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A merchant ship is a privately owned ship used for the transport of goods and civilian persons. It must not carry out acts of hostility, and may not be attacked.

A merchant ship is, however, subject to visit, to search, and in case of capture to confiscation. If it is the property of the enemy State, it is treated to some extent as a warship and may accordingly be confiscated without formality of any kind.

See Naval Warfare ^[1];

OUTLINE

Chapter 10, IV. 3. Protection of enemy merchant vessels ^[2]

Chapter 10, IV. 4. Protection of neutral merchant vessels ^[3]

DOCUMENT

San Remo Manual (Para. 67) ^[4]

CASE

Yemen, Potential Existence and Effects of Naval Blockade ^[5]

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

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<https://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Article.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=073EFC79F6DF9B7BC12563FBC>

[5] <https://casebook.icrc.org/case-study/yemen-potential-existence-and-effects-naval-blockade>