

Final exam JUR1730 International humanitarian law / the law of armed conflict

Autumn semester 2022

Exam period: Friday 2 December at 10:00 a.m. to Monday 12 December at 10:00 a.m. (Oslo time)

In the armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine that followed the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, Russian armed forces on 10 October 2022 launched a large number of missiles across Ukraine targeting, inter alia, power stations and the electricity grid. The next day, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a [statement](#) saying that the strikes “may have violated the principles on the conduct of hostilities under international humanitarian law”. In a [CrisisWatch update](#), the International Crisis Group provided the following summary of the facts of 10 October:

“Wave of Russian strikes targeted cities and civilian infrastructure. Russia throughout Oct launched strikes on Kyiv and other cities, often using Shahed-136 drones supplied by Iran, in move likely aimed at worsening living conditions across country as winter nears. Most notably, Russian forces 10 Oct launched around 80 missiles across country, about half of which were intercepted, killing 23 civilians and targeting power stations, electricity grid and symbolic targets in Kyiv such as pedestrian bridge. Meanwhile, International Atomic Energy Agency chief Rafael Mariano Grossi 12 Oct said shelling at Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia power plant in Enerhodar city had caused plant to lose connection to grid several times and called for security protection zone. Both sides have traded blame for shelling.”

For this exam, you will accept as facts the description given in the quoted statement and in the High Commissioner’s statement, and you will not draw on supplementary facts, diverging versions, or allegations, from neither the same nor other sources about the events on 10 October 2022. Based on these preconditions, respond to **both** questions below.

1. Discuss the “principles on the conduct of hostilities under international humanitarian law” that may be included in the UN High Commissioner’s statement, with a focus on how these principles apply to attacks against power stations and the electricity grid in international armed conflicts.
2. Discuss the legality under international humanitarian law of the bombing of the pedestrian bridge in Kyiv on 10 October. Building on an assumption that the bombing was unlawful, discuss whether the unlawful act may be considered as a war crime.

As a guideline, each question counts for 1/2 of the total grade.

The maximum word limit for the exam is 3,000 words. Footnotes should be included in the word count of the main text. Not included in this count: front page (title etc.), summary, table of contents and references (bibliography). Essays with text exceeding the word limit will not be accepted.

Try to structure your essays with adequate headings and sub-headings. Use relevant legal sources to substantiate your arguments, including relevant treaty provisions, customary international humanitarian law, general principles of international humanitarian law, and case law.