The term “human shields” describes a method of warfare [1] prohibited by IHL where the presence of civilians [2] or the movement of the civilian population [3], whether voluntary or involuntary, is used in order to shield military objectives [4] from attack [5], or to shield, favor or impede military operations.

See Methods of warfare [1]; Civilians [2], Civilian population [3], Military objectives [4]; Attacks [5];

OUTLINE

Chapter 9, II. 8. The civilian population is not to be used to shield military objectives [6]

LEGAL SOURCES

PI, 51/7 [7]

CIHL, 97 [8]

CASES


Israel, Human Rights Committee’s Report on Beit Hanoun (Para. 34) [12]

Israel/Lebanon/Hezbollah, Conflict in 2006 [13] (Part II [14], Paras. 6-11 [15])

Iran/Iraq, UN Security Council Assessing Violations of International Humanitarian Law [16] (Parts C. and D. [16])

United States/United Kingdom, Report on the Conduct of the Persian Gulf War [17]

Sri Lanka, Conflict in the Vanni [18] (Paras. 3-9 [18])

Democratic Republic of the Congo, Conflict in the Kivus [19] (Part III, paras 24-26 [19])

ECHR, Isayeva v. Russia [20] (Paras. 15 [21], 23 [22], 25-26 [23], 69-70 [24])


Somalia, the fate of Children in the conflict [26]

Israel/Palestine, Operation Protective Edge [27] (Gaza, 13 June - 26 August 2014 [27])
ICRC, Statement - War in Cities ; What is at Stake? [28]

Iraq, The Battle for Mosul [29]

“Great March of Return” Demonstrations and Israel’s Military Response [30]

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

Suggested readings:


SASSÒLI Marco, “Human Shields and International Humanitarian Law”, in Frieden in Freiheit = Peace in Liberty = Paix en liberté, Festschrift für Michael Bothe zum 70 Geburtstag


**Further readings:**


Source URL: https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/human-shields

Links
[8] https://www.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v1_rul_rule97
[22] https://casebook.icrc.org/case-study/echr-isayeva-v-russia#para_23