The term refers to means of warfare generally employed in armed conflicts. The term distinguishes this class of weapons from weapons of mass destruction (i.e., nuclear, chemical and biological/bacteriological weapons). International humanitarian law bans or restricts certain conventional weapons to protect civilians from their indiscriminate effects and to spare combatants from suffering superfluous injuries that serve no military purpose. As a consequence, specific weapons are forbidden in all circumstances because of their characteristics (e.g. laser weapons), others are governed by restrictions in use (e.g. incendiary weapons) and others can be both prohibited and restricted in use, according to their type and the treaty obligations applicable (e.g. mines).

See Weapons; Mines; Incendiary weapons; Laser weapons; Remnants of war; Cluster munitions; Ammunition; Dum-dum bullets; Non-detectable fragments;
CCW [14]

Mines

CIHL, 80 [15]

CIHL, 81 [16]

CIHL, 82 [17]

CIHL, 83 [18]

CCW Protocol II

[19]

CCW Protocol II (amended, 1996) [20]

Ottawa Convention [21]

Incendiary weapons

CIHL, 84 [22]–85 [23]

CCW Protocol III [24]

Non-detectable fragments

CIHL, 79 [25]
CCW Protocol I [26]

Blinding weapons

CIHL, 86 [27]

CCW Protocol IV [28]

Explosive remnants

CCW Protocol V [29]

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Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons (Protocol III to the 1980 Convention)
Protocol on Non-Detectable Fragments (Protocol I to the 1980 Convention) [35]

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Geneva Call, Puntland State of Somalia adhering to a total ban on anti-personnel mines [41]

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Syria, the Battle for Aleppo [43]

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Suggested readings:


Further readings:


Source URL: https://casebook.icrc.org/glossary/conventional-weapons

Links