According to an ICRC [1] definition of 1971, this term covers situations in which, although there is strictly speaking no armed conflict [2], there is serious or lasting internal confrontation which includes acts of violence, from spontaneous isolated acts of revolt to a struggle by groups in various stages of organization against the authorities in power. These situations do not necessarily escalate into open struggle, but the authorities use large police forces, and even the armed forces [3], to restore order within the country.

**OUTLINE**


**LEGAL SOURCE**

below the threshold of IHL

PII, 1/2 [5]

**BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES**

Suggested readings:

EIDE Asbjorn, ROSAS Allan & MERON Theodor, “Combating Lawlessness in


Further readings:


HARROFF-TAVEL Marion, “Action Taken by the International Committee of the
Red Cross in Situations of Internal Violence”, in IRRC, No. 294, May-June 1993, pp. 195-220.


**CASES**

- Mexico, The "War on Drugs"

**Source URL:** https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/internal-disturbances-and-tensions

**Links**

[1] https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/international-committee-red-cross
[4] https://casebook.icrc.org/law/fundamentals-ihl#b_iii_1_C