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Ljubljana, 20

In the 2022–2024 period, the Permanent Commission for International Law, hereinafter the Slovenian IHL Committee, has been actively engaged in the field of international humanitarian law, particularly the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their 1977 Additional Protocols.

As a non-party to the Geneva Conventions, the Slovenian IHL Committee reaffirms its unwavering commitment to upholding the international humanitarian law principles enshrined in the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols.

The Slovenian national IHL committee has been actively engaged in the implementation of the programme of the international event on International Humanitarian Law in Ljubljana.

The Slovenian IHL Committee hosted the Diplomatic Conference that aimed to fill the legal gap in mutual legal assistance in the field of international humanitarian law.

The report was drafted in accordance with the UN General Assembly Resolution 48/107 of 17 December 1993 (Status of the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflict).

Slovenia consistently addresses IHL issues in multilateral and regional forums.

Slovenia as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council draws special attention to the protection of civilians in armed conflicts, particularly through the lens of the protection of water resources and water infrastructure.

Slovenia underlines the importance of respect for IHL on the ground and strongly supports the work of international courts and tribunals and the principle of accountability.

30th and 31st INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

Slovenia for the second time reported on the progress made in the implementation of resolutions and pledges adopted by the 33rd International Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference held in Geneva between 9 and 12 December 2022.

In addition, Slovenia prepared a comprehensive report on our Special External Action Service, detailing our steadfast commitment to the implementation of the resolutions adopted at the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

THE FIRST SLOVENIAN HUMANITARIAN FORUM

In September, a special initiative was launched in Ljubljana – the first Slovenian Humanitarian Forum. The event, held in Ljubljana on October 11, was opened by the Republic of Slovenia Nataša Pirc Musčič, European Commissioner for Crisis Management, Mijana Šušteršič Egger, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Uta Klamer, Assistant Executive Director for Partnerships and Policy at UNICEF.

LJUBLJANA THE EVENT

The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs organized an international roundtable event entitled "Legal Challenges of the 21st Century – Critical Infrastructure and the Environment during Armed Conflicts and in Relation to Peacebuilding Measures" which took place in hybrid format on 19 January 2023. The event aimed to raise awareness on contemporary issues and draw attention to the respect for international law.

The event attracted numerous high-level speakers. Following the welcoming words by the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Ms. Tanja Fajon, the participants were addressed by high-level speakers: Mr. Gilles Trépoquet, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Dr. Damiro Isaković, President of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr. Darinka Štrelac Pirman, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Slovenia, and Janez Lenarčič, European Commissioner for Crisis Management.

The first panel addressed the importance of protecting critical infrastructure during armed conflict and in relation to peacebuilding activities. The panelists agreed that the legal framework is clear; critical infrastructure is not to be attacked. This infrastructure provides essential services (e.g., health care, education).

The second panel focused on the impact of armed conflict on the environment and its effects on human life and health. The panelists underlined that the legal framework is the protection of the

the natural environment during armed conflict is a soft law instrument. Soft law for the protection of the natural environment must be implemented at the national level and integrated into the military doctrine of the armed forces of States affected by climate change and environmental degradation. Slovenia is a pioneer in the use of environmental protection technologies (Slovenia).

The third panel discussed the provision of rapid and effective humanitarian assistance in need, in line with the existing legal framework. The panelists highlighted that the respect of IHL and humanitarian principles is a precondition for an effective, rapid, comprehensive and unimpeded humanitarian assistance. In order to ensure humanitarian assistance, the international community must provide additional humanitarian resources. Humanitarian exemptions in the sanctions regimes are an essential tool for preserving humanitarian space.

Through this event, Slovenia has increased the visibility of the work of the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the EU Land of global actors, in the field of humanitarian diplomacy.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN NATIONAL IHL COMMITTEES

Slovenia actively participated in the Regional Conference of European National IHL Committees organized in Vienna on 13-14 March 2023. Slovenian chair of the national IHL committee gave an introductory presentation on the role of IHL committees.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING SIGNED BY SLOVENIA AND THE ICRC

2022 Memorandum of Understanding signed with ICRC includes a provision of supporting promoting and upholding of international humanitarian law.

A GLOBAL ALLIANCE TO SPARE WATER FROM ARMED CONFLICTS

In partnership with Switzerland and Geneva Water Hub, Slovenia launched an Alliance to Spare Water from Armed Conflicts. The Alliance aims to prevent, reduce and eliminate water-related harm. By marshalling a set of goals, the Alliance will promote respect of international humanitarian law. To define the mandate and the scope of the Alliance, Slovenia and Geneva Water Hub organized an expert workshop (November 2022) in Geneva.

The Alliance was launched at the Protection of Civilians week side-event "Spare Water from Armed Conflicts for Enhanced Protection of Civilians - A Launch of the Global Alliance" in 2024 in New York.

Protection of water in armed conflicts forms part of Slovenia's water diplomacy agenda under its priority item Water, Peace and Security. To strengthen the reach and visibility of Slovenian water diplomacy, the Minister appointed Ambassador of Slovenia for Water Diplomacy in September 2022.

DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE OF IHL AT DOMESTIC LEVEL

- THE FIRST NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF IHL AT THE DOMESTIC LEVEL

Slovenia is fully committed to the implementation of the IHL at the domestic level.

➤ **THE TRANSLATION OF THE GENEVA LIST OF PRINCIPLES ON THE PROTECTION OF WATER INFRASTRUCTURE INTO THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE**

With a view to integration into military, police and training curricula of the Geneva List of Principles on the Protection of Water Infrastructure into the Slovenian language.

➤ **PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS TRAINING CENTRE (POTC)**

The Slovenian ministries of foreign affairs, defence and the interior established the Peacekeeping Operations Training Centre (POTC), which implements centres for training and education for the military, police, civilian functional specialists and other civilian personnel prior to their deployment to peacekeeping operations and missions within the UN, EU, NATO and the OSCE.

From 6 to 7 November 2023, the 2nd module of the training course was held at the Joint Training Centre in Postojna, organised by the Slovenian Armed Forces and POTC. Two leading experts from the Faculty of Law, University of Ljubljana delivered their lectures to the participants of the training.

POTC has contributed to the promotion and understanding of international humanitarian law by training personnel deployed to peacekeeping operations. This was achieved through Gender Mainstreaming Trainings (March 2022 and March 2023), as part of three Protection of Civilians Trainings (April 2022, May 2022, October 2023), as part of two specialised trainings on IHL and Military Transition (November 2022 and November 2023) and as part of the Specialised Climate, Peace and Security Training.

➤ **FACULTY OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA**

Members of the Faculty of Law in Ljubljana regularly teach courses addressing IHL issues. In addition to a compulsory course on international humanitarian law, they also teach an elective course titled 'International Law of Armed Conflict (IHL)'. Individual professors also regularly actively participate in conferences, seminars, workshops etc. on IHL issues abroad, publish works on the issues and mentor students' master and doctoral theses in the field of IHL.

In 2021 and 2023 the Faculty of Law of the University of Ljubljana organised the *Humanitarian Law to Protect in Theory and Practice* Conference Series, which is a series of biennial international interdisciplinary conferences. The conferences are organised as a forum where leading experts and researchers have the opportunity to participate in a discourse on IHL and R2P, including relevant IHL framework (www.unhcr.org).

From 21 to 24 November 2023, the annual *All-European International Humanitarian and European-international humanitarian, refugee and asylum law meet* conference was organised by the Faculty of Law, University of Ljubljana in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

(UNHCR) and Slovenian Red Cross. This competition addresses questions relating to international humanitarian and refugee law, drawing on the current crisis situations. It is designed to encourage students to study and understand the fundamental concepts of international humanitarian and refugee law, by addressing non-legal questions and practice their legal argumentation in front of experienced judges and members.

On December 1st, 2023, the Faculty of Law, University of Ljubljana in collaboration with the ICRC co-hosted an online Roundtable of IHL in Complex Situations. The event gathered 40 academic representatives from European universities which discussed teaching and disseminating IHL in Europe, war in cities and the role of academics in countering negative narrative on IHL.

FIGHT AGAINST IMPUNITY

ICC

In promotion of the respect for humanity and human rights, Slovenia supports the operation of international criminal justice, mutual legal assistance and anti-corruption of the rule of law, accountability and prevention of breaches of rights and law.

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In 2022 Slovenia ratified the amendments to the Rome Statute regarding employment of weapons, which use material or other biological agents, the primary effect of which is to injure by fragments which in the human body escape detection by X-rays of laser weapons, and regarding individual criminal responsibility in armed conflict of warfare. These amendments entered into force for Slovenia on 1 December 2022. The amendment from December 2020 was ratified in May 2024.

The Agreement on the Enforcement of Sentences of the ICC, concluded in 2019, entered into force in 2020.

Slovenia regularly participates in the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute. At the 22nd Session in December 2022 in New York, Slovenia was elected a member of the Bureau of the Assembly for the third time, with a mandate until and including the 25th Assembly in 2026.

At the 22nd Session, the Dutch Minister of Justice from Slovenia, who was elected a judge of the ICC, she solemnly swore as a judge of the ICC in March 2024.

The protection of victims is at the heart of the Rome Statute system. In this regard, Slovenia further contributed voluntarily to the Trust Fund for Victims in 2022 and 2023, to assist in redressing the harm suffered by victims of crimes through reparations ordered by the Court and other programmes for their benefit.

Slovenia regularly voices its support for both, the ICC and the fight against impunity in general bilaterally and in multilateral fora.

THE LJUBLJANA-THE HAGUE CONVENTION

In May 2023, Slovenia hosted the Diplomatic Conference that adopted the Ljubljana-The Hague Convention on International Cooperation in the Investigation, Prosecution and Punishment of Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, War Crimes and Other International Crimes

The purpose of the convention is to fill a significant gap in the field of mutual legal assistance and to facilitate and strengthen international cooperation in the investigation, prosecution and punishment of core international crimes, taking into account the challenges that arise in the investigation and prosecution of these crimes, when purely bilateral or unilateral international treaties provides a basic level of cooperation between states and persons.

To date, 34 states have signed the Convention and 10 states have decided to ratify it. The date of signature is 2023-05-23.