



**First round of Consultations on Workstream 2: National IHL  
Committees  
New Zealand National Statement  
Delivered by Legal Adviser Constance Minett  
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Thank you Chair,

New Zealand has a proud history of supporting the development and implementation of International Humanitarian Law.

New Zealand would like to thank the ICRC, alongside France, Brazil, China, Jordan, Kazakhstan, and South Africa for launching the Global Initiative to Galvanise Commitment to International Humanitarian Law.

We are pleased to participate in the Global Initiative, including the first round of consultations in Workstream 2: National IHL Committees.

*The role of New Zealand's IHL Committee*

In 1980 the Minister of Foreign Affairs established the New Zealand National Committee for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law.

Permanent membership is comprised of representatives from the New Zealand Government - including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Defence Force and New Zealand Police - experts from New Zealand's academic community and New Zealand Red Cross. Representatives from the ICRC attend as an observer.

Additional members may be temporarily co-opted to assist with specialist areas relating to IHL such as judges or established members of civil society such as NGO representatives.

The Committee has a broad mandate:

- The Committee encourages the coordination of the programmes of relevant New Zealand bodies and agencies for disseminating, promoting, and implementing IHL in New Zealand.
- The Committee plays an important informal advisory role through information exchange at Committee meetings. The Committee also has the mandate to advise member entities on any question or issue related to IHL domestically or globally on request. Past practice has demonstrated the value of the informal advisory function.

*The value of New Zealand's IHL Committee*

New Zealand's National IHL Committee has taken a range of actions that have added value and increased respect for IHL in New Zealand, including:

- The Committee supported the drafting of New Zealand's Voluntary Report on Domestic Implementation of International Humanitarian Law in 2024. The Report provides a record of New Zealand's implementation of International Humanitarian Law in an accessible way, aiming to improve understanding of IHL and encourage dialogue on the topic both within New Zealand and overseas.
- In the same year, the Committee supported the event co-hosted by the Prime Minister of New Zealand and New Zealand Red Cross to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Geneva Conventions and launch New Zealand's Voluntary Report. The event provided an important opportunity for dissemination and promotion of IHL.
- The Committee supports New Zealand Defence Force to provide a basic package of IHL training to all of its personnel. This training is a pre-requisite for deployment on NZDF operations.

#### *The role of New Zealand's Committee in the Pacific region*

New Zealand's IHL Committee supports outreach to Pacific partners. In 2024 the Committee supported the ICRC and Vanuatu to host the Pacific Roundtable on International Humanitarian Law and the Forum of National International Humanitarian Law Committees in New Zealand.

The Roundtable and Forum were key opportunities to highlight the continued relevance of international humanitarian law to the Pacific and enhance collaboration between Pacific National IHL Committees.

#### *New Zealand's aspirations for Workstream 2*

New Zealand has long been a champion of International Humanitarian Law. The idea of universal rules, of doing the right thing, has long been at the core of New Zealand's national identity and the way that we act in the world.

In accordance with our long-standing position, it is our hope that International Humanitarian Law remains at the forefront of political conversations both globally and domestically. New Zealand acknowledges our National IHL Committee's role in this important objective. We encourage all States to continue to participate in this important conversation.