

MR. JEAN-MARIE HENCKAERTS

Legal Adviser, Head of Unit

Commentaries Update Unit

Legal Division

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Jean-Marie Henckaerts is a legal adviser in the ICRC Legal Division and head of the ICRC's project to update the commentaries on the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977. So far, three commentaries have been published:

2016 - [updated Commentary on the First Geneva Convention](#)

2017 - [updated Commentary on the Second Geneva Convention](#)

2020 - [updated Commentary on the Third Geneva Convention](#)

He and his team are currently updating the ICRC Commentary on the Fourth Geneva Convention, in cooperation with several ICRC colleagues and external contributors. Prior to this, he was the head of the project on customary international humanitarian law; he is a co-author of the ICRC study on the subject.

Furthermore, he was a member of the ICRC delegation to the Diplomatic Conference on a Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague, 1999) and of the Drafting Committee of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (2007). His files in the Legal Division have covered among others the protection of women, the protection of cultural property and the protection of the natural environment in armed conflict.

Before joining the ICRC, he worked as a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Brussels from 1993 to 1996 heading the University's Project on Strengthening Democracy in Societies in Transition. At the same time, he served as a legal assessment commentator for the American Bar Association's Central and East European Law Initiative (CEELI).

Prior to that, from 1991–1993, he was a research assistant at the George Washington University Law School where he received the degree of Doctor of Juridical Science (S.J.D.) in 1994. He previously received the degree of Master of Laws (LL.M.) from the University of Georgia in 1990 and then worked as an associate attorney in the law firm of Troutman Sanders in Atlanta from

1990–1991. He received the degree of Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) from the University of Brussels in 1989.

He has taught international humanitarian law at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights. He previously taught international law at Boston University Brussels and Webster University Geneva. He has regularly lectured at the International Institute of Human Rights in Strasbourg (France) and the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in Sanremo (Italy).

He is a member of the International Law Association, European Society of International Law, American Society of International Law, Academic Council of the United Nations System and the United Nations Association.

He has published nine books and numerous articles and chapters on international law, international humanitarian law and human rights law.