**These Guidelines for authors were drafted by Chiara Giaccari and Thibaud De La Bourdonnaye, with input from Sai Sathyanarayanan Venkatesh, Saman Rejali and Ellen Policinski.**

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**Guidelines for Authors**

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The Review’s Editorial Policy and Process

The International Review of the Red Cross (the Review) is a peer-reviewed academic journal, produced by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and published by Cambridge University Press. First published in 1869, it is one the oldest continuing publication dedicated to international humanitarian law, policy and action.

The Review publishes three editions per year, each focused on a particular theme of importance for the work of the ICRC. The Review’s principle audiences include governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, humanitarian practitioners, academics, the media and all those interested in humanitarian issues.

Submissions

All papers should be submitted through the Review’s electronic submission system here.

Please submit a separate title page along with your manuscript. The title page should include:

• **Author(s) Names and Biography.** The author’s name and, if applicable, those of all co-authors, accompanied by a short biography of one to two lines describing the affiliations of each author.

• **Competing Interest statements for all authors.** These statements will be subject to editorial review and may be published in the article. Competing interests are situations that could be perceived to exert an undue influence on the content or publication of an author’s work. They may include, but are not limited to, financial, professional, contractual or personal relationships or situations. If the manuscript has multiple authors, the author submitting must include competing interest declarations relevant to all contributing authors.

• Example wording for a declaration is as follows: “Competing interests: Author A is employed at company B. Author C owns shares in company D, is on the Board of company E and is a member of organisation F. Author G has received grants from company H.” If no competing interests exist, the declaration should state “Competing interests: The author(s) declare none”.

• **Any acknowledgements or funding statements.**
Editorial Policy

The editorial line of the Review incorporates three core dimensions (see Figure 1, below):

1. humanitarian problems emanating from armed conflicts and other situations of violence (OSVs);
2. operational humanitarian responses to those problems;
3. legal challenges or developments needed to respond to humanitarian challenges

Opinions published in the Review reflect the authors’ views only. As the Review is produced and distributed by the ICRC, the Review reserves the right to reject submissions if their publication would jeopardize ICRC operations in the field.

Potential authors who work for the ICRC should refer to their employment contract, the staff rules and regulations and relevant guidelines. Where the author is not speaking in their capacity as an ICRC employee, they may be asked to remove their ICRC affiliation from the author bio. Where the position is not the official position of the ICRC, a disclaimer may be added that the work was written in a personal capacity and does not necessarily reflect the views of the ICRC.

Right of First Refusal

Manuscripts submitted to the Review must be original, unpublished work. They must be academic in tone. Articles may be simultaneously submitted to other journals or publications. However, the Review reserves a right of first refusal, meaning that in cases where an offer of publication has been received from another journal, the author must notify the Review by email at review@icrc.org. The Review will respond to the author within a period of two
weeks to let them know whether the submission will be accepted for publication in the Review. If not, it may be published elsewhere.

**Editorial Process**

The editorial team cannot guarantee publication of any submissions, whether they are solicited or spontaneous.

All authors are expected to take note of and follow the journal’s editorial policy. The editorial team reserves the right to reject a submission at any stage of the production process if it falls outside of its editorial line.

All submissions undergo an initial screening by the Review’s editorial team prior to peer review. Manuscripts that provisionally meet the requirements of the journal are then sent to peer review. The Review uses a double-blind anonymous peer review process. Peer reviewers are identified based on their expertise. Manuscripts that do not provisionally meet the requirements will be rejected without undergoing peer review, also known as a “desk rejection”.

Based on the feedback of the anonymous peer reviewer(s), the editorial team evaluates the submission and notifies the author(s) of the status of their article, which may be one of the following five possible outcomes:

1. **Accepted**: The article is accepted without any changes. Manuscripts that are accepted are sent directly to Cambridge University Press for copy editing and typesetting. However, this rarely happens in the first draft.

2. **Accepted, subject to minor revisions**: The article only needs some revisions to be accepted. Articles accepted contingent on minor revisions can nevertheless be rejected if comments are not integrated. The revised manuscript is evaluated by the editorial team and if the minor revisions are sufficiently onboarded by the author(s), the manuscript is accepted and sent to Cambridge University Press for copy editing and typesetting.

3. **Accepted, subject to major revisions**: The article needs to be substantially revised before it can be accepted—usually both in terms of structure and content. As major revisions are needed, once the revised draft is received from the author(s) it is reviewed by the editorial team and, based on the extent of revisions required and undertaken, it may be put through a second round of peer review. The revised draft of the article can still be rejected if the first round of feedback from the editors and peer reviewers were not sufficiently addressed by the author. In cases where the author(s) disagree with the reviewers’ comments, they are required to state why the comments have not been onboarded. If the feedback is sufficiently onboarded by the author, the manuscript is accepted and sent to Cambridge University Press for copy editing and typesetting.

4. **Rejected with invitation to resubmit**: The submission is rejected because its structure, form and/or contents is inadequate for publication with the Review. However, the possibility for a resubmission is given, after substantial rewriting. If the author chooses to re-submit their article, the resubmission will be treated as a first submission and
reviewed by the editorial team before putting it through the peer review process once more. Even if the author resubmits their substantially re-written manuscript, no guarantee of publication is given.

(5) **Rejected:** The article is rejected for publication because, taking into account the feedback of the anonymous peer reviewer(s), the editorial team considers that the manuscript falls outside of the journal’s editorial line and or requires re-writing so substantial that it would require the authors to essentially write a new article.

### Addressing the Editorial Comments

Once the author receives his or her manuscript with editorial suggestions and comments, it is important that the author goes through these suggested edits and comments, addresses them, and sends the revised draft back to the Review staff within the specified deadline.

**Changes:** It is important that all changes to the draft be implemented using the “track changes” function, to enable the Review staff working on the article to easily identify the changes made from the previous draft.

**Areas of disagreement:** Should the author disagree with an edit or a comment, they should include comments sufficiently justifying their reasoning for rejected the required changes.
Structure and drafting

This section provides some tips and suggestions for writing in the style of the Review, as well as some of the criteria used by peer reviewers and the editorial team in assessing the quality of submissions.

Topic and Thesis

An appropriate title and unique, academically robust thesis are two of the most important components reviewers take into account when assessing a submission. The following provides some guidance, specifically on constructing a thesis.

**Topic:** Before submitting an article to the Review, authors are advised to consider whether the subject topic and contents of their submission fall within the editorial line of the journal (see Figure 1, above). We would suggest also avoiding overly broad topics, which cannot be dealt with in detail in the form of a single academic article. However, please do take note that it is important to contextualise your argument within a broader framework before delving into your specific topic.

**Thesis:** In constructing their thesis, authors are encouraged to consider how their article fills a research or knowledge gap. The thesis must present a unique analysis, which is not a summary of already existing research on the topic at hand. An excellent thesis hinges on a robust thesis question. A thesis question encapsulates the subject matter of your article. Your article should then provide a clear answer to it.

- Example of a thesis question: Why would armed groups comply with IHL?

The thesis statement answers the thesis question by answering the question: “What is the main point this article is trying to get across, and why should a reader care?”

The thesis framework is usually presented in a two-fold way:

1. highlighting your main idea or argument
2. clearly noting why this idea or argument is important. You can identify this importance through highlighting what literature gap the analysis aims to fill, or the unique angle of analyses the manuscript undertakes.

Major Components of an Academic Article

The following provides details on what the reviewers consider for each element of the manuscript, from the title to the conclusion.

One component that usually makes a drastic difference in the readability of a paper is its structure. In this respect, once the author has defined their thesis question, drafting an outline before starting to write can be useful.

A good outline can include: (1) your thesis question; (2) supporting arguments; (3) the structure of the manuscript.
To take an example:¹

- Thesis question: why and how is IHL binding on organised armed groups?
- Supporting arguments: Organised armed groups are bound via the state on whose territory they operate; They are bound because their members are bound by IHL as individuals; They are bound by virtue of the fact that they exercise de facto governmental functions; etc...
- Article structure:
  1. Introduction;
  2. Binding force via the State: The doctrine of legislative jurisdiction;
  3. Binding force via the individual;
  4. Binding force because of the exercise of de facto governmental functions;
  5. Binding force by virtue of customary IHL: Organized armed groups as international legal persons;
  6. Binding force by virtue of consent by organized armed groups;
  7. Concluding observations.

Furthermore, each part could be bolstered by examples stemming from practice;

- Example: Organised armed groups are bound by IHL when they exercise de facto government functions, as supported by Jean Pictet’s Commentary to the Fourth Geneva Convention: “if the responsible authority at their head exercises effective sovereignty, it is bound by the very fact that it claims to represent the country, or part of the country.”²

Although there is room for creativity, Review articles are generally structurally comprised of the following elements, arranged in the following order:

(1) Title
The title of the paper must be reflective of its contents. “Catchy” titles that draw in the readers are encouraged. Try to make your title short and concise. Originality is good, but also make sure it is clear what the article is about.
- Example: The Applicability of International Humanitarian Law to Organized Armed Groups.

(2) Author(s) Names and Biography
The authors name and, if applicable, those of all co-authors, accompanied by a short biography of one to two lines describing the affiliations of each author.

(3) Keywords
Five to six keywords, to help readers find the manuscript once it is published online. Example: armed groups; international humanitarian law; binding; non-international armed conflict.

(4) Abstract
Following the keywords, an abstract of about 100 words. This section should outline the main arguments put forward by the author(s) and briefly outline how these will be analysed. The thesis question and the conclusion should be clearly stated as a part of the abstract. We recommend that author(s) write their abstracts after they have finished writing their article, in order to appropriately reflect on the scope of the article from start to finish.

Example: “While it is generally accepted today that international humanitarian law (IHL) is binding on organized armed groups, it is less clear why that is so and how the binding force of IHL on organized armed groups is to be construed. A number of explanations for that binding force have been offered. The present contribution critically examines five such explanations, namely that organized armed groups are bound via the state on whose territory they operate; that organized armed groups are bound because their members are bound by IHL as individuals; that norms of IHL are binding on organized armed groups by virtue of the fact that they exercise de facto governmental functions; that customary IHL is applicable to organized armed groups because of the (limited) international legal personality that they possess; and that organized armed groups are bound by IHL because they have consented thereto.”

(5) Introduction
Roadmap paragraph: a paragraph giving a concise description of the arguments that can be found in the article and clearly explaining how the author(s) plan to answer the thesis question.

(6) Main body
This is where the author(s) develop the thesis question by expanding on the issue, providing examples, and comparing different views.
- The author(s) should rely on different sources. Proving an argument by relying on various sources is more convincing than only using one.
  Example: “One scholar argued that… However, it has also been held that…”
- The manuscript should be composed in different sections and subsections (as already mentioned in the introduction). The purpose of these sections is to develop on and provide an answer to the thesis question.
- The author(s) should remember to:
  - refer to different lines of arguments;
  - provide examples;
  - put forward their opinion (if they wish to take a specific stance).
- Overall, the division between sections should be coherent, i.e. each section should be of a similar length.
- Each section should be linked to the previous one. Suggestions on how to structure paragraphs and link them together can be found in the sub-section on “Paragraphs” below.

(7) Paragraphs
- The author(s) should start a new paragraph for each argument provided.
- A typical paragraph usually consists of three parts: (1) a topic sentence with a premise or argument; (2) supporting details relating to the topic sentence/supporting the argument; and (3) a concluding sentence highlighting what the takeaway is from the premise.

- The first (“topic”) sentence of each paragraph should encapsulate the argument that will be developed in the paragraph. A topic sentence is a key way to flag what the premise is, and how it ties in with the thesis.

- The concluding sentence of the paragraph should provide a summary or conclusive idea of what has been developed throughout the paragraph.

- Each paragraph should be linked to the previous one: the transition from one paragraph to another should be coherent.

- “Bridging sentences” should be used to connect the previous paragraph to the next one. Bridging sentences may:
  - Refer directly to the previous section: “This”, “As such”, “Therefore”;
  - Add to the previous section: “Furthermore”, “In addition”;
  - Introduce debates related to the idea conveyed: “However”.

Example: Armed groups comply with IHL to gain the support of the local population... Therefore, armed groups generally follow IHL rules in order to be considered legitimate domestically... Furthermore, armed groups value being perceived as legitimate also on the international plane.

(8) Conclusion
In this section, the author(s) should wrap up their article, providing an answer to their thesis question without providing new arguments. However, they can still open the debate on future research to be conducted, and/or highlight the broader implications of the article.

Example: “Whether it is an advisable choice to rely on any one, or indeed more than one, of the explanations why and how IHL is applicable to organized armed groups will very much depend on the context in which the issue of that applicability arises. [...] What remains is that none of the explanations for the binding force of IHL on organized armed groups is without its weaknesses. That imperfection epitomizes the fact that IHL remains deeply engrained in a state-centric paradigm of norm generation and acceptance. While significant developments have taken place in the regulation of NIACs, organized armed groups remain largely excluded from these developments. Admittedly, their inclusion into the process of articulating norms bears a number of risks and will not be a quick fix to all the challenges that we face in the realm of compliance with IHL. However, the reality – in military as much as in humanitarian terms – of organized armed groups suggests that they need to be understood as executors of a law that is also their own.”
Style Guide

Spelling and Grammar
- Please use British English spelling (labour, not labor; - judgement, not judgment (except in the case of legal judgments); but note -ize, not -ise). Please use the spellings found at Oxford English Dictionary.
- Always double-check your grammar and punctuation: mistakes can lessen the quality of your reasoning.
- Easy spell check tools are available online, or sometimes just printing the article makes mistakes easier to spot. You can rely on the Spelling & Grammar tool on Word, or tools available online.

Language
- Make sure to adopt a clear and concise language which is neither informal nor too formal.
- If possible, refrain from expressing yourself in the first person singular (“I”) or plural (“we”).
  - Example: “This article will focus on...” Rather than “I will talk about...”
- The ordinary meaning of a particular word in a legal context can differ from normal usage. E.g. war / armed conflict.
- You can consult legal dictionaries for clarification (e.g. Free content: Black’s Law Dictionary).
- You should avoid overly long sentences, since they can confuse the reader.
  - Advice: Reading the sentence out loud helps to see if it’s too long.

Other specific formatting requirements
- Manuscripts should be submitted in Word format in 12 pt Times New Roman font with 1.5 line spacing (including for the footnotes).
- Length: Manuscripts submitted to the Review should be approximately 10,000 words, footnotes included.
- Highlighting: No highlighting (bold, italics, underlined) should be used within the text body, except for italics for foreign language terms: e.g. a limine. Foreign organisations should not be set in italics.
- Headings: Please do not use more than 3 different levels of headings, and follow the following styling:
  Heading Level 1 (Arial font, 12pt, bolded)
  Heading Title Level 2 (Arial font, 12 pt, unbolded)
  Heading Title Level 3 (Arial font, 12 pt, italicized)
- Punctuation points should be followed by a single space.
- Double inverted commas should be used throughout. Single inverted commas should be reserved for quotations within quotations.

- Quotations:
  - If the quotation forms a full sentence, the closing full stop should be inside the quotation mark.
  - Quoted passages of more than about forty words should be indented, without quotation marks.
  - Ellipses “...” should be used to indicate an omission of words within a quotation.
  - The first word after a colon should always be lower case, except for subtitles in references.

- Centuries should be referred to as follows: twentieth century. When used adjectivally they should be hyphenated (e.g. twentieth-century phenomenon).

- Please do not use Oxford commas, unless it actually helps clarify the list of items.

- Capitals: Capitals should be used when a specific reference is intended (e.g. the Parliament)

- Please note:
  - “States” is always written with a capital S.
  - “States party to + name of the treaty”, but “States Parties”.
  - Occupying Power, Detaining Power, Protecting Power
  - Capitals for official titles when followed with the person’s name (e.g.: “Minister of Health Joe Bloggs”) but otherwise lower case (e.g. “The ICRC president met with the minister of health”). But Ministry of Health with capitals.

- Abbreviations:
  - Abbreviations should be used as rarely as possible in the article, and only when indispensable (e.g. too frequent occurrence of otherwise complex expressions).
  - Acronyms and abbreviations are generally not followed by a full stop (EU US, ECHR UN, and Mr and Dr, not Mr. and Dr.) except if an abbreviation does not end in the same letter as the word (Doc., Vol., No., Prof.).
  - Abbreviations within footnotes and parentheses are permissible (e.g., etc., i.e., ibid.). Abbreviations of the Geneva Conventions and Protocols are also permissible after having spelt them out on first use (GC I/ GC II/etc./ AP I ...).
  - Please use (ed.) but (eds)

- Dates: Use the following style: 1 February 1989.

- Numerals below 100 should be spelt out, except for ages, which should always been given in digits. Please note: 10,000, not 10.000. Percentages should always be given in figures (e.g. 7%).

- Italics: Case names and Latin expressions and abbreviations should be italicized (habeas corpus, mens rea, prima facie, ultra vires, de facto, ibid.).

- Tables, graphs, and maps: should all have a brief descriptive title and a source.

- Translations and emphasis: Please indicate in a footnote, between brackets, when the translation is yours “(author’s translation)” or when you add an emphasis in a citation
“(emphasis added)”. Where emphasis has not been added by the author it should also be indicated in a footnote “(emphasis in original)”. 

Revision and Rewriting
- Do not forget to proofread your article before submitting it: you might want to ask a second person to read over your work.
- Always take at least an extra couple of days to revise the article

Plagiarism
- When using someone else’s work/research, always make sure to properly reference it to avoid plagiarism: this means no other work (including the author’s own previous works) should be referred to in the article without proper citation/footnotes.
- The Review might request citations to facts to make clear that information regarding, for instance, ongoing conflicts, is not being provided by the ICRC.

Footnotes and Referencing
Submissions must comply with the following referencing style:

Literature
Books with one or multiple authors:
- Names and surnames of all authors (use et al. only if there are more than three authors).
- Title in italics, using headline case (initial caps) on all significant words. The subtitle should be separated from the title by a colon.
- Edition, Volume number (if applicable)
- Publisher, city, year
- Page number and/or paragraph number (if applicable): use “p.” or “pp.” for page(s) and “para.” or “paras” for paragraph(s).
  - Page ranges should be indicated as follows: pp. 34–35
  - Separate page citations within the same work: pp. 4, 86.
  - Please use ff. instead of et seq. (pp. 5 ff.)
- Examples:

Book chapters:
- Names and surnames of all authors of the chapter
- Title between double inverted commas
- ‘in’

**National case law:**
Please follow as far as possible the format of the national tribunal.

**International Treaties**

**International Conventions, Protocols:**
- Protocol Additional (I) to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts, 1125 UNTS 3, 8 June 1977 (entered into force 7 December 1978), Art. 35(1).
- Geneva Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field of 12 August 1949, 75 UNTS 31 (entered into force 21 October 1950), Art. 47.
  - “Article” in sentences but “Art.” or “Arts” in references.
  - “Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions” (subsequent references in the same text: “Common Article 3”) in the body of the text; “common Art. 3” in references.

**Statutes:**

**Miscellaneous**

**UN or regional body Documents:**

**UN Resolutions:**
- Example: UNGA Res. 2857 (XXVI), 20 December 1971
- Example: UNSC Res. 181, 7 August 1963

**Commentaries:**

**ICRC Customary Law Study:**
Cross References
- Where there are subsequent references to the same work, use the initial of the name of the author, followed by his/her surname and by “above note 1, p. 4” and not “supra note 1, p.4”.
  - Example: T. Meron, above note 1, p. 4
- If more than one work of the same author have previously been cited in the same note, use a short form of the title work to indicate which one it is.
- Where a reference appears repeatedly throughout an article and/or is a fundamental source for the article, or where a reference is commonly known by a shortened form of its title, authors may use a shortened form of the title in cross-references, rather than the author name. The shortened form should be provided in brackets at the end of the first citation of the reference and should always be in non-italics and without quote marks.
  - Example:
    [Repeat citation] San Remo Manual, above note 3, p. 182
- Repeat references to legal cases should consist of the court, a shortened version of the case name in italics, and the ‘above note’ cross-reference.

Bibliography
at:  https://international-review.icrc.org/articles/applicability-international-humanitarian-law-organized-armed-groups.