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Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts

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Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

I. Introduction

The present addendum contains information from two additional replies to the request contained in paragraph 13 of General Assembly resolution [73/204](#), received subsequent to the submission of the main report, from Qatar and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.¹

II. Information received from Member States

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[7 July 2020]

Qatar reiterated the information it submitted previously (see [A/71/183](#) and [A/73/277](#)).

Qatar reported that, with reference to paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution [73/204](#), it has no objection to the use of a questionnaire as drafted by Member States, with the assistance of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and, as appropriate, in consultation with the United Nations Secretariat. The

¹ The full texts of the replies are available for review on the website of the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly (www.un.org/ga/sixth).



matter, it reported, is left to the consideration and approval of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Qatar reported that its laws contained provisions related to the national implementation of international humanitarian law. In accordance with its international obligations under the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, Qatar adopted Act No. 4 (2016) on biological weapons, promulgated on 2 June 2016 and currently in force. In cooperation with the Qatar Red Crescent Society, the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law finished drafting a law on the use and protection of emblems. In preparation for its adoption, the law is being submitted to the competent authorities for review and study following coordination with the relevant agencies.

Since the launch of the intergovernmental process on strengthening compliance with international humanitarian law following the adoption at the thirty-second International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (December 2015) of resolution 2 entitled “Strengthening compliance with international humanitarian law”, Qatar has been taking part in meetings on the subject. Its National Committee took part in the thirty-third International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, in Geneva, from 9 to 12 December 2019, the objective of which was to improve the lives of people affected by armed conflict, disasters and other emergencies.

Qatar reported that Abdullah Rashid al-Nu‘aymi, Chair of the International Aid and Development Committee of the Qatar Red Crescent Society and candidate of Qatar for membership of the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission for the 2017–2022 term, was successful in the elections held in December 2016.

Qatar and ICRC signed a shared declaration on the margins of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly in New York. The two parties agreed that Qatar would initiate a high-level dialogue including the exchange of skills and expertise in areas of shared interest, including specific contexts and topics related to humanitarian issues. Recognizing that principled humanitarian action is a public good for the entire world and recognizing the role of States in promoting respect for and compliance with international humanitarian law, the two reaffirmed their intention and commitment to explore areas of mutual interest and strengthen their cooperation in support of people affected by armed conflict and violence.

The National Committee for the Prohibition of Weapons proposed laws or amendments aimed at implementing international weapons ban instruments. Once the Committee had completed its amendments, the new Chemical Weapons Act (Act No. 16 (2013)) was adopted, as was the Biological Weapons Act (Act No. 4 (2016)). A draft law setting forth the national nuclear substance control and monitoring regime is now being prepared.

With permission from ICRC, 1,000 copies of a book and 500 memory cards have been made available of the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and of the three Protocols Additional thereto. The Palestinian National Committee on International Humanitarian Law was given 150 copies. More than 100 copies were distributed at the thirty-third International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held in 2019, and 50 were distributed at the sixth conference and fortieth meeting of the Permanent Office of the Federation of Arab Legal Scholars, held in Amman. Copies will be distributed at every event in which the Committee participates.

In terms of anticipated activities, action is being taken to coordinate courses with the Military Committee on International Humanitarian Law with a view to

raising awareness of international humanitarian law among members of the armed forces and training military counsellors and lecturers to help to educate soldiers. Two competitions, involving writing and drawing, respectively, are being organized in Qatar in order to raise awareness of international humanitarian law. The National Committee on International Humanitarian Law has organized specialized sessions for diplomats. A website and a range of social media accounts are being created for the National Committee.

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

[Original: English]
[17 November 2020]

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland reported that, in line with paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution [73/204](#), it used a template questionnaire in the hope that it might be of interest and help to encourage others to adopt a similar format in the future. The United Kingdom stated that it would welcome comments from other States and United Nations officials on that approach.

In March 2019, the United Kingdom published a voluntary report on national implementation of international humanitarian law. The United Kingdom reported that it encourages other States to draft their own reports on national implementation of international humanitarian law and promoted a pledge to this effect at the thirty-third International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

In collaboration with the British Red Cross, the United Kingdom is conducting a project to provide practical assistance and support to selected States to produce a report that details their activities to implement international humanitarian law at the national level. The United Kingdom has also produced a toolkit to provide guidance for countries to research and draft their own reports.

The United Kingdom supports the dissemination activities of the British Red Cross, including the joint project of the British Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) that ensures that the practice section of the ICRC study on customary international humanitarian law is kept up-to-date and is accessible in a database (www.icrc.org/customary-ihl). The tenth anniversary of the launch of the database was marked on 12 August 2020.

On 27 August 2020, the United Kingdom published its approach paper on the protection of civilians, which builds on the published 2010 protection of civilians strategy, highlighting the work done by the United Kingdom Government in the past 10 years to further the agenda.

In June 2018, the third edition of *Legal Support to Joint Operations*, Joint Doctrine Publication 3–46, was published, containing an introduction to the multiplicity of legal issues associated with military operations. A Ministry of Defence programme to update the joint service manual on the law of armed conflict is under way. The fourth edition of Joint Doctrine Publication 1–10, *Captured Persons*, was published in September 2020.

The United Kingdom reported that it has a Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict and a policy team and funding dedicated to tackling conflict-related sexual violence. It reported that the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative follows a survivor-centred approach, in line with Security Council resolution [2467 \(2019\)](#) on sexual violence in conflict. In June 2020, the United Kingdom launched the draft Murad Code, created with Nobel Laureate Nadia Murad and the Institute for International Criminal Investigations, to strengthen justice for survivors around the world. In October 2019,

the United Kingdom appointed two Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative survivor champions, Nadine Tunasi and Kolbassia Haoussou, who advocate support for all survivors and children born of conflict-related sexual violence within the Initiative's policy and programming. The international conference for the Initiative was postponed in the light of the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and the United Kingdom would revisit plans for a conference once the international situation allows. In collaboration with the British Red Cross, the United Kingdom published a joint open pledge on responding to sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict, in connection with the thirty-third International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. The United Kingdom published its national action plan on women and peace and security for 2018–2022, a five-year strategy on how the United Kingdom would meet its commitments under Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) to reduce the impact of conflict on women and girls and to promote their inclusion in conflict resolution. The action plan envisages a number of strategic outcomes, including one focused on gender-based violence.

The United Kingdom reported that it is supporting the International Criminal Court's preliminary examination of alleged war crimes in Iraq and continues to investigate allegations of serious criminal behaviour by United Kingdom armed forces in Iraq through the Service Police Legacy Investigations and where necessary to conduct inquests (known as Iraq Fatality Investigations) to establish the facts and learn lessons.

In July 2018, the terms of reference of the United Kingdom National Committee on International Humanitarian Law were published on the Government's website. In September 2018, the Diplomatic Academy law faculty, in partnership with the British Red Cross, launched an online introductory training course on international humanitarian law for diplomats and officials of the then Foreign and Commonwealth Office and for officials from other government departments. A special course for the Crown Prosecution Service and the Metropolitan Police was delivered from September to November 2019. In October 2019, the Committee, in collaboration with the British Red Cross, organized a conference to mark the seventieth anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. In January 2020, the Committee joined the new online digital community for national committees on international humanitarian law.

In April 2018, the United Kingdom endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration. A cross-government working group was set up to consider reporting and administrative actions arising from the endorsement.

In January 2019, the United Kingdom published a Joint Service Publication on human security in military operations and guidance on how the United Kingdom military could better liaise with non-governmental organizations and civil society involved in the protection of civilians and how military personnel should respond to children affected by conflict, including consideration of the Safe Schools Declaration and the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict.

The United Kingdom participated in the fifth Commonwealth Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on International Humanitarian Law, held in Kigali, in June 2019. A delegation was also sent to the thirty-third International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.