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October 23, 2018

## **Fragmented Evolution of International Humanitarian Law**

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) aims at limiting violence during wars. It protects certain groups (like civilians or humanitarian personnel) by prohibiting attacks on them. It also protects combatants who have been wounded or taken as prisoners of war by granting them a minimum standard of humane treatment. Furthermore, IHL prohibits certain weapons (land mines or cluster munitions) because they are considered particularly cruel. But this life-saving body of law is incomplete – in some areas, protective legal provisions are lacking, vague, or very weak. This pertains to the law of non-international armed conflict, which is much less comprehensive than the law of international armed conflict. This also pertains to the regulation of means and methods of combat, which only weakly restricts the use of some weapons such as napalm or phosphorus, and completely fails to restrict other inhumane weapons such as uranium-depleted munitions, flechettes, or anti-vehicle mines. And finally, this pertains to the protection of the environment during armed conflict, which never gained any significance. Motivated by the question of why these particular gaps exist, the aim of the lecture is to offer explanations for the non-evolution of IHL norms. Put differently, I will explore conditions of successful evolution of law – and the obstacles preventing it.