

Statement for High-Level Launch Event on the Progress Report for the Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to International Humanitarian Law (15:00-17:30, Geneva time)

Dear Colleagues,

- I am pleased to participate on behalf of the United Arab Emirates. First and foremost, I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the organizers for convening this important launch event on the Progress Report for the Global Initiative. This gathering offers a timely opportunity to take stock of our collective progress, exchange valuable experiences, and reaffirm our shared commitment to strengthening respect for international humanitarian law.
- My country wishes to express its sincere appreciation for the efforts made in this regard by the ICRC — represented today by the President Ms Mirjana Spoljaric — as well as by the six founding States, the co-chairs and all other States and actors that have actively contributed to the initiative in recent months. Our continued dedication and coordination have laid the groundwork for a constructive and inclusive process, setting a positive tone for future consultations.
- The first round of consultations and the achievements outlined in the Progress Report demonstrate the success and vitality of this initiative. With over 120 States officially joining and the participation of 131 States in the consultations, regional events and expert meetings, the Global Initiative has already achieved one of its primary objectives: ensuring global and inclusive participation in the process of strengthening the implementation of international humanitarian law in the face of new and unprecedented global challenges. This broad engagement reflects the growing awareness that the challenges to international humanitarian law can only be addressed through joint action, dialogue, and shared responsibility.
- **Dear Colleagues,** the UAE has a longstanding and practical commitment to the respect and promotion of international humanitarian law. My country has decided to be an active member of this initiative by co-chairing Workstream 1 on *Prevention*, together with Australia, Austria, and Kenya, and by actively participating in other workstreams, such as Workstream 5 on the protection of hospitals in armed conflict. This engagement reflects our strong determination to contribute concretely to the prevention of violations, the protection of civilians, and the strengthening of humanitarian norms globally.
- As outlined by Ambassador Emily Roper from Australia, the first round of consultations in workstream 1 provided an excellent opportunity for States to share best practices in a

collaborative manner, to receive valuable feedback, and to benefit from the contributions of experts. This process has helped to identify key priorities on prevention of international humanitarian law violations, highlight innovative approaches, and encourage mutual learning among participants.

- For its part, the UAE has worked assiduously to strengthen its IHL framework, with particular attention to prevention. The UAE has collaborated with partners such as the ICRC to enhance IHL training and education within the country. In late 2024, the Dubai Judicial Institute signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the ICRC aimed at building domestic competencies in IHL. Another key area of focus has been combating impunity. Federal Decree No. 12 of 2017 on International Crimes consolidated and clarified the domestic legal framework and penalties related to the international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and aggression, in accordance with IHL.
- The United Arab Emirates believes that future work in the Global Initiative should be increasingly concrete and action-oriented, ensuring that this process delivers tangible results in strengthening respect for international humanitarian law. For this reason, we hope that the forthcoming stages of the initiative will build upon these achievements and help develop generally accepted best practices capable of responding to new and evolving challenges.
- **Dear Colleagues**, my country reiterates its strongest support for the initiative, which should remain anchored in key principles: non-politicization, cooperation, and inclusivity. We believe that adherence to these principles will ensure that the Global initiative remains constructive, credible, and focused on its core humanitarian objectives : **turning legal commitments into meaningful action**.
- The UAE looks forward to reflecting on the valuable contributions from the ICRC and other States and reaffirms its strong commitment to continued engagement and cooperation in the Global Initiative in order to translate the outcomes of our collective discussions into tangible progress on the ground.
- Thank you.