



PERMANENT MISSION OF FINLAND  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
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The Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to the note LA/COD/2 of 2 April 2012, has the honour to transmit the following information on the status of the Additional Protocols relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts, as well as on measures taken to strengthen the existing body of international humanitarian law, inter alia, with respect to its dissemination and full implementation at the national level:

*Current status of the Geneva Conventions as well as other relevant IHL-instruments*

Finland has ratified the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions. Finland actively supported the adoption of the III Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions in December 2005. In 2009, Finland ratified the Third Protocol, and concurrently passed and an act on the implementation of the Protocol stipulating that the provisions of the Protocol, insofar as they are of a legislative nature, shall be in force as applicable law in Finland. At the same time, substantial provisions of other relevant Acts were amended to fully take into account the obligations imposed by the Protocol.

The Ottawa Mine Ban Treaty will enter into force for Finland on 1 July 2012. Finland will destroy its anti personnel land mines by 2016.

*International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission*

Finland has recognised the competence of the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission (IHFFC) by a declaration on 7 August 1980 and is therefore also financially supporting the work of the Commission.

*The fight against impunity*

The fight against impunity for the most serious international crimes is a priority for Finnish foreign policy. Finland ratified the Rome Statute of International Criminal Court in 2000 and continues to be a strong political and financial supporter of the Court, ICC-related projects, and other major initiatives aiming at ending impunity. Finland has also provided financial support to the Trust Fund for Victims of the ICC.

In 2008, the Criminal Code was amended to enable national courts to be fully able to exercise jurisdiction over crimes within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

To  
the Secretary-General  
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*IHL dissemination and training*

At the 31th International Conference of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent in 2011, Finland committed to altogether thirteen specific pledges. In its national pledge, Finland committed to renew the national publication on the Geneva Conventions and the Principal International Humanitarian Law Instruments as well as customary international humanitarian law. With this pledge, Finland underlined the need to ensure the effective dissemination of the Geneva Conventions as well as to increase efforts to spread knowledge of and to facilitate easily available information on International Humanitarian Law.

To complement its own dissemination activities, the Government of Finland financially supports the IHL dissemination activities of the Finnish Red Cross (FRC). The FRC engages in IHL dissemination in relation to a number of target groups, which include political decision makers, the armed forces, state civil servants, and the general public. The FRC carries out its dissemination through training, seminars, publications, a Finnish language IHL website, as well as general advocacy work.

As to national committees, the Finnish National Committee on International Humanitarian Law continues to meet regularly to reflect on issues pertaining to the implementation of IHL in Finland. The Committee is chaired by the Director General of Legal Services of the Finnish Foreign Ministry, and brings together representatives from different branches of government, the Finnish Red Cross, NGOs and the academia.

The Finnish Defence Forces provide education and training in international humanitarian law to conscripts, officers and personnel participating in crisis management operations. Additionally, officers and other personnel take part in courses organized by the Finnish Red Cross in Finland, and to courses organized by the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, and others, abroad. Issues related to international humanitarian law are also included in military exercises. Consequently, all levels of personnel of the Finnish Defence Forces are trained in IHL, and officers receive in-depth training as they progress in the careers. The Defence Command is currently exploring ways of further enhancing IHL education and training. The Defence Command is currently drafting new IHL training materials for military personnel, conscripts and crisis management personnel.

The Defence Forces employ legal advisers in the Defence Command, in the headquarters of each branch of the military, in the National Defence University and in the unit responsible for training crisis management troops and as well as in crisis management missions. Additionally, the Defence Forces trains lawyers in reserve to act as legal advisers in case of armed conflict.

The Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the assurance of its highest consideration.

New York, 1 June 2012

