



National statement of the Republic of Slovenia

at the

State Consultations on the Protection of Civilian Infrastructure Workstream 4, Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to IHL

Geneva, 15 April 2025

Distinguished participants, legal advisers,

Slovenia is delighted and honoured to be able to participate as Co-Chair in these consultations on the protection of civilian infrastructure and share with you its perspectives.

Last year, the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and the Ministry of Defence hosted an event on the challenges of modern armed conflicts, which highlighted, among other things, the indirect effects of the use of explosive weapons on essential services. In today's urbanised armed conflicts, civilians are too often exposed to death by dehydration, malnutrition, starvation, disease, disability and forced displacement due to the interconnectedness of these services and their domino effect.

Slovenia is of the view that civilian objects which merely generate revenue used to finance armed conflict do not, by that fact alone, become legitimate military targets, unless they actually contribute to military action. Slovenia further recognises the challenges associated with the application of the definition of a military objective to objects in cyberspace. One such challenge is whether the destruction of components of cyber infrastructure, which are often used for both civilian and military purposes, can provide a definite military advantage, as that data can be rerouted through other parts of the network.

In order to ensure that the principles of protection of the civilian infrastructure under IHL remain protective, Slovenia proposes that States consider indirect effects when planning military operations. Slovenia also recommends the involvement of water, environmental and other specialists in the impact assessment of military operations with a view to minimising the collateral damage of such operations.

In addition to other IHL activities, Slovenia, together with Switzerland and Geneva Water Hub, initiated during the 2024 UN Protection of Civilians Week the Global Alliance to Spare Water from Armed Conflicts, which aims to protect civilians and the environment from long-lasting impacts of today's urbanised armed conflicts.

Thank you.