



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe

Brugge



Natolin



ICRC

Same Laws, New Wars:

The Enduring Relevance of International Humanitarian Law and the Importance of the Updated ICRC Commentaries

22nd Bruges Colloquium
Hybrid edition

Online and in Bruges, 21-22 October 2021

Overview of the sessions

All sessions take place in a hybrid format, online and in Bruges.



Session 1 – Keynote speeches

The Updated Commentaries and their Relevance in Practice

Les commentaires révisés et leur pertinence dans la pratique

Session 2 – 1st Panel

The Common Articles: Cross-Cutting Interpretation Challenges

Les articles communs : questions transversales d'interprétation

Session 3 – 2nd Panel

The Third Convention: Protecting Prisoners of Today's Wars

La Troisième Convention : protéger les prisonniers des guerres contemporaines

Session 4 – 3rd Panel

Fourth Convention Commentaries Part I: IHL-IHRL, between Complementarity and Interplay

Commentaires de la Quatrième Convention, partie I : DIH-DH, entre complémentarité et interaction

Session 5 – 4th Panel

Fourth Convention Commentaries Part II: Selected Topics from the Audience

Commentaires de la Quatrième Convention : sélection de thèmes proposés par les participants



Day 1 - Thursday, 21st October 2021

09:00 - 17:00 (CET)

09:00-12:00 **The Updated Commentaries and their Relevance in Practice**
Les Commentaires révisés et leur pertinence dans la pratique

09:00-09:45 Welcome and registration
Accueil et inscription

09:45-10:15 Opening Statements
Discours d'ouverture

10:40-12:00 Keynote speeches
Conférencier.ère.s d'honneur

Topics covered:

1. The ICRC project to update the Commentaries
2. Ratifying the treaties, applying the dispositions: a State perspective
3. NATO perspective on the influence of ICRC commentaries
4. The EU and IHL: supporting the effective application and relevant interpretation
5. The Commentaries and international criminal jurisdictions: at the heart of IHL interpretation



13:45-15:15 **The Common Articles: Cross-Cutting Interpretation Challenges**
Les articles communs : protéger les prisonniers des guerres contemporaines

Cross-cutting topics, such as:

1. Common Article 1 – The obligation to respect and ensure respect and its external dimension
2. Common Article 2 – Fixing the fluctuating edges of the definition of IAC and occupation
3. Common Article 3 – Geographical and personal scope of application and the obligation of non-refoulement



15:30-17:00 **The Third Convention: Protecting Prisoners of Today's Wars**
La Troisième Convention : protéger les prisonniers des guerres contemporaines

Topics covered:

1. Technological advances and new global dynamics in the detention and treatment of PoW
2. Playing by the book? And academic interpretation of the Third Convention
3. Capturing a modern military perspective on applying the Third Convention



Day 2 - Friday, 22nd October 2021

09:00 - 13:00 (CET)

09:00-10:40 Fourth Convention Commentaries, Part I: IHL-IHRL, between Complementarity and Interplay

Commentaires de la Convention IV, Partie I : DIH-DH, entre complémentarité et interaction

Topics covered:

1. IHL-IHRL: Defining the contours of States obligations
2. Occupation and IHRL: concurrence and complementarity
3. Bringing IHRL abroad during military operations



11:00-12:45 Fourth Convention Commentaries, Part II: Selected Topics

Commentaires de la Convention IV, Partie II : sélection de thèmes

Amongst other topics covered:

1. Questioning the relevance of the nationality criterion
2. Urban, protracted and hybrid: applying the 4th Convention to nowadays conflicts
3. Prevention and repression: a double edge sword to ensure compliance?
4. Military occupation in the digital era
5. Nobody fights alone: proxy wars and the protection of civilians



12:45-13:00 Concluding remarks

