



Legal acts of Ukraine on the protection of children's rights

1. [Constitution of Ukraine](#)

Article 52. Children are equal in their rights regardless of their origin and whether they are born in or out of wedlock.

Any violence against a child, or his or her exploitation shall be prosecuted by law.

2. [Criminal Code of Ukraine](#)

Article 438. Violation of rules of the warfare

1. Cruel treatment of prisoners of war or civilians, deportation of civilian population for forced labor, pillage of national treasures on occupied territories, use of methods of the warfare prohibited by international instruments, or any other violations of rules of the warfare recognized by international instruments consented to by binding by the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine, and also giving an order to commit any such actions, - shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of eight to twelve years.
2. The same acts accompanied with a murder, - shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of ten to fifteen years, or life imprisonment.

Article 442-1. Crimes against humanity

1. Intentionally committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against the civilian population:
 - 1) persecution of any identifiable group or community, i.e. restriction of human rights on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, sexual or other grounds (characteristics) of discrimination defined by international law as unacceptable;
 - 2) deportation of the population, i.e. forced and in the absence of grounds provided for by international law, transfer (eviction) of the relevant group of persons from the territory in which they legally resided to the territory of another state;
 - 3) forced displacement of the population, i.e. forced and in the absence of grounds provided for by international law, transfer (eviction) of the relevant group of persons from the territory in which they legally resided to another area within the same state;
 - 4) rape, sexual exploitation, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced sterilisation or any other form of sexual violence;
 - 5) enslavement or trafficking in persons;
 - 6) enforced disappearance;
 - 7) illegal deprivation of liberty;
 - 8) torture;
 - 9) other intentional inhuman acts of a similar nature, accompanied by the infliction of severe suffering, moderate or severe bodily harm or serious harm to mental or physical health -
shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of seven to fifteen years.
2. Intentional commission of the crime of apartheid, extermination, murder -
as part of a large-scale or systematic attack on the civilian population shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of ten to fifteen years or life imprisonment.

3. Code of Civil Protection of Ukraine

Article 33. Evacuation

1. Evacuation is carried out on state, regional, local or on-site level.
2. There are three evacuation types based on emergency features:
 - 1) Mandatory;
 - 2) General or partial;
 - 3) Temporary or irrevocable.
3. Evacuation decisions are made:
 - 1) At state level - by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine;
 - 2) At the regional level – by the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, oblast administrations, Kyiv and Sevastopol city state administrations;
 - 3) At the local level – by raion, city district state administrations in Kyiv and Sevastopol, respective local authorities;
 - 4) On-site level - by business manager.
- ...
6. Mandatory evacuation is carried out in case of the following threats:
 - 4) Armed conflicts (from potential battle action areas to safe areas identified by the Ministry of Defense for the special period).
- ...
12. An effective response to mass displacement requires interagency coordination, cooperation and pooling of resources and is ensured by
 - 6) creation of mobile groups equipped with specialised armoured vehicles to search for and evacuate vulnerable categories of the population (persons with disabilities, the elderly, children and others) from the affected areas and areas of active hostilities;
- ...
- 10) arrangement of places for temporary stay of displaced persons, where they can be accommodated and fed, including in specialised institutions for persons with disabilities, the elderly, orphans, etc;

4. The Law of Ukraine 'On Childhood Protection'

Article 1. Definitions of Terms

child - a person under the age of 18 (majority), unless, according to the law applicable to him/her, he/she acquires the rights of an adult earlier;

child victim of hostilities and armed conflicts - a child who, as a result of hostilities or armed conflict, was wounded, contused, mutilated, subjected to physical, sexual, psychological violence, abducted or illegally taken outside Ukraine, involved in military formations or illegally detained, including in captivity;

a child in difficult life circumstances is a child who is in conditions that negatively affect his or her life, health and development due to disability, serious illness, homelessness, conflict with the law, or involvement in the worst forms of child labour, dependence on psychotropic substances and other types of addiction, abuse, including domestic violence, evasion of parents or persons in loco parentis from fulfilling their duties, circumstances of natural disasters, man-made accidents, catastrophes, military operations or armed conflicts, etc. as determined by the child's needs assessment;

Article 30. Prohibition of participation of children in hostilities and armed conflicts

Participation of children in hostilities and armed conflicts, including recruitment, financing, material support, training of children for the purpose of using them in armed conflicts of other states or violent actions aimed at overthrowing state power or violating territorial integrity, as well as the use of children in hostilities and armed conflicts, involvement and/or involvement of children in paramilitary or armed formations not provided for by the laws of Ukraine, propaganda of war are prohibited.

The State takes all possible measures to prevent the recruitment and use of children in hostilities and armed conflicts, to identify recruited children and to release them from military service.

The central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy on family and children's issues ensures broad information and awareness-raising work on the protection of children from participation in hostilities and armed conflicts, encourages society, public associations and non-governmental organisations, and the media to conduct educational work among children, their parents and other legal representatives.

Persons guilty of violating the requirements of part one of this Article shall bear criminal liability established by law.

Article 30⁻¹. Protection of children in the zone of hostilities and armed conflicts and children affected by hostilities and armed conflicts

The State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection of children in the zone of hostilities and armed conflicts, children affected by hostilities and armed conflicts, their care and reunification with family members, including search, release from captivity, and return to Ukraine of children illegally taken abroad. If the age of a person is not determined and there are grounds to believe that this person is a child, he or she is provided with the protection provided for in this Article until the age is established.

All actions of the State with regard to the protection of children in the zone of hostilities and armed conflicts, as well as children affected by hostilities and armed conflicts, shall be carried out in accordance with the norms of international humanitarian law.

Local executive authorities and local self-government bodies shall, as a matter of priority, resettle children who have been or may be in the area of hostilities or armed conflicts to safe areas. Children are resettled together with their parents, legal representatives or, with their consent, unaccompanied or with other persons.

In case of relocation, including abroad for the purpose of evacuation during the state of emergency or martial law in Ukraine, of children enrolled/placed for round-the-clock stay in institutions of various types, forms of ownership and subordination, placed in the family of foster carers, heads of the relevant institutions, their authorized employees or other persons appointed by the guardianship and custody authority or military administration/military-civilian administration at the location of the institution, in particular in case of removal of the head or his/her authorized representative, shall take measures to reunite the child with his/her family.

The central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy on family and children's issues takes measures aimed at reuniting the child with his/her family. The central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy in the field of protection of human and civil rights and freedoms takes measures to establish the location of the child's family members, facilitates searches carried out by family members, public, charitable, volunteer, humanitarian organisations and foundations involved in family reunification.

The central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy on family and children, the central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy in the fields of education and science, the central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy in the field of healthcare, create conditions for healthcare rehabilitation, psychological and pedagogical rehabilitation and social reintegration of children affected by hostilities and armed conflicts.

The status of a child affected by hostilities and armed conflicts is granted by the guardianship and custody authority at the place of registration of the child as an internally displaced person. [The procedure for granting the status of a child affected by hostilities and armed conflicts](#) is determined by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

Article 30⁻². Protection of children who have suffered from sexual violence or witnessed it

The state shall protect children from sexual violence (including sexual exploitation and perpetrated by parents or persons in loco parentis), as well as children who have suffered from such violence or witnessed it.

Identification of child victims of sexual violence, acceptance and consideration of appeals and reports of sexual violence against children, organisation of medical, social and psychological assistance to such children are carried out in accordance with the procedure approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

The central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy on family and children's issues, the central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy in the spheres of education and science, the central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy in the sphere of healthcare, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine by a joint act approve the procedure for detecting signs of sexual violence against children, interviewing a child victim of sexual violence.

The central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy on family and children's issues, the central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy in the fields of education and science, the central executive body that ensures the formation and implementation of the state policy in the field of healthcare, create conditions and ensure the provision of medical and psychological assistance and necessary rehabilitation measures to children who have suffered from sexual violence or witnessed it.

The organisation of functioning, staffing, methodological and logistical support of a special room provided for interviewing (interrogating) a child victim of sexual violence or a witness (eyewitness), using child-friendly methods, is carried out by specialised victim support services established by local executive authorities and local self-government bodies in accordance with the law.

Article 31. Protection of refugee children and children in need of additional or temporary protection

The State, through its authorised bodies, takes the necessary measures to ensure the protection of refugee children and children in need of additional or temporary protection on the territory of Ukraine.

The central executive body that implements the state policy in the field of migration (immigration and emigration) facilitates the search for parents or other legal representatives of refugee children and children in need of additional or temporary protection who have been separated from their families, and the placement of such children in appropriate children's institutions or families.

The guardianship and custody authorities shall take measures for the temporary placement of refugee children and children in need of additional or temporary protection separated from their families in appropriate children's institutions or families, establishing guardianship or custody over such children, and assist refugee children and children in need of additional or temporary protection separated from their families in exercising their rights.

Article 32. Protection of the Child from Illegal Transfer

In accordance with the procedure established by the legislation of Ukraine and relevant international treaties, the State takes measures to prevent the illegal transfer, removal and non-return of children from abroad, their abduction and trafficking in children.

The state takes all necessary and possible measures to search for and return to Ukraine children who have been illegally taken abroad, including in connection with circumstances related to military operations and armed conflicts.

5. [The Law of Ukraine 'On Social Protection and Support of Children Affected by the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on the Regulation of Social Services and Benefits'](#)
6. [Decree of the President of Ukraine 'On the Working Group to Ensure Interaction with the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the United Nations Working Group in Ukraine on Children and Armed Conflict' of 5 July 2023, no. 373/2023](#)
7. [The Procedure for Evacuation in the Event of a Threat or Occurrence of Emergency Situations, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 30 October 2013, No. 841](#)
 3. In order to protect children in the area of hostilities and armed conflicts under martial law, regional military administrations, in agreement with the military command authorities on the relevant territory and the Coordination Headquarters for Evacuation Measures and Effective Response to Mass Displacement of the Population, established by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, may decide to carry out compulsory evacuation of children with their parents, persons in loco parentis or other legal representatives from a particular
 - 17¹. The evacuation of children and persons residing or enrolled in institutions of various types, forms of ownership and subordination for a twenty-four-hour stay is carried out in accordance with the following requirements [Procedure for temporary relocation \(evacuation\) of children and persons residing or enrolled in institutions of various types, forms of ownership and subordination for round-the-clock stay, and their return to the place of permanent residence \(stay\), and in case of departure from Ukraine - to Ukraine](#), approved by Resolution No. 546 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 1 June 2023 'On the Temporary Relocation (Evacuation) of Children and Persons Residing or Enrolled in Institutions of Various Types, Forms of Ownership and Subordination for a Twenty-Four-Hour Stay and Their Return'.
 31. Refusal by parents, persons in loco parentis or other legal representatives to compulsorily evacuate children from a particular settlement in the area where hostilities are taking place is not allowed.
 40. Parents of children and persons in loco parentis, legal representatives of orphans, children deprived of parental care, including those brought up in foster families, family-type children's homes, families of guardians, carers, families of foster carers, temporarily placed, in case of mandatory evacuation are obliged to arrive with their children at the assembly points of evacuation (boarding points) at their place of residence.
 52. The State Service for Children, on the basis of information from local state administrations and local self-government bodies on the availability of foster families, family-type children's homes, families of foster carers, institutions where children are supposed to stay around the clock, determines foster families, family-type children's homes, families of foster carers, institutions to which orphans, children deprived of parental care, children left without parental care will be evacuated, taking into account their age and state of health.

8. [The Procedure for Temporary Relocation \(Evacuation\) of Children and Persons Residing or Enrolled in Institutions of Different Types, Forms of Ownership and Subordination for Twenty-Four-Hour Stay, and Their Return to the Place of Permanent Residence \(Stay\), and in Case of Travelling Outside Ukraine - to Ukraine, approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 01 June 2023 No. 546](#)
9. [The Procedure for Granting the Status of a Child Affected by Military Actions and Armed Conflicts, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 5 April 2017, No. 268](#)
10. [Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine 'Some Issues of Protection of Children Deported or Forcibly Displaced in Connection with the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine' of 29 October 2024, No. 1240.](#)
11. [Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine 'On the Establishment of the Coordination Headquarters for the Protection of Children's Rights under Martial Law' of 17.03.2022, No. 302](#)
12. [Procedure for the Identification, Return, Accompaniment and Reintegration of Children Deported or Forcibly Displaced as a Result of the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 14 May 2024, No. 551](#)
13. [Concept for the Prevention and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 16 June 2003, No. 364-p](#)
 1. **General part**

According to Article 3 of the International Labour Organization's Convention 182 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, the worst forms of child labour include:

all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage, and forced or compulsory labour, including the forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.
14. [Strategy for Ensuring the Right of Every Child in Ukraine to Grow Up in a Family Environment for 2024-2028 and Approval of the Operational Action Plan for 2024-2026 for its Implementation, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 26 November 2024, No. 1201-r](#)
15. [Action Plan for the Implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 4 August 2021, No. 898-p](#)
16. [The National Prevention Plan to Prevent and Stop Grave Violations of Children's Rights in the Context of the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on 22 March 2024, No. 256-p](#)

17. [Instruction on the Procedure for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, approved by Order of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine of 23 March 2017, No. 164](#)

Paragraph 58 of Chapter 2 of Section I. Sanitary and safe zones (areas) are established by agreement between the parties to an international or non-international armed conflict directly or through an impartial humanitarian organisation outside the combat zone in order to shelter certain categories of civilians who, due to their vulnerability, require special protection (wounded, persons with disabilities, sick and elderly persons, children under fifteen, pregnant women and mothers with children under seven).

Paragraph 9 of Chapter 4 of Section I. With regard to children, IHL provides for:

ensuring their right to education;

taking the necessary measures to reunite families separated during armed conflict;

prohibition of recruitment and participation in hostilities of children under the age of fifteen;

granting special protection to children under the age of eighteen, even if they participated in hostilities and were taken prisoner;

evacuation of children from the area of hostilities (if necessary and in agreement with their parents or persons in charge).

Paragraph 5 of Chapter 8 of Section I. Grave breaches of IHL directed against persons include:

...

recruitment of children under the age of fifteen into the armed forces or use of children in hostilities, etc.

Paragraph 2 of Chapter 15, Section I. Women and children are entitled to special respect, and IHL provides for their protection from rape, forced prostitution and any other indecent assault.

Paragraph 5 of Chapter 8, Section IV. The following goods are not subject to confiscation as contraband (even if they are intended for the enemy):

...

clothing, bedding, food and shelter for the civilian population in general and women and children in particular (provided that there are no grounds to suspect that they will be used for other purposes);



International instruments related to the children and armed conflict agenda and the six grave violations against children

1. [United Nations Charter](#)

2. [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#)

Key extracts related to the six grave violations and two serious concerns:

Article 1

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Article 2

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

Article 6

1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.
2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

Article 19

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

Article 24

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

Article 28

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity,

Article 32

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

Article 34

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Article 35

States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

Article 36

States Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

Article 37

States Parties shall ensure that:

- (a) No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age;
- (b) No child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time;
- (c) Every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age. In particular, every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best interest not to do so and shall have the right to maintain contact with his or her family through correspondence and visits, save in exceptional circumstances;
- (d) Every child deprived of his or her liberty shall have the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his or her liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority, and to a prompt decision on any such action.

Article 38

1. States Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts which are relevant to the child.
2. States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities.
3. States Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen years into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.
4. In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.

Article 39

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.

Article 40

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child's sense of dignity and worth, which reinforces the child's respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of others and which takes into account the child's age and the desirability of promoting the child's reintegration and the child's assuming a constructive role in society.
2. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of international instruments, States Parties shall, in particular, ensure that:
 - (a) No child shall be alleged as, be accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law by reason of acts or omissions that were not prohibited by national or international law at the time they were committed;
 - (b) Every child alleged as or accused of having infringed the penal law has at least the following guarantees:(i) To be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law; (ii) To be informed promptly and directly of the charges against him or her, and, if appropriate, through his or her parents or legal guardians, and to have legal or other appropriate assistance in the preparation and presentation of his or her defence; (iii) To have the matter determined without delay by a competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body in a fair hearing according to law, in the presence of legal or other appropriate assistance and, unless it is considered not to be in the best interest of the child, in particular, taking into account his or her age or situation, his or her parents or legal guardians; (iv) Not to be compelled to give testimony or to confess guilt; to examine or have examined adverse witnesses and to obtain the participation and examination of witnesses on his or her behalf under conditions of equality; (v) If considered to have infringed the penal law, to have this decision and any measures imposed in consequence thereof reviewed by a higher competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body according to law; (vi) To have the free assistance of an interpreter if the child cannot understand or speak the language used; (vii) To have his or her privacy fully respected at all stages of the proceedings.
3. States Parties shall seek to promote the establishment of laws, procedures, authorities and institutions specifically applicable to children alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law, and, in particular:
 - (a) The establishment of a minimum age below which children shall be presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law;
 - (b) Whenever appropriate and desirable, measures for dealing with such children without resorting to judicial proceedings, providing that human rights and legal safeguards are fully respected.
4. A variety of dispositions, such as care, guidance and supervision orders; counselling; probation; foster care; education and vocational training programmes and other alternatives to institutional care shall be available to ensure that children are dealt with in a manner appropriate to their well-being and proportionate both to their circumstances and the offence.

3. [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict \(OPAC\)](#)

Key extracts related to the six grave violations and two serious concerns:

The States Parties to the present Protocol;

- I. Condemning the targeting of children in situations of armed conflict and direct attacks on objects protected under international law, including places that generally have a significant presence of children, such as schools and hospitals,
- II. Convinced that an optional protocol to the Convention that raises the age of possible recruitment of persons into armed forces and their participation in hostilities will contribute effectively to the implementation of the principle that the best interests of the child are to be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children,
- III. Recognizing the special needs of those children who are particularly vulnerable to recruitment or use in hostilities contrary to the present Protocol owing to their economic or social status or gender,
- IV. Convinced of the need to strengthen international cooperation in the implementation of the present Protocol, as well as the physical and psychosocial rehabilitation and social reintegration of children who are victims of armed conflict.

Article 1

States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities.

Article 2

States Parties shall ensure that persons who have not attained the age of 18 years are not compulsorily recruited into their armed forces.

Article 4

1. Armed groups that are distinct from the armed forces of a State should not, under any circumstances, recruit or use in hostilities persons under the age of 18 years.
2. States Parties shall take all feasible measures to prevent such recruitment and use, including the adoption of legal measures necessary to prohibit and criminalize such practices.

Article 6

States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons within their jurisdiction recruited or used in hostilities contrary to the present Protocol are demobilized or otherwise released from service. States Parties shall, when necessary, accord to such persons all appropriate assistance for their physical and psychological recovery and their social reintegration.

Article 7

States Parties shall cooperate in the implementation of the present Protocol, including in the prevention of any activity contrary thereto and in the rehabilitation and social reintegration of persons who are victims of acts contrary thereto, including through technical cooperation and financial assistance. Such assistance and cooperation will be undertaken in consultation with the States Parties concerned and the relevant international organizations.

4. [Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention](#)

Key extracts related to the six grave violations and two serious concerns:

Article 3

For the purposes of this Convention, the term “ the worst forms of child labour” comprises:

- (a) All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- (b) The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- (c) The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- (d) Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Article 7

1. Each Member shall take all necessary measures to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of the provisions giving effect to this Convention including the provision and application of penal sanctions or, as appropriate, other sanctions.
2. Each Member shall, taking into account the importance of education in eliminating child labour, take effective and time-bound measures to:
 - (a) Prevent the engagement of children in the worst forms of child labour;
 - (b) Provide the necessary and appropriate direct assistance for the removal of children from the worst forms of child labour and for their rehabilitation and social integration;
 - (c) Ensure access to free basic education, and, wherever possible and appropriate, vocational training, for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour;
 - (d) Identify and reach out to children at special risk; and
 - (e) Take account of the special situation of girls.
3. Each Member shall designate the competent authority responsible for the implementation of the provisions giving effect to this Convention.

5. [Convention \(I\) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field. Geneva, 12 August 1949](#)

Key extracts related to the six grave violations and two serious concerns:

Article 2

In addition to the provisions which shall be implemented in peacetime, the present Convention shall apply to all cases of declared war or of any other armed conflict which may arise between two or more of the High Contracting Parties, even if the state of war is not recognized by one of them. The Convention shall also apply to all cases of partial or total occupation of the territory of a High Contracting Party, even if the said occupation meets with no armed resistance. Although one of the Powers in conflict may not be a party to the present Convention, the Powers who are parties thereto shall remain bound by it in their mutual relations. They shall furthermore be bound by the Convention in relation to the said Power, if the latter accepts and applies the provisions thereof.

Article 4

Neutral Powers shall apply by analogy the provisions of the present Convention to the wounded and sick, and to members of the medical personnel and to chaplains of the armed forces of the Parties to the conflict, received or interned in their territory, as well as to dead persons found.

Article 12

Members of the armed forces and other persons mentioned in the following Article, who are wounded or sick, shall be respected and protected in all circumstances. They shall be treated humanely and cared for by the Party to the conflict in whose power they may be, without any adverse distinction founded on sex, race, nationality, religion, political opinions, or any other similar criteria. Any attempts upon their lives, or violence to their persons, shall be strictly prohibited; in particular, they shall not be murdered or exterminated, subjected to torture or to biological experiments; they shall not wilfully be left without medical assistance and care, nor shall conditions exposing them to contagion or infection be created. Only urgent medical reasons will authorize priority in the order of treatment to be administered. Women shall be treated with all consideration due to their sex. The Party to the conflict which is compelled to abandon wounded or sick to the enemy shall, as far as military considerations permit, leave with them a part of its medical personnel and material to assist in their care.

Article 13

The Present Convention shall apply to the wounded and sick belonging to the following categories:

- 1) Members of the armed forces of a Party to the conflict as well as members of militias or volunteer corps forming part of such armed forces.

Article 19

Fixed establishments and mobile medical units of the Medical Service may in no circumstances be attacked, but shall at all times be respected and protected by the Parties to the conflict. Should they fall into the hands of the adverse Party, their personnel shall be free to pursue their duties, as long as the capturing Power has not itself ensured the necessary care of the wounded and sick found in such establishments and units. The responsible authorities shall ensure that the said medical establishments and units are, as far as possible, situated in such a manner that attacks against military objectives cannot imperil their safety.

Article 23

In time of peace, the High Contracting Parties and, after the outbreak of hostilities, the Parties to the conflict, may establish in their own territory and, if the need arises, in occupied areas, hospital zones and localities so organized as to protect the wounded and sick from the effects of war, as well as the personnel entrusted with the organization and administration of these zones and localities and with the care of the persons therein assembled. Upon the outbreak and during the course of hostilities, the Parties concerned may conclude agreements on mutual recognition of the hospital zones and localities they have created. They may for this purpose implement the provisions of the Draft Agreement annexed to the present Convention, with such amendments as they may consider necessary. The Protecting Powers and the International Committee of the Red Cross are invited to lend their good offices in order to facilitate the institution and recognition of these hospital zones and localities.

Article 24

Medical personnel exclusively engaged in the search for, or the collection, transport or treatment of the wounded or sick, or in the prevention of disease, staff exclusively engaged in the administration of medical units and establishments, as well as chaplains attached to the armed forces, shall be respected and protected in all circumstances.

Article 28

Personnel designated in Articles 24 and 26 who fall into the hands of the adverse Party, shall be retained only in so far as the state of health, the spiritual needs and the number of prisoners of war require.

Article 33

The material of mobile medical units of the armed forces which fall into the hands of the enemy, shall be reserved for the care of wounded and sick. The buildings, material and stores of fixed medical establishments of the armed forces shall remain subject to the laws of war, but may not be diverted from that purpose as long as they are required for the care of wounded and sick. Nevertheless, the commanders of forces in the field may make use of them, in case of urgent military necessity, provided that they make previous arrangements for the welfare of the wounded and sick who are nursed in them. The material and stores defined in the present Article shall not be intentionally destroyed.

Article 34

The real and personal property of aid societies which are admitted to the privileges of the Convention shall be regarded as private property.

Article 35

Transports of wounded and sick or of medical equipment shall be respected and protected in the same way as mobile medical units. Should such transports or vehicles fall into the hands of the adverse Party, they shall be subject to the laws of war, on condition that the Party to the conflict who captures them shall in all cases ensure the care of the wounded and sick they contain. The civilian personnel and all means of transport obtained by requisition shall be subject to the general rules of international law.

Article 36

Medical aircraft, that is to say, aircraft exclusively employed for the removal of wounded and sick and for the transport of medical personnel and equipment, shall not be attacked, but shall be respected by the belligerents, while flying at heights, times and on routes specifically agreed upon between the belligerents concerned. They shall bear, clearly marked, the distinctive emblem prescribed in Article 38, together with their national colours, on their lower, upper and lateral surfaces. They shall be provided with any other markings or means of identification that may be agreed upon between the belligerents upon the outbreak or during the course of hostilities. Unless agreed otherwise, flights over enemy or enemy-occupied territory are prohibited.

Article 38

As a compliment to Switzerland, the heraldic emblem of the red cross on a white ground, formed by reversing the Federal colours, is retained as the emblem and distinctive sign of the Medical Service of armed forces. Nevertheless, in the case of countries which already use as emblem, in place of the red cross, the red crescent or the red lion and sun¹ on a white ground, those emblems are also recognized by the terms of the present Convention.

Article 39

Under the direction of the competent military authority, the emblem shall be displayed on the flags, armllets and on all equipment employed in the Medical Service.

Article 40

The personnel designated in Article 24 and in Articles 26 and 27 shall wear, affixed to the left arm, a waterresistant armllet bearing the distinctive emblem, issued and stamped by the military authority

Article 50

Grave breaches to which the preceding Article relates shall be those involving any of the following acts, if committed against persons or property protected by the Convention: wilful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments, wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, and extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly.

6. [Convention \(III\) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949](#)
7. [Convention \(IV\) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949](#)

Article 4

Persons protected by the Convention are those who at a given moment and in any manner whatsoever, find themselves, in case of a conflict or occupation, in the hands of a Party to the conflict or Occupying Power of which they are not nationals.

Article 10

The provisions of the present Convention constitute no obstacle to the humanitarian activities which the International Committee of the Red Cross or any other impartial humanitarian organization may, subject to the consent of the Parties to the conflict concerned, undertake for the protection of civilian persons and for their relief.

Article 11

The High Contracting Parties may at any time agree to entrust to an organization which offers all guarantees of impartiality and efficacy the duties incumbent on the Protecting Powers by virtue of the present Convention.

Article 13

The provisions of Part II cover the whole of the populations of the countries in conflict, without any adverse distinction based, in particular, on race, nationality, religion or political opinion, and are intended to alleviate the sufferings caused by war.

Article 14

In time of peace, the High Contracting Parties and, after the outbreak of hostilities, the Parties thereto, may establish in their own territory and, if the need arises, in occupied areas, hospital and safety zones and localities so organized as to protect from the effects of war, wounded, sick and aged persons, children under fifteen, expectant mothers and mothers of children under seven. Upon the outbreak and during the course of hostilities, the Parties concerned may conclude agreements on mutual recognition of the zones and localities they have created. They may for this purpose implement the provisions of the Draft Agreement annexed to the present Convention, with such amendments as they may consider necessary. The Protecting Powers and the International Committee of the Red Cross are invited to lend their good offices in order to facilitate the institution and recognition of these hospital and safety zones and localities.

Article 15

Any Party to the conflict may, either direct or through a neutral State or some humanitarian organization, propose to the adverse Party to establish, in the regions where fighting is taking place, neutralized zones intended to shelter from the effects of war the following persons, without distinction: a) wounded and sick combatants or non-combatants; b) civilian persons who take no part in hostilities, and who, while they reside in the zones, perform no work of a military character.

Article 16

The wounded and sick, as well as the infirm, and expectant mothers, shall be the object of particular protection and respect. As far as military considerations allow, each Party to the conflict shall facilitate the steps taken to search for the killed and wounded, to assist the shipwrecked and other persons exposed to grave danger, and to protect them against pillage and ill-treatment.

Article 17

The Parties to the conflict shall endeavour to conclude local agreements for the removal from besieged or encircled areas, of wounded, sick, infirm, and aged persons, children and maternity cases, and for the passage of ministers of all religions, medical personnel and medical equipment on their way to such areas.

Article 18

Civilian hospitals organized to give care to the wounded and sick, the infirm and maternity cases, may in no circumstances be the object of attack, but shall at all times be respected and protected by the Parties to the conflict.

Article 20

Persons regularly and solely engaged in the operation and administration of civilian hospitals, including the personnel engaged in the search for, removal and transporting of and caring for wounded and sick civilians, the infirm and maternity cases, shall be respected and protected.

Article 21

Convoys of vehicles or hospital trains on land or specially provided vessels on sea, conveying wounded and sick civilians, the infirm and maternity cases, shall be respected and protected in the same manner as the hospitals provided for in Article 18, and shall be marked, with the consent of the State, by the display of the distinctive emblem provided for 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.

Article 22

Aircraft exclusively employed for the removal of wounded and sick civilians, the infirm and maternity cases, or for the transport of medical personnel and equipment, shall not be attacked, but shall be respected while flying at heights, times and on routes specifically agreed upon between all the Parties to the conflict concerned.

Article 23

Each High Contracting Party shall allow the free passage of all consignments of medical and hospital stores and objects necessary for religious worship intended only for civilians of another High Contracting Party, even if the latter is its adversary. It shall likewise permit the free passage of all consignments of essential foodstuffs, clothing and tonics intended for children under fifteen, expectant mothers and maternity cases.

Article 24

The Parties to the conflict shall take the necessary measures to ensure that children under fifteen, who are orphaned or are separated from their families as a result of the war, are not left to their own resources, and that their maintenance, the exercise of their religion and their education are facilitated in all circumstances. Their education shall, as far as possible, be entrusted to persons of a similar cultural tradition. The Parties to the conflict shall facilitate the reception of such children in a neutral country for the duration of the conflict with the consent of the Protecting Power, if any, and under due safeguards for the observance of the principles stated in the first paragraph. They shall, furthermore, endeavour to arrange for all children under twelve to be identified by the wearing of identity discs, or by some other means.

Article 25

All persons in the territory of a Party to the conflict, or in a territory occupied by it, shall be enabled to give news of a strictly personal nature to members of their families, wherever they may be, and to receive news from them. This correspondence shall be forwarded speedily and without undue delay. If, as a result of circumstances, it becomes difficult or impossible to exchange family correspondence by the ordinary post, the Parties to the conflict concerned shall apply to a neutral intermediary, such as the Central Agency provided for in Article 140, and shall decide in consultation with it how to ensure the fulfilment of their obligations under the best possible conditions, in particular with the co-operation of the National Red Cross (Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun) Societies. If the Parties to the conflict deem it necessary to restrict family correspondence, such restrictions shall be confined to the compulsory use of standard forms containing twenty-five freely chosen words, and to the limitation of the number of these forms despatched to one each month.

Article 27

Protected persons are entitled, in all circumstances, to respect for their persons, their honour, their family rights, their religious convictions and practices, and their manners and customs. They shall at all times be humanely treated, and shall be protected especially against all acts of violence or threats thereof and against insults and public curiosity. Women shall be especially protected against any attack on their honour, in particular against rape, enforced prostitution, or any form of indecent assault. Without prejudice to the provisions relating to their state of health, age and sex, all protected persons shall be treated with the same consideration by the Party to the conflict in whose power they are, without any adverse distinction based, in particular, on race, religion or political opinion. However, the Parties to the conflict may take such measures of control and security in regard to protected persons as may be necessary as a result of the war.

Article 29

The Party to the conflict in whose hands protected persons may be, is responsible for the treatment accorded to them by its agents, irrespective of any individual responsibility which may be incurred.

Article 34

The taking of hostages is prohibited.

Article 35

All protected persons who may desire to leave the territory at the outset of, or during a conflict, shall be entitled to do so, unless their departure is contrary to the national interests of the State. The applications of such persons to leave shall be decided in accordance with regularly established procedures and the decision shall be taken as rapidly as possible. Those persons permitted to leave may provide themselves with the necessary funds for their journey and take with them a reasonable amount of their effects and articles of personal use.

Article 46

In so far as they have not been previously withdrawn, restrictive measures taken regarding protected persons shall be cancelled as soon as possible after the close of hostilities. Restrictive measures affecting their property shall be cancelled, in accordance with the law of the Detaining Power, as soon as possible after the close of hostilities.

Article 47

Protected persons who are in occupied territory shall not be deprived, in any case or in any manner whatsoever, of the benefits of the present Convention by any change introduced, as the result of the occupation of a territory, into the institutions or government of the said territory, nor by any agreement concluded between the authorities of the occupied territories and the Occupying Power, nor by any annexation by the latter of the whole or part of the occupied territory.

Article 48

Protected persons who are not nationals of the Power whose territory is occupied, may avail themselves of the right to leave the territory subject to the provisions of Article 35, and decisions thereon shall be taken according to the procedure which the Occupying Power shall establish in accordance with the said Article.

Article 49

Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive. Nevertheless, the Occupying Power may undertake total or partial evacuation of a given area if the security of the population or imperative military reasons so demand. Such evacuations may not involve the displacement of protected persons outside the bounds of the occupied territory except when for material reasons it is impossible to avoid such displacement. Persons thus evacuated shall be transferred back to their homes as soon as hostilities in the area in question have ceased. The Occupying Power undertaking such transfers or evacuations shall ensure, to the greatest practicable extent, that proper accommodation is provided to receive the protected persons, that the removals are effected in satisfactory conditions of hygiene, health, safety and nutrition, and that members of the same family are not separated. The Protecting Power shall be informed of any transfers and evacuations as soon as they have taken place. The Occupying Power shall not detain protected persons in an area particularly exposed to the dangers of war unless the security of the population or imperative military reasons so demand. The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.

Article 50

The Occupying Power shall, with the co-operation of the national and local authorities, facilitate the proper working of all institutions devoted to the care and education of children. The Occupying Power shall take all necessary steps to facilitate the identification of children and the registration of their parentage. It may not, in any case, change their personal status, nor enlist them in formations or organizations subordinate to it. Should the local institutions be inadequate for the purpose, the Occupying Power shall make arrangements for the maintenance and education, if possible by persons of their own nationality, language and religion, of children who are orphaned or separated from their parents as a result of the war and who cannot be adequately cared for by a near relative or friend. A special section of the Bureau set up in accordance with Article 136 shall be responsible for taking all necessary steps to identify children whose identity is in doubt. Particulars of their parents or other near relatives should always be recorded if available. The Occupying Power shall not hinder the application of any preferential measures in regard to food, medical care and protection against the effects of war, which may have been adopted prior to the occupation in favour of children under fifteen years, expectant mothers, and mothers of children under seven years.

Other relevant international instruments:

8. [Convention \(II\) for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea. Geneva, 12 August 1949](#)
9. [Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts \(Protocol I\)](#)
10. [Protocol additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem \(Protocol III\)](#)
11. [Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court](#)
12. [Safe Schools Declaration and related guidance](#)
13. [Paris Principles on children associated with armed forces or armed groups](#)
14. [UN Resolution 1612 \(2005\)](#)
15. [UN Resolution 1882 \(2009\)](#)
16. [UN Resolution 1998 \(2011\)](#)
17. [UN Resolution 2068 \(2012\)](#)
18. [UN Resolution 2143 \(2014\)](#)
19. [UN Resolution 2225 \(2015\)](#)
20. [UN Resolution 2427 \(2018\)](#)
21. [UN Resolution 2601 \(2021\)](#)