

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICTS

ONLINE | JUNE 2026



DESCRIPTION

This offers a focused and practice oriented opportunity to develop a deep understanding of the protection of children in armed conflict. Participants will explore the legal foundations of child rights, the specific vulnerabilities children face in conflict settings, and the international mechanisms created to prevent and respond to grave violations.

Across seven thematic sessions, the course examines the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols, the role of International Humanitarian Law, the UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), accountability for these violations, and the dynamics of child recruitment, release, and reintegration. It also addresses conflict related sexual violence, gendered impacts, and the emerging risks posed by new technologies and modern warfare. It is designed for professionals, students, and practitioners working in humanitarian, human rights, accountability, and other fields. Through case studies and applied analysis, participants will develop the skills needed to understand violations, support protective programming, and contribute to accountability and advocacy efforts.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand and apply the international legal and normative frameworks governing child rights and child protection in armed conflict, including the CRC, OPAC, and relevant IHL norms.
- Identify and analyse the six grave violations against children and assess their implications in real world contexts.
- Assess how new means and methods of warfare affect children and protection responses.

LECTURER

Professor Cécile Aptel is a Professor of Practice of International Law at the Fletcher School, Visiting Scientist at Harvard University, and Member of the Editorial Board of the International Review of the Red Cross and the Foundation Croix-Rouge Française.

She is an expert in international justice, human rights, child rights, and humanitarian law, she has decades of senior leadership and advisory experience across the United Nations, the Red Cross Movement, academia, and leading think tanks, working across the World, including in Africa, the Americas, Europe and the Middle-East. Most recently, she led research and foresight at UNICEF, serving as the Deputy Director of its Innocenti Global Office. Previously, she was the Deputy Director of the UN Institute for Disarmament Research. She has headed major UN initiatives, including establishing the UN Mechanism on Syria (IIIM), and has worked as Chief in the UN Human Rights Office, Senior Adviser to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and to the Chief Prosecutor of the UN International Criminal Tribunals, as well as Director and Acting Under-Secretary-General at the International Federation of the Red Cross. She has written extensively on child and human rights and authored more than 40 scholarly publications.

AGENDA OF THE ONLINE SESSIONS

- Monday 1 June, 12:00 to 13.00 - **Introduction**
- Tuesday 2 June, 12:00 to 14:00
- Tuesday 9 June, 12:00 to 14:00
- Wednesday 10 June, 12:00 to 14:00
- Thursday 11 June, 12:00 to 14:00
- Tuesday 23 June, 12:00 to 14:00
- Wednesday 24 June, 12:00 to 14:00
- Thursday 25 June, 12:00 to 14:00

HOW TO APPLY

Please send an email to digital.academy@geneva-academy.ch with a CV and a motivation letter letter expressing your interest in the specific course.

Selected applicants will receive a confirmation of acceptance. To secure their place, accepted participants are required to pay a non-refundable deposit of CHF 100.

Please note that this course is subject to a minimum of 10 participants. If this minimum is not reached two weeks prior to the start date, this course will not be delivered and all registered participants will receive a full refund of the deposit. Places are limited to 25 participants, and therefore early application is strongly encouraged.

TUITION FEE

CHF 950.

A discount of CHF 100 is available for students and alumni of the Academy, and individuals who have previously participated in our educational activities.

**MORE INFORMATION
ON OUR WEBSITE**

