College of Europe
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ICRC

Addressing the Human Cost of War:

Upholding IHL to Protect the Wounded, Sick and Dead

Detailed Programme

26th Bruges Colloquium on IHL

Bruges, 19-20 November 2026

Overview of the programme

All sessions will take place at the College of Europe (Dijver 11, 8000 Bruges), in-person and in English

Thursday 19 November 2026, 08:45 – 18:00 (CET)

Opening Statements

Introductory Conversation

From Solferino to Today's Battlefields: How Does IHL Protect the Wounded, Sick, and Dead?

Panel 1

Securing the Scene: Navigating IHL Requirements for the Search, Collection, Recovery, and Evacuation of the Wounded, Sick and Dead

Panel 2

Impartial Care for the Wounded and Sick: Addressing the Challenges of Armed Conflict

Panel 3

Dignity in Death: Protecting, Identifying, and Accounting for the Deceased

Friday 20 November 2026, 09:00 – 13:00 (CET)

Panel 4

The Lasting Human Cost of Weapons that Keep on Killing: Anti-Personnel Mines and Cluster Munitions

Panel 5

How IHL Shapes Hope: Returning the Wounded, Sick and Dead to their Loved Ones

Day 1 – Thursday, 19 November 2026

08:45 - 18:00 (CET)

08:45 - 09:15 **WELCOME AND REGISTRATION**

09:15 - 09:45 **OPENING STATEMENTS**

- **Eloi Fillion**, Head of Delegation, ICRC Delegation to the EU, NATO and the Kingdom of Belgium
- **João Gomes Cravinho**, Rector, College of Europe
- **Jean-Philippe Kiehl**, Deputy Regional Director Eurasia, ICRC

09:45 - 10:45 **INTRODUCTORY CONVERSATION: FROM SOLFERINO TO TODAY'S BATTLEFIELDS: HOW IHL PROTECTS THE WOUNDED, SICK, AND DEAD**

- **Jean-Philippe Kiehl**, Deputy Regional Director Eurasia, ICRC
- **Marco Sassòli**, Honorary Professor of International Law, University of Geneva
- **Amanda Wall,** Legal Adviser and Director of the Office of Legal Affairs, NATO HQ

10:45 - 11:15 *Coffee break*

11:15 - 12:45 **PANEL 1: SECURING THE SCENE: NAVIGATING IHL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SEARCH, COLLECTION, RECOVERY, AND EVACUATION OF THE WOUNDED, SICK AND DEAD**

- **IHL obligations to search, collect and evacuate the wounded, sick and dead**

  – Ximena Londoño, Thematic Legal Advisor, ICRC
- **Operational and legal challenges of battlefield search and recovery operations**

  – Rikke Rietveld, Project Director of Battlefield Forensics Programme, NATO
- **Medical evacuation under modern battlefield conditions: search, collection and evacuation of the wounded and sick**

  – Col. (GS) Andreas Godau, Executive Officer, Multinational Medical Coordination Centre – Europe

Chaired by Alexander Breitegger, Thematic Legal Advisor, ICRC

12:45 - 14:15 *Lunch*

Day 1 – Thursday, 19 November 2026

08:45 - 18:00 (CET)

14:15 - 15:45 **PANEL 2: IMPARTIAL CARE FOR THE WOUNDED AND SICK: ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES OF ARMED CONFLICT**

- **The IHL obligation to provide care for wounded and sick persons without adverse distinction**
  – Alexander Breitegger, Thematic Legal Advisor, ICRC
- **Treating friend and foe: operational challenges in armed conflict**
  – Alexandre Guillemin, Legal Advisor, French Ministry of the Armed Forces
- **The auxiliary role in law and practice: medical care provided by National Societies**
  – Katja Schöberl, Head of International Relations and IHL, German Red Cross

Chaired by Claude Maon, Intersectional Legal Director, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)

15:45 - 16:15 *Coffee break*

16:15 - 17:45 **PANEL 3: DIGNITY IN DEATH: PROTECTING, IDENTIFYING, AND ACCOUNTING FOR THE DECEASED**

- **Managing the deceased with dignity and respect: a humanitarian forensic perspective**
  – Davette Nichole Gadison, Forensic Manager, ICRC
- **IHL and human rights obligations towards the deceased and their families**
  – Melanie Klinkner, Professor of International Law, Bournemouth University
- **Military identification and mortuary affairs: an operational perspective**
  – Philip Parks, Senior Warrant Officer, UK Defence Serious Crime Unit

Chaired by Ximena Londoño, Thematic Legal Advisor, ICRC

17:45 - 18:00 **CONCLUSION OF DAY 1**

- **Jürg Lauber**, Vice-President, ICRC (video address)

18:30 - 20:30 *Reception at the Bruges City Hall (Burg 12, 8000 Bruges)*

Day 2 – Friday, 20 November 2026

09:00 - 13:00 (CET)

09:00 - 09:15 **WELCOME**

09:15 - 10:45 **PANEL 4: THE LASTING HUMAN COST OF WEAPONS THAT KEEP ON KILLING: ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND CLUSTER MUNITIONS**

- **Beyond the blast: the individual and community impact of explosive weapons**

  – Alma Taslidžan, Disarmament and Protection of Civilians Advocacy Manager, Handicap International Belgium
- **How disarmament treaties respond to the human cost of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions**

  – Juan Carlos Ruan, Director, Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit
- **The importance of continued adherence to disarmament treaties: a State perspective**

  – Mark Roorda, Legal Counsel, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Chaired by Théo Boutruche, Human Rights Officer & Legal Adviser, UN OHCHR

10:45 - 11:15 *Coffee break*

11:15 - 12:45 **PANEL 5: HOW IHL SHAPES HOPE: RETURNING THE WOUNDED, SICK AND DEAD TO THEIR LOVED ONES**

- **Repatriating the wounded and sick, returning the deceased: IHL obligations during and after conflict**

  – Edward Madziwa, Programme Assistant, UNIDIR
- **Fostering hope: returning the dead in protracted conflicts**

  – Magdalena Grono, EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus
- **From battlefield burial to identification and return of the deceased to their families**

  – Geoffrey Cardozo, former Army Colonel, United Kingdom

Chaired by Vaios Koutroulis, Professor of International Law, Université libre de Bruxelles

12:45 - 13:00 **CONCLUDING REMARKS**