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Bahrain Forum For Human Rights

CIVILIAN OBJECTS UNDER FIRE

Documentation of Attacks on the Civilian Population
and Infrastructure, and Violations of
International Humanitarian Law,
During the U.S.–Israeli War on Iran

2026



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Introduction

1. Background and General Context of the Armed Conflict

On 28 February 2026, the United States and the Israeli occupation authorities launched a large-scale military campaign against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Although official statements claimed that the attacks were directed at military facilities, documented evidence indicates that a significant number of air and missile strikes hit entirely civilian locations, including schools, sports facilities, hospitals, relief centres, water and energy infrastructure, industrial sites, and cultural institutions. Civilians—particularly women and children—were the most severely affected by these attacks. Repeated attacks left hundreds of people dead, injured, or displaced from their homes. This conflict constitutes the most prolonged external military assault on Iranian territory in decades and raises urgent legal and humanitarian concerns regarding compliance with international humanitarian law.

2. Significance and Objectives of the Report

This report seeks to provide a comprehensive and well-documented analysis of the violations committed by United States and Israeli forces against civilians and critical infrastructure in Iran, viewed from both legal and humanitarian perspectives. It draws on testimony and statements from Iranian civil-society organisations, medical professionals, engineers, academics, athletes, advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities, and defenders of cultural heritage. These sources are used to illustrate the scale of the harm inflicted on the civilian population and on sectors essential to everyday life. The report assesses the documented incidents within the framework of international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions, Additional Protocol I, and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Particular attention is given to the international legal responsibility of the United States and Israel for the acts described.

3. Methodology

The information presented in this report was gathered from official statements issued by Iranian government bodies, including the Ministry of Health and the Social Welfare Organisation, as well as from civil-society organisations and

representatives of various professional sectors. These materials were supplemented by photographic evidence and independent media reports. The report documents attacks that occurred between 28 February and 16 March 2026, recording the locations targeted, the number of people killed or injured, and the types of facilities damaged. Each documented incident was assessed in relation to the relevant provisions of international law. The research also drew on legal materials published by the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and other authoritative institutions, with references provided.

4. Sources of Information and Data

The report relies on the following sources:

- Statements and investigations issued by a coalition of Iranian non-governmental organisations, engineering associations, medical bodies, human rights activists, advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities, academics, and professionals working in the water and energy sectors.
- Official reports from the Iranian Ministry of Health, which stated that 152 healthcare facilities had been damaged, six hospitals had been evacuated, 32 ambulances had been destroyed, and 16 healthcare workers had been killed.
- Independent media reports and testimonies provided by victims' families and eyewitnesses.
- International humanitarian law instruments: Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, which establishes the principle of distinction between civilians and combatants, prohibits attacks against civilians,[1][2] affirms the protection of civilian objects[3] and cultural sites,[4] and prohibits the starvation of civilians or the destruction of resources indispensable to their survival.[5] Reference is also made to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which criminalises intentional attacks against civilians and civilian objects,[6] as well as attacks against buildings dedicated to religion, education and culture.[7]
- International human rights treaties: The Convention on the Rights of the Child, which guarantees children's rights to health[8] and education;[9] the

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which requires states to take all necessary measures to protect persons with disabilities in situations of armed conflict;^[10] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which recognises the right to health;^[11] and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognises everyone's right to an adequate standard of living for health and well-being.^[12]

5. Scope and Limitations of the Report

The report covers the period from 28 February to mid-March 2026 and examines attacks documented during that timeframe. Its geographical scope is limited to Iranian territory and does not address military operations conducted outside Iran. Despite efforts to be comprehensive, some attacks may not yet have been documented because of the continuing conflict and difficulties in accessing certain areas. Nevertheless, the report's drafting team sought to include all available data without duplication.

Chapter One — The International Legal Framework for the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict

1.1 Principles of International Humanitarian Law

Principle of distinction. Additional Protocol I of 1977 to the Geneva Conventions requires parties to an armed conflict to distinguish at all times between civilians and combatants, and between civilian objects and military objectives. Military operations must be directed solely against military objectives.[1] This principle is the cornerstone of civilian protection.

Principles of proportionality and precaution. International humanitarian law prohibits attacks expected to cause incidental civilian deaths, injuries, or damage that would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated. Parties to a conflict must also take all feasible precautions to avoid, or at least minimize, harm to civilians.

Prohibition of attacks against civilians. Additional Protocol I provides that neither the civilian population nor individual civilians may be made the object of attack. It also prohibits acts or threats of violence whose primary purpose is to spread terror among the civilian population.[2] Indiscriminate and deliberate attacks against civilians are likewise prohibited. [13]

1.2 Protection of the Civilian Population under the Geneva Conventions

The Fourth Geneva Convention and Additional Protocol I. These instruments protect civilians and other protected persons and prohibit attacks against hospitals and medical facilities. Article 52 of Additional Protocol I provides that civilian objects must not be made the object of attack. In cases of doubt, objects ordinarily used for civilian purposes—such as schools, homes, and places of worship—must be presumed not to be used for military action. [3]

Protection of cultural heritage. Article 53 of Additional Protocol I prohibits hostile acts directed against historic monuments, works of art, and places of worship that constitute the cultural or spiritual heritage of peoples [4]. The 1954 Hague

Convention supplements this protection by requiring parties to refrain from using cultural property for military purposes.

Protection of objects indispensable to civilian survival. Article 54 of Additional Protocol I prohibits the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare. It also prohibits attacks against, destruction of, or rendering useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, including food supplies and water infrastructure [5]. A United Nations Security Council report on the protection of critical infrastructure reinforces this prohibition, noting that Article 54 prohibits rendering such objects useless, irrespective of the motive [14].

1.3 Criminalization of Attacks against Civilians under International Criminal Law

The 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court provides the principal legal framework for individual criminal responsibility for international crimes. The Statute criminalizes intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such, or against individual civilians who are not directly participating in hostilities [6]. It also criminalizes intentionally directing attacks against buildings dedicated to religion, education, art, science, or charitable purposes, as well as historic monuments, provided that such buildings and sites are not military objectives [7].

1.4 Special Protection for Vulnerable Groups

Children. The Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes every child's right to the highest attainable standard of health and requires states to ensure that no child is deprived of access to healthcare services [8]. Article 28 also recognizes the right of the child to free and compulsory primary education and encourages states to make secondary education available and accessible [9].

Women. International legal instruments emphasize the need to provide special protection to pregnant women, mothers, and nursing women. They also prohibit rape and other forms of sexual violence.

The wounded and sick. The Geneva Conventions protect wounded and sick persons, as well as medical personnel, and affirm the protected status of hospitals and medical facilities.

Persons with disabilities. Article 11 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requires states to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies, and natural disasters [10].

1.5 Protection of Civilian Objects

Civilian objects include schools and educational institutions, hospitals and medical facilities, critical infrastructure such as water and electricity networks, and cultural property. International humanitarian law protects these objects from attack. It also prohibits their use for military purposes in circumstances that would expose civilians or civilian property to danger. United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/292 of 2010 recognizes the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right essential to the full enjoyment of life and all other human rights [15]. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2573 of 2021 condemns attacks against civilian objects and critical infrastructure and emphasizes the responsibility of states to protect civilian populations [16].

Chapter Two — Attacks on Children and the Education System

2.1 Attack on Shajareh Tayyebbeh Girls' Primary School in Minab

On the morning of 28 February 2026, missiles launched by the US–Israeli coalition struck Shajareh Tayyebbeh Girls' Primary School in Minab, Hormozgan Province. The attack took place while the classrooms were crowded with pupils and teachers. Witnesses reported that the school was subjected to a double strike: the school buildings were bombed first, followed shortly afterwards by a second strike targeting rescue workers and civilians who had rushed to assist the victims. The incident is a clear example of the pattern of double-tap attacks.

The attack killed 168 children and 14 teachers, left three children missing, and injured 110 others. The classrooms were completely destroyed, and neighbouring homes were damaged. The bodies of the children were taken to hospitals as the community reeled in shock, while local residents were left without a school for their children.

2.2 Casualties and Human Losses

The attack on the Minab school killed 168 children between the ages of six and thirteen, as well as 14 female teachers. More than 110 schoolgirls sustained serious injuries, and some underwent limb amputations. Three children remain missing, and their fate is still unknown. Volunteer doctors documented cases of amputations, traumatic brain injuries, and disfigurement caused by shrapnel and burns. In terms of scale, the massacre resulted in a higher casualty toll than any other single attack on a school in Iran's modern history.

2.3 The Second Strike During Rescue Operations

The second strike targeted civilians and ambulance crews attempting to rescue the wounded, killing several paramedics and bystanders. This pattern of double-tap strikes, which was subsequently repeated in other attacks in Tehran, indicates an intention to maximise casualties and obstruct relief operations. Such conduct constitutes a flagrant violation of the attackers' obligations under international

humanitarian law and amounts to a war crime under the Rome Statute, as it involves directing an attack against humanitarian relief personnel.[6]

2.4 Attacks on Schools and Educational Institutions Across Iran

The attacks were not confined to Minab. Civil society reports documented the bombing of 65 schools and educational centres in Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz, Yazd, Tabriz, Qom, and several villages. The strikes destroyed or severely damaged classrooms, laboratories, and libraries. A number of universities and other higher-education institutions were also hit. Fifteen university students were killed in attacks on university campuses, while dozens of others were injured.

The destruction of educational facilities brought education to a complete halt in the affected areas and deprived thousands of children and students of the opportunity to continue their studies. The displacement of families also forced many children out of the education system.

2.5 Humanitarian and Social Impact of the Attacks on Education

These attacks deprived children of their right to safe and adequate education, as guaranteed by Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.[9]

They also caused severe psychological trauma, leaving surviving students in a state of constant fear and struggling with sleep disorders, nightmares and difficulty concentrating. Given the limited educational infrastructure in rural areas, rebuilding the schools may take months or even years, placing an entire generation at risk of illiteracy and depriving children of opportunities for learning and development.

2.6 Legal Characterisation of the Attacks on Schools and Children

Targeting schools and children constitutes a clear violation of the principle of distinction, which requires parties to an armed conflict to direct their attacks exclusively against military objectives.[1] It also violates the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which requires states to give paramount consideration to the best interests of the child and to guarantee children's rights to education and health.[8][9]

The attack encompasses several of the six grave violations against children identified in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005): the killing and maiming of children, attacks on schools, denial of humanitarian access, the recruitment and use of children—which is not at issue in this case—sexual violence, and abduction.

Accordingly, the attack constitutes a war crime under Article 8 of the Rome Statute. It should be investigated, and those responsible for planning and carrying it out should be held criminally accountable.

Chapter Three — Attacks on the Health System and Medical Facilities

3.1 Pattern of Attacks on Hospitals and Medical Facilities

Since the outbreak of the war, health facilities across Iran have been subjected to systematic attacks. According to the Iranian Ministry of Health, 152 health centres sustained varying degrees of damage, nine hospitals were rendered completely inoperable, and six others were evacuated because of the risk of bombardment. 11 Red Crescent bases and 32 ambulances were also bombed, while 16 doctors, nurses and paramedics were killed in the line of duty. The attacks affected major hospitals in Tehran, Hamadan, Khuzestan, Kermanshah and Qom, and extended to medical centres in rural areas.

3.2 Attack on Gandhi Hospital in Tehran

On 1 March 2026, Gandhi Hospital in Tehran was struck in an air attack that caused extensive damage to its neonatal care units and gene bank. Hospital walls collapsed, windows shattered, and glass and shrapnel were scattered throughout the treatment rooms, killing several premature infants and injuring others.

The embryo storage facility, which contained tens of thousands of frozen embryos belonging to couples experiencing infertility, was also destroyed, shattering their hopes of having children. The attack contravenes Article 54 of Additional Protocol I, which prohibits the destruction of objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population.[5]

3.3 Destruction of the Gene Bank and Embryo Storage Facility

The bombing of Gandhi Hospital caused an explosion in the storage room containing approximately 50,000 frozen embryos. The cooling systems failed and the electricity supply was cut off, resulting in irreversible damage to, and the permanent loss of, the embryos. This deprived thousands of families of the opportunity to have children and constitutes a violation of the rights to found a family and to private life. International law also requires the protection of medical

and scientific facilities and prohibits attacks against them. The attack therefore constitutes a war crime under the Rome Statute.

3.4 Attacks on Children's Hospitals and Patients with Chronic Illnesses

Abuzar Children's Hospital in Ahvaz—which houses a ward for patients with thalassaemia under the supervision of the Iranian Thalassaemia Society—was directly bombed on 1 March 2026. The attack destroyed blood-transfusion units, disabled cooling equipment and deprived children with thalassaemia of the regular blood transfusions on which their lives depend.

In other provinces, cancer-care centres were bombed, while medicines for chronic illnesses were lost following the destruction of storage facilities in the Bu Ali Industrial Zone in Hamadan. Warehouses containing infant formula and medicines used to treat multiple sclerosis were also set on fire.

Factories producing maize flour and starch in Naqadeh were also bombed, killing workers, injuring others and destroying essential food supplies. These attacks caused acute shortages of medicines and food, triggering a series of humanitarian crises.

3.5 Casualties Among Patients and Medical Personnel

The attacks killed patients receiving treatment in hospitals, including newborn infants. Mothers also died during childbirth because of power cuts and the unavailability of intensive care.

Sixteen members of medical staff—including doctors, nurses and paramedics—were killed, while dozens of others were injured as they attempted to treat the wounded. This created a severe staffing crisis within the health sector.

International law protects not only hospitals but also doctors, nurses and other medical personnel, and regards attacks against them as war crimes.[2]

3.6 Wider Social Impact of the Destruction of the Health System

The targeting of hospitals caused health services to collapse in the affected areas, increased mortality among patients with chronic illnesses and those requiring

emergency care, and prolonged emergency response times because of the destruction of ambulances.

Double-tap strikes also killed paramedics and prevented medical supplies from reaching those in need. This represents a dangerous escalation in the pattern of attacks, hampers humanitarian rescue efforts and constitutes a clear violation of international law.

The destruction of hospitals is incompatible with the right to health enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [11] and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[12]

3.7 Legal Framework for the Protection of Medical Facilities

International humanitarian law prohibits attacks against hospitals and medical facilities and protects medical personnel at all times. Intentionally directing attacks against hospitals, or using weapons that cause unnecessary suffering, constitutes a war crime.

Article 8 of the Rome Statute provides that intentionally directing attacks against hospitals, medical centres or their personnel constitutes a war crime,[6] while Article 54 of Additional Protocol I requires the protection of objects indispensable to survival.[5]

Chapter Four — Attacks on Women, Children and the Civilian Population

4.1 Women and Children as the Groups Most Affected by the Conflict

Women and children constituted the largest proportion of the war's victims. According to reports from medical personnel, 206 women and children had been killed by 12 March 2026. The youngest person killed was an eight-month-old girl, while the youngest person injured was a four-month-old girl.

An unspecified number of women and children were injured, while others were reported missing. The bombardment also destroyed a large number of residential homes and forced families to flee.

4.2 Patterns of Violence Affecting Civilians in Residential Areas

The attacks on residential areas revealed a recurring pattern of indiscriminate strikes that failed to distinguish between civilians and combatants. These included the bombing of crowded streets, such as Nejatollahi Street in Tehran, and attacks on markets, petrol stations and homes.

Double-tap strikes were also carried out at numerous locations, killing paramedics and civilians who had arrived to assist the victims. Debris blocked access to some neighbourhoods, while families remained trapped beneath the rubble for hours.

4.3 Long-Term Humanitarian and Social Consequences

These attacks tore apart the social fabric, leaving some children orphaned and others having lost one parent. Surviving women continue to endure the trauma of losing family members while bearing the responsibility of caring for children amid displacement and poverty.

Children also face the risks of malnutrition, disruption to their education and inadequate access to health services. Studies indicate that the psychological trauma caused by war can have lasting effects on the mental health of individuals and society as a whole.

4.4 Psychological Impact of the War on Society

Some survivors suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression. Children often avoid attending school for fear of further attacks.

Psychosocial support can help mitigate these effects, but the destruction of hospitals and the shortage of personnel pose major obstacles to the provision of such support.

4.5 Legal Characterisation of the Attacks on Civilians

The targeting of civilians constitutes a flagrant violation of Article 51 of Additional Protocol I, which prohibits attacks against the civilian population and acts intended to spread terror among civilians.[2]

The killing and maiming of women and children also constitute violations of the rights guaranteed to them under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[12] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[11] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.[8] Those responsible for these crimes must be held accountable in accordance with the Rome Statute.

Chapter Five — Persons with Disabilities in Armed Conflicts

5.1 Groups Most at Risk in Wartime

Persons with disabilities face heightened risks during armed conflicts because of their reliance on assistive devices and rehabilitation services, as well as the difficulties involved in evacuating them rapidly during bombardment. Homes designed to accommodate their specific needs are often destroyed, while access routes to shelters may be blocked.

5.2 Difficulties Faced by Persons with Disabilities During Bombardment and Evacuation

The Iranian Social Welfare Organisation reported that 956 housing units owned by persons with disabilities were completely destroyed, while 915 others sustained damage ranging from 5 to 50 per cent. Two persons with disabilities were killed in the bombardment, and others were injured. Many were unable to reach shelters because suitable ramps or lifts were unavailable. More than 400 people also lost their wheelchairs or hearing aids, leaving them unable to move independently or communicate effectively.

5.3 Loss of Assistive Devices and Rehabilitation Services

As a result of the destruction of homes and rehabilitation centres, many persons with disabilities lost orthopaedic devices, wheelchairs and other equipment essential to their daily lives. Eight rehabilitation and physiotherapy centres were also bombed, while 35 others were partially damaged. This deprived persons with disabilities of regular healthcare and rehabilitation services and contributed to an increase in permanent disabilities among those newly injured.

5.4 Destruction of Rehabilitation Centres and Support Services

Care and rehabilitation centres overseen by the Ministry of Social Welfare sustained extensive damage. Their destruction brought vocational training programmes and psychological support services for persons with disabilities to a halt and increased their dependence on their families, many of whom had themselves been displaced or otherwise affected.

5.5 Barriers to Accessing Shelters and Healthcare

Shelters in many cities lack the accessibility features required by persons with disabilities. During emergencies, information was not made available in sign language or Braille, making communication more difficult for persons with hearing or visual impairments. As a result, some were killed or injured while attempting to find shelter.

This situation violates Article 11 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which requires states to ensure the protection of persons with disabilities in situations of armed conflict.[10]

5.6 International Legal Framework for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities

Article 11 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requires states to take “all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict”.[10]

International humanitarian law also protects persons with disabilities as civilians and prohibits discrimination against them. The Rome Statute affirms that intentionally directing attacks against civilians and other persons not taking part in hostilities, including persons with disabilities, constitutes a war crime.[6]

Chapter Six — Attacks on Critical Infrastructure

6.1 The Concept of Critical Infrastructure under International Humanitarian Law

Critical infrastructure encompasses all facilities on which the population depends for survival and daily life, including water, energy, food, transport and communications networks, as well as hospitals and relief centres.

Attacks on such facilities are prohibited under Article 54 of Additional Protocol I, which prohibits the destruction of ‘objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population’.[5] This prohibition is reinforced by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2573 (2021), which condemns attacks against civilian objects and critical infrastructure.[16]

6.2 Attacks on Energy and Electricity Networks

On 7 March 2026, the US–Israeli coalition launched repeated attacks on oil depots in Tehran and Karaj. Missiles struck the oil depot in Fardis, fuel tanks in Shahr-e Rey, and storage facilities in Shahr-e Rey, south of Tehran. The attacks caused massive fires and released dense clouds of smoke. Six people were killed and 21 others were injured at the Fardis depot.

Reports indicate that the attackers planned the strikes to coincide with forecast rainfall, with the intention of creating acid rain that would harm the whole population of Tehran. This constitutes an example of “ecocide”. These acts constitute a violation of Articles 35(3) and 55 of Additional Protocol I, which prohibit the use of methods or means of warfare that are intended, or may be expected, to cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment. They also violate the rights to health and life.

6.3 Attacks on Essential Civilian Infrastructure

On 7 March 2026, the Bayard maize flour and starch-processing factory in Naqadeh, West Azerbaijan Province, was destroyed, killing several workers and injuring others. On 13 March 2026, the Bu Ali Industrial Zone in Hamadan was struck, setting fire to a warehouse containing infant formula and medicines used to treat serious

illnesses, including multiple sclerosis. The attacks halted the production of important medicines and caused acute shortages of basic food supplies.

Grain silos and pharmaceutical warehouses in other provinces also sustained extensive damage, leading to increases in the prices of essential goods and worsening the food crisis.

6.4 Impact of the Destruction of Infrastructure on the Civilian Population

The attacks deprived a large number of residents of electricity, heating and clean water. The destruction of oil depots and petrol stations caused fuel shortages and disrupted transport and vital industries. The fires and explosions also polluted the air and groundwater, threatening public health and the environment for years to come. This situation constitutes a violation of the population's right to an adequate standard of living sufficient for health and well-being, as recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.[11] [12]

6.5 Legal Characterisation of the Attacks on Civilian Objects

These attacks constitute a violation of Article 54 of Additional Protocol I, which prohibits the destruction of objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population.[5] They also contravene United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/292, which recognises the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a fundamental human right.[15]

Given their devastating environmental consequences, these attacks also violate international obligations relating to the protection of the environment during armed conflicts.

Chapter Seven — Attacks on Energy Facilities and Oil and Fuel Depots

7.1 Targeting of Oil and Gas Facilities

The US–Israeli coalition targeted oil and gas facilities in an effort to disrupt Iran’s energy-production capacity. The attacks struck facilities in Shahr-e Rey, Fardis, Shahr-e Rey, the Kuhak petrol depot and the city of Rey, causing massive fires and explosions and releasing toxic emissions.

Some reports indicate that the attacks were planned to cause widespread environmental damage. In one instance, missiles were directed at four locations around Tehran to coincide with forecast rainfall, with the aim of releasing acids into the atmosphere. The attacks killed six people, injured 21 others and destroyed several neighbouring homes.

7.2 Attacks on Fuel Depots in Urban Areas

On 7 March 2026, the Shahr-e Rey oil depot and fuel tanks in southern Tehran were bombed, causing massive explosions. A fuel depot in Fardis was also completely destroyed. The bombardment caused petroleum products to leak into nearby rivers, contaminating the water and releasing noxious fumes that forced residents to leave their homes. The capital’s fuel-distribution network was also disrupted, making it increasingly difficult for residents to obtain fuel for heating and transport.

7.3 Environmental and Humanitarian Risks Posed by the Attacks

The attacks caused severe air pollution and the formation of acid rain, adversely affecting residents’ health and contributing to bronchitis and other respiratory problems. Fuel leaks also contaminated the soil and groundwater, threatening agriculture and drinking-water supplies.

The use of the environment as a weapon constitutes a form of ecocide and is a crime under international environmental law. Additional Protocol I prohibits methods of warfare that cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment.[14]

7.5 International Legal Framework

Additional Protocol I prohibits attacks against civilian objects and objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population. It also requires parties to take precautions to protect the natural environment.[5] The Rome Statute further provides that the use of means of warfare that cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment constitute a war crime.[6] United Nations Security Council Resolution 2573 also affirms the need to protect critical infrastructure, including energy facilities.[16]

Chapter Eight — Attacks on Rescue Teams and Humanitarian Assistance

8.1 Targeting of Ambulance Crews During Rescue Operations

The data documented a recurring pattern of double-tap strikes in which civilians were targeted in the initial attack, followed by a second strike as rescue teams arrived. In the incident on Nejatollahi Street in Tehran, the second strike killed a large number of paramedics who were attempting to rescue the wounded. The strikes also destroyed 32 ambulances and hampered rescue operations at dozens of locations.

8.2 Attacks on Ambulances and Emergency Vehicles

Ambulances were targeted with heavy weapons while transporting injured persons and were struck directly by projectiles. In some cases, military helicopters bombed and completely destroyed Red Crescent bases along the Tehran–Qom routes. This deprived rescue teams of essential means of evacuating the wounded and delayed their transfer to hospitals.

8.3 Impact of the Attacks on Relief Operations

The attacks obstructed humanitarian operations and increased the number of deaths that could have been avoided had paramedics been able to reach the victims. They also spread fear among volunteers and victims' families, causing many to refrain from assisting the wounded for fear of a second strike.

8.4 Legal Protection of Rescue Teams and Humanitarian Personnel

Humanitarian personnel enjoy special protection under international humanitarian law. Additional Protocol I prohibits attacks against humanitarian relief personnel, as they do not take part in hostilities.[2]

The Rome Statute also provides that intentionally directing attacks against personnel or vehicles involved in humanitarian assistance missions constitutes a war crime.[6] United Nations resolutions emphasise the need to respect the

neutrality and independence of relief organisations and to facilitate their access to affected populations.

Chapter Nine — Attacks on Athletes and Sports Facilities

9.1 Targeting of Athletes During the Conflict

From the outset of the conflict, the attacks targeted the sporting community. At the Lamerd Sports Hall in Fars Province, a training hall was bombed while a women's volleyball team was present, killing 18 young players and injuring several others. In subsequent attacks, wrestler Mehdi Abdollahnejad of Alborz Province and coach Abdolrahman Shaker Hosseini were killed. Shaker Hosseini was a coach in Abarkuh, Yazd Province, and a former coach of Iran's national junior Greco-Roman wrestling team. The attacks caused profound shock throughout the sporting community and deprived the country of some of its most promising athletes.

9.2 Attacks on Sports Facilities and Venues

Missile strikes destroyed parts of the Iranian Wrestling Federation's facilities and the national team's training camp. The Azadi Sports Complex in Tehran, a multipurpose sports venue with a capacity of 12,000 spectators, was also bombed.

The Ismaili Stadium in Tehran's Yaftabad district was also struck, causing extensive damage to its infrastructure. The destruction of these facilities led to the suspension of sporting competitions and training activities and deprived young athletes of places to train.

9.3 Social and Cultural Impact of the Attacks

Sport forms an integral part of the fabric of society, promoting physical and mental well-being and bringing people together. Targeting athletes and sports facilities undermines the morale of young people and limits their opportunities for physical and technical development.

It also deprives children and young people of physical activities that can contribute to their psychological recovery from the effects of war. Attacks on sports facilities therefore constitute an assault on the cultural and human identity of society.

Chapter Ten — Attacks on Cultural Heritage and Historic Sites

10.1 The Importance of Cultural Heritage under International Law

Cultural and historic heritage embodies the identity of peoples and their collective memory, and its preservation is a collective responsibility of humanity.

The 1954 Hague Convention protects cultural property during armed conflicts and requires states to refrain from using such property, or its immediate surroundings, for military purposes and from committing any act of hostility against it. Article 53 of Additional Protocol I reinforces this prohibition by prohibiting acts of hostility directed against historic monuments, works of art and places of worship.[4] The Rome Statute also provides that intentionally directing attacks against buildings dedicated to religion, education, art or science, as well as historic monuments, constitutes a war crime.[7]

10.2 Attacks on Historic Sites and Cultural Landmarks

On 9 March 2026, the city of Isfahan was subjected to missile strikes that affected several landmarks included on UNESCO's World Heritage List, including Ashraf Palace, the Jameh Mosque of Isfahan and Chehel Sotoun Palace in Naqsh-e Jahan Square.

Golestan Palace in Tehran, which is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site, sustained damage during repeated attacks on the capital. Several museums, libraries and archives in Shiraz and Tabriz were also partially damaged, and some ancient manuscripts were burned. This damage constitutes an assault on the world's cultural heritage.

10.3 Damage to Cultural Property

The strikes caused cracks in historic walls and vaults, destroyed wooden ornamentation and domes, and led to the collapse of several columns. Shrapnel and fires also caused extensive damage to numerous works of art and historical documents.

Tourism infrastructure and the local economy were also affected by the decline in tourism. Restoration will require years of specialised work and may not restore the affected works of art to their original condition or value.

10.4 Legal Protection of Cultural Property During Armed Conflicts

Additional Protocol I prohibits acts of hostility directed against cultural property and requires parties to take precautionary measures to protect it.[4]

The Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention, including Article 15, provides for the imposition of penalties on states and individuals responsible for targeting cultural property. The Rome Statute provides that intentionally directing attacks against cultural sites that are not military objectives constitutes a war crime.[7]

Accordingly, the attackers bear international responsibility for the damage inflicted on Iran's cultural heritage.

Chapter Eleven — General Patterns of Violations

11.1 Analysis of the Pattern of Attacks on Civilian Objects

The facts indicate a systematic and recurring pattern of attacks on civilian objects, including double-tap strikes and the destruction of hospitals, schools, relief centres, water and energy facilities, markets and residential neighbourhoods. The recurrence of these attacks cannot be attributed to chance; rather, it indicates a strategy aimed at breaking the resilience of the civilian population by destroying resources essential to life.

11.2 Systematic Repetition of Attacks on Civilian Infrastructure

In many cases, the same location was targeted two or three times within a matter of hours, with the aim of completely destroying the infrastructure and maximising casualties. Schools, hospitals and sports facilities were subjected to successive strikes, while oil and water facilities were repeatedly targeted. This pattern reflects a clear intention to cause serious harm to civilian infrastructure, rather than merely incidental damage, and is contrary to the principles of distinction and proportionality.

11.3 Indicators of Criminal Intent in Military Operations

The following indicators point to the existence of criminal intent in these operations:

1. Selecting times for attacks when the largest possible number of civilians were present, such as during school hours.
2. Launching successive strikes to obstruct rescue operations.
3. Targeting facilities of an unmistakably civilian character, including schools, hospitals, cultural sites and water facilities, despite the absence of any military activity at those locations.
4. Using means that cause widespread environmental damage, including setting fire to oil depots when rainfall was forecast in order to create acid rain.

These indicators amount to a deliberate intention to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity.

11.4 Assessment of the Scale of Violations

Over a period of two weeks, 65 schools, 10 hospitals, 11 Red Crescent bases, 32 ambulances and 152 health centres were bombed. Two major food and pharmaceutical factories were also destroyed.

More than 206 women and children, 168 schoolgirls, 14 female teachers, 15 university students, 18 female volleyball players, and a number of athletes and coaches were killed. A total of 956 housing units belonging to persons with disabilities were destroyed, while 915 others sustained damage.

These figures indicate a widespread pattern of violations amounting to systematic war crimes and requiring an immediate international investigation.

Chapter Twelve — International Legal Responsibility and Accountability

12.1 State Responsibility for Violations of International Law

The United States and Israel bear international responsibility for acts committed by their armed forces that harmed Iranian civilians. Under international law, states are responsible for the internationally wrongful acts of their organs and are required to provide reparation and restore the situation to what it was before those acts occurred.

This includes investigating the alleged violations, holding those responsible to account and compensating the victims.

12.2 Individual Criminal Responsibility

Individuals who ordered or carried out attacks against civilians are subject to criminal accountability before national courts or the International Criminal Court. The Rome Statute criminalises intentionally directing attacks against civilian populations, civilian objects and cultural property.[6][7]

Double-tap strikes against rescue teams also constitute war crimes. States are under an obligation to extradite or prosecute those involved in these crimes.

12.3 International Investigative Mechanisms

The United Nations provides investigative mechanisms, including commissions of inquiry and independent missions. The Human Rights Council may also appoint special rapporteurs to investigate violations.

A comprehensive, independent and transparent investigation must be conducted into all the attacks described above, including on-site visits and the collection of forensic evidence.

12.4 Role of the International Criminal Court

As Iran is not a State Party to the Rome Statute, the United Nations Security Council may refer the situation to the International Criminal Court under Chapter VII of the

United Nations Charter. Alternatively, States Parties to the Statute may exercise universal jurisdiction over crimes committed in Iran.

These options should be examined to ensure that those responsible do not escape accountability.

12.5 Accountability and Reparation for Victims

International law recognises victims' rights to compensation, rehabilitation and guarantees of non-repetition. The states and authorities responsible for the attacks must provide fair compensation to the victims and rebuild the infrastructure that was destroyed.

Psychological support and reintegration programmes must also be established for survivors, particularly children and persons with disabilities.

Conclusion

The evidence and documentation reveal a systematic pattern of attacks carried out by the US–Israeli coalition against civilian objects and the civilian population in Iran in early 2026. The attacks struck schools, hospitals, relief centres, water and energy facilities, cultural sites and sports facilities. They killed and injured thousands of civilians, caused widespread destruction of infrastructure and inflicted catastrophic environmental damage. These facts point to the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity requiring an international investigation and accountability for those responsible.

The provisions of international humanitarian law and international human rights law clearly establish that these attacks are unlawful. Article 48 of Additional Protocol I requires parties to distinguish between civilians and combatants,[1] Article 51 prohibits attacks against civilians,[2] and Article 54 prohibits the destruction of resources indispensable to the survival of the civilian population.[5] The Rome Statute criminalises intentional attacks against civilians and civilian objects,[6] as well as against buildings dedicated to religion, education and culture.[7] The Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and international human rights treaties recognise fundamental rights to life, education, health and water, all of which were severely violated during this war.[8][9]

The report concludes that allowing these violations to continue without a decisive response encourages impunity and undermines the international system founded on the rule of law. The international community must therefore take urgent measures to end the attacks, bring the perpetrators to justice, provide immediate humanitarian assistance and rebuild critical infrastructure.

Recommendations

Recommendations to the International Community

1. Call for an end to all forms of aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran, the closure of all US military bases and assets in the region, and the establishment of an independent international commission of inquiry to investigate all violations committed by the United States and Israel in Iran. The commission should include experts in international humanitarian law and international human rights law.
2. Require all states and entities found to have been directly or indirectly involved—whether through direct action, incitement, support or facilitation—in military operations against the territory and interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran to assume full legal responsibility, including by providing fair, immediate and comprehensive compensation in accordance with the rules of international responsibility. The obligation to provide compensation is not subject to limitation and is not extinguished by changes in political circumstances. It constitutes an enforceable international obligation that may, subject to the exclusive consent of the Islamic Republic of Iran, be enforced through competent international courts, Security Council mechanisms and the exercise of universal jurisdiction. Any refusal by the responsible parties to fulfil their obligations to provide compensation and reparation constitutes a continuing violation of international law and requires collective international measures to ensure the enforcement of those obligations, protect the rights of victims and uphold the rule of international law.
3. Take effective measures to ensure respect for international humanitarian law, including a ban on the transfer of arms to the parties responsible for the attacks should they continue to disregard its provisions.
4. Provide urgent humanitarian assistance to restore the operation of hospitals and water and electricity supplies, and ensure that assistance reaches affected populations without obstruction.

5. Fund programmes for the reconstruction of schools, hospitals, sports facilities and cultural sites, and provide psychological and social support to victims, giving priority to children, women and persons with disabilities.

Recommendations to the United Nations

1. Refer the situation concerning war crimes committed in Iran to the International Criminal Court or establish a special tribunal to examine the crimes committed, and include the attacks in the Secretary-General's reports on the protection of civilians.
2. Adopt a Security Council resolution condemning attacks against civilian objects and critical infrastructure and demanding an end to them, while emphasising the implementation of Resolution 2573 (2021) on the protection of critical infrastructure.[16]
3. Mandate the relevant United Nations special rapporteurs—particularly those concerned with the right to health, the right to water, the rights of persons with disabilities and the right to education—to prepare detailed reports on the impact of the US–Israeli war on these rights.

Recommendations to International Judicial Bodies

1. Exercise national or international jurisdiction to hold accountable individuals responsible for ordering or carrying out attacks against civilians and cultural and health infrastructure.
2. Use the evidence contained in this report and the accompanying documentation to prepare indictments against those involved in war crimes and crimes against humanity committed against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Recommendations on the Protection of Civilians

1. Establish permanent monitoring mechanisms to assess the parties' compliance with their obligations under international humanitarian law and report the findings to the Security Council and relevant organisations.
2. Establish safe zones and humanitarian corridors in affected areas to facilitate the evacuation of civilians and persons in critical medical condition, under

the supervision of the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

3. Ensure respect for Iran's sovereignty as an independent state possessing legal sovereignty and popular legitimacy in all measures relating to the war and its aftermath. Restrictions on medicines, equipment and supplies required for reconstruction and rehabilitation should be fully lifted, and the needs of affected populations should be taken into account when designing and delivering international assistance.
4. Raise international awareness of crimes of ecocide and adopt legal instruments requiring states to protect the environment during armed conflicts, including the ratification of a convention on crimes against the environment.

Annexes

1. **Statistical annexes:** Detailed tables showing the number of victims by age group and sex, the number of centres destroyed, and the extent of infrastructure damage in each province.
2. **Documents and statements issued by professional groups:** Full statements from civil society organisations, doctors' and nurses' unions, engineering associations, associations of persons with disabilities, sports federations and cultural heritage protection associations.
3. **Maps and documentary photographs:** Satellite images of the targeted sites and maps showing the geographical distribution of the attacks and the infrastructure affected.
4. **List of relevant international laws and treaties:** The texts of the legal provisions cited in the report, including the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, the Rome Statute, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [13] Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 1125 U.N.T.S. 3, entered into force Dec. 7, 1978.
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[10] Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities | OHCHR
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