

NATIONAL SOCIETY WORKSHOP ON PROMOTING IHL TO YOUNG PEOPLE

CONCEPT PAPER

Over the past several years, efforts to introduce education in international humanitarian law (IHL) in schools have really taken off in both Europe and North America, largely thanks to the efforts of National Societies. A number of National Societies are currently working with the Exploring Humanitarian Law (EHL) materials or have developed their own tools for promoting IHL to young people in their contexts; related efforts are both dynamic and innovative. At the same time, the ICRC has begun to take stock of its involvement in the EHL programme and to clarify how it can best support National Societies interested in promoting IHL to young people.

Against this backdrop, the ICRC carried out a consultation with European National Societies to find out more about their IHL outreach efforts to young people (see enclosed survey findings). Through this process, participating National Societies confirmed their interest in learning more about strategies and tools, for both formal and non-formal education settings, that other National Societies have developed and in getting feedback on their own activities. With regard to EHL, the consultation revealed that National Societies generally believe that it is a very relevant tool, but they would welcome additional support in adapting it to their respective contexts and information on the "dos and don'ts" of programme implementation. More broadly, the ICRC learned that many National Societies feel quite isolated in their efforts to promote IHL to young people, and would welcome the opportunity to learn from other National Societies facing similar challenges and recording similar successes. The consultation process also highlighted the wealth of creative materials that have been developed to introduce IHL to young audiences.

The workshop, which aims to bring together Movement colleagues who work on promoting IHL to young people, is thus a natural outcome of this consultation. In putting together this event, the ICRC wants to emphasize that National Societies in the region have been the driving force behind related developments and to highlight their significant activities and achievements in this field.

The objectives of the workshop are:

- To share concrete experiences and identify "best practices" in terms of efforts to introduce IHL in schools, through EHL or similar education programmes.
- To share concrete experiences and identify "best practices" in promoting IHL to young people outside the formal school setting.
- To showcase the wealth of materials already developed by different National Societies.
- To look at other methods (beyond formal integration in the school curriculum) of disseminating EHL and similar education programmes to young people, teachers and other interested audiences (e.g., e-learning)
- To look at examples in which the EHL materials have been used or are deemed appropriate to use with other audiences (National Society volunteers of all ages, young army recruits, border police, university students, the general public) and start exploring avenues in that direction.
- To enhance cooperation within the Movement on promoting IHL to young people.

Structure

In order to shape the agenda in a manner that best responds to the needs and expectations of participants, each National Society that confirms its participation is asked in the registration form to list the main issues they would like addressed at the meeting.

To help each participant gain a general understanding of the scope of IHL promotion to young people in Europe and North America, the ICRC will put together, based on its consultation, a "fact sheet" summarizing what each participating National Society had achieved in that field. Once each National Society has vetted its "fact sheet", it will be circulated to all participants ahead of the workshop. Each "fact sheet" will also include the issues that each National Society is most interested in discussing—an easy reference for each participant to seek out others with similar concerns.