
Future themes

Aim and scope of the *Review*

The aim of the *International Review of the Red Cross* is to promote reflection on humanitarian law, policy and action in armed conflict and other situations of collective armed violence. A specialized journal on humanitarian law, it endeavours to promote knowledge, critical analysis and development of this law and to contribute to the prevention of violations of rules protecting fundamental rights and values. The *Review* also offers a forum for discussion on contemporary humanitarian action and for analysis of the causes and characteristics of conflicts so as to give a clearer insight into the humanitarian problems they generate.

Structure and composition of the *Review*

The *Review* is made up of four main sections. The first contains articles on the theme under discussion in the respective issue. Selected articles on international humanitarian law not related to that theme may be published in the second section, according to their originality, importance and academic standard. The third section, entitled *Notes and comments*, contains shorter contributions and comments on specific events, legislation or judgments, as well as book reviews. Like the selected articles on humanitarian law, these notes and comments need not necessarily be linked to the particular theme of the *Review* concerned. They are also meant to take up current issues giving rise to debate. Finally, in the *Reports and documents* section, the *Review* publishes official ICRC documents, conference reports, etc.

Future themes – March 2005 to June 2006

The following list of topics indicates areas of reflection, debate and critical analysis for contributions to the *Review*. Within the parameters of the journal's aim, topics may be examined from a historical, legal, political, military-security, psycho-sociological or humanitarian perspective, taking either a general or a regional approach. The points of interest mentioned

below by no means exhaust the various subjects that could be addressed in relation to the future themes.

The dates given below for each theme indicate the planned dates of publication of the respective issue of the *Review*. Articles must be submitted not later than four months ahead of publication, e.g. by the end of February 2005 for the June 2005 issue. Information for contributors and guidelines for referencing can be consulted on the website of the *Review*: www.icrc.org/eng/review

Detention in the context of armed conflicts
and collective armed violence (March 2005)

Deadline for submission: end of November 2004

The first issue of the *International Review of the Red Cross* in 2005 will deal with detention. The question of detention in connection with the fight against international terrorism and the renewed querying of the prohibition of torture are highly topical. We therefore invite contributions which — *inter alia* in light of recent events in Afghanistan and Iraq — take into account the problems related to detention and treatment both by State authorities and by non-State parties, including the phenomenon of hostage-taking. The detention of women and children is still a particularly sensitive issue and contributions regarding these groups of persons are welcome.

The following problems could be analysed:

- Rules and practice: closing the eyes to torture (psychological and social aspects of the prohibition on torture in the context of international terrorism and intelligence gathering).
- Methods of interrogation and international humanitarian law.
- Detention and enforced disappearances.
- Life and problems in prison (psychological, sociological; historical background).
- Children and women in detention: particular issues.
- Detention of and judicial guarantees for suspects in the fight against terrorism.
- Military commissions (to establish/challenge the status of detainees; to prosecute detainees for alleged war crimes).
- Detention by non-State parties in armed conflict, including “detention” of hostages.
- Monitoring conditions of detention: how, by whom, when? (Different modes of action of different organizations: coordination, mutual influence, effectiveness).

- Mechanisms within democratic States to control/monitor conditions of detention in times of armed conflict (parliamentary commissions of inquiry, chain of command, information channels, etc.).

Religion and humanitarian law and action (June 2005)

Deadline for submission: end of February 2005

Religion remains a key factor in many modern-day conflicts. We aim to better identify the problems encountered in the relationship between religion and international humanitarian law and humanitarian action. Subjects of particular interest are the role of religion in the historical development of humanitarian law and the religious values underpinning it, and the impact of religion on *jus in bello*. Furthermore, concepts such as neutrality, universality and impartiality — cornerstones for the success of humanitarian action — are sometimes challenged on religious grounds and we welcome contributions dealing with the acceptance of humanitarian organizations in different religious environments, the role of faith-based humanitarian organizations and the question of religious neutrality in so-called religious wars.

Possible topics:

- The role of religious values in the historical development of humanitarian law.
- Religion, fundamentalism and humanitarian law.
- The role of religion in *jus ad bellum* (as a motivation for war or peace) and *jus in bello* (constraints in warfare).
- The role of religious leaders in enhancing respect for humanitarian law.
- Acceptance of humanitarian organizations in different religious settings.
- Faith-based humanitarian organizations.
- Religious neutrality in religious wars.
- Independent humanitarian action in religious environments/conflicts.

Arms (September 2005)

Deadline for submission: end of May 2005

The year 2005 will see the 60th commemoration of the use of nuclear weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the 2005 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference and the 30th anniversary of the entry into force of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, as well as preparations for the sixth review conference of the said convention in 2006. Whereas conventional weapons continue to be the principal means with which war is fought today, there is also an increased use or development of new technologies in

the weapons industry. We welcome articles that take account of the recent developments in all these areas and contributions that reconcile newly developed means of warfare with the current framework of humanitarian law. In particular, analysis is required of issues relating to so-called “non-lethal” weapons, precision-guided weapons and enhanced high-explosive munitions and their impact on interpretation of the provisions and principles of international humanitarian law. In addition, we are looking for inquiries that take into consideration the effects of new developments on the conflict environment, explosive remnants of war, the relationship between asymmetric warfare and the use of weapons by non-State parties, and the potential use of advances in the life sciences, especially biotechnology, for the development of new weaponry.

Possible topics:

- Use of weapons by non-State parties: asymmetric warfare and obligations under international law.
- Precision-guided weapons and enhanced high-explosive munitions: impact on interpretation of the principles of international humanitarian law.
- So-called “non-lethal” weapons: do new technologies with new effects on the human body mean new challenges for the basic norms of international humanitarian law?
- New developments with regard to weapons: effects on the conflict environment; substantive rules.
- Advances in the life sciences: benefit for humanity versus threat to international humanitarian law?
- Nuclear weapons: 60 years of deterrence, of arms control and of non-use? What now?

Communication and humanitarian action (December 2005)

Deadline for submission: end of August 2005

Communication pervades every aspect of humanitarian law and action. Respect for humanitarian law can be ensured only if its content is known, understood and accepted. The communication of its messages therefore needs to be adapted to the changing contexts. The role of the media, the impact of visual communication and other technological developments call for consideration. Failure to respect that law and violations of it are likewise made known through various channels, through the press, political, humanitarian or judicial institutions. The methods of communication of interna-

tional bodies (Security Council, General Assembly, International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, International Criminal Court, human rights bodies) could be examined. Similarly, people have to understand humanitarian activities if they are to support and accept them. Activities in the field and their successful outcome are thus closely linked to, and indeed also depend on, efficient communication strategies. The question is open as to how communication could better be employed as a means of obtaining access to conflict areas and victims and of drawing attention to them in order to improve their situation.

Possible topics:

- Communication as a tool for the protection of victims.
- Communication and the implementation of international humanitarian law.
- The relevance of public appeals.
- The value and impact of declaratory statements of the Security Council and other organs.
- Promotion and perception of values through communication.
- Intercultural dialogue.
- Methods of disseminating and teaching humanitarian law and principles.
- Changing perceptions/public opinion through communication.
- Visual communication (images, pictures): “shock therapy”; public debate on the basis of images: opportunities and risks.
- Non-verbal communication: the impact of events on understanding, perception, opinion.
- The information technology revolution and its impact on conflicts and humanitarian action.

Transitional Justice and International Criminal Tribunals (March 2006)

Deadline for submission: end of November 2005

Various societies are currently emerging from repressive rule or armed conflict. Ensuring accountability for past mass atrocities or human rights abuses is fundamental for any reconciliation process and the question of how to implement a successful and effective transitional justice process remains the subject of an ongoing debate. In this connection it is of interest to consider the initial work of the International Criminal Court and the practice of the special tribunals, especially the Iraqi Special Tribunal and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, as well as developments in the Extraordinary

Chambers in Cambodia. In addition, we welcome contributions that provide a comparative analysis of transitional justice processes in different countries as well as reflections on the work of recent truth commissions.

Possible topics:

- The International Criminal Court and its initial work.
- Bilateral agreements on exemptions from the International Criminal Court.
- Special tribunals (articles on specific individual tribunals).
- Reconciliation and/or justice.

Conduct of hostilities (June 2006)

Deadline for submission: end of February 2006

The reality of conflict currently seems to be changing radically with regard to the notion of combatants and the notion and protection of civilians. Simultaneously, the question needs to be asked whether there has been a widening of the definition of “military objectives”. Targeted killings have become a common practice of some States, covert military operations are on the increase and urban warfare is now a common feature of today’s asymmetric conflicts. We would be glad to receive articles on these subjects and on any other recent developments regarding the conduct of hostilities.

Possible topics:

- The notion and protection of civilians in contemporary armed conflicts.
- Widening the definition of a “military objective”: consequences for the protection of civilians and civilian objects.
- The problem of targeted killings, and related issues.
- Conduct of hostilities in asymmetric conflicts: the impossibility to comply with international humanitarian law?
- Conduct of hostilities in non-international armed conflicts: insufficient rules?
- Urban warfare and the challenges to international humanitarian law.
- Covert military operations.