



**QUNO**  
Quaker United Nations Office



## Roundtable: Integrating Human Rights and Sustaining Peace

November 4 - 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

World Meteorological Organization – 2nd floor – Kruzel Hall / De Mello rooms.

The relationship between human rights and peacebuilding has been increasingly recognized by international organizations in recent years. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development explicitly combines the promotion of peaceful, just and inclusive societies in [Goal 16](#), and both the UN Security Council and the UN Human Rights Council acknowledged the crucial relationship between human rights and peacebuilding for the first time in 2016 through the twin resolutions on Sustaining Peace ([2282](#) ; [70/262](#)).

But despite this recognition, policymakers and practitioners working at the intersection of these two fields, often remain oblivious to, or may even be disdainful of, each other's work. The premise that evolved over time was that the two fields were divided by different methods, priorities and operational approaches. Narrow definitions of justice and equally constricted assumptions about peacebuilding, have sometimes appeared to cement the suggestion of a dichotomous relationship. These dynamics are emulated in the UN and other multilateral institutions, where parallel institutional pillars of peacebuilding, development and human rights have regularly operated as insular silos, with limited functional or operationally designed integration. Furthermore, despite rhetoric in support of more integrated programming approaches, the bifurcation of donor funding has often tended to similarly segment investments, mitigating against more symbiotic approaches between human rights/justice programming and peacebuilding practice. This has been further exacerbated by the evolving nature of global politics and evolving conflicts and risks to peace. Besides emboldening pariah governments in violating or ignoring human rights commitments, these also reflect the retreat of many of the historical champions of international human rights norms and protections.

This is problematic and frustrating because on the ground, the work of peacebuilders and human rights defenders often touches on one another and may even produce ad hoc innovative collaboration, building on the strong link between human rights violations and conflict in practice. Yet, if people working on devising solutions to problems operate with a specific analytical frame in mind and only use approaches they are familiar with, the absence of deliberate operational collaboration and reciprocal learning across these fields is likely to sustain siloed practice and miss opportunities for collaborative synergy and innovation supporting the work of both fields. That is why a wider view needs to be taken by *both* human rights practitioners and peacebuilders. Over the years, occasional dialogue has taken place across these fields in various settings. Often, these interactions have been bedeviled by a limited focus on the challenge of pursuing accountability in the context of peace negotiations, with little consideration of the broader human rights/peacebuilding interface.

Interpeace and the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) are eager to take advantage of Geneva Peace Week to facilitate a self-reflective round table discussion among peacebuilders on how to constructively and effectively engage with a human rights approach within their peacebuilding work, and how to creatively traverse the disciplinary, policy and practice divides between these two fields and foster creative collaboration and reciprocal learning in a world where this is increasingly more urgently needed. To this end we are inviting you to join a small group for this round table discussion.

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