

**Remarks by the delegation of Ukraine
during the fourth state consultation on IHL and peace (Workstream 3)
under the Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment
to International Humanitarian Law
(4 May 2026, Geneva)**

Thank you, Chair,

Ukraine would like to thank the co-chairs of this Workstream and the International Committee of the Red Cross for preparing the draft outcome.

We acknowledge that the document before us reflects many comments made throughout three rounds of extensive consultations.

While we generally support the draft outcome, we believe that some of its elements, particularly on measures to be taken during hostilities, need to be further strengthened to adequately reflect best practices and lessons learned from the current international armed conflicts.

We would welcome the inclusion of specific references to prisoners of war swaps, which proved an effective instrument for release and repatriation of thousands of POWs even during ongoing hostilities, situation of deported population, particularly children.

We also note that the text does not address the situation of prisoners of war, which is the major concern for Ukraine. Therefore, we propose to rephrase paragraph 3 “Humane treatment, registration and oversight of detention” during armed conflict to refer not only to persons deprived of their liberty and places of detention but also to all prisoners of war and places of internment.

My delegation would also like to make some general observations on the first section “Strengthening systems that preserve pathways to peace before hostilities”.

On paragraph 2(c), we would like to stress the importance of establishing civil-military cooperation mechanisms to prepare during peacetime for the protection of civilians and civilian objects. The Armed Forces of Ukraine have a civilian-military cooperation system in place, which stretches from the Ministry of Defence to the military unit level. This includes permanent groups of CIMIC officers responsible for cooperation and ensuring protection of the civilian population. They are involved in evacuation planning and informing civilian population about evacuation routes from potential zones of hostilities, timely establishment of cooperation with the civilian authorities on issues of evacuation.

On paragraph 3(h), we emphasize the criticality of legal review of weapons as a precondition to ensure the implementation of the principle of precaution during military operations. This is the first and foremost measure to be taken to ensure

the legality of any new weapons, means and methods of warfare, their compliance with ethics principles.

Ukraine has invested considerable resources in the development of the weapons review system, which is now operating under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence. This procedure goes far beyond the requirements set out in Article 36 of Additional Protocol I and is used for comprehensive interdisciplinary reviews, including review of means of warfare based on artificial intelligence. Ukraine stands ready to share its experience and calls upon all States to pay utmost attention to ensuring that new technologies in warfare remain within the boundaries of IHL and humanity.

Regarding second section “Integrating IHL into mediation and ceasefires during armed conflict”.

On paragraph 8, we strongly support the emphasis placed on the need to ensure child protection during hostilities. Ukraine has a comprehensive system of cooperation between military and civilian authorities in the protection of children and their rights, including child protection advisers in military units. Last month, UN Under-Secretary General, Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict Vanessa Fraizer visited Ukraine to see first-hand how civilian and military authorities are working to strengthen the protection of war-affected children.

Regarding paragraph 11, we stress the importance of ensuring women’s full, equal and meaningful participation not only in peace processes but also in the Armed Forces. Ukraine has achieved considerable progress in this area. Just to give you some context:

1. Restriction for women to occupy certain positions in the Armed Forces have been gradually eliminated between 2018 and 2022, and now women have a right and actually occupy leading positions in the Armed Forces and the Ministry of Defence, holding ranks up to a general:

2. Gender considerations have been integrated into daily activities of the Armed Forces through a system of gender advisers, which include 685 positions, 503 of which are presently occupied by women.

Finally, my delegation has specific language proposals regarding ensuring protection of cultural objects before, during and after hostilities. **We will send our written input to the Secretariat of the Global Initiative by 7 May.**

The delegation of Ukraine remains ready to engage constructively to finalize this important draft outcome.

Thank you.