



The Impact of the Law of Armed Conflict on General International Law

Expert roundtable

**22–23 September 2016
Exeter, United Kingdom**

Convenors:

Dr Lawrence Hill-Cawthorne (Reading) and Dr Kubo Mačák (Exeter)

Outline and Call for Papers

As one of the oldest substantive areas of international law, the law of armed conflict (LOAC) has played an important part in the development of general international law principles that now apply equally in other areas. For example, the evolution of the rules on State responsibility for the conduct of individuals can in part be traced to the development of rules attributing responsibility for violations of LOAC perpetrated by armed groups. This strong relationship between LOAC and general international law, however, has more recently come under strain as a result of more general concerns over the ‘fragmentation’ of international law, whereby substantive areas of law, including LOAC, have become divorced from general international law. It has been suggested, for example, that it is time to move away from traditional approaches to international law-making in order to ensure that LOAC remains effective at regulating contemporary conflicts. This is illustrated by claims that customary rules of LOAC, in contrast to customary international law more generally, should take account of the practice not only of States but also armed groups. In light of these conflicting perspectives, an assessment of the relationship between LOAC and general international law is both apposite and necessary.

It is on these issues that this roundtable will focus, and its goal is to facilitate in-depth discussion amongst all present. To ensure this is the case, attendees will prepare brief papers of 10-15 minutes that will initiate discussion and debate. Attendance will comprise both senior invited academics and practitioners, as well as those successfully responding to this call for papers. We therefore invite submissions on the topic of the impact of the law of armed conflict

on general international law, and more generally on the relationship between LOAC and general international law. These may explore research questions such as the following:

- How do the rules on treaty interpretation in general international law operate in the specific area of LOAC?
- Has the debate on the binding nature of treaties in LOAC for non-State armed groups resonated in other areas of international law?
- To what extent is the practice of non-State armed groups relevant to the formation of customary rules of LOAC, and is the answer the same in other areas of international law in which non-State actors participate (such as investment law)?
- How, if at all, has the law of armed conflict influenced the rules on State responsibility in international law?
- Has the growth of rights and obligations of individuals and non-State armed groups under LOAC had any impact on the development of general international law?
- How, if at all, has LOAC contributed to the 'humanization' of international law?
- Have international judicial and quasi-judicial bodies which apply LOAC in their jurisprudence had any impact on the development of general international law?
- How does the impact of LOAC on general international law compare with the impact produced by other specialised areas of international law?

Paper proposals going beyond this set of suggested questions are equally welcome, provided they fit the general theme of the roundtable.

After the roundtable and subject to strict criteria of quality and thematic cohesion, the aim is to publish selected papers, following their development in light of the discussion, in an edited, peer-reviewed collection. The publication will provide a systematic and comprehensive examination of the impact of the law of armed conflict on general international law. Several leading academic publishers have already expressed their interest in this project.

Key information

Any questions about these themes or the suitability of a possible paper may be directed by email to the roundtable convenors, Dr Lawrence Hill-Cawthorne (l.hill-cawthorne@reading.ac.uk) and Dr Kubo Mačák (k.macak@exeter.ac.uk).

Abstracts of no more than 500 words should be submitted by e-mail to loacimpact@gmail.com no later than 20th May 2016. Abstracts should be accompanied by your name, affiliation, email address and a brief note about your research interests and key relevant publications.

A draft programme will be announced as soon as possible after the abstract submission deadline, together with registration details.

We will provide all participants with accommodation and meals in Exeter for the duration of the roundtable and cover reasonable travel expenses within the UK. There will be no registration fee.