1. Introduction and Context

2022 witnessed significant global challenges, with the war in Ukraine and the increasing reliance on information communications technologies (ICTs) taking center stage. As an independent foundation, ICT4Peace has been at the forefront, promoting international and human security in cyberspace. The foundation’s activities for the year aptly addressed these pressing challenges.

2. Multilateral Discussions and Policy Contributions

Much of the foundation's efforts were centered around contributing to multilateral discussions, especially at the United Nations (UN). Engaging with the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Security of and in the use of ICTs (OEWG), ICT4Peace made several policy submissions. The foundation participated in online informal sessions in March and December 2022 and was present in-person for the July 2022 OEWG meeting in New York, where Vice President Anne-Marie Buzatu presented a statement for the OEWG's consideration.

However, the UN wasn't the sole focus. In October 2022, the Organization of American States (OAS) convened a meeting of its Working Group on Cyber Confidence Building Measures. Here, ICT4Peace offered a civil society perspective on how regional bodies can foster responsible state behavior in cyberspace. Furthermore, in November 2022 the foundation contributed to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe’s (OSCE) discussions, emphasizing the challenges human rights face due to private military and security firms leveraging ICTs.

3. Research and Publications

Research underpinned much of ICT4Peace’s work in 2022. A standout was the groundbreaking mapping study on the use of ICTs in Security Services provided by Private Commercial Actors authored by Anne-Marie Buzatu. Sponsored by the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs, Peace and Human Rights Division, this study illuminated the ways ICTs are being used in private security services, the accompanying human rights concerns, and suggested possible solutions.
Dr. Sanjana Hattotuwa’s work at Te Pūnaha Matatini’s Disinformation Project also garnered attention. It delved into the rise and ramifications of the infodemic, the surge in online violent misogyny, and its subsequent effect on women’s public participation in New Zealand. Additionally, ICT4Peace published numerous articles on topics ranging from mis/disinformation, global digital surveillance, and the Ukraine invasion to cyber arms control and disarmament, and cybersecurity discussions at the UN.

4. Partnerships and Collaborations

Collaboration was a hallmark of ICT4Peace’s 2022 endeavors. In partnership with Fondation Hirondelle, Principles for Peace, and Interpeace, the foundation co-authored a thought piece titled "The Digital Space and Peace Processes," presented at the 2022 Geneva Peace Week. At the Paris Peace Forum, ICT4Peace led a high-level discussion on preventing the proliferation of malicious software intended to harm.

The foundation’s work with the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders resulted in a research project examining the integration of gender issues in national cybersecurity strategies and their inclusion in WPS National Action Plans. ICT4Peace’s commitment to collaboration extended to other partners, such as the Cyber Mediation Network, the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform, and Digital Peace Now, among others. New partnerships were also forged with organizations like the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy and the Geneva Global Trust Initiative.

5. Media and Outreach

2022 saw ICT4Peace delve into the world of podcasts. The launch of the Brown Bag Podcast series, backed by the Daniel Gablinger Foundation, featured Dr. Sanjana Hattotuwa interviewing thought leaders from the Global South on issues intersecting social media, politics, and society. In October, Anne-Marie Buzatu was interviewed in a podcast by Jackie Dalton of Fondation Hirondelle, formerly of the BBC, on risks and opportunities for peace in digital spaces. ICT4Peace representatives also graced other podcast platforms, including those by the Asia Society Policy Institute and Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

6. ICT4Peace Academy

The academy had a standout year. In partnership with the OAS, the ICT4Peace Academy expanded its course offerings on "Cyberdiplomacy, Law, and Norms." November 2022 saw the introduction of a new series of Masterclasses, with the inaugural session focusing on Cyber Confidence Building Measures. Courses on Mis/Disinformation, Cybercrime, AI and Ethics, and Gender and ICTs broadened the academy’s curriculum. Significantly, the ICT4Peace Academy conducted training sessions for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on Misinformation, Disinformation, and Hate Speech in February and October. Additionally, the academy engaged with Germany’s Gesellschaft für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) for training sessions on Cyber Diplomacy and Norms in October and November.

7. Looking Ahead to 2023

As ICT4Peace nears its 20th anniversary, the horizon looks promising. Projects to follow up on the mapping study on ICTs in Security Services are underway. The ICT4Peace Academy is also gearing up to announce more courses. New partnerships and projects are in the pipeline, with announcements imminent. On the leadership front, Anne-Marie Buzatu is set to take the helm as the new Executive Director in 2023.

Anne-Marie Buzatu, Geneva 9 August 2023