The principle of proportionality prohibits attacks against military objectives which are “expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians [1], damage to civilian objects [2], or a combination thereof, which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage [3] anticipated”.

In other words, the principle of proportionality seeks to limit damage caused by military operations by requiring that the effects of the means [4] and methods of warfare [5] used must not be disproportionate to the military advantage [3] sought.
ICRC, The Challenges of Contemporary Armed Conflicts

ICJ, Nuclear Weapons Advisory Opinion (Para. 43)

Israel/Gaza, Operation Cast Lead (Part I, Paras. 120-126, 230-232)

Israel, The Targeted Killings Case (Paras. 40-46)

Israel, Human Rights Committee’s Report on Beit Hanoun (Paras. 38-42)

United States/United Kingdom, Report on the Conduct of the Persian Gulf War

ICTY, The Prosecutor v. Kupreskic et al. (Para. 526)

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, NATO Intervention (Part A., Paras. 4, 18-19 and Part B., Paras 75-78)

Afghanistan, Drug Dealers as Legitimate Targets

Afghanistan, Goatherd Saved from Attack

Afghanistan, Assessment of ISAF Strategy

Civil War in Nepal (Part II.)

ECHR, Isayeva v. Russia
Georgia/Russia, Human Rights Watch’s Report on the Conflict in South Ossetia (Paras. 28-30 [29], 41-47 [30])

Georgia/Russia, Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in South Ossetia (Paras. 66-67) [31]

Cambodia/Thailand, Border Conflict around the Temple of Preah Vihear [32]

Iran, Victim of Cyber warfare [33]

The armed conflict in Syria [34]

Autonomous Weapon Systems [35]

Libya, NATO Intervention 2011 [36]

UN, Report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit [37]

ICRC, International Humanitarian Law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts in 2015 (Paras. 155 [39], 160 [40], 168 [41], 179 [42], 294-295 [43])

Israel/Palestine, Operation Protective Edge (Gaza, 13 June - 26 August 2014) [44]

Libya, Report of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (2014/15) [45]

Syria, Report by UN Commission of Inquiry (March 2017) [46]
Afghanistan, Bombing of a Civilian Truck [47]

Italy, Use of force against ambulances in Iraq [48]

Syria, the Battle for Aleppo [49]

ICRC, Statement - War in Cities; What is at Stake? [50]

Germany, Aerial Drone Attack in Mir Ali/Pakistan [51]

Eastern Ukraine, OHCHR Report on the Situation: November 2016 - February 2017 [52]

Central African Republic, No Class: When Armed Groups Use Schools [53]

Afghanistan/US, "Mother of all bombs" [54]

ICTY, The Prosecutor v. Prli? et al. [55]

Somalia/US, Airstrikes in Somalia [56]

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES**

**suggested readings:**


Further readings:


KNOOPS Geert-Jan Alexander, “The Duality of the Proportionality Principle


“Symposium: The International Legal Fallout from Kosovo” (articles of GAZZINI Tarcisio, HILPOLD Peter, CERONE John, FENRICK William J., BENVENUTI


Source URL: https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/proportionality

Links

[1] https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/civilians
[6] https://casebook.icrc.org/law/fundamentals-ihl#d_iii_2_c
[26] https://casebook.icrc.org/case-study/civil-war-nepal#part_i
[27] https://casebook.icrc.org/case-study/echr-isayeva-v-russia