

# PROTECTING EDUCATION IN COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY CONFLICT

PHOTO: DAVID TURNLEY / CORBIS



CONTENT FOR INCLUSION IN TEXTBOOKS OR READERS

## **Curriculum resource** **Introducing Humanitarian Education in Primary and Junior Secondary Education**

**Global**  
Education Cluster



**Front cover**

A Red Cross worker  
helps an injured man to a  
makeshift hospital during  
the Rwandan civil war

# Foreword

This booklet is one of a series of booklets prepared as part of the Protecting Education in Conflict-Affected Countries Programme, undertaken by Save the Children on behalf of the Global Education Cluster, in partnership with Education Above All, a Qatar-based non-governmental organisation. The booklets were prepared by a consultant team from Search For Common Ground. They were written by Brendan O'Malley (editor) and Melinda Smith, with contributions from Carlyne Ashton, Saji Prelis, and Wendy Wheaton of the Education Cluster, and technical advice from Margaret Sinclair. Accompanying training workshop materials were written by Melinda Smith, with contributions from Carlyne Ashton and Brendan O'Malley. The curriculum resource was written by Carlyne Ashton and Margaret Sinclair.

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## Booklet topics and themes

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**Booklet 1**      **Overview**

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**Booklet 2**      **Legal Accountability and the Duty to Protect**

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**Booklet 3**      **Community-based Protection and Prevention**

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**Booklet 4**      **Education for Child Protection and Psychosocial Support**

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**Booklet 5**      **Education Policy and Planning for Protection, Recovery and Fair Access**

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**Booklet 6**      **Education for Building Peace**

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**Booklet 7**      **Monitoring and Reporting**

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**Booklet 8**      **Advocacy**

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The booklets should be used alongside the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) *Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery*. References to the most relevant standards for the content of each booklet are given in the resources section.

This booklet, Curriculum Resource: Introducing Humanitarian Education in Primary and Junior Secondary Education, can be used with Booklet 6.

Please feel free to share these booklets

with interested professionals working in ministries of education or non-governmental organisations, and others concerned with education for populations affected by armed conflict or insecurity.

If referenced, please use the following text: Global Education Cluster, Curriculum Resource: Introducing Humanitarian Education in Primary and Junior Secondary Education, Protecting Education in Countries Affected by Conflict series (2012)

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# Preface

## Why is 'humanitarian education' important?

Every society is susceptible to crises such as natural and man-made disasters. Many countries today face civil or international conflict. These events can cause immense suffering. Schools can play an important role in helping students develop concepts, skills and values to help others in such times of difficulty, and likewise to understand the principles underlying humanitarian law, which aims to protect life and dignity and lessen suffering during armed conflict.

The term 'humanitarian education' is used for this type of learning that enables young people to:

- analyse events and phenomena from a humanitarian perspective
- take action in the spirit of humanitarian principles and values<sup>1</sup>
- where appropriate, explore basic rules of international humanitarian law and other relevant bodies of law.

Humanitarian education introduces students to ways of protecting and helping other people in times of crisis, even if those people are not personally known to them or part of their own social group.

The story of Henry Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross, whose work inspired humanitarian action and law, can be included in school programmes to help students think more deeply about human dignity, human values and behaviour. Dunant wanted to help men wounded in battle regardless of their nationality, on the basis that they were all human beings in need. This concern led to the establishment

of the global Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which aims to prevent and respond to human suffering, with basic operational principles including humanity, neutrality and impartiality, and contributed to the development of humanitarian work in general. Dunant's proposal for what became the first Geneva Convention was a significant development in international humanitarian law.

## Who is this booklet for?

This booklet is being offered as a resource for Ministries of Education, especially national Curriculum and Textbook Development departments, centres or institutes, and other education providers (as well as interested teachers). It is hoped that ministries will review the topics covered here and consider including them in social studies, language or other subjects, lessons or textbooks, after translation and/or adaptation to local needs. The examples of possible lesson materials have been developed for upper primary or lower secondary schooling.

The present booklet illustrates how humanitarian concepts can be introduced using simple language. Each topic includes core material in larger print and 'extra notes' in boxed text. This approach recognises that there will be different reading capacity in different settings and for different age groups. In particular, some countries educate in the mother tongue. In this case, it will be quite easy for the students to understand and discuss quite sophisticated content. If, however, primary and junior secondary education is not in the mother tongue, then textbook language must be very simple.

The 'extra notes' can be used by more

advanced students, or by teachers for personal orientation to the subject matter and for materials development.

### **What teaching methods are needed and why?**

The aim is to encourage students to internalise and act upon humanitarian values. The teacher has therefore to encourage class discussion in which students examine their own personal response to the issues raised in the lesson. This discussion has to first ensure that the lesson has been understood and then encourage students to freely discuss the values and behaviours featured in the lessons. Such discussion helps students to commit themselves to the ideas and values put forward.

The lessons use stories based on true incidents. The underlying theme is that we are all human beings with similar needs. We must respect each others' needs even during armed combat and following natural disasters.

Such values-based lessons are critical for students' future behaviour as individuals, citizens and in some cases in military roles. Class discussion should help students ask themselves how they would behave if there were conflict and how they might help others in any times of crisis, including people who are not members of their own social group.

Where the mother tongue is not used in the official curriculum, it may be useful for the teacher and students to review this type of lesson content a second time, in the mother tongue, and to allow discussion in the mother tongue. This is especially important for encouraging values and behaviour change linked to personal

identity. The materials in the booklet are designed to be accessible to teachers with limited opportunities for professional training and limited classroom resources, including in countries affected by or at risk of armed conflict or natural disasters. There is a 'Teachers Notes' section at the end of the booklet that provides guidance for classroom instruction.

### **Must we use all the lesson topics, stories and questions?**

No. As a teacher or curriculum developer, the materials provided here are examples. Some stories and questions may be more applicable than others. Perhaps you can find true stories from your own country that will be more appropriate. For example, you can find stories of people who have helped organise relief after a natural disaster. You can add stories or information about your national Red Cross or Red Crescent Society, and about humanitarian work by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in your country.

It is important to leave about half of each lesson period for active class discussions on the questions raised by each story or topic, and perhaps for acting out some of the stories. This might mean that some topics could take two or more lessons to cover in full, especially if local examples are added. If necessary, some topics or stories can be omitted.

Ideally, these topics will be introduced in upper primary school and then re-visited in junior secondary school. The materials in this booklet can be divided between these levels, or extra content can be added. It is important to include key messages about Henry Dunant, the Geneva Conventions and humanitarian action in

primary school, if many students are expected to drop out before junior secondary school. This is especially true if the country is at risk of armed conflict.

### **How can these materials be introduced into an education system?**

A first step is to hold discussions and workshops with specialists responsible for curriculum and textbooks in education ministries and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The Lessons can then be adapted as necessary and used initially in pilot schools. This will give experience and insight into how to adapt the contents to the local context including national or local culture and history, student reading abilities, teachers' need for support, and so on. The network of pilot schools can be expanded as desired, while teacher training is developed and content is chosen for inclusion in future textbooks.

### **How do these lessons relate to school subjects?**

The materials in this booklet can stand alone, if room is made in the timetable for this topic, or they can be included in social studies or citizenship textbooks, or in subjects such as history, languages, ethics/morals, life skills, religious studies, human rights or peace education.

The materials should be taught as a clearly defined unit of studies, with students well aware that this is education that relates to values and behavioural development as well as factual knowledge. Because of the emphasis on active class discussion, there should be benefits also in terms of thinking skills, which will help with all school subjects.



Henry Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross, whose work inspired humanitarian action and law

## What other materials are available?

More advanced material, suited to older students, teacher preparation and training, is available on the ICRC's website ([www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org)) which includes a 'virtual campus' of course materials entitled 'Exploring Humanitarian Law' and other reference materials. The national Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in your country can assist with technical support. The youth programme 'Youth – Agents of Behavioural Change', developed by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies may be a good source of more advanced materials.

## Shall we use the terms 'international humanitarian law' and 'humanitarian action'?

The word 'humanitarian' has been omitted from the main text in the present booklet, since students may have limited reading skills. However, it is for each education provider to decide if, when and how to use this term or its equivalent in a national language of instruction.

'International humanitarian law' is a set of international rules that seeks to limit the effects of armed conflict, whether international or non-international. It protects persons who are not or are no longer participating in the hostilities and restricts the means and methods of warfare.<sup>ii</sup> 'Humanitarian action' refers to actions carried out by organisations or individuals that seek to alleviate human suffering,

protect life and health, and uphold human dignity especially during armed conflicts and other emergencies such as natural disasters.<sup>iii</sup>

Topics 3 to 9 illustrate the origins of, and some of the issues covered by, international humanitarian law, while Topics 1, 2, 10 and 11 relate to humanitarian action by organisations or individuals.

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## Protecting people in crisis situations: an overview of humanitarian principles

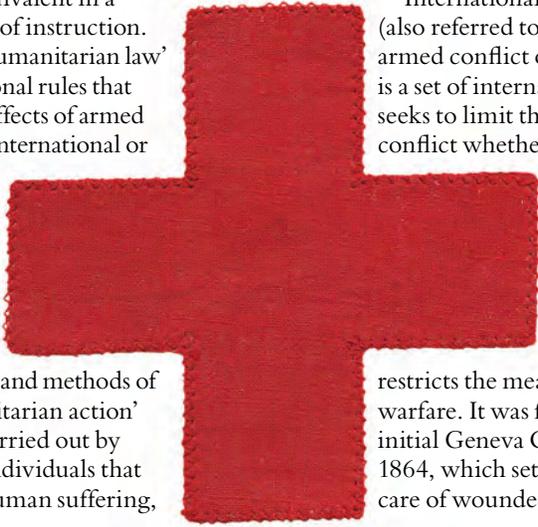
### Humanitarian law and actions

The present booklet offers ideas for lessons on how action based on humanitarian principles can protect people in times of war or other crises. The basic humanitarian principle is to reduce human suffering, without discrimination according to nationality, gender, ethnic, religious or other status.

International humanitarian law (also referred to as the laws of armed conflict or the laws of war) is a set of international rules that seeks to limit the effects of armed conflict whether international or

non-international. It protects persons who are not or are no longer participating in the hostilities and

restricts the means and methods of warfare. It was first codified in the initial Geneva Convention in 1864, which set out rules for the care of wounded soldiers. It was



then further developed in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977, which represent current international humanitarian law. The present booklet introduces some of the ideas and rules underlying those conventions. These principles include:

- distinction between combatants and civilians during warfare
- humane treatment of all non-combatants
- special protection of women, children, medical personnel, prisoners of war and other groups of people affected by armed conflict.

This booklet mentions only a very small part of international humanitarian law, notably the Geneva Conventions. International humanitarian law includes many other treaties on the protection of civilians and on topics such as the conduct of war, the regulation of weapons, landmines, naval and air warfare, and the protection of the environment. Ideally, there should be follow-up lessons in higher grades of schooling, drawing on the ICRC's 'Exploring Humanitarian Law' programme and the resources of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Humanitarian action is illustrated by the work of Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies and other organisations that care for fellow human beings at risk due to conflict, natural disaster or other crises. Humanitarian action requires care for those in need, without discrimination according to nationality, gender, ethnic, religious or other status.

In summary, international humanitarian

law establishes rules to ensure correct behaviour in the conduct of war.

Humanitarian action provides protection and assistance to people in crisis situations during both peace and war.

### **Relation to human rights**

Human rights refers to basic rights and freedoms that all people are entitled to regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin race, religion, language, or other status. Human rights include civil and political rights, such as the right to life, liberty and freedom of expression; and social, cultural and economic rights including the right to participate in culture, the right to food, and the right to work and receive an education.<sup>iv</sup> Since the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the international community has created various human rights treaties committing governments to observe these rights. Many relate to basic needs, such as the right to life, to food, health and education, and to civil and political liberties, and preventing discrimination. Human rights law applies at all times, both in peace and war (though some rights may be limited or suspended in situations of emergency).

### **Relation to the international criminal court**

The Rome Statute of 1998 set up the International Criminal Court in The Hague, The Netherlands, which can prosecute people who commit the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole, ie war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity.

# Sample lesson materials

Help and respect for others in times of crisis situations: An introduction to humanitarian values

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## TOPIC I

### We are all human beings

#### Learning objective:

You will know the meaning of ‘human being’. You will understand the importance of helping strangers in time of need.

We often help our family and friends. Sometimes we help people we do not know – we help strangers. Here is a story about a shopkeeper and how he helps a boy he does not know.

#### The Brave Shopkeeper<sup>v</sup>

There is a road in Bangkok where boys often fight. There is a Mechanics School at the end of the road. One day, some big boys from the Mechanics School saw a small boy from another school walking alone. The boy’s name was Tep.

The big boys ran after Tep and called him bad names. Tep ran away from them as fast as he could. He ran towards a little shop at the corner of the road.

#### Questions

- What is the small boy’s name?
- Where is Bangkok?
- What is the story so far?
- How did Tep feel?
- What could Tep do?

The owner of the little shop often sold things to boys from the Mechanics School. He saw some big boys running

toward his shop. They were shouting. In front of them was a small boy running fast. The big boys were calling him bad names. The small boy was trying to get away from them. The small boy ran behind the shop and knocked on the door. Quickly, the shopkeeper opened the back door of his shop to let the boy in. He shut the door and locked it. “What is your name?” he asked. “Tep,” said the boy. The shopkeeper let the boy hide in his shop.

#### Questions

- What did the shop owner do?
- Did the shop owner know the boy’s name?
- What did the shop owner think?
- Was he afraid?
- Would you open the door?

The shop owner was brave. The boys from the Mechanics School might attack him because their ‘enemy’ was hiding in his shop. The shop owner was unselfish. He was not thinking about money. The boys from the Mechanics School might not buy things from his shop in future.

But the boys from the Mechanics School did not see Tep go into the shop. They walked away. Tep was safe. “Thank you,” he said to the shop owner. The shop owner said, “I must help you. It is my duty to help any person who needs help. You are not my brother or son. I did not know your name. But you are a human being like me. We must all help each other when we can.”

#### Questions

- What does ‘human being’ mean?
- What does ‘stranger’ mean?
- Can you tell the whole story in your own words?

- Why did the shop owner open the door and help Tep?
- If boys or girls in your school need help, will you help them?

### Key message

The shop owner was right. We are all human beings.

We all need to be safe. We all need food and water. We all need friends. Sometimes we need help.

We must help other human beings when they need help. Sometimes others will help us.

### Extra notes

We are all human beings and have similar needs. These needs include respect for our shared human dignity.

Human dignity is the dignity we have because we are human beings.

This dignity is the same if we are Chinese, Indian, African, American or from other places. Human dignity is the same for rich and poor people, for women and men, for children and adults, for friends and enemies, and people of different religions.

Respect for all human beings and their needs and for human dignity is the basis of humanitarian principles and values, as well as the foundation of human rights.

In this book, we focus on humanitarian principles and values, which mean respecting the needs and human dignity of other human beings even if they are strangers or belong to a different social group or are enemies. This includes wounded soldiers, prisoners of war, and men, women or children who are not fighting.

We will talk about humanitarian action, which means helping people who are in need, for example with food, water, shelter, and health care.

This help must be available to people whose need is greatest, without discrimination by nationality, gender, religious, political or other status.

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## TOPIC 2

### Henry Dunant, Part I: A boy who changed the world

#### Learning objective:

You will be able to tell the story of Henry Dunant and how he cared for other human beings.

This story is about a boy who wanted to help other people. He became famous. When he was an old man he was given the Nobel Prize for Peace. His name was Henry Dunant. Here is his story.

Henry was 14 years old. He lived in Geneva, a town in Switzerland. One day his mother and father went to his school to see the headmaster.

Henry sat with them in the headmaster's room. The headmaster had bad news for them. "Henry has failed his Latin exam again. He is bottom of his class. He has to leave the school," he said.

His father and mother did not have enough money to send him to a private school.<sup>vi</sup> His mother sat down and cried.

#### Questions

- What was the boy's name?
- Where is Switzerland?
- What is the Nobel Peace Prize?
- What is the story so far?

Henry said, "I will do good things in my life even if I am not good at Latin and maths." Henry often went with his mother to help orphans. He often went with his father to take food to poor families in Geneva. "Why do we do this?" he asked. His mother said, "We should help other people when they have problems."

Henry got a job and worked hard. He did well. Then he set up his own business. His mother said, "I think you will be rich."

But his life changed one day.

Henry wanted to see Napoleon the Third, the Emperor of France, to ask for help with his business. The year was 1859. The emperor was in Italy with his army, near a town called Solferino.

Henry went to Italy. But Henry did not see the emperor. There had been a very big battle at Solferino, with many thousands of soldiers, and many cannons (big guns) pulled by horses. After the battle, there were many thousands of dead soldiers. And there were many thousands of wounded soldiers in pain and asking for water. Henry wanted to help them.

### Questions

- Can you tell the story in your own words?
- Why did Henry go to Italy?
- Did he see the emperor?
- What did Henry see?
- What did Henry want to do?
- Why did Henry want to help the wounded soldiers?

Some of the wounded soldiers were from France and from Italy. Some were from Austria. Henry organised women from the nearest town to take care of them. The women made beds for them in houses and

churches. They washed their wounds. They gave them food and water. Henry went to buy bandages.

Henry told the women that they must help all the wounded soldiers. They are all human beings whether they come from France, Italy or Austria.

They are not fighting now and we must help them all. The women said, "*Tutti fratelli*", which means "All are brothers" in Italian.

Some of the men were dying. Henry sat with them and wrote letters to their families. They asked him to write, "Please ask my father to comfort my mother" and other messages.

Henry's life was changed. Now he could only think, "How can we help people who are wounded during wars?" He decided to make it happen.

### Questions

- How did Henry help the wounded soldiers?
- Which soldiers did he help? French? Italian? Austrian?
- What did the women say?
- Imagine that you were not Italian but were fighting in Italy. You have been wounded in battle.
- Would you like an Italian person to give you a drink of water?
- Would you like an Italian doctor or nurse to help you?

Henry thought, "All wounded men are human beings like me. I want to help them." This was his lesson for us all.

### Key message

**We can help other human beings when they need help.**

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### Extra notes

Geneva is a town in the west of Switzerland. Geneva is very near to France and the citizens of Geneva speak French. Today there are many international organisations in Geneva, including the United Nations Office in Geneva and the United Nations Agency for Refugees. In the next lesson we will read about the International Committee of the Red Cross, which was set up after the battle of Solferino.

Its main office is in Geneva. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also has its main office in Geneva.

Solferino is a small town in northern Italy. In 1859, it was part of the Piedmont region of Italy. In the battle of Solferino, there were 140,000 soldiers from France and the Piedmont and 130,000 soldiers from Austria.

After the battle, 35,000 were wounded, 6,000 were dying or dead, and there was little attempt to provide care.

Dunant himself organised the civilian population, especially the women and girls, to provide assistance to the injured and sick soldiers.

They lacked sufficient materials and supplies, and Dunant organised the purchase of needed materials and helped erect makeshift hospitals.

Dunant convinced the population to help the wounded without regard to their side in the conflict in the spirit of the slogan, “*Tutti fratelli*” (All are brothers).

He also succeeded in gaining the release of Austrian doctors who had been captured by the French so that they could treat the wounded.<sup>vii</sup>

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### TOPIC3

## Henry Dunant, Part 2: Helping wounded soldiers

### Learning objective:

You will understand how one person can have the power to help many others. You will be able to describe the early history of the ICRC.

Henry Dunant saw that wounded soldiers were in pain and needed help. They were human beings like him. He helped wounded soldiers from France, from Italy, and from Austria. But who would help wounded soldiers in future wars?

Henry went home to Geneva. Henry talked with his friends in Geneva about the battle. He wrote a book about the battle and how the wounded soldiers needed help. He went to see important people in Europe: kings, queens, princes, generals and government officials. He gave them a copy of his book. He told them about how thousands of soldiers were wounded in the battle and how he helped them. He asked these important people to help.

Henry said, “Each country should have a society of people who will help wounded soldiers during battles. They should have medical training on how to treat wounds. They should treat all wounded soldiers who were part of the battle: soldiers from the side that won the battle and soldiers from the side who lost.”

Henry’s friend said, “The enemy may shoot at the medical workers.”

Henry said, “We need a law to tell soldiers not to shoot at medical workers. All countries must agree to this law.”

Henry met with four friends in Geneva.



The signing of the first Geneva Convention at the Swiss capital's City Hall in 1864

They set up a society to discuss these ideas. They invited leaders from different countries to come to Geneva for a meeting. Henry asked them to set up national societies in their countries to help the wounded. They asked themselves, “How will the soldiers know they are medical workers?” They all agreed to use a red cross on a white cloth for their flag and for arm-bands.

### Questions

- What did Henry do after he went back to Geneva?
- What did Henry want?
- What is an arm-band?
- Why must medical workers wear an arm-band during a battle?

In 1864, the government of Switzerland invited other governments to come to Geneva.

They agreed a law was needed to care for the wounded and protect medical workers during battles. This law was called the Geneva Convention.

Later, Henry’s society was given a new name. It was called the ‘International Committee of the Red Cross’, or the ICRC.

Henry’s idea was popular. Many countries have set up a Red Cross or Red Crescent Society. They are easily identified thanks to an emblem: some use a flag with a red cross or a red crescent or a red crystal on white cloth.

Have you seen one?

### Questions

- What idea did Henry have about helping wounded soldiers?
- What idea did Henry have about a new law?
- Did governments agree to Henry's ideas?
- What did they decide?
- How can medical workers be identified during war?
- Is there a Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in your country?

Henry Dunant was only one human being. But with his friends he set up a society to help many people from different countries.

### Key message

**We can all work with our friends to help others.**

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### Extra notes

On 24 June 1859, during the Second Italian War of Independence, there was a battle near the small town of Solferino in northern Italy. Henri Dunant helped the wounded and then returned to Geneva on 11 July. He could not forget what he had seen, and in 1862 he published a book entitled *A Memory of Solferino*. In this book, he described the battle and the needs of the wounded, concluding with a question: "Would it not be possible, in time of peace and quiet, to form relief societies for the purpose of having care given to the wounded in wartime by zealous, devoted and thoroughly qualified volunteers?" It was this question that led to the founding of the Red Cross. He also asked the military authorities if they would agree not to attack these volunteers during

battle. Henry Dunant's book was a huge success. It was translated into virtually all the European languages and read by the most influential people of his time. Among them was Gustave Moynier, a citizen of Geneva, who was a lawyer and chairman of a local charity, the Geneva Public Welfare Society.

On 9 February 1863, he presented the conclusions of Dunant's work to his society. They set up a five-member committee to study the author's proposals. It soon became known as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and met for the first time on 17 February 1863.

The ICRC said that there must be protection for medical services and volunteer nurses. They must be seen as "neutral" – not involved with the battle. On 25 August 1863, the ICRC decided to convene an international conference in Geneva, under its own responsibility, to study ways of overcoming the inadequacy of army medical services. It sent out invitations to all European governments and numerous leading personalities.

The conference began on 26 October 1863. There were 14 government delegates, six delegates of various organisations and seven private individuals. They discussed a draft 'convention' (law) prepared by the ICRC. They adopted ten resolutions, which provided for the establishment of societies for relief to wounded soldiers. This allowed for the formation of the Red Cross, and later, Red Crescent, Societies. A meeting of governments in 1864 adopted the first Geneva Convention, providing protection for wounded soldiers and those trying to help them.<sup>viii</sup>

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## TOPIC 4

### The Geneva Conventions

#### Learning objectives:

You will understand what the Geneva Conventions are and how they help prevent suffering during war.

Henry Dunant wanted a new law, to make it safe for medical workers to help wounded soldiers. He and his friends worked hard for this. A new law was agreed five years after the battle of Solferino.

Henry Dunant never forgot the wounded soldiers at the Battle of Solferino. He wanted a new law to help wounded soldiers. He and his friends asked the government of Switzerland to invite governments of other countries to a meeting. The Geneva Convention of 1864 was a law agreed to by 12 countries. The Geneva Convention was an international treaty, an agreement among countries.

The new law was about how to help wounded soldiers during a battle.

#### The Geneva Convention of 1864 said:

- Do not harm any medical workers who are helping wounded soldiers.
- Do not harm any people collecting wounded soldiers.
- Do not attack any ambulances or military hospitals.
- Help wounded soldiers from your side and the enemy's side.

#### Key message

**These rules mean that soldiers must not harm any person who is helping wounded soldiers. And medical workers must help all wounded soldiers (from both sides of**

the war). The emblems medical workers use are the Red Cross, Red Crescent or Red Crystal on a white background.

#### Questions

- How can soldiers know which people and vehicles are helping wounded soldiers?
- Is it dangerous to take wounded soldiers away from a battle?
- How would you feel if you had bullets passing you when you were carrying a wounded soldier?
- What does 'international' mean?
- Can you give an example of an 'international law'?

#### The Geneva Convention of 1864 said:

- Wounded soldiers from both sides of the war must be taken to a safe place and given help.
- Local people can help the wounded from both sides of the war. If a wounded person is staying in a house, soldiers must not harm the people there.

#### Questions

- If an enemy soldier is dying or wounded, will you take care of him in your house?
- If you are a soldier and find a wounded enemy in a house, what will you do?

After this Convention was agreed in Geneva, more international laws were made to help wounded soldiers and other people during war.

Nearly a hundred years later, in 1949, a new set of laws was made in Geneva. Every country in the world must obey these new Geneva Conventions.

These laws say that people who are not fighting must be protected. Commanders

and ordinary soldiers must obey these laws. It is a war crime to harm a person who is not fighting or is no longer fighting. War crimes are the most serious violations of international humanitarian law (also referred to as the laws of armed conflict or the laws of war) committed during the conduct of a war.

### The First Geneva Convention:

- protects wounded and sick soldiers, medical workers, and medical equipment, such as ambulances and hospitals.

### The Second Geneva Convention:

- protects wounded, sick and shipwrecked soldiers involved in battles at sea.

### The Third Geneva Convention:

- says that prisoners of war must be protected and treated humanely. This includes giving them housing, food, and medical treatment.

### The Fourth Geneva Convention:

- protects civilians (people who do not participate in the fight) when there is a war.

### Questions

- What does 'protect' mean?
- What does 'prisoner of war' mean?
- What does "prisoner of war" mean?
- What does 'civilian' mean?
- If a soldier hits a wounded man hard with his rifle, is that a crime/a violation of international law?
- If a prisoner of war has no water to drink, is that a crime/violation?
- If a soldier kills a blind man sitting under a tree, is that a crime/violation?

- If a soldier kills a pregnant woman in her home, is that a crime/violation?

**Henry Dunant wanted laws to help people when there is a war. He wanted to protect every person who is not fighting or is no longer fighting. Now there are four Geneva Conventions and other laws about this.**

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### Extra notes

Two additions to the Geneva Conventions, called 'Additional Protocols', were agreed in 1977. They develop the rules on the conduct of war and reinforce the protection of victims of armed conflict.

Among other things, they explicitly state that no children aged less than 15 can be soldiers.

Each Geneva Convention has the same section ('article 3') that clearly states that people must respect human dignity in case of war within their own country. The second Additional Protocol to the Conventions applies to this situation, also called civil war or non-international armed conflict. Here is what it says:

- I Persons taking no active part in the hostilities, including members of armed forces who have laid down their arms and those placed hors de combat by sickness, wounds, detention, or any other cause, shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction founded on race, colour, religion or faith, sex, birth or wealth, or any other similar criteria. To this end, the following acts are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place

whatsoever with respect to the above-mentioned persons:

- violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture
- taking of hostages
- outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment
- the passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all judicial guarantees which are recognised as indispensable by civilised peoples.

**2** The wounded and sick shall be collected and cared for:

- An impartial humanitarian body, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, may offer its services to the Parties to the conflict.

### Key message

There are rules to limit suffering during war. Soldiers must obey these rules.<sup>ix</sup>

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## TOPIC 5

### Preventing use of child soldiers

#### Learning objective:

You will be able to define a ‘child soldier’.  
You will know that there is a law protecting children from becoming child soldiers.

Sometimes young children are taken from their homes or schools and made to work for soldiers or fight. Often soldiers beat them and they are hungry and tired.

In 1977, there were two additions (called



Under international law children under 15 cannot be part of an army or other armed group

Protocols) to the Geneva Conventions.

They say that a person under the age of 15 must not be part of an army or other armed group. There must be no ‘child soldiers’.

Children should grow up with their family and community, if possible. But commanders in many countries today still use children as fighters and for other work.

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### Tun’s story

I was forced into the army, but I did not want to go.

One evening we were watching a show in my village. Three soldiers came. They asked for our identification cards. They

asked if we wanted to join the army.

We told them we were too young. One of my friends said, “Yes.” I said, “No.” I went back home.

More soldiers arrived the next morning at my village. They said, “We need more children from your village to be soldiers. Or give us money.” My family and others had no money. Nineteen of us were forced to leave our families and go to an army training centre.<sup>x</sup>

### Question

- Can you tell this story in your own words?
- Do you have a brother aged ten years?
- Do you want soldiers to take him away to fight?

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### Win’s story

We were forced to help fight to secure some high ground. We were drugged and ordered to move forward on the battlefield. We did not know what sort of drug or alcohol we were given. We drank it because we were very tired, very thirsty and hungry.

We had walked for two whole days under very hot burning sun. The hill where the battle was being fought (the battlefield) had no shade. Trees were burnt and bombs were exploding everywhere.

We were very afraid and very thirsty. Some of us were very tired and fell down. But we were beaten by the adult soldiers behind us. We had to move forward. One child got killed in the fighting.<sup>xi</sup>

### Questions

- Can you tell this story in your own words?
- How did the child soldiers feel?

- Is it good for adult men to force children to fight in front of them?

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### John’s story<sup>xii</sup>

John was in school but then his mother and father died, so he lived with his uncle. He went to school but was hungry a lot of the time. He failed the school exam. His school was small and the teacher was often absent. He decided to join the rebel army.

The rebel army took food from poor people after beating them. John did not like that either. He went back to school, but then he felt hungry again.

What should he do?

### Questions

- Can you tell the story in your own words?
- Would you like soldiers to come to your house and take you away?
- Have you heard about child soldiers in your country or somewhere else?
- Do you think it is good or bad for children to be soldiers? Why?

War must be avoided by all means. But if people fight in battles, they should be adults.

No boy or girl under 15 years old must be involved in an army or armed group. This is international law.

Some countries have also agreed to another international law that says no child under 18 years old can be in an army or armed group.

### Key message

**Children must not be soldiers. They should be with those who love them. They should be in school, if possible.**

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### Extra notes

There are projects in some countries that are helping former child soldiers return to normal life. At one of these centres in Somalia, a young man called Abdi, who used to be a child soldier, is training to be a fisherman.

### Abdi's message from Somalia

"I would like to say to other child soldiers that they are still teenagers and they have still got hope and their future can be bright. The adult commanders are using you because you are young and believe their lies. Please do not lose your childhood and your future."

### Interviewer

"What message do you have for the adults who are using child soldiers to fight for them?"

### Abdi

"I would like to say to them, please let the teenagers be free from the evil and please stop being so cruel and unkind to the people."

### Interviewer

"Do you have anything to say to your friends who are still out there somewhere, fighting?"

### Abdi

"I have many friends who are still soldiers. But there are some who have taken my advice and have stopped and are now starting to study at school. I even tried to pay their school fees to continue their education and to help others to follow them."<sup>xiii</sup>

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### Rose's story

Former child soldiers are returning to different contexts and circumstances. Some are demobilised under the terms of cease-fire agreements or peace agreements. Others escape, are released or are liberated by government soldiers. Almost all children who have been with armed forces for some time will also experience changes in their families and communities on their return. When Rose, aged 22 with a small child, and several months pregnant, returned from 10 years' captivity in the hands of the guerrilla group, Lord's Resistance Army, in Uganda, she found that her father had died of AIDS and her mother lay sick with the same disease. Others return to families in displacement, families that have broken up, and disrupted communities.<sup>xiv</sup>

Many children have a bad conscience about their acts as child soldiers, forced or not. Many wish to seek forgiveness, and have ideas of becoming 'helpers' to make things good. Marcus was a boy in Mozambique, who managed to escape from the RENAMO militia after four years of captivity filled with horror. Why did he risk his life to escape? "I am a human being, and I was being forced to do things no human should do, so I had to go," he said.

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### TOPIC 6

### Protecting women and girls

#### Learning objective:

You will understand the importance of protecting women and girls. You will know that they are protected under international law.

Soldiers are strong and have guns, so sometimes they attack girls and women. This is bad because the soldiers should only fight enemy soldiers and not harm people who are not fighters.

They should not harm women or girls who are not fighting. Women and girls have to go out of their homes to collect water or food or fuel for their families, and to look after small children. Girls should go to school. The Fourth Geneva Convention says that soldiers must respect all civilians. They must not harm any person who is not or no longer fighting.

The Fourth Geneva Convention says that, among the civilians, women and girls must be specially protected. If it happens that some soldiers take away girls and women to work for them in their camps, or attack them in their homes, it is against the law.

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### **The girl who was stolen from her village**

There was a young girl named Tara, who lived with her family in a village and went to school there.

There was a war in her country. Government soldiers and rebels were all around. One day she was coming home from school and she was kidnapped by some of the rebels.

She was taken to a camp where there were other young girls like her. She was trained to use a gun and to fight for the rebels. The soldiers often beat her and the other girls.

#### **Questions**

- What happened to the girl when she was in her village?

- What happened to her after she went to the rebel camp?
- How did she feel?

The girl was forced to marry one of the rebel soldiers. She did not want to marry him but he beat her and she had no choice. She had a baby while she was living in the forest, far away from her family. After a few years she escaped. She went home. Her mother and father were kind to her. But she had pain and headaches, and could not go back to school.

Another girl from this group went home with a baby but her mother and father told her to go away. They said she was not part of their family any more...<sup>xv</sup>

#### **Questions**

- If this is your sister coming home, how will you feel?
- What will you do?

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### **Deedee's story**

The German Army set up camp in a field not far from our front door. German trucks and soldiers were often on the road. Our family of four females was afraid. Night and day we listened to the sounds of the soldiers' boots on the street. We were afraid that they would stop at our house. We were afraid that we would be sent away to a work camp.

One night a drunken soldier came to our door. He forced his way into the house. He shouted at us in his language, but we could not understand. Mother begged him, in our language, to leave but he did not listen.

We girls hid in a corner, crying. The soldier grabbed my 17-year-old sister

Laura's arm and began dragging her toward the stairs. We knew he was going to attack her in one of the upstairs bedrooms.

Mother ran from the house and ran to the German soldiers' camp. She did not even stop to put on her boots. She ran through snow in her wooden shoes. She asked for the commander. The commander came quickly. He followed her back to our house. The drunken soldier was still fighting with Laura on the stairs. The officer shouted an order. The drunken soldier let go of Laura and went downstairs. The officer pushed the soldier out of the door. Then he spoke in our language. He said, "I will punish the soldier. This will not happen again." He apologised on behalf of the German Army, bowed, and walked away. That night we saw that not all the soldiers were bad. Some, like the officer, were polite, decent men.<sup>xvi</sup>

### Questions

- What happened in the family's home?
- What did the commander do? Why?

The German soldier was a good man. He had a mother and perhaps children in Germany. He wanted them to be safe. And he wanted all women and children to be safe.

### Key message

**Women and girls must be respected by anyone, including women themselves.**

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### Extra notes

In Congo, many girls and women have been attacked by soldiers and militiamen. So some women have formed women's groups to help each other.

A member of one group said, "We started the Kamanyola Women's Collective because of the situation women were facing here during the war." We worked in secret at first, helping survivors to find medical care and trying to help families stay together.

"We had lots of young women who were abandoned by their families. So we set up a sewing group to keep them busy. Those who weren't able to sew we taught to knit."

"Getting women together to knit and sew may not seem like much. But it's very effective. It helps them become productive again after their lives have been destroyed. In Congo, not only are women valued on the concept of purity, but also on their productivity. Women often say that they feel useless or not needed or without any purpose after sexual attack, so these groups help them become more active and productive."

One women's group also started literacy classes and bought farmland so its members could grow food.

They sell the crops and manage the money they make from their crops. The money helps pay their children's school fees.

This group helps 450 women.

One of these women says, "I am one of the people who was attacked. With the help of these women I was able to get back with my husband. Now I'm very happy. At the beginning, whenever I saw people talking I thought they were talking about me. When I saw someone walk by I thought maybe they wanted to harm me. So I was full of fear and distrust. But these women have helped restore my confidence."<sup>xvii</sup>



The prosecutors bench at the trial of Congo warlord Jean Pierre Bemba

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## TOPIC 7

### The International Criminal Court (ICC)

#### Learning objective:

You will be able to describe the ICC and give an example of what it does.

In 1998, many countries agreed to set up a new court of law, called the International Criminal Court. This Court can punish any individual, be they soldiers, commanders or country leaders if they commit serious crimes. The Court is in The Netherlands. 'War crimes' are the most serious violations of international humanitarian law committed during the conduct of a war. For example, killing civilians or prisoners is a war crime.

Killing an enemy soldier who wants to surrender is a war crime. Involving

children under 15 years old in an army or armed group is a war crime.

- What is the International Criminal Court?
- Where is The Netherlands?
- What is a 'war crime'?
- Can you give an example of a war crime?

The first trial at the International Criminal Court was the trial of Thomas Lubanga, a commander who used child soldiers. Some were less than ten years old. The children wanted to go to school. But the soldiers took them away from their homes. The child soldiers told the Court about what happened to them:

- It was too dangerous to try to escape. One boy was running away. The soldiers ran after him on the road. They brought

him back. In front of all of us they killed him. They said, “In this army you are not supposed to run away. If you run away, we will kill you.”

- The soldiers taught us, “Your gun will be your father and mother. Your gun will feed and clothe you.” But I did not understand how a gun could feed and clothe me. Then a boy told me, “We have to kill the enemy with our guns. We have to take food and clothes from the people we kill.”
- The commanders told us, “Get food from people with your guns.” A boy soldier said, “You will feel hungry... and then you will go inside somebody's house. You will show your gun and ask for money ... and take their goods.”
- A journalist said, “After the training had ended, the children were sent into battle zones. The commanders told them to kill everyone, including old people, women, or children.”

### Questions

- What did the children say?
- Did the children want to kill people or to go back to school?
- Did the commanders obey the Geneva Convention rule that they must not recruit children under 15?
- Did the commanders obey the Geneva Convention rule that they must protect civilians, especially women and children?

The judges at the International Criminal Court listened to the children. They listened also to lawyers who said that

Lubanga did not use child soldiers.

On 14 March 2012, the three ICC judges found Thomas Lubanga guilty of war crimes.

### Questions

- What was the crime that Lubanga was accused of?
- Where is the ICC?
- Do we need an international court to punish war crimes if they are not punished by the government?
- Why?

**The rules of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols protect civilians during war.**

**They particularly protect children. They say that children under 15 must not be involved in an army.**

**The International Criminal Court can punish people if they commit serious violations of these rules and other international laws (if their own government does not punish them).**

### Key message

**Obey international and national laws that protect people during war and other crises.**

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### Extra notes

On 17 July 1998, 120 countries agreed to the Rome Statute, the law that created the permanent International Criminal Court.

The International Criminal Court is an independent international organisation. It has its main office in The Hague, in the Netherlands (Holland).

The Court can prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

States are expected to prosecute these crimes. If they are unable or unwilling to do so, the ICC can proceed with prosecution.

### **The Lubanga case**

The trial of Congolese militia leader Thomas Lubanga Dyilo at the International Criminal Court (ICC) began on January 26, 2009. He stood accused of war crimes. Specifically, he was accused of conscripting, enlisting, and using child soldiers in the conflict in the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). On 14 March 2012, the three ICC judges found Thomas Lubanga guilty of war crimes.

The statute that created the ICC in 1998 says that States hold the primary responsibility in the prosecution of international crimes.

Under the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I of 1977, States must prosecute people accused of war crimes before their own national courts or extradite them for trial elsewhere. The ICC may only take up a case when a State is unable or unwilling to prosecute the suspects.

The ICC has jurisdiction over war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. This includes most of the serious violations of IHL covered by the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Additional Protocols whether committed during an international or non-international armed conflict.

The Rome Statute includes specific war crimes such as all forms of sexual violence committed during an armed conflict and the use in hostilities of children under 15 years old.

On genocide, the ICC repeats the definition of the crime found in the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It defines genocide as actions (such as intentional killing) intended to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.

The ICC also has jurisdiction over crimes against humanity, which include a range of acts committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population.

Contrary to other international courts, the ICC may take action against individuals but not States. However, nothing in the ICC Statute releases States from their obligations under existing IHL or customary international law.<sup>xix</sup>

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## **TOPIC 8**

### **Protecting prisoners of war (POWs)**

#### **Learning objective:**

You will be able to define ‘prisoners of war’ and how the law protects them.

During an international armed conflict, ie a conflict between two or more States, a soldier who is taken prisoner by the enemy is called a prisoner of war. He or she may be afraid that bad things will happen. Is there a law about this?

The Geneva Conventions and other laws say that enemy soldiers who want to surrender must not be harmed.

And enemy soldiers who are put in prison must be treated humanely.

They must have food, shelter and medical care. They can write letters to their families.



Soldiers escort republican fighters during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939)

### John's story: taking prisoners of war

John is a commander. He sees some enemy soldiers come out of the forest. Some are wounded. Two soldiers are carrying a badly wounded man. One soldier carries a white cloth on a stick. This means that they cannot fight any more and are surrendering.

John's soldiers want to shoot the enemy soldiers. But John says, "No, don't shoot. They are not fighting."

Secretly John is worried. Will the enemy soldiers attack his men? But John is a good man. His son is a soldier. He does not want to kill an enemy soldier who is like his own son, except during a battle.

John is a trained soldier. He knows the rule, "Do not kill men who surrender." He follows this rule.

He walks forward. He shows the enemy soldiers how to put down their guns on the ground and put their hands up in the air. Then he shows them where to sit down. He tells his soldiers to take the badly wounded man to the medical tent. The enemy soldiers were afraid at first. But now they feel safe.

John is following the rules about prisoners of war.<sup>xx</sup>

### Questions

- What does 'surrender' mean?
- How can you tell if the enemy soldiers want to surrender?
- If you have to surrender, will you feel afraid? Why?
- If you have time, can you act out this story in class?

### The ICRC helps prisoners of war in Ethiopia

The ICRC visits prisoners of war to ensure they are treated with dignity and humanity. There were prisoners of war in a camp in Ethiopia.<sup>xxi</sup> The prisoners of war were from Eritrea.

The ICRC wrote down all their names and how to contact their families. The prisoners of war wrote cards and letters to their families.

The ICRC gave these messages to the Eritrean Red Crescent Society. The Eritrean Red Crescent gave the messages to the families of the prisoners of war. The Third Geneva Convention says that all prisoners of war can send cards and letters to their families.

## Questions

- What does 'prisoner of war' mean?
- What did the ICRC do when it visited the prisoners of war?
- How will families hear about their loved ones in prison?

Other important things that the ICRC does include:

- looking at how prisoners are being treated, and talking to prison officials about how to improve the treatment of prisoners.

In some countries, prisoners of war have been treated well. They have had good food, medicine, books exercise and so on.

In other countries they have been treated very badly. Any soldier can become a prisoner of war: it could happen to you if you are a soldier. We must be kind to prisoners of war, because they are human beings like us. The International Criminal Court says it is a war crime to harm prisoners of war.

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## Extra notes

Some of the rules under this Geneva Convention are:

- Names of prisoners of war (POWs) must be sent immediately to the Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC. POWs are to be allowed to correspond with their families and receive relief packages.
- Prisoners of war must not be subjected to torture or medical experimentation and must be protected against acts of violence, insults, and public curiosity.
- Captors must not engage in any reprisals or discriminate on the basis of race,

nationality, religious beliefs, political opinions, or other criteria.

- Female POWs must be treated with regard due their gender.
- POWs are required to provide to their captors only their name, rank, date of birth, and military service number.
- POWs must be housed in clean, adequate shelter, and receive the food, clothing, and medical care necessary to maintain good health. They must not be held in combat areas where they may be exposed to fire, nor can they be used as a 'human shield' to deter military operations. They may be required to do non-military jobs under reasonable working conditions when they are paid at a fair rate.
- POWs may not be punished for their mere participation in hostilities.
- If they commit alleged offences, they are subject to the laws of their captors and can be tried by their captors' courts. The captor shall ensure fairness, impartiality, and a competent advocate for the prisoner.
- Seriously ill POWs must be repatriated (returned home).
- When the conflict ends, all POWs shall be released and be sent home without delay.
- The ICRC is granted special rights to carry out humanitarian activities on behalf of POWs. The ICRC or other impartial humanitarian relief organisations authorised by parties to the conflict must be permitted to visit prisoners and talk to them privately, examine conditions of confinement to ensure the Conventions' standards are being met, and distribute relief supplies.<sup>xxi</sup>

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## TOPIC 9

### The Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement at work

#### Learning objective:

You can give examples of the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Henry Dunant was a great human being. He helped the wounded at the battle of Solferino. He wanted to help all those in need, not just people from his own country.

After the battle of Solferino, Henry Dunant said, “Please make a society in each country that can help wounded soldiers during war.” Today there is a Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in most countries. They help many thousands of people when there is war. They also help many thousands of people when there is peace. They help people who are in need.

#### Question

- Is there a Red Cross or Red Crescent society in your country? What can you find out about it?

The ICRC, and Red Cross and Red Crescent societies help people by giving medical treatment, food and shelter to people who have lost their homes in war or in a flood or earthquake.

These societies also help people find family members during wars and help prisoners have contact with their families.

#### Miriama’s story <sup>xxiii</sup>

Mariama lives in Sierra Leone, in Africa. One day Mariama hears guns. She runs from the house with her children. She does not know where her husband is.

Mariama and the children walk until they are near the border with Liberia. But soldiers take them prisoner. Then they all hear guns. ICRC The soldiers go to fight. Mariama tells her children, “Run with me and we can hide in the forest.”

Mariama and her children go across the border. They see a camp with other refugees from Sierra Leone.

They live in a tent in the refugee camp. She tells the Red Cross workers in the camp, “I want to find my husband.” Three years later the Red Cross workers find her husband and bring him to the refugee camp. But after two months he becomes ill and dies.

#### Questions

- Can you tell the story in your own words?
- Where did Mariama and her family live before the war?
- What does ‘refugee’ mean?
- How does the Red Cross help Mariama when she is in the refugee camp?
- Pretend you are Mariama’s husband when the Red Cross comes to tell you about Mariama and the children. How do you feel?

After five years more in the camp, there is peace and Mariama goes home. Her house has fallen down. She stays with her children in one room of her uncle’s house. Then her uncle dies and his wives make her leave their house. Mariama and her children stay with a friend in a very small room. When it rains their blankets get wet. And there is little food. The Sierra Leone Red Cross has some money to help war widows to build houses. They listen to Mariama and decide that she needs help.



A Red Cross volunteer helps refer malnourished children for help in Burkina Faso

The Red Cross asks the people in the village if they will help build a house for Mariama. Some of the people in the village are from a different tribe.

They want money for their tribe. But the Red Cross workers talk with them and tell them the story of Mariama and how she has suffered. Then people say, “If you give us the materials, we will build the house.” The Red Cross gives materials for the walls and the roof.

The village people and Mariama’s two sons and daughter make her a house with three bedrooms, one for her, one for her daughter and one for her sons.

Mariama knows that many people have worked together to help her. People in far away countries gave money to the Sierra Leone Red Cross to buy materials for helping war widows. People in the Red Cross asked the men and women in the village to help her. And the village people have built her house.

### Questions

- Can you tell the story in your own words?
- Pretend you work for the Red Cross in Mariama’s village. What do you say to people to get them to co-operate) to build a house for Mariama?

Many people co-operated to help Mariama in the refugee camp. They co-operated to find her husband. Her uncle co-operated when she went home to her village. Her uncle’s wives did not co-operate with her, after he died. But the Red Cross workers asked the village people to co-operate and build her a new home.

### Key message

We are all human beings with similar needs. We can all co-operate and help each other to solve our problems. We should be kind to refugees and displaced people.

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### Extra notes

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement consists of:

- The International Committee of the Red Cross
- The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- 188 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which works in contexts of armed conflict, undertakes activities such as those below:

- Provides food, water, emergency relief and medical assistance to civilians without access to these basic necessities.
- Co-ordinates humanitarian relief efforts of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in areas affected by conflict.
- Visits prisoners of war and civilian internees held in relation to conflict to ensure that their conditions and treatment comply with the basic principles laid out in international humanitarian law (IHL).
- Conducts searches for missing persons.
- Exchanges messages to and from members of separated families.
- Reunites separated families.
- Helps to establish neutral and protected hospital and security zones in areas of conflict.
- Provides surgical equipment for war-wounded to hospitals and basic supplies to ensure that hospitals continue to operate during conflict.
- Through direct and confidential dialogue, reminds all sides participating in hostilities of their obligations under

IHL – namely to respect and protect those not or no longer taking part in the fighting.

- Through direct and confidential dialogue, draws attention (to parties of the conflict) to serious IHL violations and encourages respect for IHL.
- Educates the public about IHL and the role of the ICRC in conflict (to encourage respect for the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Crystal emblems) and contributes to the development of IHL.

### The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies carries out relief operations to assist victims of disasters. Its work focuses on four core areas: promoting humanitarian values, disaster response, disaster preparedness, and health and community care.

It is the membership association for national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies throughout the world. It strengthens the capacities of its member National Societies to assist those most in need and coordinates their international work. When the needs of people affected by disaster exceed the capacity of their national society, the Federation helps co-ordinate the international response of other national societies.

During conflicts the Federation works under the leadership of the ICRC to provide humanitarian assistance as necessary.

### National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Each National Society is made up of volunteers and staff, who provide a wide variety of services, ranging from disaster



The Red Cross assesses a child's level of malnutrition in n Penguese, Burkina Faso

relief and assistance for the victims of war, to first aid training and restoring family links.

The seven fundamental principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent are humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality.

What can you find out about the national society in your own country?

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### **TOPIC 10** **Helping strangers: Some organisations in your own country**

There are many organisations that help people in need. Can you find out more about organisations in your country?

What can you and your teachers find out about the Red Cross Society or Red Crescent Society? What can you find out about another organisation that helps people?

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### **TOPIC 11** **Helping people yourself**

#### **Learning objective:**

You will understand the personal value of helping others and will be able to give examples of when you have done this or might do it in the future.

We all help our friends and families. But do we help other people? Can you tell a story about helping someone who is not your close friend or family? Here are two stories about people who did that.

#### **Harsha's story** <sup>xxiv</sup>

When Harsha was 13 years old, a war began in his country between two different groups. Harsha saw many people from the other group being beaten and killed just because of their race and religion. The victims were people he had known all his life. He knew these people had not done



The Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies help victims of disasters such as tsunamis

anything wrong. Harsha and his family helped people who were being attacked. They were human beings.

Harsha's family did not want to hurt other human beings. They did not hate people with a different race and religion. They knew it was the wrong thing to do.

### Questions

- What does 'victim' mean?
- What was happening between the two groups??
- Why did Harsha's family want to help the group that was being attacked?

Harsha's family let members of the other group stay with them in their house. They gave them food and hid them when people came to look for them. For a week they hid them under their beds, in bathrooms, and under the roofs in their houses.

Harsha's family could have been beaten and killed for this. They risked their lives to help others.

The people who were hiding became like Harsha's family. When they could come out of hiding during the day, they helped with all of the family work. They did this because cooking, eating and cleaning together are an important part of being together in their culture. It was also a way to say, "Thank you." All the children were able to play together if they were quiet. They enjoyed playing together.

### Questions

- How did the families help each other?
- How would you feel if you were one of the children who had to hide?
- How would you feel if you were one of the children who was helping the others to hide?

Harsha and his family were not the only ones helping the other group. There were families all around his community that helped. They wanted to protect innocent people who were being attacked.

Harsha says, “In our families we learn to give to people and help them.” Children learn this value from a young age. This is one reason why some people risked their lives to help those in need. They had been taught to care for other people as fellow human beings. Harsha saw many horrible things happening to many people when he was a child. But he saw many acts of kindness, and now he works to help people affected by war. He tells his story to other young people so they can learn about helping strangers.

### Questions

- What does ‘value’ mean?
- What did Harsha’s family do to help the group who was being attacked?
- Are you brave enough to be like Harsha and his family?

### Pathum’s story <sup>xxxv</sup>

Pathum was a boy aged 14. He lived in a village in Sri Lanka. The village was near the sea. In 2004 there was a tsunami. A tsunami is when an earthquake far away makes a very big wave on the sea. The tsunami came to Pathum’s village. The big wave of water swept right through the village. It carried people away with it, like they were toys. Pathum saw the water take his mother and hit her against a wall. He never saw her again.

He never saw his father or grandmother again. A month after the tsunami hit the village, Pathum was living in a small room with his two sisters. Pathum was already back in school. He said, “I know my mother and father are dead, but I still want to make them proud. I want to stay in school and do well. This is what they wanted for me.”

One of the many Sri Lankans trying to help others asked what he could do to help Pathum. Pathum thought for a moment. Then he said, “My sister is taking her exams soon. All her notes and books were lost in the tsunami.

What I would like most is new books for her so that she can be ready to take her exams.”

Pathum chose to help another person whose needs were more urgent than his own. Pathum’s wish to help people was greater even than his desire to help himself. He was only 14 years of age, but he knew this was the right thing to do for another human being.

### Questions

- Can you tell this story in your own words?
- How would you feel if you were in this disaster?
- What would you do?

After the tsunami, many people helped others who were in need. One woman lost 17 members of her own family, but soon she was helping feed more than 50 homeless people.

Teachers whose own children had died worked quickly to reopen schools. They knew that it would help these children if they could go back to school. It also helped these teachers because they were able to continue their work for others.

### Questions

- Why do you think the woman who lost so many of her own family was helping others?
- Why did the teachers find places to start school again?

We are all human beings. We can all feel sad, hungry, thirsty, lonely, afraid. We hope that other people will help us when we face difficulties. So we should help other people when we can. If we are soldiers, we should show kindness to wounded enemy fighters or prisoners of war or civilians: they are human beings just like us.

### Key message

We can all help people who are sad, hungry, thirsty, lonely or afraid, even if they are from a different country, religion or other group. If all of us help others, then we shall get help when we need it too.

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### Extra notes

Mary Seacole (1805–1881) was born in Jamaica. Her father was from Scotland and her mother was Jamaican. Like Henry Dunant, she had a mother who showed her how important it was to take care of people who were in need. Her mother was a nurse and she taught Mary nursing skills from a very early age. When Mary grew up, she also became a skilled nurse. One of the medical contributions she made was in improving the treatment of cholera. Cholera is a disease that comes from poor sanitation and is very contagious and deadly. During Mary's lifetime, cholera was common among soldiers.

Mary moved to London and heard about the Crimean War. This war was being fought on the edge of the Black Sea where Russia had invaded Turkey. The British went to the aid of Turkey. Mary volunteered to go as a nurse with the British army as



Mary Seacole used her own money to travel to the Crimea and set up a hostel for injured soldiers

many women were doing, but she was turned away because of her race. She tried to volunteer with many other organisations, but was always turned away for the same reason. Finally, she used her own money to travel to the war area. She set up a hostel for soldiers who needed a rest or who were recovering from injuries. She worked to provide them with medical care, good food, and a safe place to recover from the horrors of war. Mary often went on the battlefield. “On several occasions she was found treating wounded soldiers from both sides while the battle was still going on.” Mary was often very poor because she spent most of her money on caring for soldiers. When she returned to London she continued her work in nursing. Mary was honoured by organisations of soldiers and former soldiers. She is honoured, even today, for her commitment to giving care to victims of war, people she did not know who came from all sides of the battle.

Mary Seacole cared for the dignity, health and happiness of all human beings. We can too.<sup>xxvi</sup>

# Annex 1: notes for teachers

## Introduction

The topics in this booklet can help promote students' ethical and moral development, and help students to become good national and global citizens. An essential part of this is learning to respect the dignity of all human beings, and especially those in need of help. The stories introduce the history and the work of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement during war and natural disasters and how laws such as the Geneva Conventions and Protocols help reduce human suffering in times of war.

The goal of this booklet is to encourage students to internalise the values of respect for human dignity, and to consider how to act on these values.

These topics can be taught in the classroom, during extra-curricular programmes, or in non-formal settings. They can be introduced in the context of subjects such as history, social studies, citizenship or languages. The stories are designed with years four to six of schooling in mind.<sup>xxvii</sup>

The additional resource material, or 'Extra notes' in boxes for most topics is added as background for teachers or students with advanced reading skills. They can help teachers or textbook writers to adapt the material for grades seven and eight. Thus, teachers of younger students can introduce the material and those same students can study related lessons at a deeper level in subsequent grades. Or some topics can be introduced in the higher grades.

Teachers are encouraged to use local materials and refer to local or national experience. Teachers can ask students to do outside assignments on appropriate topics

to deepen the learning experience.

Teachers can spend more than one class period on any topic, to allow time for discussion or if extra materials are used.

Some topics may not be appropriate for your country or for the age group of the students, and these should be not be used.

## Important points to remember

- 1 The method used for teaching most of the lessons is storytelling. We are using stories because:
  - stories are easy to grasp, young people can identify with them
  - stories can be short and still include an important idea
  - stories provide information and, at the same time, they can help students get in touch with their feelings. (Do ask students how they would feel if they were one of the people in the story.)
- 2 The subjects of war and natural disaster can be very sensitive, so it is important for teachers to observe the reaction of students during the stories and discussion. Help the students talk through their feelings about the stories or any real life experience that may come up for them.
- 3 The stories are true or a composite of true stories. You can introduce the stories in the booklet and then ask the students to make up their own stories about similar situations or tell the story of something similar which happened to them. The idea is to help students learn the point of the story, to empathise with people suffering crisis or helping

others, through discussion of the story, of their own feelings and how the story might affect their own behaviour.

- 4 As much as possible, the stories are meant to be culture/race/ethnicity neutral. It is important to remind students that the actions represented in the stories can happen anywhere.
- 5 Even in countries that are at peace, there are armed forces maintaining internal security or some soldiers may work as peacekeepers in other countries. Help students to see that they may one day need to understand the idea of the international humanitarian law (also referred to as the laws of armed conflict or the laws of war).
- 6 Structure the lesson to give time for student discussion. Ideally, 50 per cent of the class time should be used for discussion. It is most important for students to tell their own stories and come up with their own points about the lessons. This helps the students to internalise the values. You can also share a story of your own to encourage students to share. The facts of the stories are less important than the values they represent. Ask students to discuss the values.
- 7 Questions have been suggested for each story. Not all these questions should be used and you can add your own.
- 8 Ask the students for their comments on specific points or sections of the lesson. Encourage them to give more than just “Yes” or “No” answers.
- 9 Pay attention to the quiet students and actively seek their involvement. Using pairs, small groups and games such as role-playing are good ways to give everyone a chance to speak.
- 10 Drama helps students experience empathy with the people in the stories. If you have time, ask them to make up their own role-plays of the same story or another one.
- 11 You can read the stories to them, or ask them to take turns reading sections of the stories to the class. Any activity that requires the students to interact with the lessons physically, mentally and emotionally will strengthen retention and understanding.
- 12 As each lesson is presented, ask the students to reflect back on what they learned before. A useful tool is asking students, at the beginning of each class, to recall what they learned in the last class.
- 13 It is important to repeat points during the lesson and get students to repeat them in their own words. Always conduct a review of the points learned at the end of each lesson.
- 14 The topics and stories presented here are only examples of what can be done. If you can get good stories from your own country or region, please use them instead.
- 15 For topic 10, please collect information and stories from your own country.

## Annex 2: for reference

### The battle of Solferino

Extract from *A Souvenir of Solferino*, by  
Henry Dunant: <sup>xxviii</sup>

The alarm is given in both armies; on all sides are heard bugles sounding the charge, and the roll of drums. The Emperor Napoleon, who has passed the night at Montechiaro, sets forth hastily for Castiglione. By six o'clock firing has begun in earnest. The Austrians advance, in perfect formation, along the beaten paths, with their yellow and black battle flags, blazoned with the German Imperial Eagle, floating above the compact masses of white-coats. Among all the troops which are to take part in the battle, the French Guard affords a truly imposing sight. The day is dazzlingly clear, and the brilliant Italian sunlight glistens on the shining armour of Dragoons and Guides, Lancers and Cuirassiers...

The first encounter took place amid the difficulties of ground that was entirely strange to the Allies. The French Army was forced to beat a way through row upon row of mulberry trees with grapevines strung between them, amounting to a real obstacle. The ground was broken up in many places by great dried-up ditches, and by long walls some three or five feet high, wide at the base and tapering to the top. The horses had to clear these walls, and cross the ditches. The Austrians, from their vantage points on the hills, swept the French with artillery fire and rained on them a steady hail of shells, case-shot and grape-shot. The soil and dust, raised by this immense cloud of projectiles as they thundered into the ground, mingled with the thick fumes of smoking guns and shells. Facing the thunder of these batteries, roaring and spitting forth death upon them,

the French rushed forward like an opposing storm sweeping from the plain, to attack the positions they were determined to secure.

During the torrid midday heat, the fighting that rages on all sides grows more and more furious. Compact columns of men throw themselves upon each other with the impetuosity of a destructive torrent that carries everything before it; French regiments, in skirmishing order, fling themselves upon the Austrian masses, which are constantly reinforced, and become more and more solid and menacing, resisting attack with the strength of steel walls. Whole divisions threw off their knapsacks in order to be able to charge the enemy more freely with fixed bayonets. As one battalion is repulsed, another immediately replaces it. Every mound, every height, every rocky crag, is the scene of a fight to the death; bodies lie in heaps on the hills and in the valleys.

Here is a hand-to-hand struggle in all its horror and frightfulness; Austrians and Allies trampling each other under foot, killing one another on piles of bleeding corpses, felling their enemies with their rifle butts, crushing skulls, ripping bellies open with sabre and bayonet. No quarter is given; it is a sheer butchery; a struggle between savage beasts, maddened with blood and fury. Even the wounded fight to the last gasp. When they have no weapon left, they seize their enemies by the throat and tear them with their teeth. A little further on, it is the same picture, only made the more ghastly by the approach of a squadron of cavalry, which gallops by, crushing the dead and dying beneath its horses' hoofs. One poor wounded man has his jaw carried away; another his head shattered; a third, who could have been saved, has his chest

beaten in. Oaths and shrieks of rage, groans of anguish and despair, mingle with the whinnying of horses. Here come the artillery, following the cavalry, and going at full gallop. The guns crash over the dead and wounded, strewn pell-mell on the ground. Brains spurt under the wheels, limbs are broken and torn, bodies mutilated past recognition – the soil is literally puddled with blood, and the plain littered with human remains. [p.5]

The stillness of the night was broken by groans, by stifled sighs of anguish and suffering. Heart-rending voices kept calling for help. Who could ever describe the agonies of that fearful night!

When the sun came up on the twenty-fifth, it disclosed the most dreadful sights imaginable. Bodies of men and horses covered the battlefield; corpses were strewn over roads, ditches, ravines, thickets and fields; the approaches of Solferino were literally thick with dead. The fields were devastated, wheat and corn lying flat on the ground, fences broken, orchards ruined; here and there were pools of blood. The villages were deserted and bore the scars left by musket shots, bombs, rockets, grenades and shells. Walls were broken down and pierced with gaps where cannonballs had crushed through them. Houses were riddled with holes, shattered and ruined, and their inhabitants, who had been in hiding, crouching in cellars without light or food for nearly twenty hours, were beginning to crawl out, looking stunned by the terrors they had endured.

All around Solferino, and especially in the village cemetery, the ground was littered with guns, knapsacks, cartridge-boxes, mess tins, helmets, shakoes, fatigue-caps, belts, equipment of every

kind, remnants of blood-stained clothing and piles of broken weapons. The poor wounded men that were being picked up [from the battlefield] all day long were ghastly pale and exhausted...

Some, who had gaping wounds already beginning to show infection, were almost crazed with suffering. They begged to be put out of their misery, and writhed with faces distorted in the grip of the death-struggle. There were poor fellows who had not only been hit by bullets or knocked down by shell splinters, but whose arms and legs had been broken by artillery wheels passing over them. [p.12]

Although every house had become an infirmary, and each household had plenty to do in taking care of the wounded officers within its doors, I succeeded, by the Sunday morning, in getting together a certain number of women who helped as best they could with the efforts made to aid the wounded. It was not a matter of amputations or operations of any kind. But food, and above all drink, had to be taken around to men dying of hunger and thirst; then their wounds could be dressed and their bleeding, muddy, vermin covered bodies washed; all this in a scorching, filthy atmosphere in the midst of vile, nauseating odours, with lamentations and cries of anguish all around!

Before long a group of volunteer helpers was formed. The Lombard women went first to those who cried the loudest – not always the worst cases. I sought to organise as best I could relief in the quarters where it seemed to be most lacking, and I adopted in particular one of the Castiglione churches, on a height on the left coming from Brescia, and called, I think, the Chiesa Maggiore. Nearly five hundred

soldiers were there, piled in the church, and a hundred more lay outside on straw in front of the church, with strips of canvas to protect them from the sun. The women entered the churches, and went from one man to another with jars and canteens full of pure water to quench their thirst and moisten their wounds. [p. 15]

But the women of Castiglione, seeing that I made no distinction between nationalities, followed my example, showing the same kindness to all these men whose origins were so different, and all of whom were foreigners to them. “*Tutti fratelli*,” they repeated feelingly. All honour to these compassionate women, to these girls of Castiglione! Imperturbable, unwearied, unflinching, their quiet self-sacrifice made little of fatigue and horrors, and of their own devotion. [p.18]

But why have I told of all these scenes of pain and distress, and perhaps aroused painful emotions in my readers? Why have I lingered with seeming complacency over lamentable pictures, tracing their details with what may appear desperate fidelity? It is a natural question. Perhaps I might answer it by another: Would it not be possible, in time of peace and quiet, to form relief societies for the purpose of having care given to the wounded in wartime by zealous, devoted and thoroughly qualified volunteers? [p. 28]

It cannot be thought for a moment that a host of active, zealous and variant helpers would have been able to achieve nothing on that field of destruction during the dreadful night between the Friday and the Saturday, when groans and heart-rending prayers were rising from the throats of thousands of wounded men, who were enduring the most fearful agonies, and

suffering from the unthinkable torments of thirst! [p. 28]

It must not be thought that the lovely girls and kind women of Castiglione, devoted as they were, saved from death many of the wounded and disfigured, but still curable, soldiers to whom they gave their help. All they could do was to bring a little relief to a few of them. What was needed there was... kindly and experienced [people], capable, firm, already organised, and in sufficient numbers to get to work at once in an orderly fashion. In that case many of the complications and fevers which so terribly aggravated wounds originally slight, but very soon mortal, might have been avoided. [p. 28]

On certain special occasions, as, for example, when princes of the military art belonging to different nationalities meet at Cologne or Châlons, would it not be desirable that they should take advantage of this sort of congress to formulate some international principle, sanctioned by a Convention inviolate in character, which, once agreed upon and ratified, might constitute the basis for societies for the relief of the wounded in the different European countries? It is the more important to reach an agreement and concert measures in advance, because when hostilities once begin, the belligerents are already ill-disposed to each other, and thenceforth regard all questions from the one limited standpoint of their own subjects. [p.29]

# Text for the first Geneva Convention 1864<sup>xxix</sup>

Convention for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded in armies in the field

## Article 1

Ambulances and military hospitals shall be recognised as neutral and, as such, protected and respected by the belligerents as long as they accommodate wounded and sick. Neutrality shall end if the said ambulances or hospitals should be held by a military force.

## Article 2

Hospital and ambulance personnel, including the quartermaster's staff, the medical, administrative and transport services, and the chaplains, shall have the benefit of the same neutrality when on duty, and while there remain any wounded to be brought in or assisted.

## Article 3

The persons designated in the preceding Article may, even after enemy occupation, continue to discharge their functions in the Hospital or ambulance with which they serve, or may withdraw to rejoin the units to which they belong. When in these circumstances they cease their functions, such persons shall be delivered to the enemy outposts by the occupying forces.

## Article 4

The material of military hospitals being subject to the laws of war<sup>xxx</sup>, the persons attached to such hospitals may take with them, on withdrawing, only the articles which are their own personal property. Ambulances, on the contrary, under similar circumstances, shall retain their equipment.

## Article 5

Inhabitants of the country who bring help to the wounded shall be respected and shall remain free. Generals of the belligerent Powers shall make it their duty to notify the inhabitants of the appeal made to their humanity, and of the neutrality which humane conduct will confer.

The presence of any wounded combatant receiving shelter and care in a house shall ensure its protection. An inhabitant who has given shelter to the wounded shall be exempted from billeting and from a portion of such war contributions as may be levied.

## Article 6

Wounded or sick combatants, to whatever nation they may belong, shall be collected and cared for. Commanders-in-Chief may hand over immediately to the enemy outposts enemy combatants wounded during an engagement, when circumstances allow and subject to the agreement of both parties.

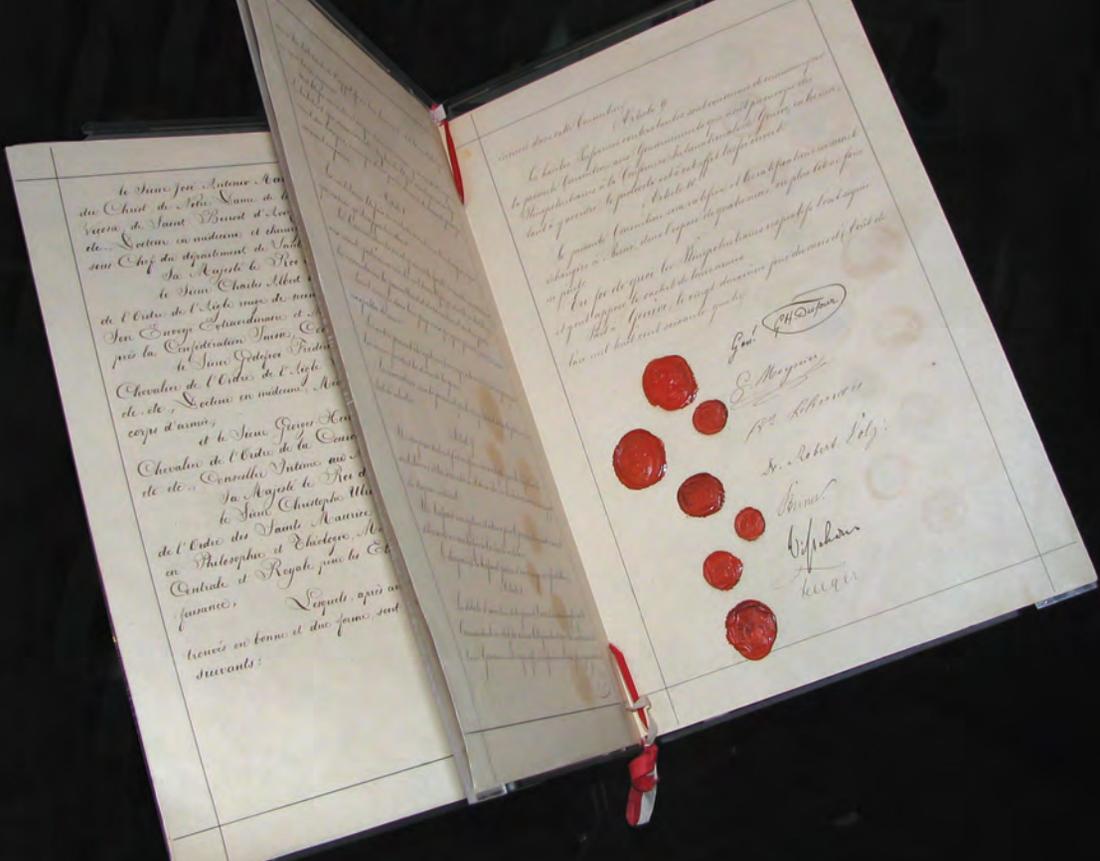
Those who, after their recovery, are recognised as being unfit for further service, shall be repatriated.

The others may likewise be sent back, on condition that they shall not again, for the duration of hostilities, take up arms. Evacuation parties, and the personnel conducting them, shall be considered as being absolutely neutral.

## Article 7

A distinctive and uniform flag shall be adopted for hospitals, ambulances and evacuation parties. It should in all circumstances be accompanied by the national flag.

An armlet may also be worn by



The original handwritten draft of the Geneva Convention, signed in 1864

personnel enjoying neutrality but its issue shall be left to the military authorities.

Both flag and armlet shall bear a red cross on a white ground.

### Article 8

The implementing of the present Convention shall be arranged by the Commanders-in-Chief of the belligerent armies following the instructions of their respective Governments and in accordance with the general principles set forth in this Convention.

### Article 9

The High Contracting Parties have agreed to communicate the present Convention

with an invitation to accede thereto to Governments unable to appoint Plenipotentiaries to the International Conference at Geneva. The Protocol has accordingly been left open.

### Article 10

The present Convention shall be ratified and the ratification exchanged at Berne, within the next four months, or sooner if possible.

In faith whereof, the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed the Convention and thereto affixed their seals. Done at Geneva, this twenty-second day of August, in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four.

# Glossary

## **Derogation:**

System that allows States to suspend temporarily certain rights in situations of emergency.

## **Geneva Conventions and Protocols:**

The four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols are international treaties that seek to regulate people's behaviour in time of armed conflict and to limit the effects of conflict. They specifically protect people who are not taking part in the hostilities (civilians) and those who are no longer participating in the hostilities, such as wounded, sick and shipwrecked soldiers and prisoners of war.<sup>xxxii</sup>

## **Genocide:**

Actions (such as intentional killing) intended to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

## **Human Dignity:**

The true human worth of a person; a universal definition applicable to all peoples and without regard to race, colour, sex, language, nationality, religious beliefs, political or other opinions, property, birth, ethnic or social origins, or any other considerations.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

## **Human Rights:**

Basic rights and freedoms that all people are entitled to regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, language, or other status. Human rights include civil and political rights, such as the right to life, liberty and

freedom of expression; and social, cultural and economic rights including the right to participate in culture, the right to food, and the right to work and receive an education.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

## **Humanitarian (ism):**

Humanitarianism is an ethic of kindness, benevolence and sympathy extended universally and impartially to all human beings. Humanitarianism has been an evolving concept historically but universality is a common element in its evolution. No distinction is to be made in the face of suffering or abuse on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, tribe, caste, age, religion, or nationality.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

## **Humanitarian education:**

Education that enables young people to analyse events and phenomena from a humanitarian perspective; it mobilises them for action in the spirit of humanitarian principles and values; it can also include exploring basic rules of IHL and other relevant bodies of law.

## **International Humanitarian Law (IHL):**

A body of international law that consists of treaty and customary rules that seek, in times of armed conflict, to limit the suffering caused by war by protecting persons who are not, or who are no longer, taking part in hostilities and by restricting the methods and the means of warfare that may be employed (also known as the 'law of war,' the 'law of armed conflict,' or *ius in bello*).

## **Prisoner of War:**

A soldier captured during an international armed conflict.

## **Refugee:**

A person who flees their homeland to another country from fear of harm, often because of war or violence.

## **War crimes:**

The most serious violations of the laws and customs of war committed during the conduct of a war.

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