

**DEFENSE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL LEGAL STUDIES
Resident Course Report**

**Law of Armed Conflict and Human Rights (LCHR)
9 October – 26 October 2017; Newport, Rhode Island**

Areas of Emphasis:

International Human Rights Law (IHL)
Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC)
International Organizations
Rules of Engagement (ROE)

Key Issues:

Practical application of IHL and LOAC to military operations

International cooperation via international organizations and multinational operations, including UN Peace Ops

Participants: 36	
Military:	33
Civilian:	3
Female	
	3
AFRICOM	14
CENTCOM	3
EUCOM	10
NORTHCOM	0
PACOM	5
SOUTHCOM	4

LCHR course graduates are prepared to:

- 1) Understand International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law principles; and**
- 2) Apply these principles in a variety of operational contexts.**

Background: The objective of the Law of Armed Conflict and Human Rights (LCHR) resident course was to enhance participants’ understanding of the international legal instruments, practices and doctrine that control the use of force and the treatment of persons in various types of military operations.

The course addressed the practical applications of international human rights law (IHRL) and international law of armed conflict (LOAC) in a variety of operational situations. These include including, gender violence as a tactic of war, terrorism and human rights, child soldiers, torture, command responsibility. The course also addressed transitional justice, transparency in military justice, impunity, gender mainstreaming and UN mechanisms for protecting human rights, detention operations, NGO relations and refugee issues. The LCHR course introduced participants to international organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations that promote legal protections, such as the United Nations, the International Criminal Court and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The course discussed the role of the operational lawyer and how to develop a solid working relationship with commanders. Throughout the course, participants engaged in directed discussions that reinforced the course topics (see attached course schedule).

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The course was attended by 36 international participants from 27 countries. These participants expressed appreciation for the practical insights presented by experienced and knowledgeable instructors. They were particularly impressed with speakers from the United Nations Headquarters in New York City and the discussion of historical examples portrayed by instructional films and video clips.

DIILS conducted a number of field studies designed to introduce LCHR participants to American culture and provide some historical context for the democratic ideals reflected in the U.S. Constitution and laws. The visit to the Pequot Native American Museum provided an example of cultural diversity in the United States. The visit to Mystic Seaport focused on the maritime history of the U.S. during the 18th to 20th centuries and its impact on the American culture and economy. LCHR participants toured historic Newport, Rhode Island where they learned about New England colonial history and the development of human rights in colonial America. And during New York City trip, they took a tour of Manhattan and experienced the cultural diversity of a large American metropolis.

Course Outcomes: LCHR provided participants with practical knowledge of international law applicable to military operations. DIILS conducts an exit survey to obtain objective and subjective feedback about the course from participants.

Exit Survey Question	Class Average (10=Excellent)
To what extent did the course provide skills and knowledge you can apply in the workplace?	9.2
Would you recommend this course to your colleagues?	9.7

*Average scores of participant response to this survey are consistent with scores for previous LCHR courses.

Participant Comments:

Listed below are examples of participants' comments on the LCHR Course:

What was the highlight of the LCHR course?

- “To understand the position of the US regarding human rights and LOAC and the experience that you have as a country in the many conflicts that you have taken part around the globe.”
- The LCHR course “gave us the means to avoid abuses in the battlefield.”

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- “The opportunity to learn more about how the United Nations contributes to preserving the peace and Human Rights.”
- “Case studies served as an eye opener that the application of force is more problematic than what people behind the desk thinks it is.”
- “Videos about Law of Armed Conflict and group discussion about them were effective.”

What were the strengths of the LCHR course?

- “The opportunity to tour the United Nations Headquarters. This visit contributed to the understanding on how the international community endeavors to preserve peace and Human Rights.”
- “The discussions were really perfect and the exchange of experience very valuable.”
- “I appreciate that this course included a mix of lawyers and commanders. I learned that commanders certainly have different opinions on many things, so their experience from real situations, including from the battlefield was highly valuable to me.”

What specifically did you learn that you anticipate using in the workplace?

- “I have learned how we should protect human rights during the armed conflict and apply rules of engagement during the military operations.”
- “I am going to teach my subordinates about Law of Armed Conflict and Human Rights.”

Future Plans:

- Expand the Rules of Engagement Exercise.
- The next LCHR course is scheduled for 16 April – 3 May 2018.

For more information

See the attached course schedule

Go to WWW.DIILS.ORG or

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