



PERMANENT MISSION OF ROMANIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**The 77<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**Sixth Committee**

**Agenda item 81 “Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of  
1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts”**

**Statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Romania  
to the United Nations, H. E. Mr. Cornel Feruță**

**New York, 17 October 2022**

**Mr. Chair,**

Romania welcomes the resumption by the Sixth Committee of the discussions on the Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts.

Respecting International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is both a moral and strategic imperative. In today's world faced with an unprecedented number of conflicts, the significance of this set of norms aimed at limiting the effects of war and protecting civilians is greater than ever.

Romania is of the view that the four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, as well as other relevant international treaties have stood the test of time and must continue to regulate the conduct of hostilities.

In accordance with article 1 common to the four Geneva Conventions, States are under obligation to "respect and ensure respect" for these Conventions in all circumstances. Such efforts are to be carried out both in wartime, by ensuring that parties to an armed conflict comply with the law, and in peacetime, by undertaking preventive measures and dissemination activities.

Romania is committed to further work towards consolidating respect for IHL at the international and regional levels, through various initiatives meant to foster dialogue and cooperation, as well as at the national level, through the adoption and enforcement of legislative and practical measures.

Spreading knowledge of IHL as widely as possible is one of the best means of supporting its effective implementation.

Guided by this approach, in 2021 Romania published a voluntary national report on the implementation of IHL at domestic level, elaborated under the coordination of the National Commission on International Humanitarian Law. The report is meant to give an overall picture of Romania's actions in this area and further raise awareness about IHL in an accessible way to anyone interested in such matters, including the public.

The exercise was also aimed at stimulating inter-institutional cooperation and helping national authorities to identify any institutional and normative gaps and, consequently, to improve the coherence and effectiveness of actions in this field.

Contrary to most other branches of international law, the core IHL treaties have a limited number of mechanisms to ensure compliance with its norms and lack a mandatory reporting system on national implementation. Therefore, national voluntary reports are an important self-assessing tool in support of strengthening compliance with IHL and further stimulating dialogue on IHL issues both in the domestic

and global arena. We encourage other states to follow suit and prepare such reports and we stand ready to share our own experience.

**Mister Chair,**

Romania is an active and steadfast supporter of the mandate and well-functioning of the International Criminal Court, whose activity represents an essential contribution in the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole.

We have responded positively to the ICC Prosecutor's appeal made earlier this year for additional financial resources and we are involved in the selection process of experts who could be seconded within the Office of the Prosecutor, thus helping in the fields identified as a priority by his Office.

We continue to extend our support to the ongoing review efforts and we stand ready to contribute to this complex process from our position as a member of the Bureau and as one of the focal points for non-cooperation.

As a reflection of the importance and continued relevance of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, earlier this year Romania has ratified all the amendments to Article 8 of the Statute.

Both the publication of our national report of the implementation of IHL at the domestic level, as well as the ratification of the amendments to Article 8 of the Rome Statute by Romania, are measures reflected in the Report of the Secretary-General on the agenda item under debate. We express our gratitude to the ICRC for including these updates in their submission.

**Mister Chair,**

The adequacy of International Humanitarian Law in contemporary armed conflict has been under scrutiny in recent years. However, current violations of IHL are not a proof of a lack of relevance of this body of law, but, in many instances, a consequence of deliberate acts of non-compliance.

One stark such example is taking place in Romania's close vicinity. The Russian Federation is directing an unjustified and unprovoked illegal military aggression against Ukraine, committing blatant violations of International Humanitarian Law in the process.

There is no alternative to holding accountable all those involved in committing violations of International Law, including International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law. Romania has joined other States Parties to the Rome Statute in a referral to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to investigate any acts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide that have occurred on the territory of Ukraine.

Just last week, the Romanian judicial authorities signed an agreement to become a member of the joint investigation team supported by EUROJUST on alleged core international crimes committed in Ukraine.

In addition, Romania supported and continues to support targeted efforts to investigate Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law violations, such as those of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine and the Moscow Mechanism of the OSCE. The findings of these bodies offer a comprehensive accounting of evidence of Russia's Human Rights abuses and International Humanitarian Law violations.

We must continue to condemn and publicly expose the attacks against civilians and stand united in protecting those who are already suffering or facing imminent threats as a result of the aggression against Ukraine. Romania stands ready to continue to play its part in all of these efforts, as a responsible actor in the international arena and a strong supporter of International Law and Justice.

**Mister Chair,**

I conclude by assuring you that Romania remains committed to work to ensure compliance with IHL at all levels, heartened by the continued relevance of this body of law for the protection of civilians and the preservation of human dignity in times of armed conflict.

Thank you!