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Documentation

Geneva's advantages as headquarters of the United Nations Human Rights Council

Geneva has long been the headquarters of numerous international organizations and Switzerland has a tradition of hosting international conferences and meetings.

In particular, Geneva has been the headquarters of the Commission on Human Rights and of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights since they were founded.

Like its predecessor institution the Commission on Human Rights, the Human Rights Council should be based in Geneva. As host country, Switzerland will ensure that the Human Rights Council will benefit from the best possible conditions for carrying out its work.

Concrete contributions by Switzerland

- "least developed countries" (LDCs) having a permanent mission in Geneva receive upon request a monthly contribution up to 3000 CHF towards the rent of their offices from Geneva authorities.
- Switzerland stands ready to provide office space for all countries that do not currently have a permanent mission in Geneva and wish to participate fully in the activities of the future Human Rights Council.
- Given that many international organisations have their headquarters in Geneva rather than in Bern, Switzerland authorises LDCs double accreditation, both in Geneva and in Bern, with residence in Geneva.
- In addition to United Nations conference facilities in Geneva (*Palais des Nations*: Salle des Assemblées (1800 seats), Salle du Conseil (400 seats), 34 conference rooms with a total of 7500 seats), there is also a wide range of high-quality conference rooms in Geneva:
 - *Geneva International Conference Centre (GICC)*: re-opened after extensive renovations in October 2005, the *GICC* offers various small and medium-sized conference rooms (modules) with a maximum capacity of 2200.
 - *Centre de Conférences de Varembe (CCV)*: 5 conference rooms with a total of 280 seats.



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- Other conference rooms in the headquarters buildings of international organisations in Geneva.
- In the framework of its host-country policy, Switzerland offers international organisations under certain conditions the possibility of an interest-free government loan, reimbursable over 50 years, for the construction of new properties or for the purchase of land.

Geneva, an attractive environment

Synergies

- 155 States have a permanent mission or a representation in Geneva.
- Geneva is not only the headquarters of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), but also – among others - of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Organisation for Migration (OIM) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).
- Various academic institutions in Geneva are strongly oriented towards human rights issues (Graduate Institute of International Studies (IUHEI), departments of the University of Geneva), Graduate Institute of Development Studies (IUED).
- Practically all missions in Geneva have human rights specialists among their staff.

General conditions

- Guarantee of respect for the privileges and immunities of international organisations and their staff as well as for missions, in accordance with the obligations of international law.
- Generous visa policies for delegates and for the international community in Geneva.
- Easy to obtain residence and work permits for the spouses and for the children of diplomats and international officials.
- The “Centre d'accueil Genève internationale” (CAGI) is a reliable partner in administrative matters (finding accommodation, school, nursery, etc.).
- Excellent transport access (air, rail, car) and central location in Europe.
- Geneva Airport has an extensive range of worldwide destinations, including direct flights to New York.
- High quality of life (an ideal city for families, numerous green spaces, etc.).
- Security.