



Joint statement

23 September 2026

I am joined today by my esteemed colleagues to address you on behalf of Brazil, China, France, Kazakhstan South Africa, and my own country Jordan.

Two years ago, together with the International Committee of the Red Cross, we launched the Global Initiative to galvanize political commitment to international humanitarian law (IHL). Today we have come together to renew our call to action. The toll of today's armed conflicts is unconscionable, and there is no time to lose.

Civilians in more than 130 armed conflicts across the world face unacceptable realities. Hospitals, schools and homes are more and more often being treated as battlefields. These patterns are not inevitable casualties of war; they are, too often, deliberate choices to disregard the rules designed to protect people caught up in war. The world must not accept such suffering and destruction.

It is possible to change course, and state leaders hold such a power. That is why, at the invitation of His Majesty King Abdullah II, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan will host the High-Level Conference to Uphold Humanity in War on 7 December 2026. Building on the work undertaken through the Global IHL Initiative, the conference will gather state leaders to reaffirm their collective commitment to IHL and translate the momentum generated into action. In this spirit and following broad consultations, a concise and inclusive political declaration will be issued by states at the conference. We invite all states to join the Initiative and all participating states to attend the conference at the highest level.

To date, 118 states from all regions of the world have joined the Global IHL Initiative. Twenty-seven of these states have co-led seven thematic workstreams, developing practical guidance on increasing respect for IHL and addressing the challenges posed by contemporary warfare. This guidance builds on a consistent theme that emerged from states throughout the process: the need to preserve and give effect to the protective purpose of IHL.

The Global IHL Initiative addresses issues relevant to contemporary armed conflicts and stakeholders worldwide, seeking to ensure the impartial, consistent and universal application of existing IHL obligations. It acknowledges that states bear the primary responsibility for upholding, implementing and applying the Geneva Conventions in all circumstances, including in situations of occupation. Gathered in New York today, we also recognize the important role played by the United Nations and the wider multilateral system in promoting respect for IHL and supporting its effective implementation.

Since their adoption in 1949, the Geneva Conventions have helped to protect the lives and dignity of millions of people. However, the suffering witnessed in today's armed conflicts around the world is a stark reminder that the most fundamental rules of these conventions are not being respected.

We call on all world leaders to unite around this shared responsibility at the High-Level Conference in Jordan. The world cannot stand idly by as the basic tenets of international humanitarian law are routinely and systematically violated.

We can put an end to the inconceivable and unconscionable suffering and destruction that characterize today's conflicts and work towards peaceful resolutions.

Together, we must uphold humanity in war.