

Universal Periodical Review

Forth Cycle

Switzerland



Right to Life
Related Human Rights Issues
Right to peace

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“From the politics of taking life to the politics of affirming it”
“From the politics of paying for war to the politics of offering peace”

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Thank you for your kind support at www.nonkilling.org

**We understand the right to life
as being the full enjoyment of Life,
as being the right not to be killed,
as being everyone's responsibility not to kill or let others die.**

The Center for Global Nonkilling has a unique mission,
inspirational for individuals and transformative for societies:
*“To promote change toward the measurable goal of a killing-free world
by means open to infinite human creativity in reverence for life”.*

The Center for Global Nonkilling (CGNK) was founded by Glenn Paige (1929-2017), Professor of political science, author of the book “Nonkilling Political Science”¹, widely translated and available in French and German². CGNK is a worldwide congregation of persons, scholars and others, working at creating societies that do not kill and enabling all individuals to do so. We are all nonkilling centres and we are all global. Valuing life in all its dimensions is a fulfilling mission for everyone. Please yourself: become a Nonkilling Centre by celebrating, enhancing and protecting life for everyone, everywhere, at all the time³.

For the Universal Periodic Review, we make submissions providing the International Community and the Country under review with either reports on all or most aspects of the right to life in the State under review. Or we make submissions calling for the ratification of the basic treaties of the “life constitution”: the Convention on the prevention and the punishment of the crime of genocide, the second protocol of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aimed at the abolition of the death penalty, the convention on enforced disappearances. Local constitution shall similarly uphold life in a dignified and inspiring manner.

We join an annex describing more precisely the right to life and presenting some aspects of the right to peace.

Universal Periodic Review of the Republic of Switzerland

All States have a full duty of exemplarity.

Such a duty – being examples in the respect and promotion of human rights – is vested in their commitment to human rights and sustainable development.

Reciprocally, exemplarity is enshrined in our capacity,
as human beings, to give the best of ourselves.

The duty of exemplarity is somehow expressed in international law; it is needed to reach the legitimate and peaceful goals of the International Community.

I. Minimum standards of living

Switzerland is a rich country, one of the richest countries in the world. Yet a large part of the population, 15%, still lives in poverty or are at risk of falling into poverty⁴.

Poverty kills. It kills through depression and suicides, through worsened conditions of life and shortened life expectancy, it kills because procedures to obtain help are lengthy and burdensome,

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sometimes too lengthy to take off the time, or to gain the knowledge needed to do these procedures, while trying to make ends meet. Poverty also kills, worldwide, because it is morally unacceptable and burdens the dignity of humanity and the worth of our common History.

Poverty is not a fatality. “There is enough for everyone’s need, but not for the greed of some. Mahatma Gandhi”. Humanity is immensely rich, in wealth, in skills and in quality, yet the capacity to earnestly share this wealth, a fair part of it, to the needy is still lacking. Yet, a fair part of the benefits acquired through non-renewable resources belong to all humanity, and so does the wealth accumulated by the previous generations. Switzerland, that holds in its banks a large part of the world’s wealth and harbours on its soil the headquarters of many trading and extractive companies is at the crux of the problem. It should be spearheading the surge to eradicate poverty, locally as worldwide, fulfilling SDG 1.

The Swiss 2022 Voluntary National Report (VNR) for the sustainable development goals 2030, shows that the country is far from being this ambitious. Though the population augments the poverty line is stable, which means that more people come into poverty; no direct measures are proposed. To the contrary, both progress and challenges show that not enough is being done. Some gaps in the social security system have been filled but filling only gaps – only some – shows that the whole system is flawed and needs a more comprehensive (and humane) approach⁵. Complaining about long-term financing of the social security system is most likely a lure as people struggling less with poverty would most likely be more productive, and thus less demanding on social systems.

We demand a reorganisation of the social security and fiscal systems to grant a minimum income to all that is no lower than the poverty line and reforms in the security system to make it simple, rapid and inclusive, guaranteeing all minimum standards of living, leaving no one behind.

II. Acting for peace

Switzerland has a long tradition of promoting peace. Moreover, as an incumbent member of the Security Council (2023-2024), the country must live up to its own standards, at home and abroad.

a. Financing peace is of vital importance

Yet compared to the military budget, the part dedicated to peace and human rights is less than minimal: 0.53%. If the world intends to achieve peace, at some point, it will to pay more for peace than what it pays for war. Progress awaited.

Conscientious objector to military taxation⁶, need to be recognized and to be offered the possibility of paying the part of their taxes going to the military budget into a “peace only” fund, to be created or into the United Nations Peacebuilding fund⁷.

We call upon the government to augment its financing for peace and to allow the payment of taxes dues the military budget into a peace fund instead.

b. Conscientious objection to military service

The alternative service to military service is rather good, but still suffers from a few flaws (largely described in a report to the OHCHR in 2022), lack of impartiality of the recruitment procedures as it is done only by the army, length of the service exceeding the military service, low pay and absence of social support for those doing the alternative service.

We call unto to the government to upgrade the condition of admission and accomplishments of alternative service.

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*All this being peacefully said,
calling on each and all to achieve a peaceful and sustainable,
indeed a nonkilling world,
we wish to the people and to the authorities of Switzerland
a participative and constructive Universal Periodic Review
And to their delegation a joyful trip from Bern to Geneva
were we welcome them to
the City of Peace.*

Annexes:

- 1) The rights to life and peace, peace policies. CGNK annex to the UPR
- 2) Financing peace, peace fact sheet, APRED 2022.
- 3) Report to the High Commissioner on Human Rights on conscientious objection, infodroit.ch, 2022.
- 4) Contribution to the report of the Special Rapporteur on equitable international order on the State and the Progress of peace.

¹ <https://nonkilling.org/center/publications-media/books-cgmk-publications>

² <https://nonkilling.org/center/publications-media/books-translations>

³ <http://nonkilling.org/center/how-to-help>

⁴ <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/en/home/statistics/economic-social-situation-population/economic-and-social-situation-of-the-population/poverty-and-material-deprivation/risk-poverty.html>
<https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/en/home/statistics/economic-social-situation-population/economic-and-social-situation-of-the-population/poverty-and-material-deprivation/poverty.html>

⁵ Has an example among many, why should soldiers and persons doing the alternative service, thus serving the State, be paid below the poverty line (if they did not have job prior to the service), that is ~ 1,800.- Swiss francs, or 62.- a day, while to poverty line is at 2279 Swiss Francs ? (LPAG articles 9 and 16a:

https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/cc/1952/1021_1046_1050/fr).

⁶ Including the redactor of this submission

⁷ <https://www.peacetaxinternational.org>