The term refers not only to criminal punishment, but also to other types of sanctions\[1\], harassment or administrative action taken against a group in retaliation for an act committed by an individual/s who are considered to form part of the group. Such punishment therefore targets persons who bear no responsibility\[2\] for having committed the conduct in question. Historically used as a deterrence tool by occupying powers to prevent attacks from resistance movements, collective punishments for acts committed by individuals during an armed conflict are prohibited by IHL against prisoners of war\[3\] or other protected persons\[4\].

International humanitarian law prohibits collective punishment of prisoners of war\[3\] or other protected persons\[4\] for acts committed by individuals during an armed conflict\[5\].

The imposition of collective punishment is a war crime\[6\].

See War crimes\[6\], Sanctions\[1\]; Individual criminal responsibility\[7\];
HR, 50 [9]

GCIII, 87/3 [10]

GCIV, 33 [11]

PI, 75/2(d) [12]

PI, 75/4(b) [12]

PII, 4/2(b) [13]

CIHL, 103 [14]

DOCUMENT

ICRC, Appeals on the Near East [15]

UN, Minimum Humanitarian Standards [16]

CASES

Sierra Leone, Special Court Ruling in the AFCR Case [17]

Switzerland, Qualification of the Conflict in El Salvador [18]


Israel/Gaza, Operation Cast Lead [22]

Israel/Lebanon/Hezbollah Conflict in 2006 [23]

Sierra Leone, Special Court Ruling on Immunity for Taylor [24]

India, Press Release, Violence in Kashmir [25]

ICRC, IHL and the Challenges of Contemporary Armed Conflicts [26]

Case Study, Armed Conflicts in the former Yugoslavia [27]

Democratic Republic of the Congo, Conflict in the Kivus [28]

Israel, House Demolitions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory [29]

Israel, Human Rights Committee’s Report on Beit Hanoun [30]

UN Security Council, Sanctions Imposed Upon Iraq [31]

UN, Guidelines for UN Forces [32]
ICTY, The Prosecutor v. Gali? [33]

Israel, Blockade of Gaza and the Flotilla Incident [34]

Iraq, Forced displacement and deliberate destruction [35]

Iraq: Situation of Internally Displaced Persons [36]

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

Suggested reading:


Further reading:


Source URL: https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/collective-punishments

Links

[1] https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/sanctions