

The Geneva Conventions Turn Sixty

In the 60 years since the adoption of the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, armed conflict has changed significantly. Gone are the global wars that defined the first half of the 20th Century and spurred nations to accept limits on the conduct of warfare. Colonial independence struggles and proxy wars waged by ideological poles—each a staple of the latter half of the century—have also declined in frequency to a point where contests between state militaries are uncommon. Taking their place in the new millennium are regional struggles pitting national armies against armed groups, with hostilities frequently contained within a given state’s borders.

Today, the Conventions’ continued relevance is on display in the high-profile trials of two accused war criminals: Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and former Liberian president Charles Taylor. And yet, even as they endure as an affirmation of the importance of wartime protections for the vulnerable, the treaties face new challenges to their legal mandate. In one familiar example, the blurred line between criminal and combatant in the international campaign against extremist groups has stirred an intense debate regarding the Conventions’ applicability.

The American Red Cross maintains that the legal framework set forth by the four Conventions and their three Additional Protocols encompasses the complexities of modern armed conflict. Accordingly, in order for the public to properly assess today’s warfare, it is imperative that they understand the treaties within the larger body of international humanitarian law (IHL). This forms the basis of the American Red Cross’s *Exploring Humanitarian Law* (EHL) program, which offers educators and students a wealth of non-partisan, unbiased IHL resources.

The 60th Anniversary has coincided with several noteworthy efforts on the part of the American Red Cross to promote awareness of the Conventions: an online petition (see article p.2) to make mandatory the inclusion of a Geneva Conventions component in U.S. secondary school curricula; the July EHL Teacher Training...



Continued Page 3

New Website Launches

The overhauled Exploring Humanitarian Law (EHL) website, www.redcross.org/ehl was officially launched on August 12, 2009—just in time for the new school year. Thanks to a successful partnership with Spitfire Strategies and Home Front Communications, the site is both content-rich and user-friendly.

Visit the website to print out EHL toolkit materials, including the entire EHL curriculum and lesson plans. You can also find classroom resources, view training schedules and locations, hear testimonials from teachers and administrators, connect with other educators, and catch up on humanitarian law-related current events. Be sure to have your students explore the new student section to learn how to turn their passion for IHL into action!

Participants Attend EHL Institute

On July 9, the American Red Cross’s Exploring Humanitarian Law (EHL) Teacher Training Institute wrapped up in Washington, D.C. More than 30 individuals congregated at American Red Cross headquarters for the three-day seminar, which provided a thorough survey of the EHL curriculum and explored the many teaching methods available to participants. The

picture painted of their experience in various sources of feedback is as unanimous as it is overwhelmingly complimentary.

In interviews, correspondence and testimonials, all seem to agree on the program’s strengths and appeal. Many, particularly those who arrived for training unfamiliar...

Continued Page 3

August 2009

Inside this issue:

Chapter Spotlight: Chicago Area	2
Petition Outreach: Chicago Efforts	2
International Baccalaureate	2
Back to School: Teaching Tools	3
EHL & IHL Training Calendars	4

**American Red Cross
National Headquarters
International Services**
2025 E St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20006
Phone: 202-303-5279

Chapter Spotlight: Greater Chicago Area

The American Red Cross of Greater Chicago has teamed up with DePaul University, Loyola University Chicago and Northeastern Illinois University to offer exciting International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Exploring Humanitarian Law (EHL) learning opportunities to their communities' 8.6 million residents. For the *Humanity and War: A Dialogue* program, the chapter is organizing a lecture series, an IHL workshop for law students, and an EHL teacher training for educators. With Loyola, the chapter will host the International Committee of the Red Cross's riveting *Our World At War: Photojournalism Beyond the Front Lines* exhibit.

Greater Chicago's impressive outreach efforts provide some excellent ideas for chapters across the country seeking new ways to promote the IHL and EHL programs.

See articles on this page for further details on all of these events. To learn more about Greater Chicago's events contact Carrie Wall, Manager of Greater Chicago's Health and International Services, at wallc@usa.redcross.org or (312) 729-6168.

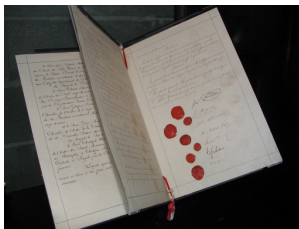
IHL Workshop & EHL Teacher Training

October promises to be a busy month for the American Red Cross of Greater Chicago.

With DePaul University's International Human Rights Law Institute, Greater Chicago has developed an in-depth *Law & War Workshop*, running October 16 to 18. The

instructors, legal professionals from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and faculty members from area law schools, will lead participants through the intensive program with a combination of lectures and hands-on exercises. It is open to full- and part-time U.S. law students who have completed at least one year of study.

A week later, on October 24, the chapter will hold an Exploring Humanitarian Law (EHL) teacher training at Northeastern Illi-



nois University for educators of youth aged 13 to 18. EHL is an international curriculum designed to educate students about IHL while instilling creative problem solving and 21st Century skills. The EHL program, developed by the ICRC and the Education Development Centre, aligns with standards set by the National Council for the Social Studies. It promotes respect for human life and dignity, ethical judgment, global citizenship, the Geneva Conventions, and the role of humanitarian organizations. The training is an exciting professional development opportunity for middle and high school educators, who can earn Continuing Education Units.

Click [here](#) to learn more about the IHL workshop.

Chicago to Get *Our World at War* Exhibit

The International Committee of the Red Cross's powerful *Our World at War* exhibit—a showcase of forty images from today's armed conflicts—is coming to Chicago. Featuring the work of renowned war photojournalists, the exhibit explores the human suffering produced by warfare and individuals' courageous adaptations to hardship. The Red Cross's humanitarian work is evident in several pictures.

Click [here](#) for a sneak peak of the exhibit. It will be on display at Loyola University Chicago from September 25 to November 20.

Lecture Series

The American Red Cross of Greater Chicago has partnered with Loyola University Chicago and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in developing the *Raymond I. Geraldson Humanitarian Lecture Series*. Each installment will highlight current humanitarian issues and emphasize the Red Cross core principles of Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, and Universality.

The series kicks off at Loyola on October 13 at 7:30 P.M. with *Mitigating Youth Violence: Seeking Peaceful Communities*. Panelists will examine similarities in the effects of violence on youth in the Chicago area and conflict zones depicted in the ICRC's *Our World at War* exhibit (see article this page). The lecture is open to the public; youth are especially encouraged to attend.



Petition Outreach Efforts

Protect the Vulnerable in War: Teach the Geneva Conventions!

The American Red Cross of Greater Chicago has been leading the drive for signatures on the American Red Cross's first ever online petition. The petition calls on school district administrators to teach the Geneva Conventions to high school students. Chicago has been instrumental in petition outreach by posting the petition on their Facebook Page and recruiting volunteers to sign.

You can help! Match Greater Chicago's efforts:

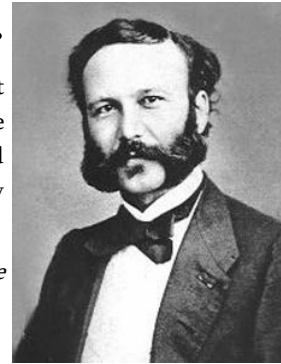
1. Feature the petition on your Cause and send an announcement to Cause members.
2. Post on your Page wall and send an update to your fans, asking them to sign.
3. Sign the petition yourself—and invite your friends to sign at <http://bit.ly/ARCPetition>.

The Geneva Conventions Turn Sixty, cont.

...Institute (p.2) at American Red Cross headquarters, in which more than 30 attendees explored the curriculum and assessed methods of incorporating it in their classroom and outreach efforts; and the launch of a revamped EHL website (p.1) featuring improved access to a wealth of resources for teachers and students.

The projects have generated renewed interest in the Conventions. They serve as only the most recent examples of the American Red Cross's commitment to that goal, with many more to come.

Click [here](#) for The Economist's take on the anniversary.



Henry Dunant, circa 1860.

The Geneva Conventions can be traced to his humanitarian efforts at the Battle of Solferino, Italy, in 1859.

IB Americas Conference a Success

More than one thousand people attended the July 9-12 International Baccalaureate (IB) Americas conference in Quebec City. The American Red Cross's *Exploring Humanitarian Law* (EHL) curriculum was featured prominently during a 75-minute presentation and at the exhibit hall. The American Red Cross teamed up with the Canadian Red Cross and two teachers—American Paul Frankmann and Canadian Angela Ripley—to demonstrate EHL's alignment with the IB philosophy. Both seek to develop 21st Century skills such as global awareness and critical thinking. "We look forward to a dialogue with the IB leadership," said Isabelle Daoust, the American Red Cross delegate to the conference. "We see many points of intersection between EHL and the Middle Years and Diploma Programs in a number of academic areas."

Are you a teacher or principal in an International Baccalaureate School? To learn how to introduce EHL into your IB school, please contact us at EHL@usa.redcross.org

Back to School: EHL Teaching Tools

Looking for new ways to get your students interested in International Humanitarian Law? Check out our latest teacher-to-teacher resource recommendations!

Discover how a child's life is affected by warfare and civil strife:

[The Power of One](#) (book and video) reveals how an empowered youth made a difference in South Africa's Apartheid regime.

[The Boy in the Striped Pajamas](#) (book and video) helps children discover the Holocaust from the point of view of a nine-year-old boy.

Engaging internet resources:

The ICRC released a new [public opinion survey](#) that emphasizes the impact of armed conflict on people around the world.

Connect students with inspiring stories and volunteer opportunities at [Do Something.org](http://DoSomething.org)

In the News:

[The Kill Company](#): Did an Army colonel's fiery rhetoric set the conditions for a massacre? A recent New Yorker article by Raffi Khatchadourian

Are you an educator? Do you have ideas for next issue's teacher-to-teacher resource recommendations? If so, please contact us at EHL@usa.redcross.org.

Participants Attend EHL Institute, cont.

...with international humanitarian law, characterized the EHL content as inherently stimulating, offering myriad opportunities to introduce students to the central themes of empathy, justice and citizenship.

Alissa Mears, a Virginia high school English teacher, noted, "EHL appeals to the students' knowledge base, but also asks them to extend beyond it and view circumstances from other peoples' perspectives." That many of the ethical and practical questions raised by EHL scenarios avoid easy answers struck educators as congruent with their efforts to develop students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. As one participant put it, "[the] curriculum is an excellent conduit for teaching essential 21st Century skills, citizenship skills, and morals that are sadly missing from our basic national teaching standards. Students are hungry for this kind of real life education and it is our responsibility to spread these life lessons."

For their part, the facilitators were also pleased with the outcome of this year's Institute. Alicia Guajardo was encouraged by the students' lively group discussions and enthusiasm for the course curriculum and teacher resources. The positive responses have generated terrific momentum as planners look ahead to future seminars.

See Page 4 for information regarding future EHL teacher training opportunities.



2009 EHL Teacher Training Calendar

In our teacher trainings and workshops, highly skilled instructors help you to integrate EHL resources into your lessons. Continuing Education Units are available for participants. Here is the current list of workshops and trainings. If there isn't a training or workshop scheduled near you, your [local Red Cross chapter](#) can work with you to set one up. Additional questions can be sent to EHL@usa.redcross.org.

Date	Location	Type	Time	Contact
Sept. 18-19	Seattle, WA	2-day training	4:00pm - 8:00pm 9:00am - 4:00pm	Elisabeth Vasquez Hein (206) 720-5299
Sept. 24	Moline, IL	Half-day workshop	4:00pm - 7:00pm	Ann Kappeler (309) 743-2166
Sept. 28	Moline, IL	Half-day workshop	1:00pm - 4:00pm	Ann Kappeler (309) 743-2166
Oct. 5, 13, 19, & 26	New Hartford, NY	4-session series	5:30pm - 8:30pm	Jay Starr (315) 733-4666
Oct. 10	Santa Cruz, CA	Half-day workshop		Phyllis Cole (831) 438-5749
Oct. 14	Washington, DC	Half-day workshop	5:00pm - 9:00pm	Norma Gamero (240) 485-3053
Oct. 17	Ashburn, VA	Half-day workshop	9:00am - 1:00pm	Norma Gamero (240) 485-3053
Oct. 17	Phoenix, AZ	1-day training	10:00am - 3:00pm	Skyler Sinsabaugh (602) 336-6660
Oct. 24	Chicago, IL	1-day training		Carrie Wall (312) 729-6168
Nov. 7	Silver Spring, MD	Half-day workshop	9:00am - 1:00pm	Norma Gamero (240) 485-3053

"EHL appeals to the students' knowledge base, but also asks them to extend beyond it and view circumstances from other peoples' perspectives."

-Alissa Mears, High School English Teacher, Virginia

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is everyone's concern. In a world where warfare and civil strife are a daily reality for millions, IHL provides a framework for the protection of civilians and combatants alike. The conduct of warfare IHL embodies is set forth in the Geneva Conventions of 1949. It is the American Red Cross's unique mandate to educate the American public regarding IHL and humanitarian principles that protect civilians, wounded combatants, and prisoners of war during armed conflict.

At the national and local level, the American Red Cross is actively involved in providing opportunities to learn more about IHL in the United States. For regular news and updates for teachers, educators and students interested in exploring International Law, please visit our web site or contact your local American Red Cross chapter.

Contact Us

The Exploring Humanitarian Law Newsletter is published bimonthly by the International Humanitarian Law and Chapter Support Unit, a section of the International Services Department at American Red Cross National Headquarters.

It is edited and distributed to Exploring Humanitarian Law Listserv subscribers, American Red Cross chapters, and educators in the field. Its goal is to provide information regarding EHL program activities, marketing efforts, continuing education efforts, and customer support.

Please send comments to:

EHL@usa.redcross.org

[www.redcross.org/ehl]

