

Human rights and humanitarian law in professional policing concepts



Highlights from the book
To Serve and to Protect



ICRC

Human rights and humanitarian law in professional policing concepts



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Original: English
February 2002



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Since its founding in 1863, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been endeavouring to protect and assist people affected by armed conflict. It was born of a desire to bring aid without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield and to prevent or alleviate human suffering. Its purpose is to protect life and health by limiting the effects of conflict.

The League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies was founded in 1919. Now called the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, it organizes, coordinates and directs international relief operations in the event of large-scale natural disasters and encourages the work of National Societies.

The two organizations combine with the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to form the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The Movement is guided by the seven Fundamental Principles it formally adopted in 1965. These are: Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality.

With the ever-changing nature of conflict, today's actors are no longer confined to soldiers fighting on the battlefield. Irregular armed groups, paramilitary, interior troops, members of police and security forces and even isolated individuals often take part in today's armed conflicts and other situations of large-scale violence. Ever fewer wars are waged between States, these having given way to conflicts of a low-intensity non-international nature, acts of terrorism and massive civil disobedience. The battlefield has shifted to urban areas, and civilians are increasingly at risk, often the object of direct attacks. Fundamental principles of humanity are today widely and systematically disregarded. These changes have, in their turn, prompted changes in the ICRC's work, particularly in its efforts to promote knowledge of and compliance with international humanitarian law.

The ICRC is the guardian of international humanitarian law: its mandate is to promote respect for the rules laid down by that law. In addition to promoting knowledge of the law, it strives to assist the victims of armed conflict and internal violence and to ensure that they are protected as the law requires. This is achieved not only by direct field operations (see **b**, the work of the ICRC) but also by encouraging and taking part in the training of military, police and security forces in the area of humanitarian law and, where appropriate, human rights.

In 1996, the ICRC began training police and security forces in humanitarian and human rights law. Two years later, it published a training manual entitled *To Serve and to Protect*. This has since been translated into 21 other languages. The present booklet is based on that manual and deals with some of the key terms, concepts, principles and modes of behaviour. It is intended for use by mid- to lower-echelon police and security officials.

The main purpose of law-enforcement work is to serve the community by protecting all its members against illegal acts. In democratic societies the forces involved strive to be representative of the communities they serve as well as responsive and accountable to them. This booklet will help law-enforcement officials to understand and apply the relevant principles and rules of international humanitarian and human rights law in their work. That will enhance their organization's image as one whose purpose it is to serve and protect the citizens.

The ICRC

visits prisoners of war and civilian detainees

searches for missing persons

transmits messages between family members separated by conflict

reunites dispersed families

provides food, water and medical assistance to civilians without access to these basic necessities

spreads knowledge of humanitarian law

monitors compliance with that law

draws attention to violations and contributes to the development of humanitarian law

cooperates with National Societies by providing mutual support



International law (or, strictly speaking, public international law):

is **binding** on all those subject to it, in particular States;

is **primarily concerned** with the rights, duties and interests of the States;

is the **body of rules** that governs relations between the States themselves and between them and other subjects of that law, such as international organizations and, to a lesser degree, individuals;

regulates many aspects of international relations and includes rules on the territorial rights of States (relating to land, sea and airspace), environmental protection, international trade and commerce, the use of force by States, etc.

Human rights law and humanitarian law are two branches of public international law. Both are designed to protect the life, health and dignity of individuals, although in differing circumstances.

The sources of international law and national law are different, and States differ as to the manner in which they integrate international law into their domestic legal systems. However, a State cannot cite provisions in its constitution or national law as an excuse for failing to discharge its obligations under international law.

Acts that violate international law may give rise to international liability on the part of the State, including an obligation to make reparations. These acts may include violations committed by law-enforcement agents in their official capacity. The State can therefore be liable under international law for its acts.

Also known as the law of armed conflict, humanitarian law covers the following situations:

international armed conflict, i.e. armed hostilities between States involving partial or total occupation;

non-international armed conflict, i.e. protracted armed violence within a State;

"mixed armed conflict", i.e. internal conflict with foreign involvement.

International humanitarian law consists of principles and rules aimed at protecting persons and property that are, or may be, affected by armed conflict and at restricting the methods and means of warfare used. Historically, it has comprised the "Geneva law" and the "Hague law".

The "Geneva law" encompasses the rules relating primarily to the protection of persons not taking part in the hostilities (i.e. civilians) or persons no longer taking part in the hostilities (in particular, wounded, sick, shipwrecked and captured members of the armed forces).

The "Hague law" primarily encompasses the rules determining the rights and obligations of the warring parties in the conduct of the hostilities and limiting their choice of the means and methods of warfare.

The bulk of modern international humanitarian law is contained in the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, which were supplemented by two Additional Protocols on 10 June 1977. The adoption of Protocol I blurred the previous distinction between the "Geneva law" and the "Hague law".

The First Geneva Convention contains provisions to assist military personnel who are wounded or fall sick on the battlefield.

The Second Geneva Convention contains provisions to assist wounded, sick and shipwrecked military personnel at sea.

The Third Geneva Convention regulates treatment of prisoners of war.

The Fourth Geneva Convention is for the protection of civilians in wartime.

Protocol I covers international armed conflicts, including wars of national liberation, and is particularly intended to ensure the protection of civilians against the effects of the hostilities.

Article 3 common to all four Geneva Conventions of 1949 has been called a “mini-convention” in its own right because it contains rules that are applicable not only to international conflict but to internal conflict as well. Those rules are today considered to be customary international law, i.e. something by which belligerents are bound no matter what treaty obligations they may or may not have. They represent a minimum standard to be observed in all circumstances. Persons taking no active part in the hostilities must be treated humanely and without discrimination. Violence to the life and physical and mental well-being of non-combatants is prohibited, as are hostage-taking, outrages against personal dignity and denial of the right to a fair trial. The wounded and sick must be collected and cared for.

Protocol II additional to the Geneva Conventions may be considered as a development of Article 3; it contains more detailed rules applicable in the event of internal armed conflict.

International human rights law consists of a set of principles and rules on the basis of which individuals or groups can expect certain standards of conduct or benefits from the authorities solely by virtue of the fact that they are human beings. These rights are guaranteed by the constitutions and domestic law of most countries.

The International Bill of Human Rights is the term used as a collective reference to three major human rights instruments:

Universal Declaration of human rights;

International Covenant on civil and political rights;

International Covenant on economic, social and cultural rights.

Other major human rights treaties are as follows:

Convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide;

Convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination;

Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women;

Convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;

Convention on the rights of the child;

Convention relating to the status of refugees;

Protocol relating to the status of refugees.

Various bodies set up under the United Nations Charter or the main international human rights treaties together form an international human rights supervisory system.

The main Charter-based organization is the Commission on Human Rights and its sub-commission for the promotion and protection of human rights. The Commission makes use of “special procedures”, i.e. “special rapporteurs” and working groups that deal with specific subjects or countries.

Six of the main human rights treaties provide for committees of independent experts who have the task of monitoring the implementation of their respective treaties.

Law-enforcement officials should also be familiar with relevant regional human rights systems:

African Charter on human and peoples’ rights;

American Convention on human rights;

European Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.



law enforcement in democratic States



The main task of law-enforcement officials is to serve the community by protecting people against illegal acts.

The officials' responsibilities are to maintain public order and security, to prevent and detect crime and to help those in need.

The power and authority with which they are entrusted are to arrest and detain, to search and seize, and to use firearms and other force.

Law-enforcement organizations should be representative of the communities they serve and responsive and accountable to them.

Law-enforcement officials must know, understand, respect and apply the law.

International human rights and humanitarian law are both directly relevant to law-enforcement practice.

For law-enforcement officials, promoting and protecting human rights and freedoms is both a collective and individual responsibility.

All persons are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection by the law. There must be no discrimination.



Strict observance of and respect for the law is fundamental to good law-enforcement practice.

Neither exceptional circumstances nor superior orders may be used by individual law-enforcement officials to justify unlawful conduct.

Law-enforcement officials must develop a personal attitude and adopt a code of conduct that enables them to perform their tasks in accordance with the law.

Professional ethics are the standards and rules that govern the conduct of all members of a given profession.

The Code of Conduct for Law-Enforcement Officials sets out to provide ethical and legal guidelines for the profession. The following is a summary of its eight provisions:



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- Article 1: Law-enforcement officials must at all times perform their duty under the law.
- Article 2: They must respect and safeguard human dignity and uphold the human rights of all persons.
- Article 3: They may use force only when strictly necessary and to the extent required for the performance of their duty.
- Article 4: They must respect confidentiality unless the performance of duty or the needs of the justice system strictly require otherwise.
- Article 5: They are forbidden to inflict, instigate or tolerate any act of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- Article 6: They have a duty to safeguard the health of those in their custody and to secure medical care whenever necessary.
- Article 7: They are forbidden to commit any act of corruption.
- Article 8: They must respect the law and this Code. They must report violations to their superiors.

Suspected unlawful and/or unethical behaviour by law-enforcement officials requires prompt, thorough and impartial investigation.





prevention and detection of crime



In the task of preventing and detecting crime, as in all law-enforcement responsibilities, human rights must be respected by the police at all times.

Adequate prevention and detection must be based on lawful and non-arbitrary tactics and practices.

The key to this is community policing: the citizenry and the police must enjoy mutual trust, respect and cooperation.

The essential rights that must be respected in preventing and detecting crime are:

the right to be presumed innocent;

the right to a fair trial;

the right to privacy.

The interrogation of suspects and accused persons must be governed by precise rules and requires sound preparation.

Police infiltration and the use of informants must remain exceptional measures. Strict rules, monitoring and supervision are fundamental requirements for such practices.

Law-enforcement officials must receive special training to deal with crime victims, something which requires specific rules and procedures.

Whether it is a matter of criminal or civil proceedings, all persons are entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial court established by law.

The following minimum guarantees must be provided to ensure a fair trial on a criminal charge:

The accused must:

be promptly informed of the charges;

have an adequate opportunity to prepare his/her defence;

be tried without undue delay;

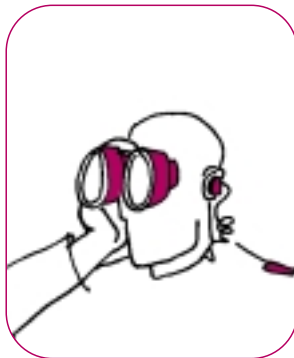
be allowed to defend himself/herself in person, by means of the legal counsel of his/her choice or, when necessary, receive legal aid;

be allowed to call and examine witnesses;

have the assistance of an interpreter free of charge;

not be compelled to testify against himself/herself or to confess guilt.

The victims of crime and abuse of power are entitled to protection and redress.





Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression and to peaceful assembly and association.

Fundamental rights such as that of peaceful assembly and of association can be restricted on the condition that this is lawful and necessary, i.e. needed:

to respect the rights or reputation of others;

to protect national security, public safety, public order, public health or public morals.

In the event of unlawful but non-violent assemblies, law-enforcement officials must avoid the use of force or, where this is not feasible, limit its use to the minimum.

In dispersing violent assemblies, firearms may be used only when less dangerous means prove ineffective and when there is an imminent threat to life or of serious injury.

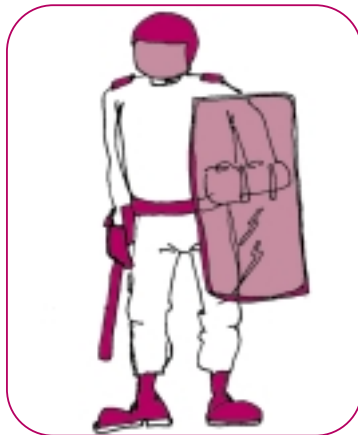
Firing indiscriminately into a violent crowd is never a legitimate or acceptable method of dispersing it.

In times of public emergency threatening the life of the nation, States may, to the extent strictly required by the situation, take certain measures that depart from the provisions of the International Covenant on civil and political rights.

Any state of emergency must be officially proclaimed. Even when this has been done, certain rights are inalienable, among them the right to life, the right to be spared torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and the freedom from retroactive application of criminal law.

Low-intensity internal armed conflict is governed by Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions. Article 3 sets out a number of acts that are prohibited at all times. These include violence to life, hostage-taking, outrages upon personal dignity and extra-judicial punishment and executions.

High-intensity internal armed conflict is also governed by Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions as well as by Protocol II additional to those Conventions.





basic law-enforcement powers >arrest and detention



Everyone has the right to life, freedom and personal safety.

Arrest means the act of apprehending a person for the alleged commission of an offence or by order of an authority.

A detained person means any person deprived of personal freedom except as a result of being convicted for an offence.

An imprisoned person means any person deprived of personal freedom as a result of a conviction for an offence.

Detention means the situation of detained persons as defined above.

Imprisonment means the situation of imprisoned persons as defined above.

The absolute prohibition on torture applies equally to all arrested, detained or imprisoned persons.

Arbitrary arrest, detention or imprisonment is also prohibited.

The power to arrest and detain must be exercised only by duly authorized persons.

Persons detained on a criminal charge must be presumed innocent unless duly convicted.

Detainees may not be forced to testify, to confess guilt or to incriminate others.

Upon arrest, a person must be promptly informed of the reasons and of any charges laid against him/her.

Detainees must be brought before a judicial or other authority who can judge the lawfulness of their arrest or detention.

Detainees are entitled to legal counsel, with whom they must be allowed adequate and unimpeded communication.

A person deprived of freedom has the right to notify his/her family, or other appropriate persons of his/her choosing, of his/her arrest, detention or imprisonment, or to have them notified by someone else.

Victims of unlawful arrest or detention have an enforceable right to compensation.

To protect the special status of women and juveniles, the law contains additional provisions regarding their arrest, detention and imprisonment.





Law-enforcement officials may use force only when strictly necessary and to the extent required for the performance of their duty.

When the use of force cannot be avoided, the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality must be observed.

Before force is resorted to, an attempt must be made to use non-violent means.

The use of firearms must be considered an extreme measure (last resort). Firearms may be used only in specific circumstances involving an imminent threat of death or serious injury. The intentional lethal use of firearms is allowed only when strictly unavoidable to protect life.

When using firearms, the police must first assess the risk they pose to the public, to themselves and, lastly, to the suspect.

To ensure that the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality are observed, every operation involving the possible use of firearms normally entails four phases: containment, planning, contingencies and briefing.

Each of these four phases requires an immediate assessment before any action is taken. This assessment must take into account the following:

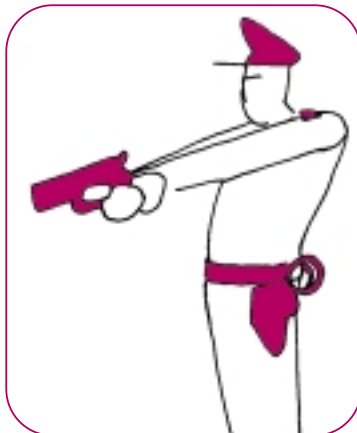
proximity and location of the suspect;

weapons in the suspect's possession;

the immediate threat to life, particularly if hostages are involved.

Reporting and review procedures must be observed and the misuse of force – particularly that resulting in death – must be promptly, thoroughly and impartially investigated and, if the evidence warrants, the use of force must be punished as a violation of criminal laws.

Responsibility for the use of force is borne by both the agents involved and their superiors. Ultimately, the police organization itself, its senior commanders and the agent or agents accused of wrongful action can all be held accountable by the judicial authorities.





vulnerable groups

> women



Women and men are entitled to full equality of rights and freedoms, without discrimination for any reason.

Several international human rights instruments – in particular the 1979 Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women – deal with the rights of women.

Violence against women is a problem that affects all societies. It is perpetuated by the failure – or outright refusal – of State authorities to recognize violence against women both as a criminal offence that is punishable under national laws and as a violation of the victim's human rights. Law-enforcement officials are required to act whenever domestic violence occurs, just as they do when any other crime occurs in their jurisdiction.

When it comes to arresting and detaining women, law-enforcement officials must allow for the special needs of women and must respect their rights.

Women offenders must at all times be dealt with and supervised by female law-enforcement officials and, when detained, must be kept separated from men.

Women are extremely vulnerable in armed conflict situations and require special protection and care.

Rape, forced prostitution and other forms of gender-based violence are war crimes, whether committed in connection with international or internal armed conflict.



vulnerable groups > juveniles



The 1989 Convention on the rights of the child focuses on looking after the best interests of children. It seeks to protect them against abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Children have the same fundamental human rights and freedoms as adults. There are international rules that provide them with additional protection, particularly in the area of juvenile justice.

An arrested or detained juvenile has the same rights as an arrested or detained adult. For example, he or she must be promptly informed of the reasons for arrest and of any charges laid.

Following arrest, the parents or guardian of the arrested juvenile must be informed of the fact.

Where pre-trial detention of a juvenile is unavoidable, its duration should be kept to an absolute minimum by giving the highest priority to expeditious processing of that case.

Detained juveniles must be kept separated from adults. Accused juveniles must be kept separated from convicted juveniles.

Children are extremely vulnerable in armed conflict situations and the States party to conflict must take all feasible measures to ensure that children affected by the conflict are protected and cared for.

Children under 15 years of age must not be allowed to take part in hostilities, nor may they be recruited into the armed forces.

If arrested, detained or interned for reasons related to an armed conflict, children must be kept separated from adults, except in cases where families are housed as family units.



The term refugee applies to any person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his or her former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling, to return to it.

Under some regional arrangements, the definition of refugee has been extended to include other causes which might compel a person to flee his/her country, such as armed conflict, foreign domination, outside aggression, massive violations of human rights or other circumstances that have seriously disturbed public order.

Internally displaced persons are individuals or groups who have been forced to flee their homes or places of habitual residence suddenly or unexpectedly as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violation of human rights or natural or man-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized border.

Refugees are protected in a general manner by all human rights treaties and are entitled to additional protection under the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees, and its 1967 Protocol.

Internally displaced persons have the same rights and freedoms as persons who have not been displaced, which means that they are protected by international human rights law as well as national law.

The governments of countries that have internally displaced persons on their territory are first and foremost responsible for their care and protection.

In wartime, refugees and internally displaced persons are entitled to the same special protection under international humanitarian law as all other members of the civilian population.

The forced movement of all or part of the civilian population is prohibited by international humanitarian law.

Law-enforcement officials must be aware of the special needs of refugees and internally displaced persons in order to provide them with appropriate protection and assistance.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was created to provide international protection for refugees and to facilitate the finding of lasting solutions to their situation.





The victims of crime must be treated with compassion and with respect for their personal dignity. They are entitled to access to the justice system and to prompt redress for the harm they have suffered.

The UN Declaration of basic principles of justice for victims of crime and abuse of power (Victims Declaration) provides guidance to governments on how to assist such victims.

The Declaration defines victims of crime as:

“persons who, individually or collectively, have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that are in violation of criminal laws operative within Member States, including those laws proscribing criminal abuse of power”.

The victims must be kept informed about the progress of the proceedings and the disposition of their cases, especially in cases of serious crime and where such information has been requested.

The victims should receive the material, medical, psychological and social assistance that they need.

The victims may require protection of their privacy and safety, and that of their family, against intimidation and retaliation.

Anyone who has been the victim of unlawful arrest or detention has an enforceable right to compensation.

In cases where public officials or other persons acting in an official or quasi-official capacity have violated national criminal laws, the victims should receive restitution from the State whose officials or agents were responsible for the harm inflicted.

Persons affected by the use of firearms or other force, or their legal representatives, must have access to the competent authorities for administrative review and judicial control.

The Declaration defines victims of abuse of power as:

“persons who individually or collectively, have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, through acts or omissions that do not yet constitute violations of national criminal laws but of internationally recognized norms relating to human rights”.

One of the main objectives of the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their two Additional Protocols of 1977 is to protect the victims of armed conflict. These may include civilians, wounded, sick or shipwrecked military personnel, and prisoners of war.





command and management

>monitoring and review responsibilities



Most law-enforcement services are civilian organizations working under the authority of either the ministry of the interior or the ministry of justice.

The training of law-enforcement officials must deal not only with issues at the theoretical level but must also explain the correct application of the knowledge obtained by the trainees in order to ensure appropriate practices.

Policing comprises offering a range of services. Their type and quality depend on the ability of law-enforcement organizations to detect and interpret the desires and needs of the communities they serve.

Effective communication between every unit of the organization and good relations with the community it serves are crucial. These relations, both internal and external, are key factors in ensuring law-enforcement that responds to those desires and needs.

Law-enforcement is the object of public scrutiny. Transparency is essential; performances must be regularly recorded and evaluated.

Law-enforcement organizations are legally accountable to the government and to the community as a whole. The organization, as well as individual officials within it, can be held accountable for its actions under national and international law.

Law-enforcement strategy and policy development is a joint effort involving the organization itself, the government, the judiciary and the community as a whole.

Members of society may complain about law-enforcement performance. The organization must therefore be equipped to investigate any such complaint promptly, thoroughly and impartially.

In some countries, complaints about law-enforcement performance are entrusted for investigation to an independent civilian review board.

The right to file a complaint with a review board or with a particular law-enforcement organization in no way affects the individual's right to have his/her complaint examined by an independent court in the framework of criminal or civil proceedings, or both.





Human rights violations are violations of the relevant national criminal law and/or of international human rights standards.

In a strict legal sense, human rights can be violated only when the act or omission is imputable to the State.

At the international level, States can be held accountable for their human rights practices by a wide variety of judicial, quasi-judicial and political mechanisms, including individual complaints procedures established under some human rights treaties.

Individual complaints addressed to one of the treaty-monitoring bodies can be dealt with only when the State concerned has accepted the capacity of that body to receive and consider such communications. All domestic remedies must already have been exhausted.

Domestic remedies include legal proceedings, whether criminal or civil, arbitration or conciliation mechanisms, a national ombudsman or a national human rights commission.

Law-enforcement organizations have a duty, on the basis both of national law and State obligations under international law, to investigate human rights violations promptly, thoroughly and impartially.

Establishing and maintaining effective monitoring and review procedures is needed to guarantee the individual accountability of law-enforcement officials.

The authority to arrest and detain individuals, to conduct searches, to seize personal property and to use force, including deadly force, are powers bestowed on law-enforcement officials to assist them in the performance of their duties. All organizations entrusted with police duties must carry them out lawfully, with full respect for international human rights standards.

In democratic societies, police detect and fight crime, maintain public order and help people in the event of an emergency. This is the police's mandate, and it must be carried out for all members of society, including vulnerable groups such as juveniles, women, internally displaced persons and refugees, without any adverse discrimination.

As professional organizations with codes of conduct and/or codes of ethics, police forces are responsible and accountable to the communities they serve. They operate within a legal framework which must ensure correct law-enforcement practices. Police actions must be lawful, necessary and proportional. And police organizations must monitor the actions of their staff. This is to ensure that any and all human rights violations committed by the police are thoroughly investigated and that appropriate sanctions are imposed and remedial action taken.

Law-enforcement officials must know, respect, understand and apply the law that they are sworn to uphold. Only when these practices are institutionally ingrained and when law-enforcement officials regularly demonstrate a commitment to meeting human rights standards will they enjoy the confidence, trust and respect of the community they serve.

In cases where law-enforcement officials are involved in armed conflict, they must also fully respect the rules of international humanitarian law.

A comprehensive list of these instruments and their contents is available through UN reference centres and websites such as www.un.org and www.unhchr.ch

ACHPR

African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights

ACHR

American Convention on Human Rights

BEIJING RULES

UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice

BODY OF PRINCIPLES

Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons Under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment

BPUFF

Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms

CAT

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

CCLEO

Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials

CEDAW

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

CERD

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

CHR

Commission on Human Rights

CPPCG

Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

CRC

Convention on the Rights of the Child

CRSR

Convention relating to the Status of Refugees

ECHR

European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights)

ECOSOC

The Economic and Social Council

IBHR

International Bill of Human Rights
(Collective reference to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)

ICCPR

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICESCR

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

ICJ

International Court of Justice

IDP

Internally Displaced Person

IHL

International Humanitarian Law

OAS

Organization of American States

OAU

Organization of African Unity

SMR

Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

UDHR

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNHCR

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNHCHR

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

UNRPJ

United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty

VICTIMS DECLARATION

Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power

notes

mission

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. It directs and coordinates the international relief activities conducted by the Movement in situations of conflict. It also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.



ICRC