engaging more deeply with Quakerism, which was still relatively new to me. I was fortunate to benefit from the support of the Muswell Hill Meeting, without which I could not have pursued the further studies and professional opportunities that I was able to while living as an RQ.

Do you feel your experience at QUNO influenced your future work or life?

My immediate decision to return to university to study law after leaving QUNO was one that I reached through a process of discernment over the course of my year in Geneva. This was informed by my observation that many of those I was meeting had at least some form of legal background, and that law itself had the power to effect tangible change for the protection of human rights.

My current work, researching the global use of the death penalty, in a new research centre, the Death Penalty Research Unit, is a direct continuation of my work at QUNO, as the death penalty was one of the main focal points for the HRR programme at the time I was a PA.

More broadly, my year in Geneva was a personally transformative one. The combination of stability and inspiration provided by the QUNO PA-ship gradually expanded my sense of what I could achieve professionally, while the process of meeting so many others from around the world embedded a particular internationalist outlook that I've carried with me ever since.