

The Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to International Humanitarian Law

WORKSTREAM 2: NATIONAL IHL COMMITTEES

FIFTH STATE CONSULTATION ON NATIONAL IHL COMMITTEES

24 June 2026

Statement by Finland

I wish to thank the ICRC and all the co-chairs, Germany, Peru, Philippines, and the UK, for all their efforts under this workstream and for preparing the revised draft outcome document.

Finland has had a national IHL committee since 1993 and we have found these consultations very valuable to further improve its work and effectiveness.

We appreciate that the revised text takes into consideration the different needs and capacities of States as well as the varying committee mandates, modalities and contexts. We consider that these recommendations will better advance the establishment of new national IHL committees and further activate existing ones.

The effectiveness of these recommendations depends on their implementation, and we fully support efforts to ensure that relevant recommendations are put into practice. We however suggest to revise the language under outcome 1(e) "*overseeing the implementation of these recommendations*" and 2(i) in the Annex 1. Additional monitoring and reporting duties on the implementation of recommendations under all of the seven workstreams would be very extensive and we would prefer to maintain the focus on how the recommendations could be used as *tools and resources supporting* the implementation of IHL obligations. As we have highlighted before, it is important not to overburden the committees with additional administrative duties or take away time from their substantive work. For example, the Finnish IHL committee has a role in preparing national and Nordic pledges for the International Conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and, in particular, in the follow-up of their implementation. In addition to these pledges, the IHL committee also follows up on the implementation at the national level of the pledges of the European Union. These pledges are an important tool in promoting IHL as they impact concrete actions and major part of the Finnish IHL committee's work goes into these.

We are very pleased that under Annex 1 in 2(h) it has been added that National IHL committees should consider advising, or facilitating the provision of advice, to their State on **integrating gender, age-sensitive, and disability-inclusive approaches**. We note positively also the related additions in 4(e)(v) ja 4(g) of Annex 1. Finland, together with the Finnish Red Cross, pledged at the 34th International Conference to [increase awareness of gender dimensions in armed conflict](#) and made also a pledge on [IHL and persons with disabilities and disability inclusive humanitarian action](#). Stronger integration of a gender perspective into understanding of IHL as well as taking into account the specific barriers and risks faced by persons with disabilities when interpreting and implementing IHL is necessary to strengthen protection for *all*.

Thank you.