



Published on *How does law protect in war? - Online casebook* (<https://casebook.icrc.org>)

Home > Status

It refers to the legal position or condition of a person, property or place/territory under International Humanitarian Law.

Unlike human rights law, for example, under IHL the set of rules that applies to a particular situation is often dependent on the status of the persons or objects involved, and sometimes even the territory on which certain conduct is carried out.

IHL recognizes particular protections for the following categories of persons, places and objects:

- a. Wounded ^[1], sick ^[2] or shipwrecked persons; ^[3]
- b. Combatants ^[4];
- c. Prisoners of war ^[5];
- d. Medical aircraft ^[6];
- e. Medical ^[7] and religious personnel ^[8];
- f. Civilian persons ^[9];
- g. Cultural property ^[10];
- h. Civil defence personnel ^[11];
- i. Occupied territory ^[12];
- j. non-defended localities ^[13] and demilitarized zones ^[14];
- k. hospital ^[15] and safety zones ^[16].

IHL also uses the term when it clarifies that its application does not affect the legal status of

armed groups.

Furthermore, international humanitarian law deals with the status of public officials and judges of an occupied territory by providing that the Occupying Power may not alter their status.

See [Classification of persons](#) [17]; [Protected persons](#) [18]; [Legal Status of the parties](#) [19];

CASES

[Malaysia/Philippines, Conflict over the Sultanate of Sulu](#) [20]

[Israel, Blockade of Gaza and the Flotilla Incident](#) [21]

[European Court of Human Rights, Kononov v. Latvia](#) [22]

[United States, Jurisprudence Related to the Bombing of the U.S.S. Cole](#) [23]

[Georgia: Attacks against peacekeepers](#) [24]

LEGAL SOURCE

of wounded and sick

See [Wounded and sick](#) [1]

[GCI, 13](#) [25] (see [ICRC updated Commentary](#) [26]), [14](#) [27] (see [ICRC updated Commentary](#) [28])

of shipwrecked

See Shipwrecked ^[3]

GCI, 13 ^[25] (see ICRC updated Commentary ^[26])

of combatant

See Combatant ^[4]

HR, 1 ^[29]-3 ^[30]

PI, 43 ^[31]-47 ^[32]

of POWs

See Prisoner of war ^[5]

HR, 1 ^[33]-3 ^[30]

GCIII, 4 ^[34]

of medical personnel

See Medical personnel ^[7]

of religious personnel

See Religious personnel ^[8]

of civilians

See Civilian population ^[35]

PI, 50 ^[36]

CIHL, 5 ^[37]

of civilian object

See Civilian objects ^[10]

PI, 52 ^[38]

CIHL, 7 ^[39] and 9 ^[40]

of civil defence personnel

See Civil defence ^[11]

PI, 62 ^[41]-67 ^[42]

of parties to the conflict

See Legal status of the parties ^[19]

of non-defended localities

See Non-defended localities ^[13]

of demilitarized zones

See Demilitarized zones ^[14]

of hospital and safety zones and localities

See Hospital and safety zones and localities ^[43]

Source URL: <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/status>

Links

[1] <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/wounded-and-sick>

[2] <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/sick>

[3] <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/shipwrecked>

[4] <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/combatants>

[5] <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/prisoners-war>

[6] <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/medical-aircraft>

[7] <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/medical-personnel>

[8] <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/religious-personnel>

[9] <https://casebook.icrc.org/law/civilian-population>

[10] <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/civilian-objects>

[11] <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/civil-defence>

[39] https://www.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_rul_rule7

[40] https://www.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_rul_rule9

[41]

<https://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Article.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=02E0D3A823098378C12563CD00>

[42]

<https://www.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Article.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=3807E75E13109FC6C12563CD00>

[43] <https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/hospital-zones-and-localities-hospital-and-safety-zones-and-localities>