

Global IHL Initiative
WS6: Upholding International Humanitarian Law in the Use of Information
and Communication Technologies during Armed Conflicts
Third State Consultation
Statement of Japan
16 February 2026

Thank you, Madam/Mr. Chair.

We would like to express our gratitude to the ICRC and the co-chairs, Ghana, Luxembourg, Mexico, and Switzerland, for convening this important discussion.

Respecting and ensuring respect for international humanitarian law is a fundamental obligation that must be upheld.

We strongly urge all parties to comply with international law, including IHL.

As noted in the last key observation, it is understood that development and public sharing of national views and positions on how international law, including IHL, applies to cyber operations, will lead to transparency, trust-building and shared understanding, and will help ensure compliance with IHL.

Japan has consistently made clear its position in favor of IHL being applied to cyber operations.

In 2021, the Japanese government prepared a document on its basic position on international law applicable to cyber operations.

We submitted this document to the Governmental Group of Experts on cybersecurity, and made it public.

This document reaffirms that existing international law, including the UN Charter in its entirety, is applicable to cyber operations, and presents the current position of the Government of Japan on the most important and most basic matters related to how existing international law applies to cyber operations.

In the document, Japan sets out its fundamental position on the relationship

between international humanitarian law (IHL) and cyber operations. In particular, it affirms that the principles of IHL—including the principles of humanity, necessity, proportionality and distinction—apply to conduct in cyberspace. It also notes that cyber operations, which may cause, for example, the destruction or neutralization of military targets, may also constitute “attacks” under IHL.

Japan will continue to actively participate in international discussions on how IHL applies to cyber operations.

I thank you.