

Student Experience: the IDHE Trip to Geneva 2014

Post by *MSc International Development and Humanitarian Emergencies* student, *Rebecca Brooks*.



Dr Stuart Gordon and MSc International Development and Humanitarian Emergencies students in Geneva.

In March this year, 34 students studying for the MSc in International Development and Humanitarian Emergencies travelled to Geneva to visit various humanitarian organisations.

Trekking across the beautiful city, we attended meetings at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Medicine Sans Frontières, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, and Interpeace.

It was a great opportunity to see in practice what we had been learning about in our lectures and get a taste of what it would be like to work for a humanitarian organisation. We were able to see first-hand the different institutional perspectives regarding the principles and purpose of humanitarian action and got the chance to quiz high profile humanitarian workers on their beliefs and practices and the future challenges humanitarianism faces.

Jam-packed and full of practical insights, we learnt more about the IFRC's organisational structure and disaster response, OCHA's leadership and coordination roles, and the ICRC's unique legal mandate. A really interesting talk at UNHCR taught us about their cooperation with the private sector for fundraising, and at MSF we were able to discuss the challenges and contestations surrounding the securitisation of aid.

A fascinating organisation we visited, Interpeace, introduced us to their unique approach to peacebuilding, and at the HD Centre we got the chance to watch a clip of their film 'Miles and War'

documenting what life is like working as a mediator. Listening to speakers from all organisations reflect on their practical experiences in the field was fantastic, and really helped us to contextualise the theoretical grounding of our academic studies. Speakers also gave us useful tips on how to secure internships and employment opportunities in the sector.

Visiting Geneva was a brilliant opportunity to ground theory in practice and gain an invaluable insight into working in the field we are studying. It was a real highpoint of the year!

About the MSc International Development & Humanitarian Emergencies

MSc International Development and Humanitarian Emergencies (IDHE) at LSE




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