

International Humanitarian Law and Armed Conflicts

International Humanitarian Law (IHL), also known as the law of armed conflict, is a branch of international law that seeks to limit the effects of war. It aims to protect individuals who are not or are no longer participating in hostilities, including civilians, prisoners of war, and wounded soldiers. Furthermore, it restricts the means and methods of warfare that parties to a conflict may employ.

The modern foundations of IHL were established through a series of international treaties, and their Additional Protocols. These 1949 most notably the Geneva Conventions of instruments impose obligations on states and, in certain circumstances, on non-state armed groups. Compliance with these rules is essential for maintaining a minimum level of humanity during armed conflicts.

One of the fundamental principles of IHL is the principle of distinction. According to this principle, parties to a conflict must at all times distinguish between civilians and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives. Direct attacks against civilians are prohibited under international law. Another important principle is proportionality, which prohibits attacks expected to cause excessive civilian harm in relation to the anticipated military advantage.

Despite the existence of comprehensive legal frameworks, violations of IHL remain common in many contemporary conflicts. Deliberate attacks on civilians, torture, and the use of prohibited weapons continue to raise serious concerns within the international community. International courts and tribunals play a significant role in prosecuting individuals responsible for war crimes and ensuring accountability for grave breaches of humanitarian law.

Sample Questions

1. What is the primary purpose of International Humanitarian Law?

- A) To prevent all wars from occurring
- B) To regulate international trade during conflicts
- C) To reduce the suffering caused by armed conflicts
- D) To strengthen military capabilities

Ϛ. According to the passage, which documents form the modern foundation of IHL?

- A) The UN Charter and the Vienna Convention
- B) The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols
- C) The Hague Peace Conferences only
- D) The Rome Statute alone

ϛ. The word “impose” in paragraph is closest in meaning to... .

- A) Remove
- B) Establish
- C) Ignore
- D) Weaken

Ϝ. Which principle requires parties to differentiate between civilians and combatants?

- A) Necessity
- B) Reciprocity
- C) Distinction
- D) Sovereignty

ϝ. Which statement is TRUE according to the passage?

- A) Attacks against civilians are always permitted during war
- B) IHL applies only to states
- C) Violations of IHL no longer occur in modern conflicts
- D) International tribunals may prosecute war crimes

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Meaning Word

مخاصمه مسلحانه Armed Conflict

عملیات و درگیری‌های نظامی Hostilities

غیرنظامی Civilian

رزمنده Combatant

اسیر جنگی (Prisoner of War (POW

اصل تفکیک Distinction

اصل تناسب Proportionality

جنایت جنگی War Crime

پاسخگویی Accountability

حقوق بشردوستانه Humanitarian Law

معاهده Treaty

نقض Breach

سلاح‌های ممنوعه Prohibited Weapons

دادگاه اختصاصی Tribunal

رعایت و تبعیت Compliance