

Humanitarian Law RULEs!

Center for the Study of Humanitarian Law
Monthly Newsletter

October 2016

IHL Analysis

War Crime on the Use of Chemical Weapons Goes Unpunished: The Case of Syria

Several incidences of the use of chemical weapons by the Government forces of Syria and other actors have been widely reported by international media. The victims of those attacks are frequently the most vulnerable - women and children. In 2013, the Guardian reported that the UN confirmed that chemical weapons attack took place in Damascus, involving specially designed rockets that spread sarin nerve agent over rebel-held suburbs of the Syrian capital. Since then, the Guardian has noted that there have been more attacks involving the use of chlorine gas.

In the most recent incident, the New York Times reported that the use of chlorine gas was used in Aleppo, where more than 120 people were hurt, including 10 women and 37 children. This latest incident again calls for the international community's attention on Syria's crippling civil war where there are repeated violations of international humanitarian law because of the use of chemical weapons. Under customary international law and international humanitarian law, the use of chemical weapon is prohibited. The Geneva Conventions, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Rome Statute all prohibit the use of chemical weapons. Syria is a state party to these conventions. So far, the international community's response to the use of chemical weapons has been lackluster. There is mounting evidence that suggests both the Syrian government and the rebel groups have used prohibited weapons in warfare under international humanitarian law. Prosecuting the perpetrators would be the first step to end the atrocities and impunity in Syria.

The Center is supported by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian law (RWI), ICRC, Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) and Macquarie University's PACE Program. The Center's library is open to all students, visiting academics and university professors.

LIBRARY HOURS

October & November 2016

Mon to Fri: 8.45am – 5.30pm

Closed:

Pchum Ben Day – 1-2 October 2016

Paris Peace Agreement –

23 October 2016

UPCOMING EVENTS

ECCC lecture series – third lecture - 8
October 2016

The 4th International Conference on
Human Rights and Peace & Conflict in
Southeast Asia 2016 (SEAHRN) – 10-12
October

Research Methodology: The Process of
Knowing – 20 October 2016

Comparative Human Rights Law
Conference 2016 – 22 October 2016

IHL Moot Court Competition (School
Round) – 25 October 2016

WESTLAW TRAINING

CSHL is now offering Westlaw database training to law students at RULE. If you would like to attend a training session, please contact librarian Sarun Sous at sarun@elbbl-cshl.org to arrange a time.

