Protecting health care in armed conflict: key rules from Geneva Call’s *Deed of Commitment*
Respect and protect the wounded and sick, whether civilian or military, friend or enemy, in all circumstances.

Do not attack, harm or kill them.
Collect and care for the wounded and sick without delay or discrimination.
Respect and protect health care personnel engaged in the provision of health care.

Do not attack, threat, abduct or compel health care personnel to perform acts contrary to their medical ethics.
Respect and protect health care facilities. Do not attack them.

Do not use health care facilities for any military purpose. If you do, health care facilities will lose their protection from attack.
Respect and protect ambulances and vehicles transporting medical supplies.
If the enemy uses health care facilities or transports for military purposes, give advance war-evacuation of health care personnel and do not attack before evacuation of health care personnel and patients.
Respect the protective emblems. Do not use them for purposes not related to the provision of health care.
Take measures to ensure access for the affected population to essential health care services.
Put these rules into practice.
Violations must be investigated and sanctioned in accordance with international standards.
Cooperate with Geneva Call to monitor respect of these rules.
Geneva Call

Geneva Call is a neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian organization working to improve the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The organization strengthens the respect for the law of armed conflict by armed non-State actors and supports local communities in their efforts to improve their own protection.

Note

This booklet serves as guidance to leaders and fighters of armed non-State actors on how to ensure the protection of the wounded and sick, whether civilian or military, health care personnel, facilities and transports. Their content is based on international law and good practices.

The purpose of this booklet is towards improving understanding of international humanitarian law. The booklet should not be interpreted to promote violent behaviour or the use of force.

The Deed of Commitment

Geneva Call has developed a formal document known as the Deed of Commitment that gives armed non-State actors the opportunity to undertake to respect international humanitarian norms. To date, four documents have been developed:

- The Deed of Commitment for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines and for Cooperation in Mine Action
- The Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict
- The Deed of Commitment for the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict and towards the Elimination of Gender Discrimination
- The Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Health Care in Armed Conflict

Geneva Call supports and monitors the implementation of the Deeds of Commitment by signatory armed non-State actors.

International Humanitarian Law

International Humanitarian Law is a set of rules which seek, for humanitarian reasons, to limit the effects of armed conflict. It protects persons who are not or are no longer participating in the hostilities and restricts the means and methods of warfare.

Geneva Call seeks to build armed non-State actors’ knowledge of broad International humanitarian norms, and their capacities to implement them.

Geneva Call provides training and technical advice to armed non-State actors on how to incorporate these rules into their policies, codes of conduct and other internal regulations.