



Israeli Attacks Against Medical Personnel and Facilities in Lebanon:

War crimes to be investigated and prosecuted.

September 2024 - October 2024



Executive Summary:

This report provides an analysis of Israeli violations against medical personnel, civilian hospitals, and humanitarian units in Lebanon, covering the period from September 23, 2024, to October 23, 2024. Data was collected by the Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH), team who documented the extent of these attacks, which may constitute crimes against the protections outlined under International Humanitarian Law (IHL) for medical personnel, civilian hospitals, and humanitarian units in Lebanon, particularly under the 1949 Geneva Conventions. The violations were examined specifically through the lens of Article 24 of the First Geneva Convention, which safeguards medical personnel forming part of the armed forces in the field, Article 15 of the additional protocol 1, Article 18 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which protects civilian hospitals, and Article 62 of Protocol I concerning civil defense organizations, among others.

The methodology employed involved incident-specific data collection from media platforms, as well as official reports from the Ministry of public Health, the Civil Defense, and data analysis with reference to the relevant Geneva Conventions. Graphs within this report present the data, showcasing the frequency, location, and impact of the documented violations. The report also acknowledges certain limitations; due to the dynamic nature of the ongoing conflict and the continuous nature of reported violations, data verification was challenging. In cases where CLDH did not have adequate access to validate certain incidents, the relevant information was excluded for reliability.

The findings reveal a pattern of severe and repeated violations by Israeli Defense Forces (IDF), targeting protected entities under IHL, with implications of war crimes. However, limitations due to access constraints and the rapidly evolving situation mean that this report presents only verified, fact-checked information. The report urges the international community to hold violators accountable to safeguard medical personnel and facilities, protect civilian lives, and uphold the international humanitarian law.

Introduction:

The current Israeli war against Lebanon is not the result of a specific event during the last period between September 2024 and October 2024. Rather, it stems from a series of escalating attacks between the Israeli and Lebanon along the Lebanese borders, known as the Blue Line, which started in October 2023. Based on the Ministry of Public Health's (MOPH) latest assessment on December 4, 2024, these attacks resulted in the death of 4047 civilians, 316 out of them are children and 790 women and the injury of 16638 civilians, 1456 out of them are children and 2567 are women. In addition to the death of 16 medical personnel and injury of 73, the death of 206 paramedics and injury of 257, and the attack on 67 hospitals, 177 ambulance and 19 rescue vehicles¹. According to the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, the Israeli war on Lebanon effectively began after the Israeli detonation of thousands of pagers mostly owned by Hezbollah.² This action resulted in the killing of 37 individuals and injuries to 3,000 over two consecutive days³. These attacks occurred while people were in markets or at home, leading to the deaths of 3 children, according to Health Minister Firas Abiad⁴. Abiad emphasized that the victims were not in combat zones but were simply engaging in civilian activities. Thus, this attack constitutes a violation of IHL which prohibits targeting civilians. Since then, Israeli attacks across Lebanese territories have increased dramatically, particularly on September 23rd when Israel launched the most aggressive aerial bombardment on Lebanon since the 2006 war⁵. This attack resulted in the killing of 558 people, including 50 children and 94 women, and injured over 1,835, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)⁶.

The attacks intensified after the 27th of September when Israel attacked Hezbollah's central headquarters in Dahiyeh targeting a number of senior personnel including secretary General Hassan Nasrallah. Since then, the Israeli attacks on Lebanon have not ceased, on the contrary it has been escalating into an invasion into the Lebanese territories.

¹ <https://www.moph.gov.lb/en/Media#/en/Media/view/77347/4-047-martyrs-and-16-638-wounded-the-total-updated-toll-of-the-israeli-aggression>.

² المركز العربي للابحاث ودراسة السياسات، وحدة الدراسات السياسية، العدوان الإسرائيلي على لبنان بعد استهداف مقر القيادة المركزية لحزب الله واغتيال أمينه العام، 29 سبتمبر، 2024

³ As per Lebanese Health Minister Firas Abiad talk with NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2024/09/20/nx-s1-5117771/lebanese-health-minister-discusses-his-countrys-response-to-pager-explosions>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ المركز العربي للابحاث ودراسة السياسات، وحدة الدراسات السياسية، العدوان الإسرائيلي على لبنان بعد استهداف مقر القيادة المركزية لحزب الله واغتيال أمينه العام، 29 سبتمبر، 2024

⁶ Human Rights Watch, "Lebanon: Israeli Strikes Kill Hundreds as Hostilities Escalate Countries at UN Should Urgently Establish Impartial International Investigation", September 25, 2024, accessed at: November 10, 2024. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/09/25/lebanon-israeli-strikes-kill-hundreds-hostilities-escalate>

Methodology:

Through this report, CLDH aims to highlight Israeli attacks within the framework of IHL focusing mainly on the violations against medical and humanitarian personnel in the armed conflict. In particular, the violations will be studied within the scope of the 1949 Geneva Conventions I and IV, as well as Protocol I. For the scope of this report, we are to limit our analysis within the 23 September 2024 to 23 October 2024 timeframe.

Furthermore, the report presents data on casualties of medical and humanitarian personnel. The CLDH team collected this for the period between 23 September 2024 and 23 October 2024 by monitoring both mainstream and non-mainstream media outlets, as well as official reports issued by the Ministry of Public Health, Civil Defense, Red Cross and United Nations Announcements. The CLDH fact-checking expertise followed up on the collected data for credibility. Furthermore, the report uses this data to analyze violations of IHL and applicable articles of IHL. It is important to also note, for the sake of precision, that this report adopts the terminology “medical personnel and units” as used in the relevant IHL articles which describe people and facilities operating in the medical field.

Lastly, one must acknowledge the limitations faced in issuing this report, particularly the daily fluctuations in data numbers due to the current ongoing Israeli attacks on Lebanon, as this document was under preparation. In addition to the disruption in accessing data sources.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL):

IHL has binding jurisdiction over governments and parties in armed conflicts because of both treaty law (e.g., the Geneva Conventions) and customary international law, which applies to nations or entities that are not legally bound by specific treaties⁷. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), customary IHL originates from practices widely acknowledged as law, involving both official actions and the conviction that those actions are legally binding, a principle known as *opinion juris*⁸. This dual foundation—treaty and custom—ensures that important international humanitarian law concepts are universally recognized and enforceable even beyond formal agreements.

⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross. “Customary IHL.” ICRC, Accessed November 10, 2024. <https://www.icrc.org/en/law-and-policy/customary-ihl>.

⁸ Ibid.

The 1949 Geneva Conventions, which nearly every state has ratified, establish critical protections for civilians, the wounded, prisoners of war, and medical workers during armed combat⁹. These agreements are at the heart of IHL requiring all parties to a conflict to follow standards that promote human rights and dignity¹⁰. Additional Protocols to these treaties, particularly Protocol I (1977), addressing international conflicts, and Protocol II (1977), addressing internal conflicts, significantly enhance protections and obligations¹¹.

The referred herein violations of international humanitarian law may qualify as war crimes under the relevant legal frameworks¹². The ICC, established by the Rome Statute, has the authority to prosecute persons for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide when national tribunals are unable or unwilling to act¹³. Notable cases include prosecutions relating to the conflicts in Darfur, Sudan, where the ICC indicted officials for crimes such as attacks on civilians and forced displacement, highlighting the global community's commitment to ¹⁴accountability. Furthermore, tribunals such as the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) have prosecuted war crimes related to regional conflicts. The ICTY's conviction of Ratko Mladić for the Srebrenica massacre has established legal precedents and provided victims with a sense of justice¹⁵.

For elaborated details on IHL, application, and scope, refer to annex 1.

Relevant Geneva Convention Articles:

The below present the most relevant Geneva Conventions articles applicable in instances of attacks by IDF on medical personnel and humanitarian workers in its war on Lebanon.

Geneva Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field. Geneva, 12 August 1949, *Article 24: Protection of medical personnel engaged in care*

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² International Committee of the Red Cross. What Is International Humanitarian Law? Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 2004. Accessed November 10, 2024. https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/document/file_list/what_is_ihl.pdf.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

By virtue of Article 24 of Geneva Convention I, three categories of persons are protected¹⁶:

- A. Medical personnel engaged in the search, collection, transport, or treatment of the wounded or sick, or in the prevention of disease.

The first group of individuals protected under Article 24 is determined by the activities they perform: 'searching for,' 'collecting,' 'transporting,' or 'treating' the 'wounded or sick,' or engaging in 'disease prevention.' Therefore, the main factor in determining if a member of the armed forces falls within this category is whether they are involved in one or more of these specified activities. A person may be covered by this provision even if they do not belong to the medical branch of the armed forces, as long as they meet all the requirements outlined in Article 24.

Protection under Article 24 is not granted simply based on a person's position within the military medical services, but rather on the nature of the tasks they perform, as outlined by the article.

Individuals including-not limited to- hospital orderlies, nurses, stretcher-bearers, ambulance drivers, and medical aircraft pilots are involved in activities like searching for, collecting, or transporting the wounded or sick. Therefore, their roles can also be covered by Article 24, as long as all conditions are met.

The phrase 'treatment of the wounded or sick' includes all medical activities performed by healthcare professionals, such as general practitioners, specialists, surgeons, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, and anyone operating medical equipment. These individuals are therefore protected under Article 24.

In 1949, 'disease prevention' was added to the list of protected activities. As a result, Article 24 now includes not only curative medicine but also preventative measures, which can benefit all members of the armed forces, whether they are suffering from injuries or not. Disease prevention activities include hygiene measures like delousing, disinfecting water supplies, vaccinations, barracks cleaning, and training on preventing sexually transmitted infections (STI's). Some of these tasks may also be carried out by veterinarians.

¹⁶ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). "Commentary on Article 24 of the Geneva Convention (I) on the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field." Geneva Convention (I), 1949. Updated 2016. Available at: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gci-1949/article-24/commentary/2016#8>.

B. Staff engaged in the administration of medical units and establishments

- Protection is not restricted to those directly involved with the injured and sick. It also extends to armed forces personnel whose roles are essential for the functioning of medical units and facilities that treat the wounded and ill. These individuals may not necessarily serve within the medical service but can still qualify for protection under Article 24. They meet the criteria for protection if their duties support medical units, such as procuring medical supplies, handling administrative tasks, or working as cooks or cleaners.

C. Religious personnel attached to the armed forces

For abiding with the scope of this report, the report will not delve into the details of paragraph (c) noting that religious personnel attached to the armed forces are protected under Article 24 of the Geneva Convention I. For further details, the reader can refer to International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). "Commentary on Article 24 of the Geneva Convention (I) on the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field." *Geneva Convention (I), 1949*. Updated 2016.

Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949, Article 18: Protection of civilian hospitals.

By virtue of Article 18 of Convention IV relative to protection of civilian persons in time of war, civilian hospitals formed to care for the wounded and sick, the infirm, and maternity cases may not be attacked under any circumstances but must always be respected and defended by the conflicting parties¹⁷. States that are parties to a conflict must provide all civilian hospitals with certificates confirming that they are civilian hospitals and that the structures they occupy are not utilized for any purpose that would deprive these hospitals of protection according to Article 19 of Convention IV¹⁸. In this context, Article 19 of the Convention states that civilian hospitals are entitled to protection unless they are utilized to commit acts against the enemy in addition to their humanitarian duty. Protection may, however, be terminated only when due warning has been given, namely, in all suitable situations, a fair time limit, and such warning has gone unheeded¹⁹.

¹⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). "Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, Article 18: Protection of Civilian Hospitals." Geneva Convention IV, 1949. Available at: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciv-1949/article-18>.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). "Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, Article 19: Discontinuance of Protection of Hospitals." Geneva Convention IV, 1949. Available at: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciv-1949/article-19>.

Civilian hospitals must be marked with the emblem specified in Article 38 of the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field of August 12, 1949, but only if so, permitted by the state²⁰. In this context, Article 38 of the Convention states: as a compliment to Switzerland, the heraldic emblem of the red cross on a white background, made by inverting the Federal colors, is kept as the emblem and unique sign of the Armed Forces Medical Service²¹. However, in the case of countries that already employ as an emblem, in place of the red cross, the red crescent, or the red lion and sun on white ground, those emblems are also recognized by the conditions of the current Convention²².

Additionally, by virtue of Article 18 of the Convention IV, to avoid the risk of hostile action, the parties to the conflict shall, to the extent that military considerations permit, take the appropriate steps to make the unique insignia denoting civilian hospitals readily visible to enemy land, air, and naval forces²³. Given the risks that hospitals may face as a result of their proximity to military objectives, it is advised that such facilities be located as far away from such goals as practicable²⁴.

Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977.

By virtue of Article 12 of Protocol I 1977²⁵:

1. Medical units shall be respected and protected at all times and shall not be the object of attack.
2. Paragraph 1 shall apply to civilian medical units, provided that they:
 - a. belong to one of the Parties to the conflict;
 - b. are recognized and authorized by the competent authority of one of the Parties to the conflict; or
 - c. are authorized in conformity with Article 9, paragraph 2, of this Protocol or Article 27 of the First Convention.

²⁰ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). "Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, Article 18: Protection of Civilian Hospitals." Geneva Convention IV, 1949. Available at: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciv-1949/article-18>.

²¹ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). "Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field, Article 38: Emblem of the Convention." Geneva Convention I, 1949. Available at: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gci-1949/article-38>.

²² Ibid.

²³ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). "Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, Article 18: Protection of Civilian Hospitals." Geneva Convention IV, 1949. Available at: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciv-1949/article-18>.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). "Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), Article 12: Protection of Medical Units." Protocol I, 1977. Available at: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/api-1977/article-12>.

4. Under no circumstances shall medical units be used in an attempt to shield military objectives from attack. Whenever possible, the Parties to the conflict shall ensure that medical units are so sited that attacks against military objectives do not imperil their safety.

Furthermore, by virtue of Article 15 of Protocol I 1977²⁶:

1. Civilian medical personnel shall be respected and protected.
2. If needed, all available help shall be afforded to civilian medical personnel in an area where civilian medical services are disrupted by combat activity.
3. The Occupying Power shall afford civilian medical personnel in occupied territories every assistance to enable them to perform, to the best of their ability, their humanitarian functions. The Occupying Power may not require that, in the performance of those functions, such personnel shall give priority to the treatment of any person except on medical grounds. They shall not be compelled to carry out tasks which are not compatible with their humanitarian mission.
4. Civilian medical personnel shall have access to any place where their services are essential, subject to such supervisory and safety measures as the relevant Party to the conflict may deem necessary.
5. Civilian religious personnel shall be respected and protected. The provisions of the Conventions and of this Protocol concerning the protection and identification of medical personnel shall apply equally to such persons.

Customary IHL, Rule 25 and Rule 26

By virtue of Rule 25 of Customary IHL, “Medical personnel exclusively assigned to medical duties must be respected and protected in all circumstances. They lose their protection if they commit, outside their humanitarian function, acts harmful to the enemy”²⁷. This rule goes back to the 1864 Geneva Convention and was repeated in the subsequent Geneva Conventions of 1906 and 1929²⁸. It is now set forth in the First, Second and Fourth Geneva Conventions of 1949²⁹. Its scope was expanded in Article 15 of Additional Protocol I to cover civilian medical personnel in addition to military medical personnel in all circumstances³⁰.

²⁶ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). “Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), Article 15: Protection of Medical Units.” Protocol I, 1977. Available at: IHL Treaties - Additional Protocol (I) to the Geneva Conventions, 1977 - Article 15

²⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), “Rule 25: Medical Personnel,” Customary IHL Database, accessed October 20, 2024, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/customary-ihl/v1/rule25>.

²⁸ 1864 Geneva Convention, Article 2 (cited in Vol. II, Ch. 7, § 1); 1906 Geneva Convention, Articles 9–10 (ibid., §§ 2–3); 1929 Geneva Convention, Articles 9–10 (ibid., §§ 4–5)

²⁹ First Geneva Convention, Articles 24–26 (ibid., §§ 6–8); Second Geneva Convention, Article 36 (ibid., § 9); Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 20 (ibid., § 10).

³⁰ Additional Protocol I, Article 15 (adopted by consensus) (ibid., § 12)

In addition, Rule 26 dictates “Punishing a person for performing medical duties compatible with medical ethics or compelling a person engaged in medical activities to perform acts contrary to medical ethics is prohibited.”³¹ This rule is codified in Article 16 of Additional Protocol I and Article 10 of Additional Protocol II, to which no reservations have been made³². The rule is also set forth in military manuals, including manuals which are applicable in or have been applied in non-international armed conflicts³³. Violations of this rule inherently constitute violations of the right of the wounded and sick to protection and care, and also of the obligation to respect and protect medical personnel (as per Rule 25)³⁴.

Obligation of Parties to the Conflict

In the context of this report, Israel is a signatory to the Four Geneva Conventions (with some reservations)³⁵. Thus, Israel is bound by the provisions of the Geneva Conventions, and more particularly to this context, it is bound by Article 24 of Geneva Convention I, Article 18 of Geneva Convention IV, and Rules 25 and 26 of Customary IHL. Also, it remains bound to Article 12 and 15 of Protocol I (1977), though it has not ratified it³⁶. This is because many of the provisions of Protocol I are considered part of customary law and thus apply to Israel.

Violations committed by IDF: September 23rd, 2024 – October 20th, 2024

- **Medical Units and Medical Personnel:**

This section of the paper presents the data collected by CLDH team on the Israeli attacks specifically targeting medical personnel and medical units starting from September 23, 2024 till October 20, 2024. All the data herein underwent fact-checking procedure by a team of expertise.

³¹ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), “Rule 26: Medical Activities,” Customary IHL Database, accessed October 20, 2024, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/customary-ihl/v1/rule26>.

³² Additional Protocol I, Article 16 (adopted by consensus) (cited in Vol. II, Ch. 7, § 232); Additional Protocol II, Article 10 (adopted by consensus) (ibid., § 233)

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), “Israel: State Parties / Signatories to Geneva Convention III (1949),” International Humanitarian Law Treaties Database, accessed October 20, 2024, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciii-1949/state-parties/IL>. For further details on the reservations refer to <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciii-1949/state-parties/IL>

³⁶ United Nations, “The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949: Israel’s Position,” UNISPAL Documents Collection, accessed October 20, 2024, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-199015/>.

The collected data is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

According to the data collected by the CLDH team, between September 23 and October 20, 2024, 6 military attacks carried out by the IDF targeted **Ambulance vehicles**.

- A military attack carried out by IDF targeted an ambulance belonging to the Islamic Authority Health Center in Sohmor village in Western Beqaa District, according to the National News Agency on September 23rd, 2024³⁷.
- A military attack carried out by IDF targeted an ambulance belonging to the Islamic Authority health Center in Joya village, Tyre district, in South Lebanon on October 4, 2024³⁸.
- A military attack carried out by IDF targeted an ambulance in Be'er Al salasel village in Tyr district South Lebanon on October 20, 2024³⁹.
- A military attack carried out by IDF targeted 3 ambulance vehicles belonging to the Islamic Health Authorities in Ankoun village, Saida district South Lebanon on October 21, 2024⁴⁰.
- A military attack carried out by IDF targeted an ambulance belonging to the Islamic Scouts at the Eastern entrance to Tyre, South Lebanon⁴¹.
- A military attack carried out by IDF targeted 2 ambulances belonging to the red cross in Om Al Tout village, Tyr district, South Lebanon on October 23, 2024.⁴²

³⁷ https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/723655/%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%81-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%81-%D9%84%D9%83%D8%B4%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9?_cf_chl_tk=zoSIZiQ084QAl8y07AuDR6fe_Om9j0EEPC8NKx3FQg-1729759046-1.0.1.1-QFA_HDJe64ulLkIxtlh6UJiknpGUS2my5gDya8TsAcw.

³⁸ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/727176/%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%81-%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87%D9%8A%D8%A6%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%AC%D9%88%D9%8A%D8%A7>

³⁹ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/731805/%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%82-%D8%B5%D9%88%D8%B1>

⁴⁰ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/732064/%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%89%D8%A1%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D8%A9-4-%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%B9%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%88-%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%89-%D9%88%D8%AA%D8%B6%D8%B1%D8%B1-3-%D8%A2>

⁴¹ https://x.com/lbci_news/status/1848349343364846070?s=46&t=A4a5HyEr6kkmgKws08cJJg

⁴² <https://twitter.com/redcrosslebanon/status/1849100987820093621?s=46&t=A4a5HyEr6kkmgKws08cJJg>

- On 20th of October 2024, an ambulance was attacked by Israeli airstrike in Tyre, South of Lebanon.

Attacks on medical teams and facilities



Figure 1: The term health workers is inclusive of the medical personnel of the Lebanese Red Cross team, and Islamic Health Authority Center. In addition, attacks on hospitals and medical centers are combined into one category in this graph. Data in the figure was collected by the CLDH team.

In addition to medical units like ambulances, hospitals, and medical centers, these facilities also became targets of Israeli attacks. According to data collected by the CLDH team, from September 23 to October 20, 2024, hospitals and medical units (including medical centers) were attacked multiple times.

- On October 4, 2024, an Israeli airstrike targeted the surroundings of Saint George Hospital in Hadath area in Beirut⁴³.
- On the same date, an air strike targeted the center of the Islamic Health Authority Center in Kherbet Selem⁴⁴.

⁴³ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/726960/%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%B7-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AC-%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AC-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%AA>

⁴⁴ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/727120/%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2-%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87%D9%8A%D8%A6%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5-D-8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%AE%D8%B1%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D8%B3%D9%84%D9%85>

- On October 5, 2024, Israel directly attacked Ghandour Hospital and 9 of the medical personnel were severely injured⁴⁵.
- On October 12, 2024, Ablah Hospital was damaged in an Israeli airstrike in Ablah village⁴⁶.
- On October 12, 2024, Fakh Hospital was damaged in an Israeli airstrike in Loubya village⁴⁷.
- On October 17, 2024, The Islamic Authority Health Center was attacked directly by an Israeli airstrike in Habboush⁴⁸.

As for **Medical Personnel**, the data has showed the following:

- An airstrike targeted the Islamic Authority Health Center in Nabatiyeh, South Lebanon, on September 24, 2024 killing one medical personnel⁴⁹.
- Israeli airstrikes targeted Civil Defense Center and clinic in the towns of Al-Taybeh and Deir Sryan in south Lebanon and a Paramedics center in Tair Debba and Houmein al-Fawqa in south Lebanon on September 28 and September 29, 2024 killing 14 paramedics⁵⁰.
- An Israeli airstrike targeted The Civil Defense Center - The Islamic Health Authority in Sohmor, western Bekaa on September 30, 2024 killing 6 medical personnel⁵¹.

⁴⁵ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/727255/%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%BA%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%B6%D9%86%D8%A7-%D9%84%D9%82%D8%B5%D9%81-%D9%87%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%85%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D9%84%D9%82%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%B0%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7>

⁴⁶ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/729457/%D8%A3%D8%B6%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B2%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%AD-%D9%88%D8%B2%D8%AD%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%83>

⁴⁷ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/730933/%D8%AA%D8%B6%D8%B1%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%81%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%82%D9%8A%D9%87-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84>

⁴⁸ <https://www.aljadeed.tv/news/%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA/509620/%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%81%D8%AA-%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%8B-%D9%85%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%B7-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%87%D9%8A%D8%A6%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%AD>

⁴⁹ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/724075/%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%B9%D9%81-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%B7%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%A7>

⁵⁰ <https://moph.gov.lb/ar/Pages/13/75713/moph-denounces-the-series-of-targeting-of-paramedics>

⁵¹ <https://www.moph.gov.lb/en/Media/view/75740/1/moph-mourns-6-martyrs-of-paramedics-in-sohmor-in-the-western-bekaa>

- Israeli airstrikes killed 28 medical personnel between October 2nd and October 3rd 2024⁵².
- An Israeli airstrike targeted the red cross during a rescue mission in Taibeh village, South Lebanon on October 3rd, 2024 injuring 5 paramedics⁵³.
- An Israeli airstrike targeted the Islamic Health Authority near the Marjeyoun Governmental Hospital, South Lebanon on October 4 2024, killing 11 paramedics⁵⁴.
- An Israeli airstrike targeted a carpet warehouse in Al Ayn village, Bekaa on the October 4, 2024, killing an off-duty Red Cross paramedic⁵⁵.
- An Israeli airstrike targeted a medical center in Sedeqeen village, South Lebanon on October 13, 2024 killing 1 medical personnel⁵⁶.
- An Israeli airstrike targeted two ambulance vehicles belonging to the red cross, during a rescue mission carried alongside UNIFEL forces, on october 16, 2024, in Joya village, South Lebanon Injuring 2 paramedicss⁵⁷.

In this context, on October 17, 2024, the WHO issued a statement calling for an end to attacks on healthcare and the immediate protection of healthcare workers and facilities. The statement confirmed that 23 such attacks in Lebanon have resulted in 72 deaths and 43 injuries among health workers and patients⁵⁸.

⁵² <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/who-says-28-health-workers-killed-lebanon-over-24-hours-2024-10-03/>

⁵³ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/726895/%D8%A7%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A9-5-%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%A3%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%AE%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%AA%D9%86%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%B0%D9%87%D9%85-%D9%85%D9%87%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A5>

⁵⁴ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/727074/%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF-4-%D8%B9-D%86%D8%A7%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%87%D9%8A%D8%A6%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B1> ; <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/727231/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%87%D9%8A%D8%A6%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%86%D8%B9%D8%AA-11-%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%B9%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D8%B3-%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%88>

⁵⁵ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/727349/%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%B9%D9%81%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8-%D-8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B1-%D8%B5%D9%88%D8%AF%D9%81-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7>

⁵⁶ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/729761/%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2-%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A6-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D8%A9-%D8%B4%D9%87%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D9%88%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AD-%D9%85%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%82%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%BA>

⁵⁷ <https://www.annahar.com/Lebanon/161109/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%AD%D9%85%D8%B1-%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86-%D8%A5%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%B9%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A7-%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A3%D8%AB%D9%86%D8%A7-%D9%85%D9%87%D9%85%D8%A9-%D8%A5%D9%86%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%B0-%D9%85%D9%86%D8%B3%D9%82%D8%A9-%D9%85%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%84>

⁵⁸ <https://www.who.int/news/item/16-10-2024-attacks-on-hospitals-and-health-workers-jeopardize-provision-of-health-in-lebanon#:~:text=Since%20the%20escalation%20of%20hostilities%20between%20Israel%20and,impacted%20health%20facilities%2C%20while%2013%20impacted%20health%20transport.>

According to the data collected by the CLDH team, civil defense personnel and humanitarian personnel were targeted by the IDF. The below presents the attacks that took place between September 23, 2024 and October 20, 2024.

- A UNHCR personnel was killed in a direct Israeli airstrike in Beqaa on 24 September 2024⁵⁹.
- One member of the Civil Defense was killed upon carrying a relief and rescue mission in the Southern Suburbs of Beirut on 28 September 2024⁶⁰.
- 3 members of the civil defense were killed in Israeli airstrikes on Joya, Majdal Zoun, and Ainata on 6 October 2024⁶¹.
- 10 firefighters from the civil defense were killed by an Israeli airstrike on Baraachit⁶².
- 5 civil defense members were killed in Tyre through direct attack on the Tyre regional civil defense center on 9 October 2024⁶³.
- 7 civil defense members were killed in an Israeli airstrike on 10 October 2024⁶⁴.
- 1 civil defense member was killed in an Israeli airstrike in Nabatiyeh on 16 October 2024⁶⁵.

One relief member from Terre des hommes - Lebanon, Amin, and his family, were killed in an Israeli attack on Tyre, Lebanon on 28 September 2024⁶⁶.

- 15 UN peacekeepers injured in Israeli airstrike destroy main gate of UNIFIL compound in Lebanon on 12 October 2024⁶⁷.

⁵⁹ <https://www.unhcr.org/lb/18817-unhcr-mourns-killing-of-beloved-staff-member-and-contractor-staff-in-lebanon.html>

⁶⁰ <https://x.com/CivilDefenseLB/status/1839957801440792958>

⁶¹ <https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/justice-law/727616/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AF%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%87%D9%8A%D8%A6%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%AD%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%86%D8%B9%D9%89-3-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%B9%D9%81%D9%8A%D9%86>

⁶² <https://www.moph.gov.lb/en/Media/view/75845/1/an-additional-massacre-and-war-crime-in-baraashit>

⁶³ <https://www.moph.gov.lb/en/Media/view/75845/1/an-additional-massacre-and-war-crime-in-baraashit>

⁶⁴ <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/society/%D8%B3%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%B9%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A8-%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9>

⁶⁵ https://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%88%D9%82%D8%B6%D8%A7%D8%A1/730457/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AF%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D8%B-3%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF-%D8%B9%D9%86%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%BA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%A8%D8%B7%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D8%AB%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D8%AA%__cf_chLtk=JwLfb20J30JRBzRpQ.Kqi4a329Q6DQBTN09kuU7uKrdE-1729780059-1.0.1.1-Xm.iWtRgD_dJ.4BmTPQDPxPvS5gFlfrHZkusxD3z3Sg

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⁶⁷ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/10/1155661>

Legal Analysis:

Article 24 of the first Geneva Convention clearly protects medical staff who care for the injured and sick and are part of the armed forces in the field. The article also covers certain civilians working under the auspices of the armed forces in the field. These people, whether they are doctors, nurses, ambulance workers, or volunteers, are protected from direct attacks. The crucial feature of this rule is that the troops must be performing medical tasks, which means they must be respected and protected from violence as long as they are not directly participating in hostilities.

Article 15 of the additional protocol 1, which grants that civilian medical and religious personnel can perform their duties safely. This includes not only guaranteeing their respect and protection but also providing assistance in situations where it is needed. Thus, respect and protection are granted to all civilian medical personnel and civilian religious personnel, as defined in Article 8 of the protocol (Terminology), sub-paragraphs (c) and (d), whereas such protections are traditionally offered in the conventions only to military medical and religious personnel and to medical staff at civilian hospitals. This extension of protection is strongly justified, as many countries today plan for cooperation or coordination between military and civilian medical services during armed conflict. The earlier presented data under the provision of Article 15 highlights attacks on medical personnel, resulting in numerous casualties, including fatalities. These attacks on medical personnel violate the principle of “medical neutrality” under IHL.

Medical personnel at the Red Cross, Islamic Health Authority Centers civil defense and hospitals are protected under Article 15. Thus, Israel’s targeting of medical professionals violates article 15 while also causing secondary injury by impeding the care of injured civilians and combatants. These violations have a domino effect, blocking aid from reaching people most in need, delaying important life-saving procedures, and instilling dread in other healthcare personnel, making them hesitant to continue their job. The persistence of these attacks implies a systemic Israeli breach of medical neutrality, which could amount to war crimes given the purposeful and recurrent character of the violations.

On the other hand, **Article 18** of the Fourth Geneva Convention provides immediate protection to civilian hospitals that care for the sick and wounded. These hospitals are safeguarded unless they are used to conduct hostile acts against the enemy in addition to their humanitarian functions. Hospitals should never be attacked or threatened with violence, and they should always be properly labeled as medical facilities. As the data presented earlier shows, Israeli airstrikes have attacked Ghandour and Fakih hospitals and damaged Ablah hospital throughout October 2024. Hospitals serve as safe havens in conflict zones, providing care to civilians and combatants who have ceased to participate in hostilities. Attacking such facilities is a breach of the fundamental principles of Article 18, which requires complete security for civilian hospitals. The continuous attacks on hospitals indicates an Israeli possible systematic targeting of hospitals’ while denying their protected status.

Article 18 states that hospitals lose their protection if they are used for military reasons. However, it is evident that the hospitals targeted by the Israeli airstrikes were not used for such purposes. The attacks breach the principle of distinction, which requires warring parties to distinguish between military and civilian targets. Even if a hospital is near a military target, indiscriminate strikes are prohibited under IHL. The claimed strikes on these facilities would not only violate the Geneva Conventions, but would also have long-term humanitarian effects, such as the inability of civilians to receive care and the loss of essential infrastructure.

During an armed conflict, ambulances and other medical transportation are critical. Attacks on these units violate **Articles 19, 21 –22 and Article 35 of the first Geneva convention, Articles 22 and 38-39 of the second Geneva convention, Article 18 of the fourth Geneva convention, Articles 12, 13 and 21-31 of the additional Protocol I, Article 11 of the additional Protocol II, and rules 28 and 29 of the customary international humanitarian law** which require the respect and security of medical units like hospitals and other facilities dedicated solely to medical purposes must be respected and protected under all circumstances. Medical units cannot be attacked, and their access cannot be restricted. Additionally, the above articles grant the respect and protection of any means of transportation that is assigned exclusively to the conveyance of the wounded and sick, medical personnel and/or medical equipment or supplies in the same way as medical units. The attack on ambulances, especially when combined with specific threats⁶⁸ (October 12), is a serious infringement of IHL because these vehicles are clearly identified for medical purposes and are part of a humanitarian mission. The timing of the attacks that were initiated during patient transportation or evacuation attempts, and the planned nature of the threats indicate a violation of the standards of proportionality and precaution. These principles compel combatants to avoid using disproportionate force that could endanger civilians or medical personnel, and to ensure that any military advantage gained is not offset by the damage done to civilian life and infrastructure. Targeting ambulances jeopardizes both the present and future ability to care for the injured, a breach that contradicts the core principles of IHL.

Aside from breaching the conventions and Protocols, the attacks on the red cross, Islamic Health Authority Centers, civil defense, civilian hospitals, and ambulances violate **Rules 25, 26, 28 and 29** of customary IHL. Furthermore, because they intentionally target individuals and facilities protected by IHL, these acts may be classified as “war crimes” under international law. In-depth analysis of these breaches demonstrates that beyond the immediate harm of killing or wounding medical personnel, these violations have long-term impacts. They inhibit the delivery of essential health services to civilian populations, cause disruptions in public health systems, and inflict psychological terror on communities reliant on these services.

⁶⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/oct/13/israel-orders-more-evacuations-in-lebanon-threatens-medics-who-treat-hezbollah-members>

Civil defense organizations are officially designated as protected organizations during armed conflict under Geneva Convention Protocol I (Article 62)⁶⁹. Civil defense workers are protected as long as they remain neutral and perform only humanitarian tasks such as rescue operations, firefighting, medical support, and relief efforts⁷⁰.

Article 62 - General protection⁷¹ dictates:

“1. Civilian civil defense organizations and their personnel shall be respected and protected, subject to the provisions of this Protocol, particularly the provisions of this Section. They shall be entitled to perform their civil defense tasks except in case of imperative military necessity.”

“2. Buildings and ‘ matériel ’ used for civil defense purposes and shelters provided for the civilian population are covered by Article 52. Objects used for civil defense purposes may not be destroyed or diverted from their proper use except by the Party to which they belong.”

Customary IHL Rule 31 states that civil defense personnel, equipment, and structures (such as civil defense facilities) should not be targeted⁷². Attacking these individuals or facilities without a legitimate military goal violates this norm, particularly in situations where their activity concentrates on relief and rescue⁷³. Thus, based on the data, attacks on civil defense members and their centers in places like Tyre, Nabatiyeh, and Baraachit are clear breaches of these provisions.

Under the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel (1994), UN staff are entitled to protection from direct attacks in conflict zones⁷⁴. This extends to personnel involved in humanitarian relief, peacekeeping, and refugee assistance, such as UNHCR and UNIFIL workers⁷⁵. Furthermore, UN sites are frequently identified by distinctive signs or flags. Attacks on these places, such as the UNIFIL facility, are only lawful if they are directly involved in combat or military operations, which is normally forbidden⁷⁶. Thus, the murder of a UNHCR worker in Beqaa and the injury of 15 UNIFIL troops during an Israeli airstrike on their complex suggest a probable violation of the 1994 Convention, as such individuals are explicitly protected when engaged in non-combat tasks. Without proof of their engagement in hostilities, these attacks represent Israeli violations.

⁶⁹ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). “Article 62: General Protection of Civil Defence Organisations and Their Personnel.” Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977. Available at: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/api-1977/article-62>.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). “Rule 31. Humanitarian Relief Personnel.” Customary International Humanitarian Law. Volume I: Rules, 2005. Available at: Customary IHL - Rule 31. Humanitarian Relief Personnel.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ United Nations. Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, 1994. Available at: <https://www.un.org/law/cod/safety.html>

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Recommendations:

- The Government of Lebanon should move forward with acceding to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Or alternatively, proceed with a declaration under **Article 12(3)** of the ICC without parliamentary ratification. This would enable Lebanon to bring a case related to the Israel Defense Forces' (IDF) potential war crimes, specifically in relation to the targeting of civilian infrastructure and humanitarian workers.
- The government of Lebanon should make use of **Article 8 of The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide** which allows any contracting party to request that the appropriate UN bodies take measures, in accordance with the UN Charter, to prevent and suppress acts of genocide.
- The United Nations Security Council should establish an international investigation mechanism to thoroughly examine Israel's systematic targeting of humanitarian and medical workers in Lebanon. This investigation should focus on documenting evidence of violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and ensure accountability for those responsible.
- State institutions, as well as national and international non-governmental organizations, must intensify advocacy efforts to ensure full adherence to IHL, emphasizing the protection of medical teams, ambulances, hospitals, medical facilities, and humanitarian workers in Lebanon. This should include the creation of public awareness campaigns, as well as targeted diplomatic and legal advocacy at the international level, particularly within the UN system, to pressure Israel to comply with its obligations under IHL.

Conclusion:

This report underscores grave violations of IHL principles and protections. Article 24 of the First Geneva Convention and Additional Protocol I ensures medical personnel and Humanitarian personnel protection, explicitly safeguarding individuals who provide care to the injured and sick without participating in hostilities, including both military and civilian staff. The documented assaults on medical personnel and paramedics from the Red Cross and Islamic Health Authority Centers, civil defense and health centers directly contravene this provision, violating the core principle of “medical neutrality” upheld by IHL. Not only do these attacks result in immediate harm, but they also obstruct life-saving care for civilians and combatants, instilling fear among medical personnel and creating long-term detriments to health care delivery in conflict zones.

Similarly, Article 18 of the Fourth Geneva Convention provides clear protection to civilian hospitals, as long as they are not used for military purposes. Data presented earlier on the Israeli attacks on Ghandour, Fakihi, and Ablah hospitals point to significant breaches of this article, with no evidence suggesting these facilities were used for hostile purposes. These actions disregard the principle of distinction, which obligates combatants to differentiate between civilian and military targets, leading to further disruption of essential health services and loss of civilian lives.

Moreover, attacks on medical transportation and ambulances violate Articles 35 of the First Geneva Convention, Articles 21-31 of Protocol I, Article 11 of Protocol II which mandate respect and protection for medical vehicles. Strikes on ambulances, especially during patient transport, reveal violations of the principles of proportionality and precaution, as these actions unnecessarily endanger civilians and medical personnel while compromising immediate medical response capabilities.

Additionally, the attacks on civil defense and humanitarian personnel and facilities breach Articles 62 and 52 of Geneva Convention Protocol I, which ensure protection for civil defense organizations engaged in purely humanitarian functions. Customary IHL Rule 31 further reinforces the protection of civil defense assets and personnel, yet the strikes on civil defense members in Tyre, Nabatiyeh, and Baraachit reflect serious violations of these norms. The targeting of UN staff and facilities contravenes the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, an agreement that explicitly prohibits attacks on UN personnel engaged in peacekeeping or humanitarian tasks.

These patterns of attacks not only breach established IHL norms but may also amount to war crimes under international law. The documented violations against medical, civil defense, and humanitarian personnel disrupt essential services, endanger civilian lives, and perpetuate a climate of fear that hinders the operation of humanitarian efforts. In light of this evidence, there is a pressing need for accountability and adherence to IHL standards to ensure the protection of civilians and humanitarian actors in conflict zones, as well as to ensure that not any entity is granted immunity from adherence to universal frameworks. Moreover, it is crucial to emphasize the need for the Government of Lebanon to take actionable steps to prevent similar violations in both current and future conflicts, ensuring that effective measures are put in place to safeguard humanitarian efforts and uphold international law and that accountability is granted.

Annex 1:

Overview of International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

What is International Humanitarian Law?⁷⁷

International humanitarian law is a set of regulations aimed at mitigating the humanitarian consequences of armed conflict. It protects those who are not or no longer involved in hostilities and limits the tools and techniques of combat. The universal codification of international humanitarian law began in the nineteenth century. Since then, states have agreed on a set of practical principles based on the harsh realities of modern combat. These regulations create a delicate balance between humanitarian concerns and the military needs of states. As the international community has evolved, a greater number of countries have contributed to the formulation of these laws. International humanitarian law now constitutes a universal body of law.

Where is International Humanitarian Law found?⁷⁸

The Four Geneva Conventions of 1949 comprise a significant portion of international humanitarian law. Almost every state in the world has committed to abiding by them. The Conventions were produced and supplemented by additional agreements such as, Additional Protocols of 1977 for the Protection of Victims of Armed Conflicts. Other treaties forbid the use of certain weapons and military methods while protecting specific groups of people and goods. These agreements include:

1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, plus its two protocols;

1972 Biological Weapons Convention;

1980 Conventional Weapons Convention and its five protocols;

1993 Chemical Weapons Convention;

1997 Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines;

and 2000 Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child addresses the role of children in armed conflict.

Many parts of international humanitarian law are now recognized as customary law, or general norms to which all states are bound.

⁷⁷ ICRC, Advisory Service on International Humanitarian Law, "What is International Humanitarian Law?" (Factsheet), July 2004, available at: <https://www.icrc.org/en/download/file/4541/what-is-ihl-factsheet.pdf>

⁷⁸ ICRC, Advisory Service on International Humanitarian Law, "What is International Humanitarian Law?" (Factsheet), July 2004, available at: <https://www.icrc.org/en/download/file/4541/what-is-ihl-factsheet.pdf>

When does *International Humanitarian Law* apply? ⁷⁹

International humanitarian law only applies to armed conflicts; it does not address internal tensions or disturbances, such as isolated acts of violence. It applies only when a conflict has occurred, and then equally to both sides, regardless of who initiated the fighting.

International humanitarian law makes a distinction between *international and non-international armed conflict*. *International conflicts* involve at least two states. They are subject to a variety of rules, including those outlined in the **four Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I**. Non-international armed conflicts occur on the territory of a single state and include either regular military forces fighting groups of armed dissidents or armed groups fighting each other. Internal armed conflicts are subject to a more limited set of restrictions, as outlined in **Article 3 of the four Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol II**.

It is necessary to distinguish between international humanitarian law and human rights law. Human rights law, unlike international humanitarian law, is applicable in peacetime and remains applicable in times of conflict, despite the fact that many of its principles may be suspended during an armed conflict⁸⁰.

Who does *International Humanitarian Law* protect? ⁸¹

Civilians, medical and religious military professionals, and those who do not participate in the battle are all protected under international humanitarian law. It also defends individuals who have stopped fighting, including the injured, shipwrecked, and sick combatants, as well as prisoners of war. More specifically, it is banned to kill or harm an opponent who surrenders or is unable to fight; the sick and wounded must be collected and cared for by the party in control over them. Medical workers, supplies, hospitals, and ambulances must all be secure.

There are also detailed rules governing the circumstances of imprisonment for prisoners of war, as well as how civilians should be treated when under enemy control. This encompasses the right to food, shelter, and medical treatment, as well as the ability to communicate with family members. The law specifies a number of easily recognizable symbols that can be used to designate protected individuals, places, and objects. The primary emblems are the red cross, the red crescent, and symbols indicating cultural property and civil defense facilities.

⁷⁹ ICRC, Advisory Service on International Humanitarian Law, "What is International Humanitarian Law?" (Factsheet), July 2004, available at: <https://www.icrc.org/en/download/file/4541/what-is-ihl-factsheet.pdf>

⁸⁰ General Comment No. 31 [80] Nature of the General Legal Obligation Imposed on States Parties to the Covenant: 26/05/2004. Human Rights Committee. Eightieth session (CCPR/C/74/CRP.4/Rev.6), pt. 11. <http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices>. For further details on the applicability of international humanitarian law and international human rights law and their complementarity via <https://casebook.icrc.org/law/ihl-and-human-rights#:~:text=IHL%20is%20applicable%20in%20armed,the%20life%20of%20the%20nation>.

⁸¹ ICRC, Advisory Service on International Humanitarian Law, "What is International Humanitarian Law?" (Factsheet), July 2004, available at: <https://www.icrc.org/en/download/file/4541/what-is-ihl-factsheet.pdf>



Israeli Attacks Against Medical Personnel and Facilities in Lebanon:

War crimes to be investigated and prosecuted.

September 2024 - October 2024