



# San Remo Manual

## on International Law Applicable to Armed Conflicts at Sea

### Statement Launching the drafting phase of the Project

In 1994 a group of experts completed, after six years of work, the San Remo Manual on International Law Applicable to Armed Conflicts at Sea (published in 1995). This manual has a unique standing internationally, having inspired national military manuals throughout the world. Subsequent events made it necessary to update the Manual to ensure it continues to reflect the current state of the law, including developments over time in State practice and *opinio juris*, as well as the evolution of naval operations in contemporary armed conflicts. A project to this effect was initiated in 2019 by a small group of experts, with the consent of the Council of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law at San Remo. After a successful start and relevant progress, the project suffered delays because of a combination of factors, including the Covid-19 pandemic and financial constraints.

The Council of the Institute very much welcomes and supports the new vigour instilled in the project by the Steering Committee, with the active support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and of the Norwegian Red Cross Society, which assists in seeking funds for the continuation and conclusion of the project and to provide the project with a secretariat. To strengthen the ties with San Remo, the project's meetings will in the future take place generally in San Remo at Villa Ormond, official seat of the Institute. The Villa provides an ideal venue for this type of activity and offers good and convenient options regarding logistics arrangements. The Institute will provide practical services such as catering, secretarial and technical assistance as well as organizing local transport and accommodation on site.

The Council of the Institute reaffirms the role of Prof. Fausto Pocar, Honorary President of the Institute as the chairman of the Steering Committee (SC), and confirms Mr. Arne Willy Dahl, Member of the Institute, as member of the SC. Furthermore, it appoints BrigGen (ret'd) Jan Peter Spijk, the Institute's Vice President, as new member of the SC to reinforce the link between the Institute and the SC. In addition, Mr. Laurent Gisel, Head of the Arms and Conduct of Hostilities Unit, representing the ICRC, and Ms. Berit Reiss – Andersen, Special Advisor, representing the Norwegian Red Cross, have been added to the Steering Committee.

To support the completion of the up-date process, a Drafting Committee is being formed. Mr. Gisel will head the Drafting Committee, the composition of which will be arranged soon. The main responsibility of the Drafting Committee will be to suggest and draft the revisions of the commentary, as appropriate. Honouring the extensive activities of the Group of Experts in past years, the Group's composition will be evaluated, to better reflect gender and geographical diversity. The Group of Experts will meet in September 2025 and afterwards with regular intervals, on the condition of available funding. The current aim is to finalise the review of the Manual, including the commentary in the course of 2027. The consultation of States is foreseen both during this process, and at the end.

*December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024*