

“Global Violence: Consequences and Responses”

Global violence is a universal scourge which threatens the lives of an increasing number of people around the world.

For each individual who dies and suffers as a result of an armed conflict, many more are the victims of a broad range of other patterns of political and moral collective violence.

Since the end of the Cold War the overall improvement of the international security scenario has led to a substantive decline in battlefield deaths. Violence continues however to dramatically affect the existence of millions of people in multiple forms: armed conflicts, political oppression, economic and social exploitation, forced displacement of populations, environmental destruction, human rights abuses, organized crime, ethnic cleansing, terrorism.

No country, no community is immune from a phenomenon which finds a fertile ground in the absence of democracy and good governance, in the denial of fundamental rights and freedoms.

Global violence is a major challenge of the 21st century. A challenge not necessarily inevitable and to a certain extent predictable and preventable.

The need of a stronger commitment to identify the underlying causes and the main features of global violence is widely felt by the international community. New efforts by governments, international organisations, civil society to prevent global violence and mitigate its consequences are required.

The Sanremo Institute is an independent non-profit humanitarian organization. It's main objective is to promote the knowledge and the dissemination of international humanitarian law, human rights and related issues. Over the years the Institute has acquired a widespread international reputation for its training and research engagement in this specific area. More

than 12.000 people from all over the world have been associated with its educational activities.

In line with the pursuit of its aims, the Institute works in close collaboration with a number of important international organizations dedicated to the humanitarian cause including ICRC, UNHCR, OIM. It maintains operational partnerships with UNESCO, EU, Council of Europe NATO and other regional organizations.

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of its foundation (1970) the Institute has decided to bring together in Sanremo its main partners and stakeholders – representatives of governments, international organizations, academia, NGOs – to discuss the topic of “Global Violence: Consequences and Responses”.

Our aim is to promote a new awareness of global violence paradigms and of the inextricable relationship existing between its different expressions through informal debate and open discussion, in the constructive spirit which is internationally recognized as the “spirit of Sanremo”.

The multifaceted nature of global violence requires a renewed, collective effort in collecting data, in defining priorities, in developing international cooperation and internationally agreed responses, in promoting and monitoring adherence to international treaties and other legal instruments having direct relevance to global violence and its prevention.

An official opening event (9 September), which will include statements and addresses of a general nature concerning the topic of global violence, will be followed (9-11 September) by a Round Table, jointly organized with the International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva, articulated in three main plenary sessions addressing the following issues:

- Contemporary forms of armed violence: International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights at a crossroads (Thursday, 9 September)
- The deprivation of liberty in armed conflict and other situations of violence (Friday, 10 September)
- Individual guarantees in detention (Saturday, 11 September)

The purpose of the Round Table is to review some of the legal and practical challenges posed by contemporary armed conflicts and other situations of violence, in which non-State actors are playing a growing role, such as terrorism, contemporary piracy and organized violent crime, with a particular focus on the problem of the deprivation of liberty and detention.

The discussion will examine the existing legal obligations and any insufficiencies that may exist, as well as the relationship between international humanitarian law and human rights and the challenges posed to the application of existing rules on the ground. In reviewing applicable law, practical aspects will be considered and suggestions made, as appropriate, on ways in which both the law and the practice could be improved.