To have access to civilians [1] in need, humanitarian organizations [2] must deliver humanitarian assistance [3] with the consent of the belligerent parties concerned. Such consent cannot be arbitrarily withheld. In cases where a party imposes a siege, blockade [4] or embargo which has the effect of starving [5] the civilian population, the party is obliged to give its consent.

In international armed conflicts, the representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross [6] and Protecting Powers [7] must have access to prisoners of war [8] or protected persons [9]. In non-international armed conflicts [10], the consent of the belligerent parties is required for these representatives to have access to persons deprived of their liberty for reasons related to the conflict.

See Humanitarian assistance [3]; Civilians [1]; Civilian population [11]; International Committee of the Red Cross [6]; Protecting Powers [7]; Humanitarian organizations [2];
for delegates of Protecting Powers

GCI, 8 [14] (see ICRC updated Commentary [15])

GCII, 8 [16] (see ICRC updated Commentary [17])

GCIII, 8 [18]

GCIV, 9 [19]

for delegates of the ICRC

GCIII, 126/4 [20]

GCIV, 143/5 [21]

to humanitarian activities of the ICRC and other humanitarian organisations

GCI, 9 [22] (see ICRC updated Commentary [23])

GCII, 9 [24] (see ICRC updated Commentary [25])

GCIII, 9 [26]

GCIV, 10 [27]
to assistance by civil defence organisations of neutral or third States

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Case Study, Armed Conflicts in the former Yugoslavia (Paras. 13 and 36)

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Iraq/Syria/UK, Drone Operations against ISIS

Eastern Ukraine, OHCHR Report on the Situation: November 2016 - February 2017

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