

## **I Am a Child – What Are My Rights under International Humanitarian Law?**

**Q:** As a child, do I have rights under International humanitarian law?

**A:** Children enjoy the rights that are ensured for civilians under this law.

**Q:** Does International humanitarian law give me special protection?

**A:** As a child, you belong to one of the most vulnerable groups. The law guarantees that you will be treated humanely, which includes respect for your dignity and bodily and mental integrity. The Occupying Power has to provide you with the care and aid that you require in light of your age.

**Q:** Do I get preferential treatment in time of war or occupation?

**A:** Children affected by conflicts are entitled to special respect and protection. If you are under 15 and living in occupied territory, you are entitled to preferential treatment regarding food, medical assistance and social care.

**Q:** How is relief provided?

**A:** All medical supplies, food and clothing intended for children under 15 like you, shall be allowed free passage and must be given priority.

**Q:** Does international humanitarian law protect the rights of my family?

**A:** This law recognises the importance of the family and strives to maintain family unity during conflicts.

**Q:** If I become orphaned who will educate me and take care of me?

**A:** You have the right to receive the care, shelter and education that you need, facilitated either by the authorities of the occupied territory, or by the Occupying Power and preferably provided by someone who shares your nationality, language and religion.

**Q:** If I am separated from my family, how can I communicate with them?

**A:** The members of your family, wherever they may be, have the right to receive news from you and you have the right to receive news from them. This correspondence shall be forwarded speedily and without undue delay.

**Q:** May the Occupying Power change my personal status such as my name and religion?

**A:** It may not do so in any circumstances.

**Q:** What happens if my parents are arrested, put under house arrest or forcibly transferred to another place?

**A:** You must not to be left without support. If you are dependent on your parents and you find yourself without adequate means of support or unable to earn a living, the Occupying Power must provide for you.

**Q:** As a child, may I be arrested?

**A:** You may not be arrested if you are under 15 years of age.

**Q:** If I and the rest of my family are detained, may we be separated?

**A:** If at all possible, you must be housed together and separately from other detainees, and given the required facilities for maintaining your family life.

**Q:** If I am detained, what are my specific rights as a child?

**A:** You have the right to pursue your education, either inside or outside of the place of detention. Moreover, open spaces must be provided for your physical exercises and games.

**Q:** May death penalty be pronounced on me as a child?

**A:** No. There are no circumstances under which you may be sentenced to death if you are under 18 years of age.

**Q:** May I be compelled to work by the Occupying Power?

**A:** You may not be compelled to work.

**Q:** May the Occupying Power attack my school?

**A:** The Occupying Power must protect all schools and must not use them for military purposes or as detention centres, as schools are protected buildings. The Occupying Power is also forbidden to target other protected buildings such as museums and cultural centres.