

**STATEMENT BY GHANA AT THE 3RD STATE CONSULTATION ON
UPHOLDING IHL IN THE USE OF ICTs DURING ARMED
CONFLICTS (SESSION 1)**

*Global Initiative on Galvanizing Political Support for IHL
Geneva, 16 February 2026*

Chair,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ghana thanks its fellow workstream co-chairs and the ICRC for their continued leadership and for presenting the key observations to help advance our collective efforts to uphold international humanitarian law in the context of ICT activities during armed conflicts.

We believe that these observations accurately reflect humanitarian concerns consistently raised across previous consultations. States increasingly recognize that ICT activities in armed conflict can produce consequences comparable to kinetic operations. Disruption of electricity, banking, communications, health services or humanitarian operations through digital means can rapidly endanger civilian lives and dignity. The emphasis on civilian protection therefore remains both timely and necessary.

In our view, the key observations provide a sound basis for moving toward practical recommendations. They reaffirm that existing IHL fully applies in the digital domain and that technological change does not diminish humanitarian obligations. Rather, it increases the urgency of ensuring that these obligations are properly understood and implemented.

Ghana particularly welcomes the reaffirmation that ICT operations causing death, injury or damage, including by disabling civilian infrastructure, may amount to attacks under IHL and must comply with principles of distinction, proportionality, military necessity and precautions. This clarification is critical to maintaining civilian protection as warfare evolves.

We also appreciate the attention given to data protection. In today's interconnected world, data underpins essential civilian services. Harm to civilian data can undermine livelihoods, governance, and humanitarian assistance. Recognizing that the handling of data during armed conflict has humanitarian consequences helps ensure that protections remain relevant to contemporary realities.

The observations concerning civilian ICT infrastructure used for military purposes are equally important. In many regions, including parts of Africa, infrastructure networks are shared and

limited. Damage to dual-use systems can therefore have disproportionate humanitarian consequences. Ghana supports the call for feasible separation of civilian and military ICT uses and for precautions to minimize civilian harm.

We also welcome the focus on civilian involvement in ICT operations and the responsibilities of states to prevent civilians from being drawn into hostilities through digital means. Civilians engaging in such activities may unknowingly expose themselves to significant risks, and states should work to prevent such situations wherever possible.

Likewise, the observations regarding technology companies are timely. Their services are essential to civilian life and humanitarian operations. Encouraging companies to assess risks and prevent complicity in IHL violations contributes to protecting civilian populations.

Chair,

These discussions resonate with Ghana's own commitment to civilian protection and respect for IHL. As a longstanding contributor to peacekeeping and regional stability efforts, Ghana recognizes that humanitarian law must remain effective in all operational environments, including the digital domain.

To further strengthen implementation, Ghana believes continued discussion should focus on practical guidance, exchange of good practices, and capacity-building support, particularly for states with limited technical resources. Cooperation among governments, humanitarian organizations and the private sector will also be essential.

Chair,

As conflict increasingly extends into digital spaces, our responsibility remains constant: to protect civilians and preserve human dignity. Ghana remains committed to constructive engagement in this initiative to ensure that humanitarian protections remain robust in this evolving operational environment.

I thank you.

**STATEMENT BY GHANA AT THE 3RD STATE CONSULTATION ON
UPHOLDING IHL IN THE USE OF ICTS DURING ARMED CONFLICTS**
(SESSION 2)

*Global Initiative on Galvanizing Political Support for IHL
Geneva, 16 February 2026*

**Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

Ghana thanks fellow workstream co-chairs and the ICRC for advancing this important discussion and for presenting comprehensive observations on protecting medical and humanitarian services and strengthening compliance with international humanitarian law in the context of ICT activities during armed conflicts.

Ghana considers that the key observations presented in this session reflect the humanitarian concerns repeatedly raised throughout earlier consultations. They capture an increasingly urgent reality: as medical services, humanitarian operations, and essential civilian infrastructure become more digitally dependent, ICT disruptions can directly threaten civilian lives and humanitarian access.

We therefore believe these observations provide a sound basis for moving toward practical recommendations that can guide states in ensuring respect for IHL in the digital environment.

Ghana strongly supports the reaffirmation that medical personnel, humanitarian actors, and the systems on which they depend must be respected and protected at all times, including against the effects of ICT activities. Disruption of hospital systems, humanitarian logistics platforms or medical data networks can have life-threatening consequences, even when no physical attack occurs. Respecting the confidentiality and integrity of humanitarian and medical data is therefore essential to preserving trust in impartial humanitarian action.

Ghana also welcomes continued exploration of a digital emblem to help signal protected medical and humanitarian systems in cyberspace. We encourage further work to ensure that any such mechanism is technically viable and accessible to states with varying technological capacities.

The observations concerning the protection of objects indispensable to civilian survival, installations containing dangerous forces and cultural property are equally important. Digital operations affecting these systems can have cascading humanitarian consequences and must therefore be carefully assessed under IHL.

Ghana further supports the call to address the spread of information in violation of IHL. ICT-enabled disinformation that spreads terror, dehumanizes communities or obstructs humanitarian operations undermines civilian protection and threatens social stability. Measures to counter such misuse must be consistent with international law while safeguarding humanitarian space.

Chair,

From Ghana's perspective, these discussions resonate with our longstanding commitment to protecting civilians and strengthening compliance with IHL. Ghana's participation in peacekeeping operations and regional peace efforts has demonstrated the importance of adapting humanitarian protections to evolving operational environments, including those shaped by digital technologies.

The observations concerning national implementation are particularly relevant. Effective compliance requires dissemination of IHL within armed forces, integration into doctrine and training, availability of legal advice, and appropriate review of new capabilities. Continued support for capacity-building and sharing of good practices will be crucial, especially for states with limited technical resources.

In response to the guiding questions, Ghana sees value in further discussion on practical implementation tools and cooperation with technology companies, whose platforms increasingly shape conflict dynamics. Strengthening resilience of civilian digital infrastructure and ensuring gender- and age-sensitive approaches are also important safeguards.

Chair,

As warfare increasingly affects digital systems upon which civilians depend, the humanitarian imperative remains unchanged. Ghana remains committed to working with partners in this Global Initiative to ensure that international humanitarian law continues to protect civilians effectively in this evolving operational environment.

I thank you.