

PROMOTING IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

Context

The most damaging impact of armed conflict may be traced to a lack of effective implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL). Therefore, improving the implementation of IHL can tangibly mitigate the effects of armed conflict and improve the protection of civilians. Many states, including G7 states, have robust programs for implementing IHL obligations. Despite near-universal state acceptance of the Geneva conventions of 1949, serious violations of IHL continue to be witnessed in several situations of armed conflict in the world. These include violations involving deliberate targeting of civilians or civilian objects, healthcare facilities, medical and humanitarian personnel, schools which are not being used for military purposes, acts of hostility against cultural objects, as well as arbitrary restrictions on humanitarian access.

Commitments

Through a reaffirmation of the centrality of respect for IHL during armed conflict and through the sharing of good practices, G7 states can set an example by promoting the effective implementation of IHL by partners in order to enhance the protection of civilians affected by armed conflict. G7 states expect scrupulous adherence to IHL by their partners. Therefore, G7 foreign ministers have committed to using their support to state and, when relevant, non-state parties to armed conflict to, inter alia, encourage these parties' effective implementation of IHL. Linking the provision of support to parties to armed conflict with IHL compliance, could foster greater adherence to IHL and a concomitant reduction of unnecessary human suffering in areas of armed conflict.

G7 foreign ministers have committed to practical measures aimed at promoting partners' effective implementation of IHL. Specifically, the G7 will, as appropriate:

- seek commitments from partners to enhance respect for IHL;
- continue to help increase the capacity of state and, when relevant, non-state partners to implement international humanitarian law by assisting them to incorporate IHL into their doctrine, education, field training, operational decision-making processes and rules of engagement; and
- assist partners in ensuring that their disciplinary and/or judicial structures are capable of effectively addressing their own IHL violations should they occur and holding persons accountable for IHL violations in accordance with applicable requirements of international law.

Source: <https://g7.gc.ca/en/g7-presidency/themes/building-peaceful-secure-world/g7-ministerial-meeting/g7-foreign-ministers-joint-communique/promoting-implementation-international-humanitarian-law/>