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CORRESPONDENTS' REPORTS

MALAWI<sup>1</sup>

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- Permanent Mission of the Republic of Malawi to the United Nations, ‘Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of Armed Conflicts (Agenda Item 82)’ (18 October 2010)  
<<http://www.un.int/wcm/webdav/site/malawi/shared/documents/Additional%20Protocols.pdf>>

On 18 October 2010, Malawi presented a statement on the status of the *Geneva Conventions* and *Additional Protocols* to the 6<sup>th</sup> Committee of the UN General Assembly. The statement said that Malawi continues to have keen interest in this agenda item because it considers IHL to be of great significance in relations of belligerent parties and the protection of protected persons, including civilians in armed conflicts, who unfortunately include women and children, boys and girls. The 1949 *Geneva Conventions* and their *Additional Protocols* of 1977 are part and parcel of the Laws of Malawi. The statement added that the *Additional Protocols* are of great importance as they effectively fill the lacuna left by the 1949 *Geneva Conventions*.

Malawi takes seriously the obligation to disseminate the provisions of the *Geneva Conventions* to the military and civilians alike in peace time. For this reason, Malawi has integrated the whole corpus of international humanitarian law into the curriculum and training of its military personnel. The government of the Republic of Malawi also took a deliberate step by establishing the National Authority on IHL, the primary responsibility of which is to coordinate the dissemination of IHL and its implementation at the national level.

The National IHL Committee is composed of stakeholders from the Malawi Defence Force, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, academia, the Malawi Red Cross, among other important institutions. Dissemination and integration is one thing and implementation and compliance is another. This is why Malawi is keen to promote the implementation and compliance of the 1949 *Geneva Conventions* and their *Additional Protocols* by educating the military personnel in the fundamental tenets of the *Geneva Conventions* and their *Additional Protocols* and also on the international law on armed conflicts as well as sanctions against war crimes and crimes against humanity. IHL is an examinable subject in the Malawi Defence Force and its study and understanding are strict requirements for the promotion of officers. More importantly, exercises and refresher courses for the military as well as civilians are conducted on a regular basis within the framework of continuous training and seminars. Furthermore, compliance with IHL within the military is promoted by military legal advisers.

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