

# Protection of Human Rights Defenders in Light of Threats and Killings committed by Non-State Actors

## Lessons Learned from Colombia and Lebanon

**Wednesday, 5 October 2002, 10:00-11:30 hrs**  
**Graduate Institute Geneva (auditorium A2)**

**Side Event to the 51<sup>st</sup> Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council**

Targeted killings of human rights defenders by non-state actors are a global phenomenon taking place in an increasingly shrinking space for civil society. These killings have become a tool through which perpetrators eliminate perceived critics and opponents to their ideology or economic and/or political interests. Impunity for these crimes stifle peaceful dissent and civil society engagement, silence political or economic opposition, and extinguish critical public dialogue. What role do official state authorities have in preventing and responding to these kinds of killings? How can United Nations instruments and mechanisms, such as the Human Rights Council, engage with this issue?

To discuss these questions and learn from the case studies of Lebanon and Colombia, UMAM Documentation & Research, the Lokman Slim Foundation, Dar al-Jadeed, and the Centre on Conflict, Development & Peacebuilding (CCDP) at the Graduate Institute, invite you to this side event during the 51<sup>st</sup> UN Human Rights Council Session, co-sponsored by the Permanent Missions of Germany, France, and Australia in Geneva.

The event will take place under Chatham House rules.

Please register through this [link](#) for in-person attendance.

Online attendance is possible through this [link](#).

## Panel Discussion

Words of welcome by **Dr. Annyssa Bellal**, Senior Researcher at the Center on Conflict, Development, and Peacebuilding.

**Lebanon** **Nadim Shehadi**, former Executive Director of Lebanese American University's New York Headquarters & Academic Center and an Associate Fellow at Chatham House.

**Colombia** **Juan Pappier**, Human Rights Watch Americas senior researcher, author of the HRW report "Left Undefended" (via video link) and **Shoshana Levy**, UNHCR-appointed judge at the French Appeal Court for Asylum and former Legal and Field Officer at the United Nations Mission of Verification in Colombia (UNVMC).

- **Dr. Morris Tidball-Binz**, UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions.
- **Dr. Erica Harper**, Head of Research and Policy Studies at the Geneva Academy, where she leads the Academy's work on non-state actors among other areas.

Followed by an open Q&A.

Moderated by Fritz Streiff, International Criminal and Human Rights Lawyer and Podcaster.

For logistical questions, please contact [stella.peisch@graduateinstitute.ch](mailto:stella.peisch@graduateinstitute.ch)