

Global Initiative on IHL

This document provides a top-level overview of the Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to International Humanitarian Law (the *Global IHL Initiative*).

FROM COMMITMENT TO CONCRETE ACTION

Despite a global consensus supporting the Geneva Conventions, adherence to even the most basic humanitarian norms is shockingly insufficient in today's war zones. Current conflicts reveal, in appalling and devastating ways, the immense challenges facing international humanitarian law (IHL) in providing real and effective protection.

This is not inevitable. With strong and sustained political will, we can close the gap between the law and the reality on the ground. The Global IHL Initiative was launched in September of 2024 by **Brazil, China, France, Jordan, Kazakhstan, South Africa** and the **ICRC** as an exceptional effort to address today's crises and secure a future where the fundamental rules of war are respected and upheld. The initiative aims to:

- **make IHL a political priority** at the global, regional and national levels
- **mobilize state leaders and all stakeholders** to ensure IHL is part of every discussion on armed conflict and security, and
- **develop practical recommendation** to address the most pressing humanitarian challenges in contemporary warfare and turn political commitment into concrete change on the ground.

All states are encouraged to join the initiative. This is about the universality of IHL, and it is hoped that the entire international community will come together to reassert their commitment to upholding IHL.

The initiative will culminate in a **High-Level Meeting to Uphold Humanity in War** in 2026.

WORKSTREAMS

The Global IHL Initiative is composed of seven workstreams running in parallel, each chaired by a group of states.

- **PREVENTION GOOD PRACTICES** (Australia, Austria, Kenya, United Arab Emirates)
Sharing effective measures to prevent IHL violations before they occur and reinforcing practices that have proven impactful to change behaviours in war and ensure better respect for IHL.
- **NATIONAL IHL COMMITTEES** (Germany, Peru, Philippines, UK)
Exploring the full potential of these national bodies to create a culture of respect at home and influence political decision-making.
- **IHL AND PEACE** (Bangladesh, Colombia, Ethiopia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia)
Exploring how respect for IHL can reduce harm, build trust, facilitate dialogue and support sustainable peace and reconciliation.
- **CIVILIAN INFRASTRUCTURE** (Algeria, Costa Rica, Sierra Leone, Slovenia)
Addressing how the rules of war apply to the protection of civilian infrastructure, including by clarifying the definition of military objectives and preventing attacks on civilian objects.
- **PROTECTION OF HOSPITALS** (Nigeria, Pakistan, Spain, Uruguay)
Strengthening the specific protection of medical facilities and personnel, preventing misuse of hospitals and hence attacks against them, and ensuring life-saving care is never interrupted.
- **INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES** (Ghana, Luxembourg, Mexico, Switzerland)
Responding to the risks posed to civilians by cyber operations and harmful information during armed conflicts, and building a shared understanding on how IHL applies in cyberspace.
- **NAVAL WARFARE** (Egypt, Indonesia)
Addressing the changing nature of naval warfare and the increased presence of civilians at sea, by better understanding the humanitarian impact of maritime conflict on people and infrastructure, both at sea and on land.

PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS

The first round of consultations was held between April and June 2025. Around **130 states** participated, with over 250 statements made. A **Progress Report** will be published in **September 2025**, summarizing the discussions and presenting elements that will be further explored to inform the initiative's final recommendations.

The second round of consultations will take place on the following dates:

- **3 November 2025**, Geneva (hybrid): Protecting civilian infrastructure
- **6 November 2025**, Geneva (hybrid): Naval warfare
- **24 November 2025**, Geneva (hybrid): Upholding IHL in the use of Information and Communication Technologies during Armed Conflicts
- **25 November 2025**, Geneva (hybrid): Prevention good practices
- **26 November 2025**, Geneva (hybrid): IHL and Peace
- **2 December 2025**, Geneva (hybrid): Achieving Meaningful Protection for Hospitals in Armed Conflict

For the workstream on National IHL Committees, this round of consultations will continue through regional forums gathering national IHL committees across the globe:

- **25 September 2025**, Abuja (in person): consultation integrated into the Annual ECOWAS-ICRC Review Meeting on the implementation of international humanitarian law in West Africa
- **3 December 2025**, Pretoria (in person): consultation integrated into the 24th Regional IHL Seminar for Southern Africa and Indian Ocean Island States
- **8–9 December 2025**, Cairo (in person): consultation integrated into the Thirteenth Regional Meeting of Arab National Committees on IHL

This new round of consultations will build on the experiences and ideas shared by states and other stakeholders during the first round of consultations, with a view to start identifying concrete and practical recommendations for each of the seven workstreams of the Global IHL initiative.

Supporting events (expert workshops, panel discussions and regional meetings) will also be organized by the six founding states, the co-chairs and the ICRC, bringing additional expertise from key stakeholders (national societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, civil society, academia, etc.):

- **23–26 September 2025**, Abuja (in person): ECOWAS-ICRC Annual Review Meeting on the implementation of IHL in West Africa
- **7 October 2025**, Astana (hybrid): Regional Conference of Representatives of Central Asia, South Caucasus and Eastern Europe on Galvanizing Political Commitment to IHL
- **7–8 October 2025**, Nairobi (in person): Regional Seminar for East Africa on IHL
- **17 October 2025**, Brussels (in person): Preventing violations of IHL through socialization of norms: an exchange of practice (in partnership with the European Union)
- **28 October 2025**, Paris (in person): Seminar, “Upholding international humanitarian law in an era of digitalized warfare: Presenting the ICT workstream of the Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to IHL” (in partnership with Paris Peace Forum)
- **30 October 2025**, Bogota (in person): Workshop on IHL in post-conflict transitions
- **30–31 October 2025**, Geneva (in person): Expert workshop on Achieving Meaningful Protection for Hospitals in Armed Conflict
- **5–6 November 2025**, Cairo (in person): Thirteenth Meeting of Arab National Committees on IHL
- **13–14 November 2025**, Bruges (in person): Colloquium, ‘Standing up for IHL: building a common understanding around the law that protects in war’, organized by the ICRC and the College of Europe
- **2–5 December 2025**, Pretoria (in person): Regional IHL Seminar for Southern Africa and Indian Ocean Island States
- **8–10 December 2025**, Geneva (in person): The concept of military objective (as part of the workstream on Protecting civilian infrastructure), co-hosted by the ICRC and Oxford University

For more information, please refer to our [website Humanity in War](#).

