

GENERAL STATEMENT BY INDIA ON 5TH IHL GLOBAL CONSULTATIONS

We extend our sincere appreciation to ICRC and the Co-Chairs for their dedicated efforts in assembling these comprehensive draft outcome documents. Especially, ICRC's role in putting these principles is highly appreciable.

2. India's commitment to International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is deeply rooted in its civilizational values and reflected consistently in our past intervention. As a nation firmly devoted to global peace, security, and the rule of law, India has always maintained that respect for human dignity must be respected in the times of conflict. Compliance with IHL norms is essential not only as a legal obligation but as a prerequisite for reconciliation, and global stability.

3. India notes the discussions on preserving pathways to peace on safeguarding civilian infrastructure in and achieving meaningful protection for hospitals. We further note the deliberations on upholding IHL in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as well as the application of these humanitarian rules to naval warfare are important from the safety perspective.

4. As a rule-abiding country, India welcomes these discussions. India has the adequate measures to implement the thrust of these documents. The protections and best practices discussed are already deeply operationalized within India's system through our robust domestic legal frameworks, military manuals, rules of engagement, and IHL training programs for our armed forces.

5. At the same time, India reiterates that the obligations under the Geneva Conventions are the cornerstones of international humanitarian law. It is our firm position that the present discussions and any resulting outcome documents should not go beyond the scope of the Conventions. These initiatives must focus exclusively on enhancing the practical implementation of existing rules and facilitating the exchange of best practices. They should not attempt to reinterpret established principles, impose new customary norms, or create binding legal obligations outside of formally negotiated treaties. Our collective efforts must remain firmly grounded in the established texts of international law, respecting state sovereignty and existing international commitments.

6. In conclusion, India reaffirm its commitment to IHL and look forward to working constructively that advances international peace and human dignity.

Thank you.