



## Law demands humane treatment of prisoners of war

The Geneva Convention pertaining to prisoners of war was adopted in 1949. Key provisions include:

### Article 3

Persons taking no active part in the hostilities...shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction founded on race, colour, religion or faith, sex, birth or wealth, or any other similar criteria.

To this end the following acts are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever....

**(a)** Violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture;

**(b)** Taking of hostages;

**(c)** Outrages upon personal dignity, in particular, humiliating and degrading treatment;

**(d)** The passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples....

### Article 13

Prisoners of war must at all times be humanely treated....

Likewise, prisoners of war must at all times be protected, particularly against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity.

Measures of reprisal against prisoners of war are prohibited.

### Article 14

Prisoners of war are entitled in all circumstances to respect for their persons and their honor. Women shall be treated with all the regard due to their sex and shall in all cases benefit by treatment as favorable as that granted to men.

### Article 15

The Power detaining prisoners of war shall be bound to provide free of charge for their maintenance and for the medical attention required by their state of health.

### Article 17

Every prisoner of war, when questioned on the subject, is bound to give only his surname, first names and rank, date of birth, and army, regimental, personal or serial number, or failing this, equivalent information....

No physical or mental torture, nor any other form of coercion, may be inflicted on prisoners of war to secure from them information of any kind whatever. Prisoners of war who refuse to answer may not be threatened, insulted, or exposed to any unpleasant or disadvantageous treatment of any kind.

### Article 25

Prisoners of war shall be quartered under conditions as favorable as those for the forces of the Detaining Power who are billeted in the same area. The said conditions shall make allowance for the habits and customs of the prisoners and shall in no case be prejudicial to their health.