

PROTOCOL ADDITIONAL TO THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS OF 12 AUGUST 1949,  
AND RELATING TO THE PROTECTION  
OF VICTIMS OF INTERNATIONAL ARMED CONFLICTS

(PROTOCOL I)

**ANNEX I**

**REGULATIONS CONCERNING IDENTIFICATION**

(as amended on 30 November 1993)

**Article 1 - General provisions**

1. The regulations concerning identification in this Annex implement the relevant provisions of the Geneva Conventions and the Protocol; they are intended to facilitate the identification of personnel, material, units, transports and installations protected under the Geneva Conventions and the Protocol.
2. These rules do not in and of themselves establish the right to protection. This right is governed by the relevant articles in the Conventions and the Protocol.
3. The competent authorities may, subject to the relevant provisions of the Geneva Conventions and the Protocol, at all times regulate the use, display, illumination and detectability of the distinctive emblems and signals.
4. The High Contracting Parties and in particular the Parties to the conflict are invited at all times to agree upon additional or other signals, means or systems which enhance the possibility of identification and take full advantage of technological developments in this field.

CHAPTER I - IDENTITY CARDS

**Article 2** - Identity card for permanent civilian medical and religious personnel

1. The identity card for permanent civilian medical and religious personnel referred to in Article 18, paragraph 3, of the Protocol should:
  - (a) bear the distinctive emblem and be of such size that it can be carried in the pocket;
  - (b) be as durable as practicable;
  - (c) be worded in the national or official language and, in addition and when appropriate, in the local language of the region concerned;
  - (d) mention the name, the date of birth (or, if that date is not available, the age at the time of issue) and the identity number, if any, of the holder;
  - (e) state in what capacity the holder is entitled to the protection of the Conventions and of the Protocol;
  - (f) bear the photograph of the holder as well as his signature or his thumbprint, or both;
  - (g) bear the stamp and signature of the competent authority;
  - (h) state the date of issue and date of expiry of the card;
  - (i) indicate, whenever possible, the holder's blood group, on the reverse side of the card.
  
2. The identity card shall be uniform throughout the territory of each High Contracting Party and, as far as possible, of the same type for all Parties to the conflict. The Parties to the conflict may be guided by the single-language model shown in Figure 1. At the outbreak of hostilities, they shall transmit to each other a specimen of the model they are using, if such model differs from that shown in Figure 1. The identity card shall be made out, if possible, in duplicate, one copy being kept by the issuing authority, which should maintain control of the cards which it has issued.
  
3. In no circumstances may permanent civilian medical and religious personnel be deprived of their identity cards. In the event of the loss of a card, they shall be entitled to obtain a duplicate copy.

**Article 3 - Identity card for temporary civilian medical and religious personnel**

1. The identity card for temporary civilian medical and religious personnel should, whenever possible, be similar to that provided for in Article 1<sup>2</sup> of these Regulations. The Parties to the conflict may be guided by the model shown in Figure 1.
2. When circumstances preclude the provision to temporary civilian medical and religious personnel of identity cards similar to those described in Article 2 of these Regulations, the said personnel may be provided with a certificate signed by the competent authority certifying that the person to whom it is issued is assigned to duty as temporary personnel and stating, if possible, the duration of such assignment and his right to wear the distinctive emblem. The certificate should mention the holder's name and date of birth (or if that is not available, his age at the time when the certificate was issued), his function and identity number, if any. It shall bear his signature or his thumbprint, or both.

FRONT

	(space reserved for the name of the country and authority issuing this card)	
<b>IDENTITY CARD</b>		
for <b>PERMANENT</b> civilian <b>medical</b> personnel <b>TEMPORARY</b> civilian <b>religious</b> personnel		
Name . . . . .		
Date of birth (or age) . . . . .		
Identity No. (if any) . . . . .		
The holder of this card is protected by the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and by the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I) in his capacity as . . . . .		
Date of issue . . . . . No. of card . . . . .		
Signature of issuing authority		
Date of expiry . . . . .		

REVERSE SIDE

Height . . . . .	Eyes . . . . .	Hair . . . . .
Other distinguishing marks or information: . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .		
PHOTO OF HOLDER		
Stamp	Signature of holder or thumbprint or both	

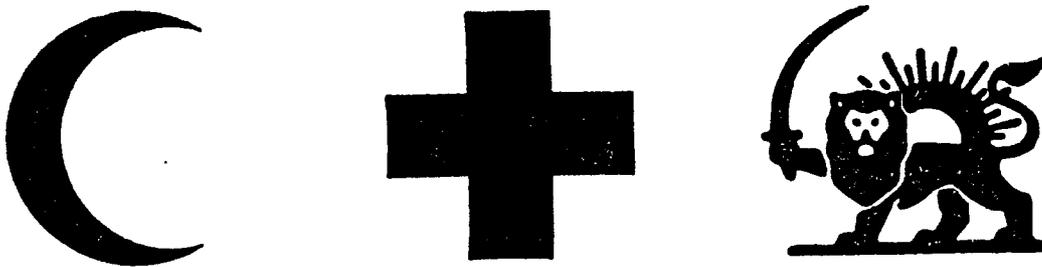
IDENTIFICATION

Figure 1: Model of identity card (format: 74 mm × 105 mm)

CHAPTER II - THE DISTINCTIVE EMBLEM

Article 4 - Shape

The distinctive emblem (red on a white ground) shall be as large as appropriate under the circumstances. For the shapes of the cross, the crescent or the lion and sun, the High Contracting Parties may be guided by the models shown in Figure 2.



*Figure 2: Distinctive emblems in red on a white ground*

Article 5 - Use

1. The distinctive emblem shall, whenever possible, be displayed on a flat surface, on flags or in any other way appropriate to the lay of the land, so that it is visible from as many directions and from as far away as possible, and in particular from the air.
2. At night or when visibility is reduced, the distinctive emblem may be lighted or illuminated.
3. The distinctive emblem may be made of materials which make it recognizable by technical means of detecting. The red part should be painted on top of black primer paint in order to facilitate its identification, in particular by infrared instruments.
4. Medical and religious personnel carrying out their duties in the battle area shall, as far as possible, wear headgear and clothing bearing the distinctive emblem.

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\*No State has used the emblem of the lion and sun since 1980.

CHAPTER III - DISTINCTIVE SIGNALS

**Article 6 - Use**

1. All distinctive signals specified in this Chapter may be used by medical units or transports.
2. These signals, at the exclusive disposal of medical units and transports, shall not be used for any other purpose, the use of the light signal being reserved (see paragraph 3 below).
3. In the absence of a special agreement between the Parties to the conflict reserving the use of flashing blue lights for the identification of medical vehicles, ships and craft, the use of such signals for other vehicles, ships and craft is not prohibited.
4. Temporary medical aircraft which cannot, either for lack of time or because of their characteristics, be marked with the distinctive emblem, may use the distinctive signals authorized in this Chapter.

**Article 7 - Light signal**

1. The light signal, consisting of a flashing blue light as defined in the Airworthiness Technical Manual of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Doc. 9051, is established for the use of medical aircraft to signal their identity. No other aircraft shall use this signal. Medical aircraft using the flashing blue light should exhibit such lights as may be necessary to make the light signal visible from as many directions as possible.
2. In accordance with the provisions of Chapter XIV, para. 4 of the International Code of Signals of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), vessels protected by the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Protocol should exhibit one or more flashing blue lights visible from any direction.
3. Medical vehicles should exhibit one or more flashing blue lights visible from as far away as possible. The High Contracting Parties and, in particular, the Parties to the conflict which use lights of other colours should give notification of this.
4. The recommended blue colour is obtained when its chromaticity is within the boundaries of the International Commission on Illumination (ICI) chromaticity diagram defined by the following equations:

green boundary	$y = 0.065 + 0,805x$
white boundary	$y = 0.400 - x$
purple boundary	$x = 0.133 + 0,600y$

The recommended flashing rate of the blue light is between sixty and one hundred flashes per minute.

**Article 8 - Radio signal**

1. The radio signal shall consist of the urgency signal and the distinctive signal as described in the Radio Regulations (RR Articles 40 and N 40) of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).
2. The radio message preceded by the urgency and distinctive signals mentioned in paragraph 1 shall be transmitted in English at appropriate intervals on a frequency or frequencies specified for this purpose in the Radio Regulations, and shall convey the following data relating to the medical transports concerned:
  - (a) call sign or other recognized means of identification;
  - (b) position;
  - (c) number and type of vehicles;
  - (d) intended route;
  - (e) estimated time en route and of departure and arrival, as appropriate;
  - (f) any other information, such as flight altitude, guarded radio frequencies, languages used and secondary surveillance radar modes and codes.
3. In order to facilitate the communications referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, as well as the communications referred to in Articles 22, 23 and 25 to 31 of the Protocol, the High Contracting Parties, the Parties to a conflict, or one of the Parties to a conflict, acting in agreement or alone, may designate, in accordance with the Table of Frequency Allocations in the Radio Regulations annexed to the International Telecommunication Convention, and publish selected national frequencies to be used by them for such communications. The International Telecommunication Union shall be notified of these frequencies in accordance with procedures approved by a World Administrative Radio Conference.

**Article 9 - Electronic identification**

1. The Secondary Surveillance Radar (SSR) system, as specified in Annex 10 to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation of 7 December 1944, as amended from time to time, may be used to identify and to follow the course of medical aircraft. The SSR mode and code to be reserved for the exclusive use of medical aircraft shall be established by the High Contracting Parties, the Parties to a conflict, or one of the Parties to a conflict, acting in agreement or alone, in accordance with procedures to be recommended by the International Civil Aviation Organization.
2. Protected medical transports may, for their identification and location, use standard aeronautical radar transponders and/or maritime search and rescue radar transponders.

It should be possible for protected medical transports to be identified by other vessels or aircraft equipped with secondary surveillance radar by means of a code transmitted by a radar transponder, e.g. in mode 3/A, fitted on the medical transports.

The code transmitted by the medical transport transponder should be assigned to that transport by the competent authorities and notified to all the Parties to the conflict.

3. It should be possible for medical transports to be identified by submarines by the appropriate underwater acoustic signals transmitted by the medical transports.

The underwater acoustic signal shall consist of the call sign (or any other recognized means of identification of medical transport) of the ship preceded by the single group YYY transmitted in morse on an appropriate acoustic frequency, e.g. 5kHz.

Parties to a conflict wishing to use the underwater acoustic identification signal described above shall inform the Parties concerned of the signal as soon as possible, and shall, when notifying the use of their hospital ships, confirm the frequency to be employed.

4. Parties to a conflict may, by special agreement between them, establish for their use a similar electronic system for the identification of medical vehicles, and medical ships and craft.

## CHAPTER IV - COMMUNICATIONS

### **Article 10 - Radiocommunications**

1. The urgency signal and the distinctive signal provided for in Article 8 may precede appropriate radio communications by medical units and transports in the application of the procedures carried out under Articles 22, 23 and 25 to 31 of the Protocol.
2. The medical transports referred to in Articles 40 (Section II, No. 3209) and N 40 (Section III, No. 3214) of the ITU Radio Regulations may also transmit their communications by satellite systems, in accordance with the provisions of Articles 37, N 37 and 59 of the ITU Radio Regulations for the Mobile-Satellite Services.

### **Article 11 - Use of international codes**

Medical units and transports may also use the codes and signals laid down by the International Telecommunication Union, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization. These codes and signals shall be used in accordance with the standards, practices and procedures established by these Organizations.

### **Article 12 - Other means of communication**

When two-way radiocommunication is not possible, the signals provided for in the International Code of Signals adopted by the International Maritime Organization or in the appropriate Annex to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation of 7 December 1944, as amended from time to time, may be used.

### **Article 13 - Flight plans**

The agreements and notifications relating to flight plans provided for in Article 29 of the Protocol shall as far as possible be formulated in accordance with procedures laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organization.

**Article 14** - Signals and procedures for the interception of medical aircraft

If an intercepting aircraft is used to verify the identity of a medical aircraft in flight or to require it to land in accordance with Articles 30 and 31 of the Protocol, the standard visual and radio interception procedures prescribed by Annex 2 to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation of 7 December 1944, as amended from time to time, should be used by the intercepting and the medical aircraft.

CHAPTER V - CIVIL DEFENCE

**Article 15** - Identity card

1. The identity card of the civil defence personnel provided for in Article 66, paragraph 3, of the Protocol is governed by the relevant provisions of Article 2 of these Regulations.
2. The identity card for civil defence personnel may follow the model shown in Figure 3.
3. If civil defence personnel are permitted to carry light individual weapons, an entry to that effect should be made on the card mentioned.

**FRONT**

	(space reserved for the name of the country and authority issuing this card)	
<b>IDENTITY CARD</b> for civil defence personnel		
Name . . . . .		
Date of birth (or age) . . . . .		
Identity No. (if any) . . . . .		
The holder of this card is protected by the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and by the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I) in his capacity as . . . . .		
Date of issue . . . . .      No. of card . . . . .		
Signature of issuing authority		
Date of expiry . . . . .		

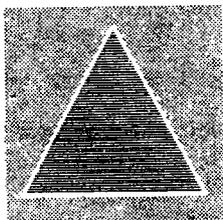
**REVERSE SIDE**

Height . . . . .	Eyes . . . . .	Hair . . . . .
Other distinguishing marks or information: . . . . . . . . . .		
Weapons . . . . .		
PHOTO OF HOLDER		
Stamp	Signature of holder or thumbprint or both	

*Figure 3: Model of identity card for civil defence personnel  
(format: 74 mm × 105 mm)*

Article 16 - International distinctive sign

1. The international distinctive sign of civil defence provided for in Article 66, paragraph 4, of the Protocol is an equilateral blue triangle on an orange ground. A model is shown in Figure 4:



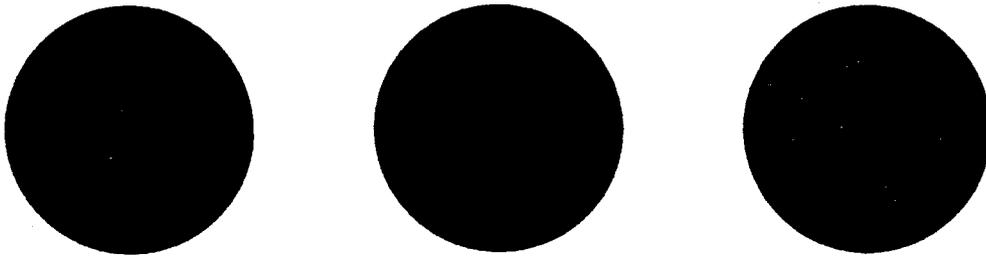
*Figure 4: Blue triangle on an orange ground*

2. It is recommended that:
  - (a) if the blue triangle is on a flag or armband or tabard, the ground to the triangle be the orange flag, armband or tabard;
  - (b) one of the angles of the triangle be pointed vertically upwards;
  - (c) no angle of the triangle touch the edge of the orange ground.
3. The international distinctive sign shall be as large as appropriate under the circumstances. The distinctive sign shall, whenever possible, be displayed on flat surfaces or on flags visible from as many directions and from as far away as possible. Subject to the instructions of the competent authority, civil defence personnel shall, as far as possible, wear headgear and clothing bearing the international distinctive sign. At night or when visibility is reduced, the sign may be lighted or illuminated; it may also be made of materials rendering it recognizable by technical means of detection.

CHAPTER VI - WORKS AND INSTALLATIONS CONTAINING DANGEROUS FORCES

**Article 17** - International special sign

1. The international special sign for works and installations containing dangerous forces, as provided for in Article 56, paragraph 7, of the Protocol, shall be a group of three bright orange circles of equal size, placed on the same axis, the distance between each circle being one radius, in accordance with Figure 5 illustrated below.
2. The sign shall be as large as appropriate under the circumstances. When displayed over an extended surface it may be repeated as often as appropriate under the circumstances. It shall, whenever possible, be displayed on flat surfaces or on flags so as to be visible from as many directions and from as far away as possible.
3. On a flag, the distance between the outer limits of the sign and the adjacent sides of the flag shall be one radius of a circle. The flag shall be rectangular and shall have a white ground.
4. At night or when visibility is reduced, the sign may be lighted or illuminated. It may also be made of materials rendering it recognizable by technical means of detection.



*Figure 5: International special sign for works and installations containing dangerous forces*