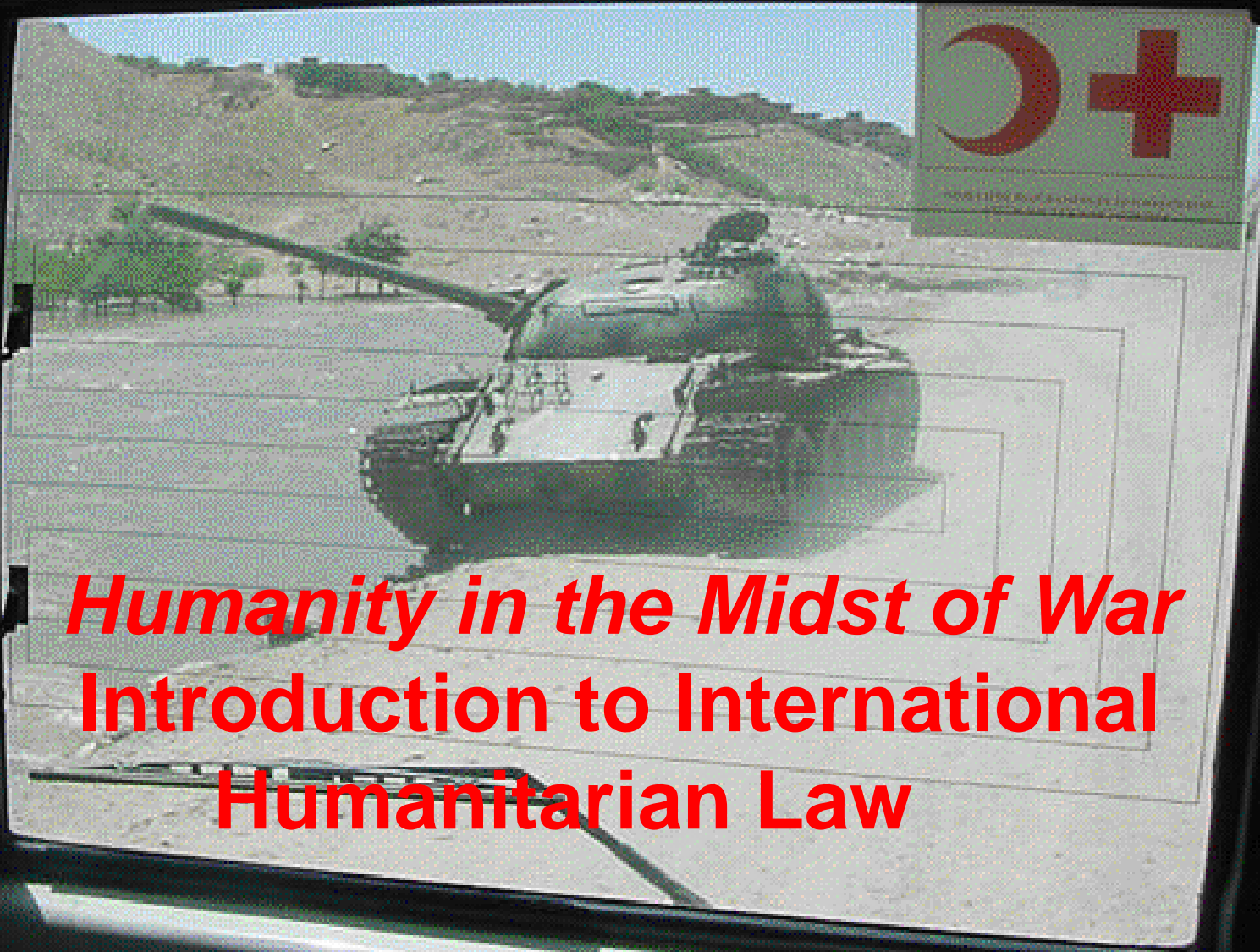




American Red Cross
St. Joseph County Chapter
International Humanitarian Law Briefing



Humanity in the Midst of War
**Introduction to International
Humanitarian Law**

International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

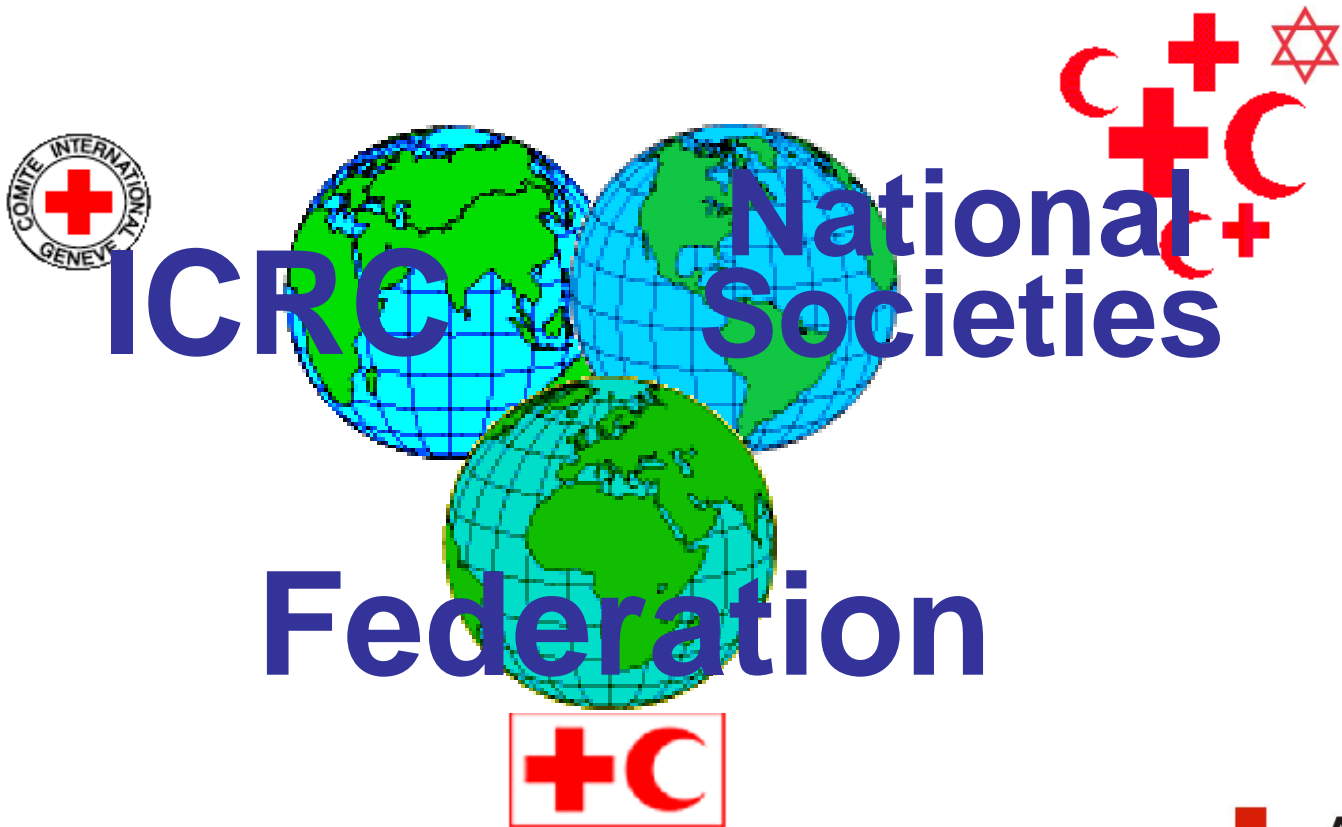
**The body of rules and principles
that seeks to save lives and alleviate
suffering during armed conflict**

Course Objectives

Increase the understanding of and respect for—

- Human dignity
- International humanitarian law (IHL)
 - Who and what IHL protects
 - How IHL protects people
- The importance of a public understanding of IHL
- Meeting IHL and fundamental principles challenges in American Red Cross daily work

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement



IHL 2-1



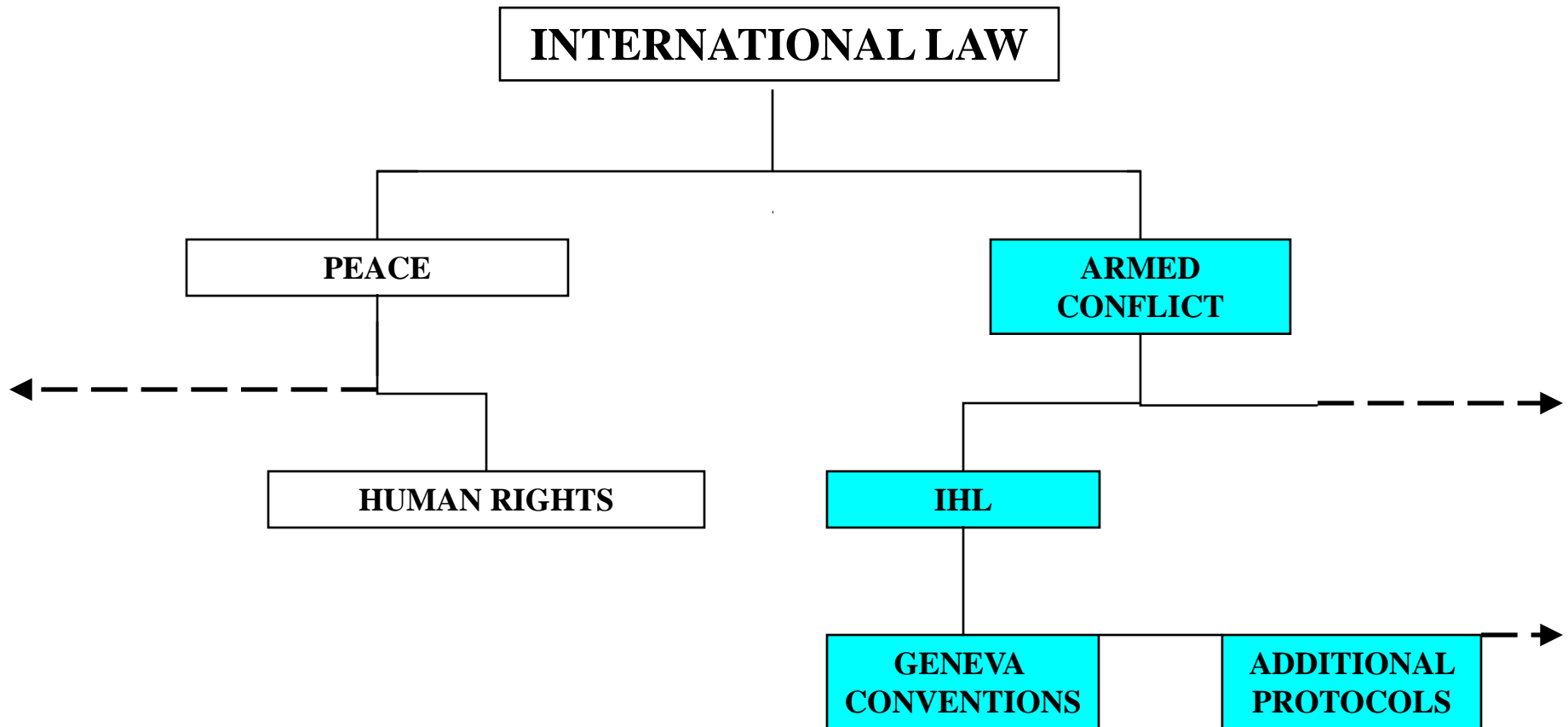
International
Services

The Basic Sources of IHL Are--

- **The Geneva Conventions of 1949**
and their
- **Additional Protocols**



IHL in the Context of International Law



IHL and International Human Rights

Human Rights

IHL

Common Fundamental Rights

- No discrimination based on race, color, sex or religion
- Right to life
- No torture
- No cruel treatment
- No humiliating or degrading treatment
- No slavery
- Cannot apply the law retroactively

IHL 2-5



International
Services

The Four Geneva Conventions for the Protection of Victims of War

First Geneva Convention

Protection of Wounded and Sick Combatants on Land

Second Geneva Convention

Protection of Wounded and Sick Combatants at Sea

Third Geneva Convention

Protection of Prisoners of War

Fourth Geneva Convention

Protection of Civilians

Who and What Is Protected

- **Wounded and sick combatants on land and at sea**
- **Prisoners and detainees**
- **Civilians**
- **Military and civilian medical personnel, also medical equipment, hospitals and medical transport vehicles**
- **Civilians accompanying the military**
- **Religious personnel (chaplains of the armed forces)**
- **Red Cross relief personnel**

Prisoner of War (POW) and Civilian Protections

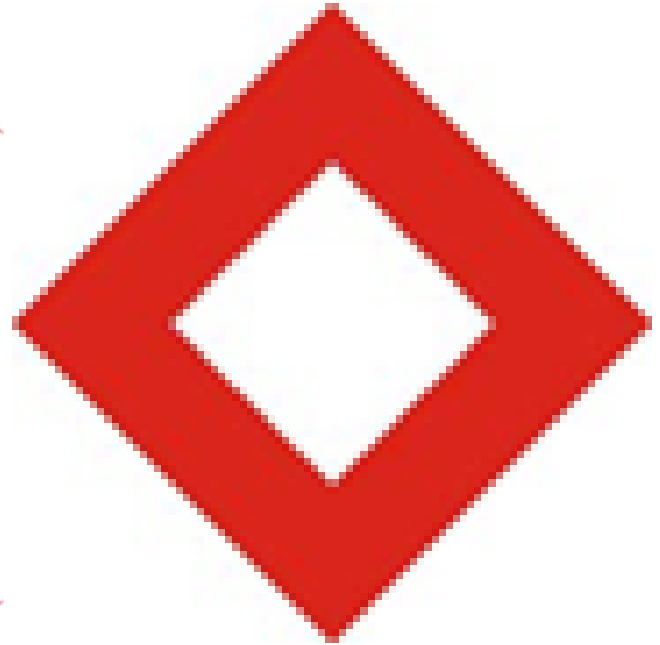
POW

- Receive humane treatment
- Get adequate food, clothing and medical care
- Are secure from public harassment or ridicule
- The government and ICRC are informed of capture
- Receive visits from the ICRC
- Receive family correspondence, relief parcels and assistance
- Are released at the end of conflict

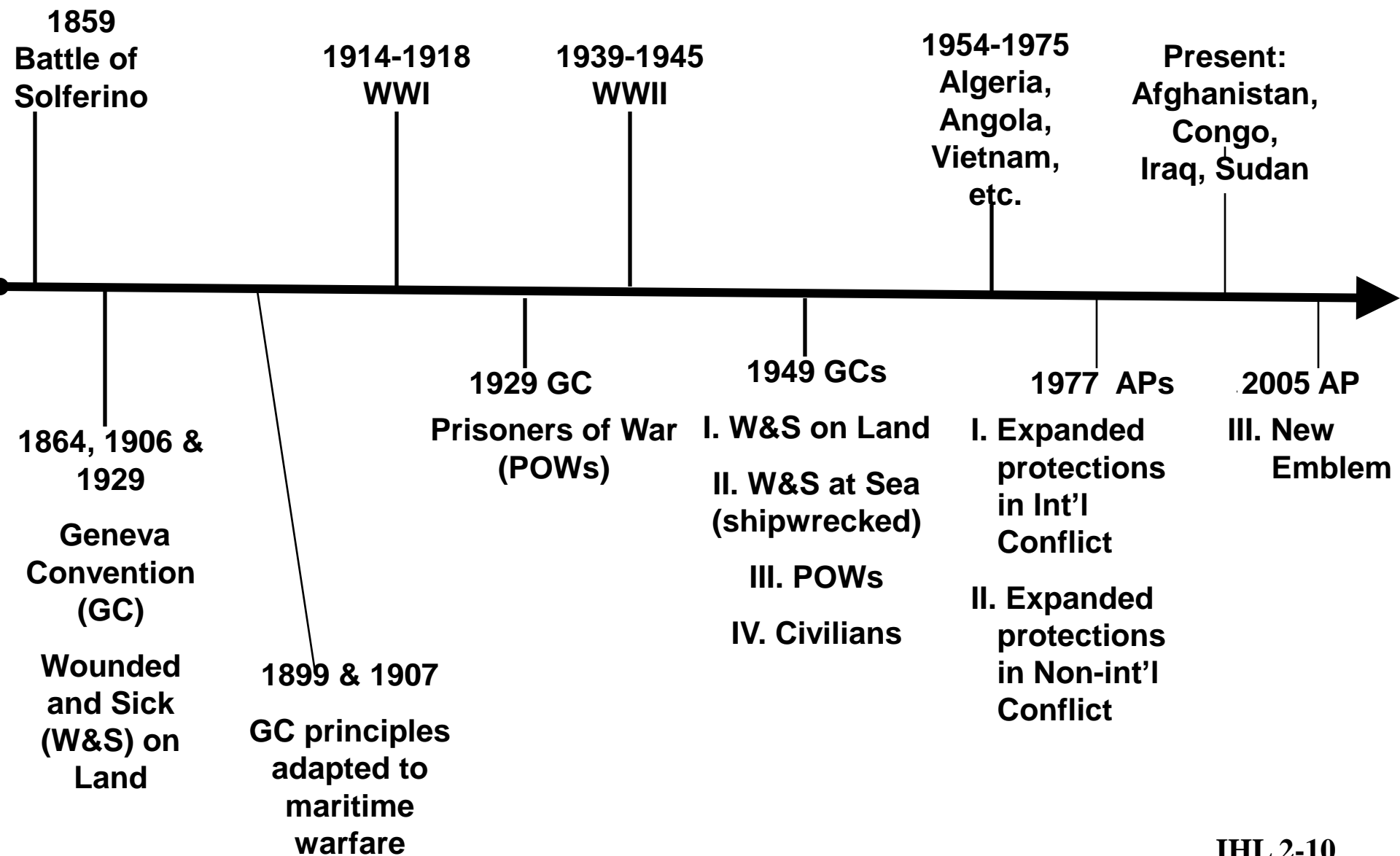
Civilian

- Receive humane treatment
- Get adequate food, clothing and medical care
- Their property is safeguarded from looting and destruction
- All hospitals, medical personnel and vehicles are respected
- Receive assistance provided by humanitarian organizations
- Receive family correspondence and family news
- Are interned only for vital security reasons

Distinctive Emblems (for protective use)



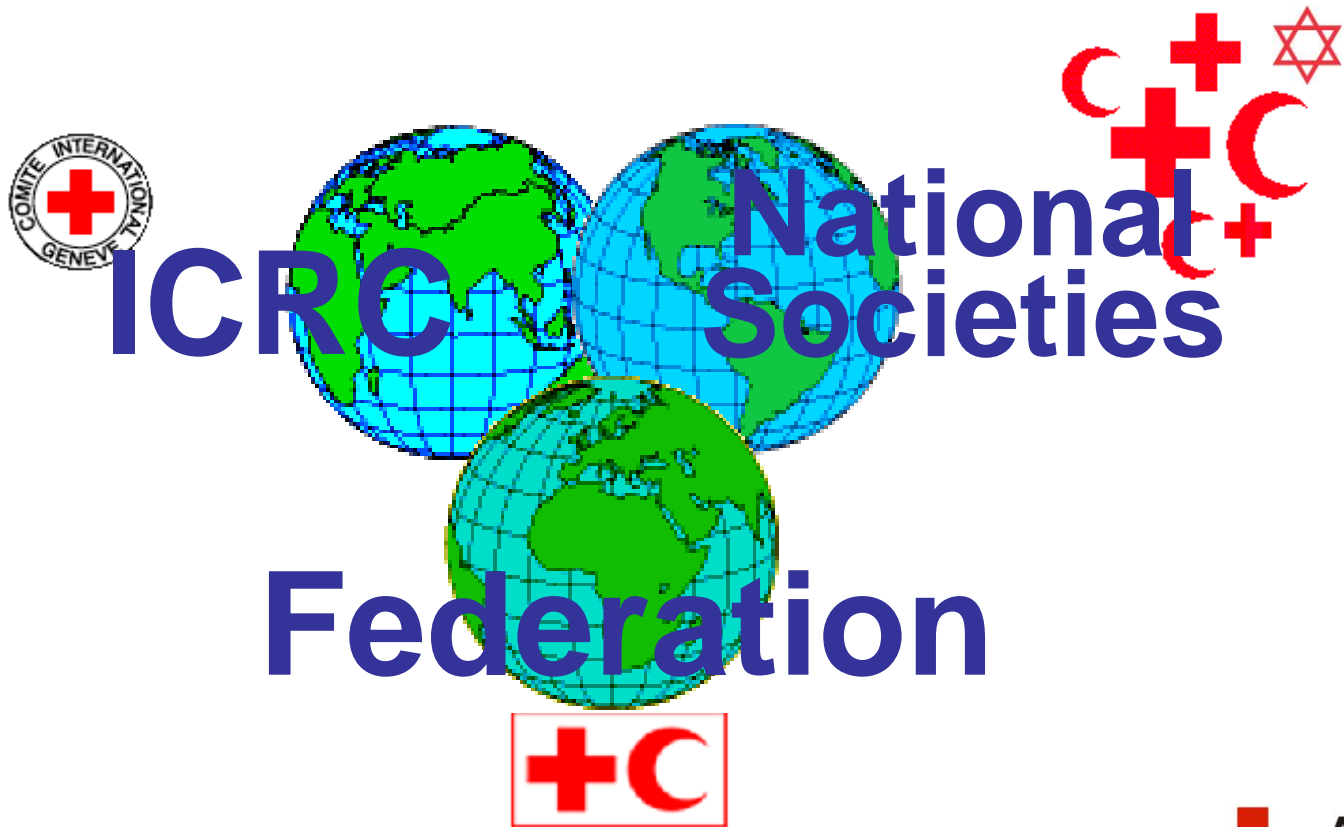
The Development of IHL



Types of Conflict	What Law Applies
International armed conflict	Geneva Conventions I–IV Additional Protocol I
Non-international armed conflict	Geneva Conventions 1–IV (Common Article 3) Additional Protocol II
Internal disturbances, tensions	International Human Rights Law
Peace operations	IHL United Nations Charter

***Acts of terrorism** are illegal under all bodies of law in peacetime and in armed conflict.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement



IHL 3-1



International
Services

National Society Examples



Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society

Options for Use of Red Crystal (for indicative use)



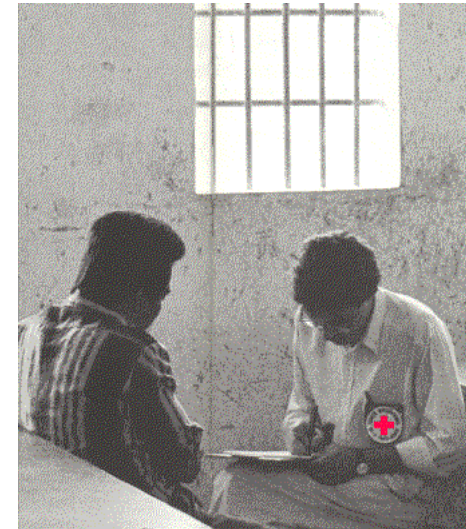
ICRC Activities

The ICRC works on a neutral and impartial basis to protect and assist people affected by conflict by:

- **Visiting prisoners of war and security detainees**
- **Searching for missing persons**
- **Transmitting messages between separated family members**
- **Reuniting dispersed families**
- **Providing safe water, food and medical assistance to those in need**
- **Disseminating IHL: promotes respect, monitors compliance and contributes to development**

ICRC Procedures in Places of Detention

- **Observe detention conditions and work to improve treatment**
- **Gain access to all detainees and detention facilities**
- **Register prisoners and detainees**
- **Do interviews without witnesses**
- **Provide confidential reports**
- **Arrange repeat visits**



ICRC Visits in Places of Detention

In 2005, ICRC delegations visited approximately 528,000 detainees or POWs interned in more than 2,600 places of detention in 76 different countries. The delegations made *confidential* reports to the *detaining authorities*, passing reports up through the chain of command as deemed appropriate.

The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement



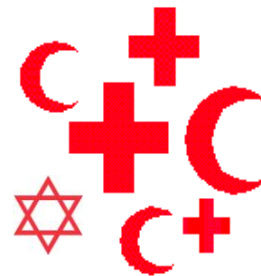
Humanity



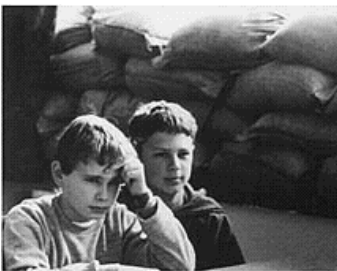
Independence



Impartiality



Voluntary Service



Neutrality



Universality



Unity

Legal Consequences of Non-Compliance for Individuals

- **Domestic prosecution**
- **War crimes tribunals**
- **International Criminal Court**

Legal Consequences of Non-Compliance for Nations

- **International sanctions**
- **Compensation**

Reasons to Respect IHL

- **Reciprocity**
- **Military efficiency**
- **Economic impact**
- **Public opinion**
- **Ethical values**
- **Preservation of civilization and recovery**
- **Break the cycle of violence and win the peace**





“The Geneva Conventions ...continue to remind us most forcefully of our common obligation to care for each other even, and particularly, in conditions that foster behavior to the contrary...”

**Nelson Mandela
July 10, 2003**