
Translated from Arabic

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Standing Committee on International Humanitarian Law

Office of the Chair

**Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949
and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts**

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia attaches considerable importance to international humanitarian law and its application at all levels. It has made a range of efforts at the national level, most notably as follows:

- The legislative environment has been developed, and national legislation has been aligned with international conventions, particularly those related to international humanitarian law. The most recent example is Royal Decree No. M/7 of 6 Muharram A.H. 1445 (24 July A.D. 2023) approving the Use and Protection of the Emblem and Name of the Red Crescent and Similar Entities Act.
- Saudi Arabia has acceded to international treaties and aimed at respecting and guaranteeing respect for international humanitarian law.
- Action has been taken to disseminate the provisions of international humanitarian law on a wider scale and study its applications, including by cooperating with foreign parties responsible for implementing international humanitarian law and by including international humanitarian law in higher education curricula and in military training. Numerous national institutions, including the Saudi Red Crescent Authority and the Standing Committee on International Humanitarian Law, cooperate with the entities of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to provide training and disseminate the provisions of international humanitarian law.

In view of its commitment to international humanitarian law, Saudi Arabia has acceded to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, the 1977 Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), and the 1977 Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August

1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II). Saudi Arabia understands that the four Geneva Conventions and the two Protocols Additional thereto are among the most important foundations of international humanitarian law in relation to the protection of civilians in armed conflict. They set out legal obligations which States are morally bound to observe.

Saudi Arabia is a party to numerous other international instruments related to international humanitarian law, including the following:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1989
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, adopted in General Assembly resolution 54/263 of 25 May 2000
- The 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (the Hague Convention)
- Protocol I to the Hague Convention, done on 14 May 1954
- Protocol II to the Hague Convention, done on 26 March 2000
- The Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, done at Geneva on 17 June 1925
- The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, signed at London, Moscow and Washington, D.C. on 10 April 1972
- The Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, done at Geneva on 10 October 1980
- The Protocol on Non-Detectable Fragments (Protocol I), done at Geneva on 10 October 1980
- The Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons (Protocol III), done at Geneva on 10 October 1980

- The Protocol on Blinding Laser Weapons (Protocol IV), done at Vienna on 13 October 1995
- The Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War (Protocol V), done at Geneva on 28 November 2003
- The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, done at Paris on 13 January 1993.

By virtue of Cabinet Decision No. 144 of 27 Rabi‘ II, A.H. 1428 (14 August A.D. 2007), the Standing Committee on International Humanitarian Law was established in 2007 within the Saudi Red Crescent Authority. Its members include many relevant Government bodies. Its task is to keep abreast of international humanitarian law and relevant agreements, formulate recommendations and raise awareness.

The Standing Committee monitors international humanitarian law by undertaking several specialized tasks, including raising awareness of international humanitarian law, disseminating its provisions and incorporating it in civilian and military curricula. It coordinates efforts to review national laws related to international humanitarian law and submits appropriate proposals and recommendations to the competent bodies. It also formulates draft laws to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law in accordance with the international obligations of Saudi Arabia. It contributes to specialized studies on relevant international agreements that have been ratified or acceded to by Saudi Arabia, and on ways to implement those agreements at the national level.

In fulfilling its objectives, the Standing Committee organizes conferences, seminars, discussion groups workshops and training courses on international humanitarian law in relation to Saudi Arabia. It takes part in relevant international conferences and events held in Saudi Arabia and abroad. It endeavours to develop cooperation, exchange expertise and strengthen ties with relevant domestic, regional and international bodies. In addition, it provides legal advice on international humanitarian law to relevant bodies.

Saudi Arabia consistently complies with its obligations under the international humanitarian law instruments to which it has acceded, particularly as those instruments are consistent with the purposes and principles of

the Charter of the United Nations. The competent bodies in Saudi Arabia have taken several measures at the international level to strengthen compliance with international humanitarian law. In particular, they exchange expertise to benefit from best practices and engage with relevant international bodies. However, Saudi Arabia notes with concern that there have been serious breaches of the relevant international instruments in several armed conflicts. As a result, thousands of civilians, many of them belonging to such vulnerable categories as children, women and older persons, have been killed or permanently injured. Civilian facilities and cultural sites, which are protected under international humanitarian law, have been attacked indiscriminately.