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YEARBOOK OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

In the last decades International Humanitarian Law plays a more and more significant role in the field of Public International Law. The change of methods of warfare in international and non-international conflicts needs a growing attention related to the establishment of legal limits. The main aim of this periodical is to introduce the most actual issues in this regard. It has appeared since 1998 under the auspices of the T. M. C. Asser Instituut.

The T. M. C. Asser Instituut has worked for thirty-five years, and during this time it became a leading scientific research institute in the field of International Law. It is located in the “city of International Law”, The Hague, The Netherlands. The Scientific Commissions of the Institute on European Law, Private International Law and Public International Law deal also with Law of International Commercial Arbitration, International Economic Law and increasingly, International Humanitarian Law. The Institute has an inter-university background, and in this way co-operates with Dutch law faculties and also with other national and foreign institutions.

This wide-scale scientific work of the T. M. C. Asser Instituut guarantees the high quality of the Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law as well. The Board of Editors includes experts working as professors in universities, such as Professor Horst Fischer (University of Leiden, The Netherlands) or Professor Eric David (Brussels Free University, Belgium), but also judges of international judicial bodies, such as H. E. Judge Abdul Koroma (International Court of Justice, The Hague), H. E. Theodor Meron (International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, The Hague) or H. E. Judge Elizabeth Odio-Benito (International Criminal Court, The Hague).

The Yearbook introduces the most significant and urging issues of International Humanitarian Law, for instance the higher and higher need for repression of war crimes and other grave breaches of IHL, the individual criminal responsibility, the work of the already existing international criminal *ad hoc* tribunals and the International Criminal Court. On the other hand, it deals also with the question of amnesty and transitional justice, the regulations related to weapons, the work of non-governmental humanitarian organizations, especially the International Committee of the Red Cross, and all the other relevant subjects regarding to armed conflicts.

All editions of the Yearbook contain articles, commentaries on current developments, reports on state practice and the relevant documentation. The reports about state practice are ensured by the Yearbook’s world-wide network of correspondents. In this way, information is collected from numerous countries of Africa, Asia, Europe, Middle East, North, Central and South America, so this information-gathering activity covers all regions of the world, that

provides a global overview of the situations which have to be affected by International Humanitarian Law.

The last volume of the Yearbook on 2002 published in 2005 includes articles, that summarize problematic issues of IHL, but also studies about the very actual problems that appeared in the last years. For instance, the article of Professor William A. Schabas introduces the development of the law of genocide through the judicial practice of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the Former Yugoslavia. The article of Yukata Arai-Takahashi deals with legal characterization of the armed conflicts in Afghanistan since October 2001, and norms to apply related to the status of prisoners of war with special consideration to the Al Qaeda soldiers detained in Guantánamo Bay. The chapter of 'Current developments' includes studies on the issue of truth and reconciliation processes, that play a more and more important role in the consolidation after armed conflicts. Among the articles dealing with the recent enforcement and dissemination of IHL can be mentioned the one written by delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Antoine A. Bouvier and Katie E. Sams introduces the supporting activities of the ICRC related to the education of IHL in universities. The organization ensures material help (for instance, providing the necessary books and legal documents) and development possibilities (such as vocational competitions) to train students and academic actors especially at the faculties of law, political science and international relations, so that the next generation of decision-makers is aware of their duties under International Humanitarian Law.

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