
ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

I. Position of Egypt on international humanitarian law conventions

1. Conventions ratified or acceded to

- The four Geneva Conventions, dated 12 August 1949, ratified on 1 November 1952;
- Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions, relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts, ratified on 9 October 1992;
- Protocol II Additional to the Geneva Conventions, relating to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts, ratified on 9 October 1992;
- Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague, 14 May 1954), ratified on 17 August 1955;
- Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague, 14 May 1954), ratified on 17 August 1955;
- Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague, 26 March 1999), ratified on 3 August 2005;
- Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (10 December 1976), ratified on 1 April 1982;
- 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified on 6 July 1990;
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, acceded to on 2 June 2007;
- Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (17 June 1925), ratified on 6 December 1928;
- 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, ratified on 8 February 1952.

2. Conventions signed

- (i) Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the annex thereto, of 1972, signed on 10 April 1972;
- (ii) The Statute of the International Criminal Court of 1998, signed on 26 December 2000.

II. Egyptian efforts at the national level towards strengthening the application of the principles of international humanitarian law

1. In the area of combating war crimes

(a) National legislation in the area of combating war crimes

National legislation provides penalties for the substantial violations mentioned in articles 50, 51, 130 and 147 of the fourth Geneva Convention and articles 11 to 85 of the first Additional Protocol. The

following constitute the most important national legislation for the application of those conventions at the national level:

- Article 251 bis and 317, item 9, of the Criminal Code (Act No. 58 of 1937), amended, respectively, by Act No. 13 of the 1940 and Act No. 58 of 1937 promulgating the Criminal Code;
- Articles 4/130, 4/3, 137, 141, 151, 152, 166 and 167 of the Military Code (Act No. 25 of 1966);
- The Arab Republic of Egypt has ratified the international Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity. Under article 151 of the Egyptian Constitution, international conventions, immediately on the ratification thereof or accession thereto, become part of Egyptian law and applicable in the same manner as any other legislation and the various types and levels of courts are bound to apply and execute their provisions;
- As for the provisions pertaining to international judicial cooperation and the extradition of criminals, in addition to the conclusion by the Arab Republic of Egypt of numerous international judicial cooperation agreements in respect of criminal matters with numerous States, both Arab and non-Arab, which have now become the authoritative basis for working with those States, the Arab Republic of Egypt spares no effort in applying the principle of reciprocity and international comity where no such agreements exist;
- The International Cooperation Section of the Ministry of Justice is about to complete the preparation and drafting of a bill on international judicial cooperation in criminal matters. The bill contains provisions on extradition, the transfer of sentenced persons and the transfer of criminal proceedings, in addition to provisions for cooperation with international criminal courts, whether such courts have been established under an international convention, such as the International Criminal Court, or pursuant to a resolution of the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, as in the case of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia or the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda;
- The preparation and drafting of a bill on the repression of international crime (war crimes, crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity) have been completed. The bill contains provisions on the non-applicability of statutory limitations to such crimes or the related punishments;
- The Military Code includes provisions relating to punishment for war crimes and has been applied by military courts;

(b) Identity cards

Egypt has taken steps for the issuance of the identity cards which are provided for in, and models for which are annexed to, the fourth Geneva Convention and the first Additional Protocol thereto, as follows:

- Cards for members of medical and religious services attached to the armed forces;
- Identity cards for persons who accompany the armed forces;
- Capture cards;
- Internment cards;
- Correspondence cards;
- Prisoner-of-war death cards;
- Civil defence personnel identity cards;

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- Identity cards for journalists on dangerous professional missions.

2. Legislation on emblem protection

- Act No. 12, passed on 25 March 1940, and the decree issued on 9 April 1940 on the protection of the use of the red crescent and similar emblems and designations;
- In addition, the preparation and drafting of a new bill on the protection of the Red Cross and Red Crescent emblems have been completed. The bill has been referred to the People's Assembly in preparation for the taking of steps for its promulgation in the near future.

3. Dissemination of the provisions of international humanitarian law

(a) In the area of training of judges

International humanitarian law is taught at the National Centre for Judicial Studies to all civilian and military judges and members of the Office of the Public Prosecutor. It was taught in four six-hour sessions for assistants in the civilian and military prosecutors' offices in 2005 and 2006, at which time 940 prosecutors' assistants took advantage of the opportunity. Approximately 200 judges were also taught, in two four-hour sessions.

Competitions for men of the judiciary were organized in April 2005 and March 2006, in each of which 35 judges, both civilian and military, participated. The top three were selected to travel to Beirut to attend an in-depth session on international humanitarian law at a specialized institute in Lebanon.

In May 2005 and April 2006, research competitions were organized at the Ministries of Justice and the Interior, in each of which 42 judges and 24 police officers took part. The top two from the Ministry of Justice and the top participant from the police travelled to Beirut to take part in an in-depth course on international humanitarian law at a specialized institute in Lebanon.

An in-depth session on international humanitarian law is being prepared at the National Centre for Judicial Studies for an elite group of civilian and military judges and prosecutor's office members.

(b) In the area of training of military personnel

International humanitarian law is taught in all military schools and institutes, to students, officers and commanders of various levels.

Special training courses are held for officers in the field of international humanitarian law to prepare them as legal experts.

Three training sessions were held in three stages for members of the military judiciary, as follows:

- Advanced course for members of the military prosecutor's office;
- High-level course for the military judiciary;
- Preparation of commanders' courses for members of the armed forces. The courses lasted 12 hours and were held at the National Centre for Judicial Studies.

In addition, a symposium was organized for representatives of the armed forces in Arab States for the teaching of international humanitarian law in military schools, training in its principles and its inclusion in military programmes.

Books, references and printed materials on international humanitarian law are prepared and supplied to units and individuals.

(c) In the area of training of policemen

The Ministry of the Interior has prepared programmes for the dissemination of international humanitarian law among police academy students and officers of various ranks. Moreover, international humanitarian law has been included as a core subject for fourth-division students in the police academy and for teaching to students in institutes for various non-commissioned police officers.

A group of officers were prepared in coordination with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) mission in Cairo to take charge of promoting awareness of the precepts of the law in the various police sectors.

Competitions are held among all the officers of the Ministry and students in training institutes in the field of international humanitarian law.

The subject "International Humanitarian Law" is included in the higher studies research plan in the police academy.

Police offices are provided with references, documents and conventions pertaining to international humanitarian law.

Periodic meetings are held between the security commands and representatives of the Red Cross in Cairo.

Foreign delegations of officers are sent to study international humanitarian law.

Publications including the principles of international humanitarian law are prepared for distribution to all officers of all ranks.

In February and March 2005 two in-depth sessions on international humanitarian law were held in coordination with the Red Cross, in which 100 officers belonging to the mid-level command of the police participated, i.e., 50 in each session. The top two participants in each of the two sessions were sent to Beirut to attend an in-depth course on international humanitarian law at a specialized institute in Lebanon.

In March 2005 a specialized course was held for officers working in the tourism area, in which 30 officers participated.

In April 2005 a day of training was held for officers working in the Northern Sinai Security Directorate, in which 20 officers participated.

In April 2005 a day of training was held for officers working in the Southern Sinai Security Directorate, in which 20 officers participated.

(d) In the area of training of Members of Parliament

Special symposiums have been organized for members of the People's Assembly as well as training sessions for Assembly employees and researchers.

(e) In the area of training of diplomats

Diplomats receive instruction in international humanitarian law at the Institute for Diplomatic Studies.

(f) Courses on dissemination in various Government circles

- Higher education and universities

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- Universities teach the subject "International Humanitarian Law" to students in the faculties of Law, Economics, Political Science and Information, as well as in higher studies.
 - Primary and secondary education
 - There exists an ongoing plan for the inclusion of information on international humanitarian law in the study curricula for school students, the content depending on the stage of study.
 - More than 800 trainers have been trained in the programme "Introduction to International Humanitarian Law" in the various governorates and actual training with the programme has begun in some schools.
 - Information
 - In May 2006 a three-day course was organized for members of the media. Twenty-five persons from the various media sectors participated in the course, which was aimed at familiarizing them with international humanitarian law and the importance of the media in spreading knowledge about it.
 - Special courses on the dissemination of the law by the national society
 - There exist numerous dissemination programmes that are carried out jointly by the Egyptian Red Crescent Society and the ICRC delegation in Cairo for Red Crescent youth in all the governorates. They have included the holding of a training session between the Red Cross and the Red Crescent in September 2006 on the search for missing persons and a course for Red Crescent volunteers in Giza in November 2006.
 - The International Cooperation Section in the Ministry of Justice is about to complete the establishment of an Internet site for the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law in the Arab Republic of Egypt. Its purpose is to make known the provisions of international humanitarian law, related judicial studies and research and all international instruments so as to encourage States' accession to them. It will also provide links to all specialized agencies and other national committees with a view to the strengthening of ties and the exchange of information. The site will also serve to host a semi-annual bulletin.
 - In addition, an International Humanitarian Law Centre has been created under the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law of the International Cooperation Section of the Ministry of Justice. The Centre is building a collection of all studies and books relating to international humanitarian law, which will be available to anyone doing studies in that field.
 - A meeting of Arab Government experts was held in February 2005.
 - A meeting of national experts in the field of international humanitarian law was held in January 2006.
 - The sixth meeting of Arab governmental experts was held in February 2007.
- 4. In the area of support to the national Red Crescent or Red Cross societies**
- Decree No. 1925 of the President of the Republic, of 1969, declared the Red Crescent Society a public society.
- 5. In the area of the establishment of national committees on international humanitarian law**
- (a) A National Committee on International Humanitarian Law was formed under Prime Ministerial Decree No. 149 of 2000. The Committee is chaired by the Ministry of Justice, while the International and Cultural Cooperation Section of the Ministry of Justice serves as its technical secretariat. Its members

include the Ministries of Defence, the Interior, Justice, Foreign Affairs, Higher Education and General Intelligence; the Egyptian Red Crescent Society; and the ICRC delegation in Cairo. The funds needed for the Committee to perform its mission are allocated out of the budget of the Ministry of Justice.

- (b) Four subcommittees have been created under the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law, as follows:
- Committee on Conferences and International Cooperation;
 - Legislative Committee;
 - Information Committee;
 - Education Committee.
- (c) An annual plan of action on international humanitarian law is being prepared. It will include activities to be undertaken by the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law with a view to promoting awareness of international humanitarian law and the application of its provisions.
- (d) The Committee holds its meetings on a regular basis and whenever there is a specific need.
- (e) A specific set of rules of procedure exists and is followed by the Committee.

III. Draft plan of action of the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law from January to December 2007

In view of the mission of the technical secretariat of the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law and the achievements realized during the previous year, the technical secretariat undertook to draft a regional plan of action for the Committee with the aim of disseminating the principles of international humanitarian law at all levels and explaining the results targeted in each subcommittee, which are as follows:

1. Committee on Conferences and International Cooperation

- (i) Review of the celebration, scheduled to be held on 25 and 26 February 2007, of the issuance of the Arabic version of the study of customary international humanitarian law norms in coordination with the ICRC delegation and discussion of the related agenda;
- (ii) Review of the sixth meeting of Arab governmental experts on Arab implementation of international humanitarian law, scheduled to be held on 27 and 28 February 2007, in coordination with the ICRC delegation, and discussion of the related agenda;
- (iii) Preparation for the annual symposium of the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law;
- (iv) Follow-up of the regional plan of action for the implementation of international humanitarian law at the regional level, establishment of a schedule of international and regional meetings on international humanitarian law and organization of symposiums and conferences to prepare for those meetings with a view to exchanging views, bringing points of view closer together and attempting to reach agreement on unified international and regional positions to facilitate the incorporation and application of the provisions of international humanitarian law.

2. Legislative Committee

- (i) Follow-up and discussion of the responses of the committees concerned to the draft law on combating crimes against humanity and war crimes;

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- (ii) Follow-up on the draft law on emblems and protected international designations, the preparation of which has been completed and which has been forwarded to the parliamentary committee in the People's Assembly;
 - (iii) Examination of the preparation of a draft law on the protection of cultural property in times of armed conflict in the light of the Cairo Declaration on the protection of cultural property and the Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);
 - (iv) Follow-up of action taken regarding the appropriateness of accession by the Arab Republic of Egypt to article 90 of the first Additional Protocol of 1977;

3. Information Committee

- (i) Continuation of efforts to disseminate the principles of international humanitarian law through the media and to familiarize the public with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and also to cover the work of the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law and make its activities in various fields known;
- (ii) Continuation of the holding of special sessions for members of the media on raising awareness of international humanitarian law and the role of the National Committee in promoting its implementation at the national level;
- (iii) According of importance to the establishment of an Internet site of the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law in coordination with the ICRC delegation, for the purpose of making known the provisions of international humanitarian law and related judicial studies and research and periodically reviewing the work and activities of the Committee;

4. Education Committee

- (i) Continued coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education with a view to the inclusion of the subject "International Humanitarian Law" in university curricula, in particular in the faculties of Law, Political Science and Information, in the context of the study of public international law or as an independent subject within the framework of the programme of higher studies; and also follow-up of the efforts of the Ministry of Higher Education aimed at including international humanitarian law among the subjects of general cultural activities through scientific conferences and symposiums;
- (ii) Coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education and the ICRC delegation in order to provide support to the Arab Library in the area of international humanitarian law with abundant writings in Arabic;
- (iii) Follow-up of the efforts made to include international humanitarian law in the materials for training courses for members of the judiciary, officers of the armed forces and diplomats;
- (iv) Collaboration with the quarters concerned with a view to the preparation of programmes for the dissemination of the precepts of international humanitarian law among parliamentarians so as to facilitate the proposal and adoption of draft acts relating to that branch of law;
- (v) Follow-up of the efforts of the Ministry of Education in the area of dissemination of the principles of international humanitarian law and the inclusion of its fundamental concepts in school curricula;
- (vi) Coordination with the quarters concerned in efforts to include the topic "protection of cultural property" in school and university curricula as well as in the educational programmes of the armed forces and members of the police, the judiciary and the diplomatic corps.