An international armed conflict occurs when one or more States have recourse to armed
force against another State, regardless of the reasons or the intensity of this confrontation.
No formal declaration of war or recognition of the situation is required. The existence of an
international armed conflict, and as a consequence, the possibility to apply International
Humanitarian Law to this situation, depends on what actually happens on the ground. It is
based on factual conditions. Apart from regular, inter-state armed conflicts, Additional
Protocol I extends the definition of international armed conflicts to include armed conflicts
in which peoples are fighting against colonial domination, alien occupation or racist
regimes in the exercise of their right to self-determination (Wars of national liberation).

See also Application; Armed conflict; Internationalised armed conflict; Non-
international armed conflict;
common 2 \[8\] (see ICRC updated Commentary \[9\])

PI, 1/4 \[10\]

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