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FOREWORD

The University of the Philippines Institute of International Legal Studies (UP IILS) of the UP Law Center is proud to announce the publication of the 2026 Edition of the Asia Pacific Journal of International Humanitarian Law (APJIHL). This year marks the Journal's seventh year of publishing volumes that cultivate scholarship and academic discourse on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in the Asia-Pacific region.

With the release of the special issue edition centered on Artificial Intelligence and Warfare earlier this year, the journal has, for the first time in its history, released more than one edition in a single year.

Indeed, for the Journal, 2026 has proven to be a convergence of past and future. The emergence of Artificial Intelligence and other technological advancements in the digital space has led to new debates in IHL. Meanwhile, issues regarding freedom of religion and the Asia-Pacific region's role in IHL continue to carve out their space, of immense importance and long overdue, in academic discourse. It is in this spirit that we proudly present the articles in this volume:

- **International Humanitarian Law in the Asia-Pacific: History, State Practice, and Contemporary Challenges** by Dr. Bhavana Chandran & Dr. Udaya Simha, which outlines the evolution of international humanitarian law in the Asia-Pacific region to show how regional experiences are reflected in its development.
- **After the Algorithmic Battlefield: Artificial Intelligence in Post-Conflict Asia-Pacific Societies and the Fragmentation of International Humanitarian Protection** by Mx. Nandana Rajesh & Dr. Aneesh V. Pillai, which asks whether existing laws in the Asia-Pacific are enough to regulate AI systems in societies emerging from conflict.
- **On the Digitization of Distinctive Emblems in International Humanitarian Law** by Lei Zhang & Hui Chen, which discusses the advantages of digital emblems and the rules governing them.

- **Judicial Archives as Living Memory: Insights from the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia** by Vikram Ramaswamy, which argues that judicial archives should be viewed as living memory that can contribute to transitional justice in post-conflict situations.
- **The Dragon's Human Face: Wartime Implications of Traditional Chinese Minben Thought for Contemporary Laws of War** by Kunyang Li & Zhuo Liang, which explores the ancient Chinese view of Minben and its intersection with the evolution of the laws of war.
- **Freedom of Religion and Belief Under Fire: Protection Theory and Practice in Jeopardy?** by Fadi Hachem, which, through case studies from the Levant, argues that protections for freedom of religion remain fragmented and insufficient.
- **The Dragon's Human Face: Wartime Implications of Traditional Chinese Minben Thought for Contemporary Laws of War** by Kunyang Li & Zhuo Liang, which explores the ancient Chinese view of Minben and its intersection with the evolution of the laws of war.
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This year has also seen an even greater increase in submissions from scholars across the region. This reinforces APJIHL's commitment to serve as a vehicle for scholars who are eager to contribute to the body of knowledge on IHL. We thank the scholars who keep the important discourses alive.

We extend our sincerest gratitude to the members of the Boards of Experts and the peer reviewers, without whose expertise, which is required for the facilitation of the rigorous editorial screening and double-blind peer review, the release of the 2026 edition would not be possible. This gratitude is likewise extended to the diligent administrative staff and dedicated research staff of the UP Law Center. Also, the 2026 edition would never be possible without the unwavering commitment of the editorial team, consisting of Atty. Joan Paula Deveraturda as Associate Editor, and

Ms. Aira Lynn Cunanan, Ms. Ma. Flordeliza Villar, Mr. Mackie Valenzula, Ms. Patricia Arago, and Mr. John Paolo Cabrera as Editorial Assistants.

As the world continues to advance technologically, and new technologies that may have been intended for the greater good of humankind are inevitably utilized for ends that multiply the destructive nature of human conflict, the scholars of IHL must continue their work so that the multiplying effects of these technologies on human suffering may at least be diminished.

ROMMEL J. CASIS
Managing Editor
2026

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