

**Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment
to International Humanitarian Law**
High-Level Launch Event on the Progress Report for the Global Initiative
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Statement by

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Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We thank Costa Rica, Slovenia, Switzerland and the ICRC for hosting the High-Level Launch Event on the Progress Report for the Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to IHL.

Austria attaches utmost importance to the Global Initiative and is honoured to co-chair – together with Australia, Kenya and the United Arab Emirates – the first workstream on “prevention good practices”. The frequency, scale, and severity of IHL violations remain unacceptable. Within workstream 1, we seek to build on global experience in preventing such violations and to explore new approaches. Our goal is to identify good practices, successful strategies, and effective methodologies, ultimately providing evidence-based guidance for fostering an environment in which IHL is respected.

One of the key components in the prevention of IHL violations is training. In our experience, IHL training has proven to be an effective tool in creating a common peer culture of compliance with IHL among trained persons. It serves to ensure that conduct in compliance with IHL becomes firmly inserted into routine mechanisms of action, and members of the armed forces adhere to it even under the extreme stress of combat situations.

This is why – together with the ICRC and the European Commission – Austria is hosting the regional workshop “Preventing violations of IHL through socialization of norms” in Brussels tomorrow. The workshop aims to explore and exchange experience on how training and education can help build a culture of compliance by embedding IHL into the practices, ethics, and identities of various actors, including armed forces but also the judiciary, journalists, and youth.

Austria is fully committed to multilateralism, the rule of law and a rules-based world order. Support for international humanitarian law and disarmament are key pillars of our foreign policy.

Austria is proud of the work that we have jointly accomplished so far and that is now reflected in the Progress Report. The preliminary results of the first round of consultations are a pivotal achievement and an important step towards our ultimate goal: agreeing on practical and concrete recommendations that strengthen respect for international humanitarian law and place it at the heart of global decision-making.

Thank you very much.