



SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
BACHELOR OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AND PHILOSOPHY
END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATION
BDP 4203: INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

DATE: 9th March 2026

TIME: 11:00 – 13:00

Instructions

1. This examination consists of **FIVE** questions.
2. Answer **Question ONE (COMPULSORY)** and any other **TWO** questions.

QUESTION ONE – CASE STUDY (30 MARKS)
(COMPULSORY)

Case Study: The Armed Conflict in Karibu State

Karibu State has been experiencing an armed conflict between its government forces and an organised armed group known as the Karibu Liberation Front. The fighting has lasted for over two years and has spread across several regions of the country. Government forces have conducted aerial bombardments in areas where the Karibu Liberation Front is believed to be operating. These areas are densely populated, and several civilian homes, schools, and medical facilities have been damaged or destroyed. The government claims that the armed group deliberately operates from within civilian populations. The Karibu Liberation Front has abducted civilians suspected of supporting the government and has attacked military convoys using improvised explosive devices placed along public roads. In some instances, civilians have been injured or killed during these attacks. Humanitarian organisations attempting to deliver food and medical supplies to affected populations have reported repeated delays and denials of access by both parties to the conflict. Government officials argue that security concerns justify these restrictions. Karibu State is a party to the Geneva Conventions but has not ratified Additional Protocol II.

- (a) Determine the nature of the armed conflict in Karibu State and explain the legal basis for the application of International Humanitarian Law. (10 Marks)
- (b) Analyse the conduct of both the government forces and the Karibu Liberation Front in light of the fundamental principles of International Humanitarian Law. (10 marks)
- (c) Discuss the legal protections available to civilians and humanitarian personnel in this conflict, and assess whether these protections appear to have been violated. (10 Marks)

QUESTION TWO

Explain the sources of International Humanitarian Law, distinguishing clearly between:

a) treaty law, and (6Marks)

b) customary international humanitarian law. (7Marks)

Illustrate your answer with relevant examples.

QUESTION THREE

Examine the concepts of war crimes and crimes against humanity under international law. In your answer, explain how individual criminal responsibility arises for such crimes. (15 Marks)

QUESTION FOUR

a) Discuss the concept of state responsibility for violations of International Humanitarian Law. (10 Marks)

(b) Assess the challenges of enforcing International Humanitarian Law against non-state armed groups in contemporary armed conflicts. (5Marks)

QUESTION FIVE

Civilians are at the centre of protection under International Humanitarian Law.

With relevant examples or case law, analyse the legal protections afforded to civilians and civilian objects during armed conflict, with particular reference to:

a) the principle of distinction (5 Marks)

b) the principle of proportionality, and (5 Marks)

c) the principle of military necessity. (5 Marks)