

# MARIA EJARQUE CV

*"dedicated to transformative practices & social justice, with a focus on human rights, humanitarian affairs and IHL & protection during conflict"*

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## Profile Summary

- 20+ years of professional experience in advocacy, diplomacy, communication, fundraising, partnership building, program coordination, project management, and public policy.
- Expertise in child protection, conflict resolution, cultural development, curating, democratization, human rights, humanitarian affairs, media development, migration & forced displacement, protection of journalists, protection of heritage.
- Extensive experience working with international organizations, governments, civil society (INGOs, NGOs and CSOs), media, and cultural institutions.
- Experience in teaching and training.
- Academic background in international relations, law and communication. PhD candidate in international relations.
- Fluent in English, French, and Portuguese; working knowledge of Spanish; basic knowledge of Arabic.
- Member of the Committee of the Press Emblem Campaign (PEC)

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## Professional Experience

### UN Mechanisms Coordinator

**Law for Palestine** – Geneva, Switzerland

*January 2025 – Present*

- Coordinating engagement with the UN and UN Mechanisms (including Human Rights Council, Col, SRs, UNGA, UNGA Subsidiary Organs, etc).
- Contributing to documentation and reporting, advocacy and outreach.

### Member of the Committee

**Press Emblem Campaign (PEC)** — Geneva, Switzerland

*December 2024 – Present*

- Strengthening the legal protection and safety of journalists around the world.
- Engagement with UN Mechanisms (including Human Rights Council, Col, SRs, etc), NGOs and CSOs and broader public.

### Director (35%)

**Association La Rose des Vents** — Geneva, Switzerland

*October 2024 – Present*

- Leading systemic initiatives supporting persons in exile, including refugees and forcibly displaced persons (regardless of their status)
- Driving efforts towards integration, autonomy and inclusion, in Geneva.

## **Contractor**

**Museum of Ethnography of Geneva / Festival Everybody's Perfect** — Geneva, Switzerland  
*October 2024 – January 2025*

- Facilitating queer decolonial visits and training (jointly with Nayansaku Mufwankolo) of the exhibition *“Remembering: Geneva in the Colonial World”* in collaboration with the Festival Everybody's Perfect and the Ville de Genève.

## **Humanitarian Affairs & Migration Counsellor**

**Permanent Mission of Portugal to the UN** — Geneva, Switzerland  
*August 2023 – September 2024*

- Represented Portugal in multilateral forums on humanitarian affairs, forced displacement and migration issues.
- Advised on engagements with key organizations (ICRC, IFRC, IOM, OCHA, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDRR) and multistakeholder groups (GHD, GFMD, etc).
- Backstopped engagement in UN Human Rights mechanisms (including HR Council, Interactive dialogues with special rapporteurs, etc) on topics covered.
- Actively engaged in high-level negotiations (eg. UNHCR Omnibus Resolution, negotiated in Geneva and adopted by the UNGA in NY).
- Drafted public statements, reports, and communication materials. Contributed to joint and coordinated statements.
- Liaise with UN agencies, Permanent Missions (in Geneva and NY), INGOs, NGOs, etc.

## **Deputy Consul-General**

**Consulate-General of Portugal** — Luanda, Angola  
*September 2021 – August 2023*

- Coordinated consular operations and visa applications, including appeals.
- Coordinated response to consular emergencies (including humanitarian and medical repatriations) as well as the Emergency Contingency Plan.
- Prepared guidelines for consular operations (including on unaccompanied minors; and addressing bias and systemic racism)
- Liaised with Government, Diplomatic Missions and EU partners (Consular and Schengen coordination meetings)
- Ensured effective public diplomacy, through website, social media and press statements.

## **Desk Officer – Middle East and North Africa Department**

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs** — Lisbon, Portugal  
*September 2019 – August 2021*

- Advised on bilateral relations with Iraq, Iran, Libya, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Yemen.
- Monitored developments, including human rights and IHL, in different countries including Libya, Syria, Yemen and the wider region.
- Prepared reports, statements, talking points; backstopped engagement at the EU and UN level.
- Prepared press statements, website content and social media content, effectively contributing to public diplomacy.

## **Consular Mission**

**Embassy of Portugal in Pakistan** — Islamabad, Pakistan  
*April 2019 – August 2019*

- Processed family reunification requests, facilitating the successful reunification of 240 individuals from Pakistan with relatives residing in Portugal.
- Participated in country level anti-fraud working group (involving diplomatic missions from EU countries, US, UK and Japan) as well as EU consular and Schengen coordination meetings.

## **Desk Officer – Visa Department**

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs** — Lisbon, Portugal

*April 2018 – April 2019*

- Advised on bilateral and EU level agreement negotiation and prepare recommendations on agreement drafting and negotiation.
- Followed and prepared reports on EU court of justice and European Human Rights Court judicial decisions and opinions on different human rights issues (freedom of movement, data protection, refugee protection, etc).
- Focal point for refugee resettlement programme. Participated in briefings and coordination meetings with relevant actors, including government, IOM, UNHCR, Red Cross and civil society organizations.
- Prepared analytical reports on EU Schengen policy as well as EU level meetings on Schengen policy, including background notes, recommendations on national positions and talking points.

## **Researcher**

**Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED)** — Myanmar and India (Remote)

*October 2017 – December 2017*

- Monitored and analyzed conflict-related events using open-source intelligence, media, civil society (CSOs and NGOs) and UN reports.
- Disaggregated data and summarized conflict-related events for ACLED's conflict database.

## **Acting Chief of Staff and Advisor**

**Government of Timor-Leste, Ministry of Defense** — Dili, Timor-Leste

*April 2014 – September 2017*

- Advised on defense and security policy, including SSR, external relations, defense relations, engagement in humanitarian and UN peacekeeping initiatives, Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security.
- Advised on Timor-Leste's engagement at international defense and security forums, including ASEAN Regional Forum, the Shangri-La Dialogue and Xiangshan Forum.
- Coordinated between the Ministry of Defense / Secretary of Defense and the Timorese Defense Forces (F-FDTL) as well as the Prime Minister's Office.

## **Electoral Advisor**

**UNDP Mali** — Koulikoro, Mali

*July 2013 – January 2014*

- Led civil society training initiatives on electoral participation, focusing on women and youth inclusion.
- Implemented the *National Gender and Elections Strategy*, empowering underrepresented groups (second highest women voter turnout in the country, following the capital Bamako).
- Backstopped UNDP Basked Fund (financed by ECOWAS, EU, Japan & Canada)

## **Electoral Advisor**

**United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste** — Baucau, Timor-Leste

*January 2012 – August 2012*

- Advised the National Electoral Commission in overseeing presidential and parliamentary elections.
- Coordinated the Media and Elections Working Group to ensure accurate and balanced election reporting.
- Prepared weekly and monthly electoral reports; including security and electoral violence incident reports.

- Liaised with other UN agencies, UNPOL, Military Liaison, UN Peacekeepers, NEC, Electoral Administration (STAE), Local Authorities & Police, Political Parties, Traditional Leaders.

### **Consultant**

**UNESCO (CLT, CI, ERC Sectors & World Reports Unit)** — Paris, France

*November 2004 – June 2009*

- Coordinated programs and managed projects on cultural industries, media development, freedom of expression & information, post-conflict development, protection of journalists, protection of cultural heritage, access to education during conflict, etc, prepared public policy recommendations in these fields.
- Contributed to the *World Report on Cultural Diversity*, leading research on best practices & policy recommendations, as well as drafting thematic papers on gender, media, and cultural industries.
- Strengthened partnerships with governments, the private sector, and international organizations, securing funding and advancing program implementation.
- Organized international conferences (Global Alliance on Cultural Diversity, Iraa Media Development Conference, etc), facilitated partnership building and fundraising.
- Coordinated gender mainstreaming and human-rights based approaches.
- Integrated the UNESCO Post-Conflict and Post-Disaster Task Force.

### **Human Rights Consultant**

**Open Society Institute / Oak Foundation / Atlantic Philanthropies** — Paris, France

*October 2008 – February 2009*

- Conducted a needs assessment study on the impact of counter-terrorism measures on human rights in France.
- Collaborated with stakeholders to design frameworks for protecting rights in anti-terrorism contexts.

### **Researcher**

**Documentary Series “The Way in Time”** — Lisbon, Portugal

*September 2010 – December 2011*

- Researched and prepared content for a 12-episode documentary on different social justice issues (including conflict, climate justice, poverty, etc).

### **Production Assistant**

**World Dance Day (REDE Association)** — Lisbon, Portugal

*September 2009 – April 2010*

- Organized World Dance Day event at Teatro S. Luiz on the production, promoting and financing of dance and performing arts as tools for social development.

### **Social and Human Sciences Intern**

**UNESCO** — Paris, France

*June 2004 – October 2004*

- Supported project management and organization of conferences and meetings. Edited reports and articles and contributed to the publication *Diogenes*.

### **Field Information Support Intern**

**UN OCHA** — New York, USA

*June 2001 – August 2001*

- Assisted with early warning and rapid response mechanisms in Sierra Leone and Kosovo. Managed humanitarian data and resources for field missions and other humanitarian actors.

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## Academic Experience

### Teaching

- **Universidade de Coimbra (Portugal)**, Master's in International Relations, Development, Peace & Security Studies, course "Global Interventionism", Modules on the UN Human Rights Council (scheduled for 2025) and on UN Peace Mediation Processes (2018)
- **Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e (Timor-Leste)**, Bachelor's in Communication, TV Journalism (2014-2015)
- **Instituto Politécnico de Leiria (Portugal)**, Escola Superior de Arte e Design das Caldas da Rainha, Bachelor's in Sound and Image, Studio Practice (2010-2011)
- **Université Blaise Pascal (France)**, Bachelor's in Portuguese Language, Module on Media and Cultural Mediation (2008)

### Referral

- Master's Thesis Dissertation "Human Rights and war prisoners", Jury Member, Oponent, Master's in Communication Sciences, Universidade Nova de Lisboa (2009)

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## Participation in Research Projects

- **"Film and Philosophy: Mapping an Encounter"**, IFL, Universidade Nova de Lisboa (2012-2013)
- **"Post-National Sovereignty: The European Union Path Towards a Political Identity"**, IFL, Universidade Nova de Lisboa (2010-2012)
- **"World Report on Cultural Diversity, Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue"**, UNESCO (2006-2008)

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## Papers in Conferences

- **"Queering the museum, rethinking curatorial practices: feminist, queer and decolonial approaches"**, Eighteenth International Conference on the Inclusive Museum (Spain), September 2025 (*accepted*)
- **"General conditions for the organization of free, democratic, transparent and peaceful elections"**, UNDP, Koulikoro Governorate (Mali), November 2013
- **"Framing pain: the normative consequences of images of pain"**, Panic and Mourning, First Graduate Conference in Cultural Studies (Portugal), October 2010
- **"Conflicts between women's rights and cultural accommodation"**, Gender, Media and the Public Sphere, University of Coimbra (Portugal), October 2009
- **"Media pluralism and cultural diversity"**, 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diversity, UNESCO Headquarters (France), January 2008

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## Editorial Experience

- Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue, World Report on Cultural Diversity UNESCO, Chapter 8, Cultural Diversity, Human Rights and Democratic Governance, 2009

- Media Development and Poverty Eradication, World Press Freedom Day Series, UNESCO, 2006
- Media and Good Governance, World Press Freedom Day Series, UNESCO, 2005
- Penser la nature, Diogenes, 2004/3 (n°207)
- Humanismes émergents, Diogenes, 2004/2 (n° 206)

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## Training Experience

- Training session on Human Rights for children & youth (15 to 18 years), Social Sciences Days, Escola Secundária Rainha D. Amélia (Portugal) – (scheduled for 2025)
- “Cineclub”, Filmmaking for children in Dili, Escola Portuguesa Ruy Cinatti (Timor-Leste) – 2014
- “Let’s Make Documentaries”, Documentary filmmaking for children, Festival de Cinema “Olhar Lisboa”, Mares do Sul (Portugal) - 2013
- Citizenship journalism and documentary filmmaking for children (10 to 16 years) in Koulikoro Region, UNDP / École du CAP (Mali) – 2013
- Project development, implementation and reporting to CSO in Koulikoro Region, UNDP (Mali) – 2013
- Election Monitoring to National Election Commission staff in Baucau District, UNMIT (Timor-Leste) - 2012

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## Academic Background

- **PhD candidate in International Relations** – Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon (since 2025)
- **Diploma of Advanced Studies in International Relations** — Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon (2016) - *“Post-crisis Constitution Making: Processes That Matter”*
- **Master’s in Communication Sciences** — Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon (2008) - *“Identity in the Public Sphere”*
- **Bachelor’s in Communication** — Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Lisbon (2003)

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## Additional Education

- **International Law, Human Rights Law, Asylum & Refugee Law and Migration Law:** Certificates from NYU, Université Catholique de Louvain, Universidade de Lisboa, UNHCR, and IOM.
  - **Reparations and Restitutions:** Masterclass in restitution of human remains by Université de Genève.
  - **Mediation and Negotiation Skills:** Training by UNITAR, USIP and ICP.
  - **Humanitarian Affairs:** Courses in humanitarian response and humanitarian access negotiation.
  - **Feminist, Queer & Decolonial Curatorial Practices:** Courses in curatorial practices from NODE Center for Curatorial Studies, Faculty of Arts of Zurich & Contranarrativas.
  - **Filmmaking & Photography:** Courses in camera & lighting, cinematography, photography & scriptwriting (Restart, Escola Superior de Teatro e Cinema, PhotoGeneve 2024)
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## Languages

- **Portuguese:** Native
  - **English:** Proficient (C2)
  - **French:** Proficient (C2)
  - **Spanish:** Working knowledge (B1)
  - **Arabic:** Beginner (A1)
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## Technical Skills

- Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook
  - Audiovisual tools: Canva, InDesign, Lightroom, Photoshop, Premiere, Final Cut Pro, Color, DaVinci Resolve
  - Web and social media tools: IG, X, Facebook, LinkedIn, website content development
  - Photographer & filmmaker
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## Affiliations

- Member of the Committee, Press Emblem Campaign (Protection of Journalists),