Hospital zones and localities

Zones and localities organized to protect, from the effects of war, wounded and sick \[1\] from the armed forces \[2\], medical personnel and the personnel employed in the organization and administration of these zones and localities or assigned to care for the persons therein assembled.

Hospital zones must fulfil the following conditions:

a. they must comprise only a small part of the territory governed by the Power which has established them;
b. they must be thinly populated in relation to the possibilities of accommodation;
c. they must be removed and free from all military objectives \[3\], or large industrial or administrative establishments;
d. they must not be situated in areas which, according to every probability, may become important for the conduct of war;
e. the lines of communication and means of transport which they possess must not be used for the transport of military personnel or material, even in transit;
f. they must in no case be defended by military means.

Such zones must be recognized by an agreement between the parties.

Hospital zones and localities have affinities with neutralized zones \[4\], and demilitarized zones \[5\].

Hospital zones must be marked by appropriate distinctive signs.
Hospital and safety zones and localities [6]
Zones fulfilling the same conditions as hospital zones and localities, and so organized as to protect from the effects of war, wounded, sick [1] and aged persons, children under fifteen, expectant mothers of children under seven, and the personnel allowed for hospital zones and localities. Recognition of hospital and safety zones and localities must be by agreement between the parties, and they must be marked by appropriate distinctive signs. Such zones and localities have affinities with neutralized zones and demilitarized zones.

See also Neutralized zones [4], Demilitarized zones [5]

OUTLINE
Chapter 7, V. Possible Constitution of Hospital, Safety and Neutralized Zones [7]
Chapter 9, II. 13. Zones created to protect war victims against the effects of hostilities [8]

LEGAL SOURCE
GCI, 23 [9] (see ICRC updated Commentary [10])
GCIV, 14 [12]
CASES

Sri Lanka, Jaffna Hospital Zone [17]

Case Study, Armed Conflicts in the former Yugoslavia (5) [18]

UN, Security Council Resolution 2286 on Attacks on Hospitals [19]

South Sudan, Attack in Malakal UN Protection Site [20]

South Sudan, AU Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan [21]

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

Suggested readings:


LAVOYER Jean-Philippe, “International Humanitarian Law, Protected Zones and the Use of Force”, in BIERMANN Wolfgang & VADSET Martin (eds), UN Peacekeeping in Trouble: Lessons Learned from the former Yugoslavia,


Further readings:


Links