

1. First lesson

Principles of IHL and their relevance in contemporary armed conflicts

- Concept and philosophy of IHL
- The distinction between civilians and combatants: a necessary prerequisite for respect for IHL that is impossible to meet in contemporary armed conflicts?

2. Second lesson

The laws of war in contemporary international law and in the contemporary international community

- Nature and existence of international law
- Sources of IHL
- *Jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* under the UN Charter
- The complementary character of IHL and International Human Rights Law

3. Third lesson

Different types of armed conflicts

- The concept of armed conflict
- The distinction between international and non-international armed conflicts: reasons, relativity and comparison of the two regimes
- Contemporary problems of qualification
- Practical consequences of problems of qualification

4. Fourth lesson

Implementation of IHL

- The need for national measures of implementation in peacetime
- The example of the (need for) national legislation on the protection of the emblem of the red cross, red crescent or red crystal in the country where the course is being held
- Monitoring and control by the ICRC: possibilities and limits inherent in the ICRC's status and approach
- The role of the UN: conflict resolution and humanitarian action
- The prosecution of war crimes by national courts, ad hoc tribunals and the International Criminal Court

