

# RIGHT TO WATER: HUMANIZATION TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL WATER LAW AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

VILLA MOYNIER, 120B RUE DE LAUSANNE, GENEVA | THURSDAY 19 MARCH 2026, 18:00-19:30



Global water governance faces unprecedented pressures from climate change, pollution, demographic growth, and systemic over-extraction. Concurrently, the weaponization and destruction of water infrastructure in armed conflicts pose severe threats to civilian survival and public health.

The humanization of international water law emphasizes the fundamental human need for freshwater, interpreting established norms and developing novel principles and approaches that integrate individuals and non-state actors into water management. This marks an evolving trend from traditional, interstate frameworks toward a regime prioritizing individual and collective needs.

In conversation with Laurence Boisson de Chazournes and Mara Tignino, we will assess the impact of the humanization trend by examining the parameters of the right to water, the *Geneva List of Principles on the Protection of Water Infrastructure* safeguarding water in armed conflict, shifting trends in compliance and dispute settlement involving shared water resources, and critical legal gaps regarding gender equality ahead of World Water Day 2026.

## INTRODUCTION

---

**Cécile Aptel**, Executive Director, Geneva Academy

## MODERATOR

---

**Tihao Zeng**, Teaching Assistant, Geneva Academy

## SPEAKERS

---

### **Laurence Boisson de Chazournes**

Special Advisor, Platform for International Water Law/Geneva Water Hub; Professor em., University of Geneva

### **Mara Tignino**

Scientific Director of the Geneva Water Hub; Senior Lecturer, University of Geneva

## ABOUT THE GENEVA ACADEMY TALKS

---

The Geneva Academy Talks consist of a series of events on contemporary issues of international law in armed conflicts and post-conflict situations. They target academics, practitioners and policy-makers – representatives from states, the United Nations and other relevant international organizations – as well as civil society. This activity is open to all students and Executive Master participants.

## REGISTRATION

---

Register here: <https://bit.ly/4rdjZLf>

