



Permanent Mission of Italy  
UN - New York

**Follow-up to UNGA res 77/107 ("Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts")**

**Submission by Italy on new developments and activities undertaken during the reporting period 2022-2024**

---

- I.** Ratifications or Accessions to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, their Additional Protocols and other relevant international humanitarian law (IHL) treaties

Not applicable

- II.** Adoption of national legislation to implement the above-mentioned instruments

Not applicable

- III.** Adoption of other measures of implementation and for the dissemination of IHL

**Promotion and Dissemination of International Humanitarian Law**

- *Adoption of the Voluntary report on the implementation of international humanitarian law in Italy*

In 2022-2023 the Commission for the Study and Development of International Humanitarian Law drafted the Voluntary report on the implementation of international humanitarian law in Italy based on a fruitful cooperation with the Italian Red Cross and an extensive consultation process with relevant stakeholders. The report was endorsed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in November 2023 and made public both in Italian and in English to facilitate its dissemination abroad.<sup>1</sup>

The voluntary report, stemming from a resolution adopted during the 33<sup>rd</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 2019, intends to offer an overview of the activities undertaken at the national level for the application of IHL rules and their dissemination. The Report describes the state of the art of IHL in the Italian legal system, including the rules, policies, and good practices whose broad reach constitutes one of the significant aspects of the Italian experience.

The Report devotes particular attention to highlighting examples of good practices that can be brought to international attention, to share useful measures for IHL implementation and dissemination purposes.

---

<sup>1</sup> For the English version of the report see: [https://cri.it/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Rapporto-volontario-nazionale-sul-DIU-2023\\_ENG.pdf](https://cri.it/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Rapporto-volontario-nazionale-sul-DIU-2023_ENG.pdf)

- *Drafting process of a new Italian Military Manual on the Application of International Law to Military Operations*

The Ministry of Defence established a Working Group for drafting a Military Manual on the Application of International Law to Military Operations by Decree in October 2023. Its aim is to draft a military manual focused on international humanitarian law issues and public international law aspects of military operations abroad.

The Working Group is composed by legal advisers and experts from the Armed Forces, academia, the Military Justice and the Italian Red Cross. A Scientific Committee, comprising experts with different backgrounds, has also been established to support the activities of the Working Group.

The drafting of the preliminary comprehensive version of the Manual is scheduled by Fall 2024.

### **Armed Forces**

- *Training of Italian Armed Forces on IHL*

The organisation of training programs by the various components of the Armed Forces (the Army; the Navy; the Air Force; and the Carabinieri) is a key priority for Italy and it is arranged by military academies and military commands present on the national territory targeting officers, non-commissioned officers and other members of the Italian Armed Forces. Specific tailored courses are also organized for legal advisers by the ISSMI (Joint Services Staff College).

The Italian Ministry of Defence also facilitates the management of around 20 yearly training courses and dissemination activities on international humanitarian law for the benefit of its members organized by the Italian Red Cross. These courses are taught through the involvement of legal and military experts, academics, staff and training in IHL of the Italian Red Cross.

The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also provides an annual financial contribution to the activities of the Sanremo International Institute of Humanitarian Law.

- *Creation of the Blue Helmets of Culture Task Force*

The focus of Italy on the protection of cultural heritage has been fostered through a follow-up of the 'Blue Helmets of Culture', an initiative originated from the 2016 memorandum of understanding between the Italian Government and UNESCO. On these premises, based on a cooperative arrangement involving the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Education, a team of experts from the Ministry of Culture and staff belonging to the Carabinieri Command for the Protection of Cultural Heritage was recently created. Its tasks include damage- and risk-assessment for the cultural and natural heritage, combating the trafficking of illicitly stolen cultural goods, elaboration of safeguard measures, technical supervision, training and assistance to national authorities. It was the first initiative of this nature ever carried out in the world, thus representing a reference model for relevant stakeholders. The conclusions of the G20 Culture Ministers Meeting, held in Rome on 29-30 July 2021, welcomed the activation of international mechanisms for rapid intervention in emergencies.

On these premises, the Italian Ministry of Culture, recognizing the opportunity to continue this positive experience, through a Ministerial Decree adopted on 31 March 2022 set up the 'Blue Helmets of Culture' Task Force as a permanent operational structure within the Ministry to manage the activities related to the protection of cultural heritage at national and international level in relation to crisis situations also through the possibility to be deployed based on invitation by UNESCO. Subsequently, activities have been carried out to make this Task Force operative.

## **Enforcement**

- *International Criminal Court*

Italy has continued to support the International Criminal Court in its role to end impunity for atrocity crimes provided in its Statute through dedicated funds and institutional support. In March 2022, the Ministry of Justice established a Commission responsible for preparing a ‘Draft code on international crimes’ to increase the coherence of the Italian legal system to the provisions of the ICC Statute and other relevant obligations in this area. The Commission was composed by representatives from the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Military Justice and academia and it concluded its work with set of proposals and a final report, subsequently presented to the Minister of Justice on 31 May 2022. In January 2023, a ‘working group’ composed of experts and senior officials part of the previous Commission was set up at the Legislative Office of the Ministry of Justice to finalise the draft. An amended text was approved by the Council of Ministers in March 2023.

## **Dissemination among the youth**

- *National IHL Competition for secondary school students (2022-2024)* - Based on a three-year Memorandum an Agreement between the Italian Ministry of Education and the Italian Red Cross, a National IHL Competition involving students in the third and fourth grades of secondary schools is yearly organized at the Italian Red Cross Headquarters in Rome. The main aim of the initiative is to accomplish the objective of raising awareness on IHL among civilians, and to make young people increasingly aware of the reality of armed conflict and humanitarian actions.

The competition is divided into two phases: the first one implies a cycle of lessons to provide basic skills on IHL and on the competition, held by IHL instructors specialized by the Italian Red Cross in cooperation with the participating schools. The second phase is a 2-day in presence competition involving around 20 teams of 8 students, each of which represents its region of provenance. The competition is composed of different gaming ‘thematic stations’ where students will have to act in first person in fictional scenarios, including a visit to a prison camp, an interview with a prisoner of war, or a trial in a criminal court. The latest edition of the initiative took place in Rome on 13 and 14 May 2024.

## **IV. Domestic case-law relating to the above-mentioned instruments**

Not applicable.

## **V. Activities carried out by national commissions or committees to support the implementation or dissemination of IHL**

The Commission for the Study and Development of International Humanitarian Law, established by a Decree of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in 2021, has continued its activities in this area, providing an opportunity to foster links and cooperation among relevant institutions in the IHL sectors, also through the management of significant outputs as the voluntary report on the implementation of international humanitarian law detailed above.

The establishment of the Commission has also facilitated the participation of Italy in periodic international meetings of similar bodies permitting to share good practices with other countries and strengthening international ties. This has been the case for the fifth universal meetings of IHL Commissions organized by the ICRC, where the Chairman of the Italian Commission was among the panelists. Similarly, representatives of the Italian Commissions have participated in the Regional Conference of European National IHL Commissions held on 13-14 March 2023 in Vienna where one of the representatives of the Italian Commission was among the panelists in the plenary session.

## **VI. Other relevant initiatives to promote respect for the 1949 Geneva Conventions, their Additional Protocols and other relevant instruments.**

- *Engagement in international fora and initiatives*

Italy continues to engage in several international fora and initiatives related to IHL. This includes participation in the various fora set up under the auspices of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, including the Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems Group of Government Experts. Italy has also endorsed the Dublin declaration concerning the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas and continues to support inter-governmental initiatives as the Safe School Declaration. Similarly, Italy continues its support to demining in countries affected by remnants of war through dedicated funds channelled through relevant actors as UN and ICRC and provision of technical expertise as, for instance, training activities carried out by the Italian Ministry of Defence, in cooperation with the Italian MFA, in Libya

- *National Action Plan implementing UN Security Council resolution on 'Women, Peace and Security' (UNSC Res. 1325 of 2000)*

The implementation in Italy of UNSC Res. 1325 – and of the related international agenda – is coordinated by the Interministerial Human Rights Committee (CIDU) set up at the Italian MFA. The CIDU has, over the years, supervised the implementation of subsequent National Action Plans, also in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence.

In the relevant period a series of activities have been carried out to implement the 2020-2024 Action Plan. A significant novelty has been represented by the specific focus on the protection of women and minors, especially girls, in conflict and post-conflict areas, also through a joint table on the topic involving the Italian MFA and MoD. At the same time, the implementation of the International Agenda through the 2020-2024 Action Plan provides for joint information and training activities at all levels, especially within the Armed Forces, due to greater synergy with civil society and universities. The Italian MFA and Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) have signed the Compact on Women, Peace and Security on 15 April 2024.

The Defense General Staff, through its 'Gender Policies' section, further provides training courses for Gender Advisors and Gender Focal Points aimed at officers, non-commissioned officers, and civilian personnel of the Defense administration. IHL modules are an integral part of the aforementioned training courses.

- *Support provided to the Universities Network for Children in Armed Conflict' (UNETCHAC)*

The Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has provided financial contribution and support to the 'Universities Network for Children in Armed Conflict' (UNETCHAC)', the first international inter-university network aimed at enhancing the protection of the rights and safety of children directly and indirectly involved in armed conflicts.

Launched in November 2020 with the support of MFA, the UNETCHAC sees the participation of dozens universities and research centres from different geographical areas (Europe, Africa, the Middle East and the Americas), some of which are located in conflict zones. Since its creation, the UNETCHAC has promoted several international activities and events to foster cooperation among its members, including international conferences, training courses, awareness campaigns, and thematic publications.