
Obligations of Humanitarian Workers Under International Law

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Abstract:

This article examines the obligations of personnel tasked with providing humanitarian services under international law, focusing on the duties they must fulfill to ensure the fair and effective delivery of aid in conflict zones and humanitarian crises. The article highlights the importance of neutrality, impartiality, compliance with international laws and agreements, and the protection of civilians and beneficiaries. Additionally, it discusses the challenges these workers may face in carrying out their duties. The article also underscores the role of international law in regulating and guiding humanitarian work to protect human rights and reduce suffering during crises.

Keywords: International humanitarian law, humanitarian services, neutrality, civilian protection, Geneva Conventions, armed conflicts, humanitarian aid, legal obligations.

Introduction:

Humanitarian aid is one of the most crucial activities aimed at protecting and saving the lives of individuals affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters, and other humanitarian crises. These activities are an integral part of international humanitarian law, which governs relations between states and conflicting parties with the objective of reducing human suffering and preserving human dignity in exceptional circumstances.

International humanitarian law, particularly the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, imposes a range of obligations on personnel tasked with delivering humanitarian services. These obligations are designed to ensure the effective and equitable provision of aid. They include the commitment of personnel to neutrality, impartiality, adherence to international laws and agreements, and the protection of civilians and aid recipients. Moreover, these personnel are required to report any violations of international humanitarian law they may witness while carrying out their duties.

Understanding and implementing these obligations in practice is crucial for ensuring the continuity of humanitarian services in challenging and complex environments. Adherence to these duties also helps to build trust between humanitarian organiza-

tions and local communities, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of humanitarian response efforts in addressing the growing challenges faced by the world today.

This article, therefore, explores the various legal and practical aspects of the obligations of personnel responsible for providing humanitarian services under international law, with a focus on the challenges they encounter in striving to fulfill these duties in conflict and crisis contexts.

Section One: Obligations Pertaining to the Principles of Humanitarian Work

International humanitarian law has established a framework of binding provisions that dictate how humanitarian services should be delivered. The primary purpose of this framework is to clarify the obligations and prohibitions imposed by this body of law on anyone engaged in providing humanitarian services (Saulnier, 2005, p. 653).

This legal framework facilitates the regulation of humanitarian activities, ensuring they are conducted in accordance with specific standards designed to protect civilians, objects, and locations associated with these activities. For instance, the framework may prohibit the targeting of individuals and sites related to humanitarian services during armed conflicts. It may also delineate prohibitions, such as the use of violence against humanitarian workers or the obstruction of humanitarian assistance.

Thus, international humanitarian law plays a crucial role in guiding and regulating relief activities, ensuring the safety of civilians and humanitarian workers during armed conflicts.

First: The Nature of Humanitarian Relief Work – "Voluntary Service"

Voluntary service is a fundamental component of humanitarian relief work. This type of service involves unpaid, voluntary participation in providing humanitarian assistance to those in need during armed conflicts and natural disasters. Voluntary service is governed by the laws and legal frameworks that regulate humanitarian relief work as a whole.

Humanitarian relief volunteers contribute their time and effort without expecting financial compensation, aiming to provide assistance and support to those in need and victims of crises. These volunteers are required to adhere to the principles of neutrality, non-discrimination, and respect for human rights while carrying out their duties.

Voluntary service is highly valued under international humanitarian law, which encourages the international community to offer support and protection to volunteers and ensure safe conditions for them to perform their duties. Humanitarian organizations and governments bear the responsibility of providing support and oversight to volunteer activities to maximize the benefits of volunteer efforts in the humanitarian relief sector.

A humanitarian organization is a non-profit entity, whether foreign, regional, or international, whose primary mission is to provide humanitarian relief, support recov-

ery operations, or foster the development of communities in need. The term "humanitarian organization" is commonly used in field discussions and political activities, yet it is rarely given a precise definition within the international legal framework. In many international instruments and agreements related to disaster response, humanitarian organizations are not distinguished from other entities, assuming that they possess the same rights and obligations in delivering relief and recovery assistance during disasters (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2007).

The principle of humanity mandates that humanitarian aid consists of goods and services essential for the survival of populations and that it be provided to civilians deprived of basic necessities due to conflict. The purpose of such aid is to alleviate human suffering and to protect life, health, and human dignity (See "Activities and Military and Paramilitary Operations in Nicaragua and Against It," Note 23, para. 242; and also see Resolution No. 7, 20th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Vienna, 1965).

This principle is violated when the aim of humanitarian aid is to provide direct or indirect support to one of the parties in the conflict. However, it is not considered violated when the motivation is not primarily focused on the humanitarian aspect, provided that the aid is used appropriately.

Adherence to this humanitarian principle reflects in the manner in which aid is provided, especially in ensuring that the aid meets other established requirements. It is unlikely that non-neutral or biased aid would be considered humanitarian. Moreover, parties to the conflict are obligated to respect the humanitarian nature of relief supplies and should not attempt to alter their intended purpose or goal.

Second: The Duty of Neutrality in Providing Humanitarian Relief Services

Humanitarian principles define the content of humanitarian aid as providing essential assistance to populations in need without any sorting or discriminatory treatment among them. This distinction is crucial in differentiating humanitarian aid from other activities, particularly those of a political, religious, ideological, or military nature. The core purpose of humanitarian assistance is not served by such distinctions. Additionally, adherence to humanitarian principles plays a vital role in facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid and gaining acceptance for humanitarian work, thereby enabling humanitarian workers to perform their tasks under the best possible conditions. Consequently, the principle of non-discrimination means that humanitarian aid must be provided solely based on need, without any punitive or selective discrimination (Commission Européenne, n.d.).

The importance of the principle of non-discrimination in providing humanitarian aid underscores the necessity that personnel working in humanitarian assistance must

embody neutrality and impartiality when delivering aid to those in need. This means they should not discriminate between victims based on any criteria, whether it is gender, race, religion, color, nationality, or any other characteristics, nor should they show favoritism toward some over others (Majzoub, 2009, p. 99). Instead, they are always required to treat everyone with complete equality and should only prioritize individuals based on the level of their need for assistance, in accordance with the principle of integrity (Boujelal, 2007, p. 87).

Whether it is emergency relief or long-term reconstruction and development, humanitarian assistance is fundamentally aimed at alleviating suffering and supporting populations experiencing extreme poverty, who are sometimes at risk of death. Thus, it is expected to address needs observed during crises (Pérouse de Montclos, 2006, p 39).

The 1864 Convention stipulated in Article 6: "Wounded and sick soldiers shall be collected and cared for, irrespective of their affiliation." This reflects the principle of non-discrimination, meaning: treat your enemy as you would your friend (Glasman, 2020).

Additionally, Article 5 of the First Additional Protocol states the right of all persons deprived of their liberty due to armed conflict, whether detained or imprisoned, to receive spiritual assistance from personnel. This is reflected in the text of paragraph 1(d), which allows them to practice their religious rites and receive spiritual support from those performing spiritual duties, such as chaplains, if they request it.

This article reflects the Protocol's commitment to protecting the rights of individuals affected by armed conflict, granting them the right to express their religious practices and benefit from spiritual support. This approach demonstrates humanitarian guidance and moral respect towards individuals in these difficult circumstances, contributing to an environment that upholds human dignity and respects human rights during periods of detention or interrogation.

According to Article 61 of the First Additional Protocol, civil defense personnel are also obligated to assist victims of armed conflict. This is clearly reflected in their undertaking of the fourteen humanitarian tasks mentioned in this article.

Third: The Principle of Neutrality in Providing Humanitarian Relief Services

The principle of neutrality is a concept commonly used in international relations and armed conflicts. This principle refers to the stance of a state or political entity that abstains from participating in ongoing international conflicts between other parties or aligning with any of the warring sides, aiming to maintain a path of peaceful existence and avoid involvement in military conflicts. Neutral states are often seen as potential mediators in resolving international disputes due to their non-participation in the conflict and lack of bias towards any party. This can provide an opportunity for resolving conflicts peacefully. (Plattner, 1996, p. 185)

The principle of neutrality requires a clear distinction between combatants and non-combatants (civilians), with humanitarian aid being permissible only for civilians. Therefore, humanitarian organizations and their personnel must make every effort to distinguish between combatants and civilians. However, it remains legally permissible to protect humanitarian aid even in cases where combatants and civilians are intermingled and benefit from the assistance provided. Based on this principle, humanitarian organizations are prohibited from participating in hostilities or supporting any warring parties. They are obliged to refrain from engaging in parallel activities aimed at supporting any combatant party, thereby ensuring adherence to the principle of neutrality and maintaining the legal status of humanitarian aid (Abd Ali, 2016, p. 77). The duty of neutrality requires humanitarian service personnel of all types not to engage in any hostile actions against any party to the conflict and to avoid any actions that might cast doubt on their neutrality while providing humanitarian services (Bassiouni, 1999, p. 301). The goal of the duty of neutrality is to preserve the independence and integrity of humanitarian organizations' work and ensure that aid is provided fairly and without discrimination to those in need in conflict areas. Neutrality is a fundamental part of international humanitarian law principles and helps build trust between humanitarian organizations and the warring parties, facilitating more effective delivery of humanitarian aid in conflict and emergency areas.

The same meaning is reflected in Article 64/01 of the First Protocol regarding humanitarian activities conducted by civil defense personnel from a neutral state, which states: "... such activity shall in no case be considered as intervention in the conflict...".

The duty of neutrality also applies to military civil defense personnel, as clearly stated in Article 67, paragraph (e) of the same protocol, which specifies: "These individuals shall not participate directly in hostilities, and shall not commit or use to commit—outside their civil defense duties—acts harmful to the enemy."

The principle of neutrality is relevant only in relation to this goal, which is to enhance the achievement of it for humanitarian organizations. It involves refraining from taking a stance on political, religious, or ideological issues. Deviating from this principle may lead to its credibility being questioned by the parties to the conflict or one of them, thus creating an obstacle to the proper execution of the organization's mission. Neutrality, for a humanitarian organization, is not an end in itself but a condition for the success of humanitarian assistance (Dominicé, 2014, p. 459).

Article 70 of the previously mentioned Protocol also emphasizes the obligation of those performing relief work to maintain neutrality throughout their humanitarian activities. The relief actions they provide are not considered as intervention in the conflict, as clarified in the first paragraph of this article.

The same principle is reiterated in Article 18(2) of the Second Additional Protocol of 1977, which states: "Humanitarian and neutral relief actions, not based on any unjust discrimination, are to be provided for the civilian population with the consent of the High Contracting Party..."

The United Nations also requires international staff it deploys for specific missions to refrain from engaging in any political activities that are inconsistent with the neutrality and independence required of them as international employees (Fattalawi, 2011, p. 297).

While the Geneva Conventions permit these individuals to carry weapons, it is within the context of maintaining order and defending themselves, in addition to protecting the wounded from escalation and retaliation. It is noteworthy that the four Geneva Conventions do not grant these individuals special protection or immunity based on their status as specialized medical personnel. Instead, they are considered general caregivers for the wounded. This principle is confirmed by historical events during armed conflicts, where medical personnel have suffered physical and psychological harm while performing their duties. Such actions are inconsistent with the principle of neutrality outlined in international humanitarian law (Lounissi, 2021).

Second Section: Job-Related Duties

Humanitarian workers are bound by essential duties to ensure the effective and safe delivery of humanitarian assistance. They must maintain confidentiality to protect the privacy of beneficiaries, comply with local and international laws to adhere to humanitarian principles, and wear internationally recognized insignia to affirm their identity as humanitarian workers and ensure their safety in conflict zones. These duties are crucial to protecting both workers and beneficiaries while respecting humanitarian principles.

1. Duty of Confidentiality in Humanitarian Work

The duty of confidentiality is a fundamental principle in the execution of humanitarian work. Humanitarian organizations and teams must prioritize the protection of information and data related to beneficiaries and their activities. The duty of confidentiality safeguards the privacy and security of individuals involved in humanitarian assistance, whether they are victims of armed conflicts or humanitarian crises.

This approach is sustainable and necessary for several reasons. First and foremost, it ensures the protection of victims and those involved in the assistance by preventing the disclosure of sensitive information, thus maintaining their privacy and security. Secondly, this approach eliminates any opportunity for adversaries of humanitarian work to justify attacks on humanitarian staff, as they would not be able to claim that information was leaked to hostile parties (Maoui, 2011, p. 47).

Several agreements have highlighted this duty. Article 16(3) of the First Additional Protocol stipulates that medical personnel must not disclose information regarding the wounded and sick under their care to any party in the conflict, except in cases required by the law of the party they belong to (Protocol I Additional, art. 16(3), 1977). A similar provision is reiterated in Article 10(3) of the Second Additional Protocol of 1977 (Protocol II Additional, art. 10(3), 1977)

While it may be reasonable to expect civilian medical personnel working under civilian organizations to adhere strictly to this duty, it is logically challenging to expect absolute compliance from military medical personnel. Their military training and patriotic sentiments may compel them to prioritize their nation's victory in the conflict, even if it means disclosing the secrets of the victims under their care, particularly when these victims belong to the opposing military forces.

The positions of humanitarian organizations and associations have been widely debated regarding the acceptance or rejection of this duty of confidentiality for their personnel.

It is well-known that all humanitarian workers affiliated with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, especially those working for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), are bound by this duty. In addition to maintaining the confidentiality of the victims under their care, ICRC personnel are also committed to not disclosing any information regarding violations of international humanitarian law that they may witness during their duties, even if their testimony could be crucial in a trial. This privilege has not been granted to any other organization, whether non-governmental, like Médecins Sans Frontières, or intergovernmental, like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The exceptional treatment granted to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reflects the recognition by states of its unique humanitarian status and role globally (Rona, 2002, p. 79). However, the ICRC, in certain circumstances—after alerting the parties to the conflict about the need to cease their severe violations of international humanitarian law and observing no response to its appeal—may break its duty of confidentiality and publicly denounce these violations (International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], 2008, p. 32).

In contrast, there are other prominent humanitarian organizations that do not recognize the duty of confidentiality at all (Rona, 2002, p. 79). A prime example is Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), which believes that remaining silent about the crimes observed by its staff while providing humanitarian services would be tantamount to being complicit with evil and injustice. MSF permits its staff to immediately expose such violations as soon as they are witnessed, and the images of these crimes and the

testimonies of its staff, published on its website, are clear evidence of its non-adherence to the duty of confidentiality (Médecins Sans Frontières, 2019).

The differing stances of humanitarian organizations on the obligation to maintain confidentiality in sharing information can be illustrated by the contrasting positions of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the ICRC regarding the sharing of information about the conflict in Yugoslavia. The UNHCR encourages its staff to communicate with the media and provide them with updates on the conflict in Yugoslavia, considering this approach as a means to inform the world about the humanitarian situation in affected areas. In contrast, the ICRC expressed discontent with this approach, arguing that the sharing of precise information about the conflict should be restricted and controlled. The ICRC believes that providing detailed information could endanger individuals working in dangerous areas, and tensions between the UNHCR and the ICRC escalated during a meeting in Geneva in 1992 due to their conflicting views on information sharing (Bong, 2001, pp. 222-223).

In 1994, the United Nations issued the Administrative Instructions applicable to staff on short-term appointments (which applies to peacekeeping personnel, technical cooperation, and emergency operations). This regulation contains numerous provisions related to the conduct of such personnel, including, for instance, the prohibition of making any statements to the press or other media without prior approval from the United Nations.

In addition to the obligation of humanitarian workers to maintain confidentiality, international humanitarian law also emphasizes the need for them to respect the laws in force in any location where they are operating.

2. Duty to Respect Local Laws in Humanitarian Work

According to international humanitarian law, humanitarian workers are required to adhere to local laws in all the areas where they conduct their activities. This obligation is not contingent on their status as free individuals or as detainees of a hostile party but pertains to a steadfast commitment to comply with the rules and regulations set by local authorities or governing their humanitarian mission, whether they are working under the supervision of these parties or providing aid in their territories. This commitment is based on several articles and provisions included in various international humanitarian law treaties (Maoui, 2011, p. 56).

Among these legal agreements are the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, which contain provisions regulating the conduct of humanitarian personnel during armed conflicts. For example, Article 24 of the Third Geneva Convention stipulates that humanitarian workers must refrain from any activities that could provide enemies with in-

formation detrimental to humanitarian efforts. Additionally, the two Additional Protocols of 1977 to the Geneva Conventions expand the scope of humanitarian law to include non-international armed conflicts and enhance the protection of humanitarian workers. Article 18 of Protocol I requires humanitarian workers to avoid disclosing information that could contribute to hostile actions.

In the event that humanitarian workers fall into the hands of a party to the conflict, they are obligated to respect all the laws and regulations imposed by their captors, as long as these are consistent with the spirit of the Geneva Conventions. For instance, Article 28 of the First Geneva Convention requires that medical and religious personnel retained by a detaining power be subject to the military laws and regulations established by the detaining state.

The same obligation applies to prisoners of war who are temporary medical personnel and military civil defense staff performing humanitarian tasks in detention centers (Geneva Convention III, art. 82(1), 1949). Article 93 of the Fourth Geneva Convention also addresses the right of detained religious personnel to freely practice their religious rites among their own community, provided they respect the internal regulations set by the detaining state. This applies similarly to other religious personnel appointed by the detaining state specifically to provide spiritual assistance to detainees if no clergyman is among the detainees or if their number is insufficient.

The United Nations has mandated that its personnel consistently respect the laws of the host country where they carry out their duties, as well as its systems, traditions, and orders (Fatlaoui, 2011., p. 297). The 1994 United Nations Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel emphasizes this duty (UN Convention, art. 6(1)(a), 1994) in Article 6, titled "Respect for Laws and Regulations." Additionally, the Optional Protocol to this Convention, dated December 8, 2005, allows states to take punitive measures against personnel in cases of violations of their laws.

Moreover, Article 12(7) of the 1996 Additional Protocol II also requires United Nations personnel and staff of other humanitarian organizations to respect the laws of the host state. Furthermore, the United Nations has urged humanitarian workers through numerous recommendations and resolutions from the General Assembly and the Security Council to respect the traditions and laws of any country where they perform their humanitarian duties (UN General Assembly, 2004).

In addition to respecting the laws of the countries in which they work, humanitarian workers must also carry their distinguishing insignia so that they can be recognized by armed forces and citizens of those countries, which helps to protect them from various forms of attack.

3. Duty to Wear the Emblem When Performing Humanitarian Work

The duty to wear the emblem is essential when carrying out humanitarian work. The emblem plays a crucial role in distinguishing humanitarian personnel and relief organizations from other parties present in affected areas or regions experiencing armed conflicts.

Regarding the responsibility for the use of the emblem, it lies with the state and falls within the framework of international agreements such as the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols. The responsibility for monitoring and regulation in this context is entrusted to the states in collaboration with national societies. This responsibility requires states to take national measures, such as recognizing official emblems and identifying the national authority responsible for regulating the use of the emblem (Al-Maliki, 2020, p. 190).

The primary purpose of the emblem is to clearly contribute to the protection that international humanitarian law guarantees for medical services during armed conflicts. Other individuals or objects may also use the emblem for protective purposes during wartime, with authorization from the state, which is commonly referred to as "protective use of the emblem." (ICRC, 2010)

The state may allow relief personnel to display the Red Cross or Red Crescent emblem to protect them during armed conflict if the relief efforts are carried out under the responsibility of the International Committee of the Red Cross. (Sandoz, Swinarski, & Zimmermann, 1986, p. 855)

In this context, relief personnel do not have the right to display the Red Cross or Red Crescent emblem if the relief efforts are conducted by the Protecting Power, its substitute, or any other organization. This restriction is because the protective emblem cannot be used by any of these entities. For example, during relief operations conducted by the United Nations for the Iraqi people, the United Nations flag was raised as a symbol to represent these operations instead of using the Red Cross or Red Crescent emblem. This reflects the adherence to international laws and standards that regulate the use of humanitarian emblems and helps prevent confusion and misuse of these symbols (Al-Asbali, 2006., pp. 283-284).

4. Protection by Armed Forces During the Delivery of Humanitarian Aid

The possibility of using armed forces to protect relief convoys is a potential measure that is decided upon through coordination and agreement among the relevant parties. This measure is considered necessary to ensure the safety of humanitarian shipments and to prevent their theft, looting, or diversion to those who violate the rules of international humanitarian law.

At the same time, it is important to consider that the presence of armed forces accompanying relief convoys could impact the rights and safety of relief personnel, as long as their role and mission have been pre-approved. This approach reflects the guiding principles focused on ensuring the protection of humanitarian workers and the safety of humanitarian operations (Al-Asbali, 2006., pp. 285)..

In summary, these issues must be addressed with care and respect for international principles and regulations, and mutual dialogue and understanding can play a crucial role in determining how to organize and implement protection and security in such circumstances.

The implementation of relief operations under the Red Cross emblem, which symbolizes the neutrality of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), excludes the participation of parties to the conflict in guarding the convoy with their armed forces. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], 1998) believes that the best way to protect and ensure its humanitarian operations during armed conflicts is by adhering to its well-known principles of humanity, independence, neutrality, and impartiality. The presence of armed forces alongside its personnel is seen as a threat to the credibility of the International Movement and the ICRC. This principle highlights the limited role of the ICRC in conflicts where security conditions deteriorate to the extent that the warring parties lose full control over the situation. This can lead to tragic conditions for civilian victims due to the lack of essential supplies needed for the population's survival.

In cases where the situation escalates to the point of threatening the region, efforts to protect relief convoys rely on the measures taken by the Security Council under its responsibility to maintain peace and security according to the United Nations Charter. Through these measures, we face a new situation regarding emergency humanitarian assistance under the Security Council's oversight, as demonstrated in Iraq, Somalia, and the former Yugoslavia.

Regarding non-international armed conflicts, it was noted that the common Article 3 of the four Geneva Conventions does not directly include relief personnel. As a result of this gap and the increasing occurrence of non-international armed conflicts compared to international armed conflicts in recent times, the ICRC has made efforts to address this deficiency. These efforts began at the 21st International Conference held in 1969.

This conference issued a declaration of international humanitarian principles for assisting civilian populations in disaster situations, though it did not distinguish between international and non-international armed conflicts. This led the United Na-

tions General Assembly to call for the application of these principles, as highlighted in the Istanbul Declaration of 1970, to all situations of international and non-international armed conflicts. All parties to the conflict should make effective efforts to facilitate the application of these principles (Junod et al, p1986).

At the 1971 Conference of Experts for the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law, the importance of enhancing the protection of humanitarian workers during non-international armed conflicts, including the use of the emblem for protection, was emphasized. The conference highlighted this necessity in its recommendations (Junod et al., p1499).

A. Prior Authorization by the Contracting Party's Authority for Humanitarian Work:

Article 18, paragraph 2 of Additional Protocol II grants states the authority to license relief organizations located within the territory of the contracting party, allowing them to carry out their humanitarian missions for the benefit of affected populations. The provision explicitly affirms this right, stating: "(...) humanitarian and impartial relief operations that are not discriminatory shall be carried out for the benefit of the civilian population with the approval of the contracting party concerned ...". The term "contracting party" in this context refers to the legitimate government (Al-Asbali, 2006., pp. 225-224).

B. Approval by the Insurgent Authority Prior to Providing Humanitarian Aid:

Local humanitarian organizations or relief associations must meet the requirements for obtaining authorization to enter areas controlled by insurgent parties within a particular state. If the insurgent party effectively controls a part of the territory, these organizations need to engage with the insurgent forces to obtain permission to enter this area and provide humanitarian assistance, such as food, clothing, shelter, and other essential needs.

It is worth noting that the previous governing authority may often view these organizations as entities working against and challenging its control, potentially preventing their personnel from operating in areas under the insurgent party's control. In such cases, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) typically undertakes these tasks to address the basic needs of civilians living under difficult conditions due to a lack of necessary assistance (Al-Asbali, n.d., pp. 283).

From our study of the protection of relief personnel, it is evident that their protection during armed conflicts is still in its early stages compared to the provisions made for

medical and religious personnel. One aspect that needs to be addressed in the review of Additional Protocol I is the necessity of including a provision that clarifies the protection of relief personnel through the use of the emblem, similar to the provisions for medical services.

Additionally, these emblems are not standardized in size; for example, when used for protection purposes, the Red Cross or Red Crescent emblems are relatively large compared to their size when used merely for identification purposes.

After outlining the primary duties imposed by international humanitarian law on humanitarian service personnel during armed conflicts, it is also important to note that this law grants them certain rights that no party to the conflict can deny.

Conclusion

The role of personnel tasked with delivering humanitarian services within the framework of international law extends beyond merely providing aid; it represents an ethical and legal commitment that contributes to upholding and protecting human dignity in times of conflict and crises. These duties, including neutrality, integrity, and compliance with international laws, are fundamental to ensuring the effectiveness and continuity of humanitarian assistance. Given the increasing challenges faced by the world today, such as escalating armed conflicts, rising natural disasters, and multifaceted humanitarian crises, adhering to these duties is more crucial than ever.

The protection of human rights in conflict and crisis contexts heavily relies on the ability of humanitarian personnel to perform their duties efficiently and effectively. This capability can only be achieved through the respect and application of the principles and international laws governing humanitarian work. Commitment to neutrality and integrity ensures that aid reaches the most needy beneficiaries, regardless of any political or military considerations, thereby enhancing the credibility and legitimacy of humanitarian efforts.

Furthermore, the protection of civilians and aid recipients is considered a cornerstone in efforts to alleviate human suffering during conflicts. This requires humanitarian personnel not only to adhere to laws but also to exhibit courage and perseverance in confronting the challenges and difficulties they may encounter in the field.

Ultimately, it is essential to recognize that humanitarian work under international law requires international cooperation and effective coordination among various stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations. The commitment of all parties to these duties contributes to creating a safer and more just environment for civilians affected by crises and helps build communities that are more resilient and capable of recovery post-conflict.

Thus, enhancing the understanding and practical application of these duties not only serves immediate humanitarian goals but also contributes to establishing stronger foundations for long-term peace and stability. This encapsulates the core role that international humanitarian law plays in shaping a more humane and just world.

1. Enhancing the effectiveness of aid through compliance with international laws and agreements increases the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance and ensures its delivery to the most needy without discrimination or bias.
2. Personnel's commitment to neutrality and integrity builds trust with local communities, facilitating relief operations and reducing potential risks.
3. Adhering to international guidelines allows personnel to mitigate risks to their safety and that of aid recipients, thus improving the humanitarian work environment.
4. Humanitarian personnel play a crucial role in reporting violations, which reinforces respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, and pressures actors to adhere to legal standards.

These findings underscore the importance of humanitarian personnel's adherence to legal duties as an integral part of achieving humanitarian objectives and providing necessary support to those in extreme circumstances.

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