



Invitation to
REDUCING THE HUMAN COST OF LARGE-SCALE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE
MARITIME DOMAIN:
Prisoners of War, Wounded Sick and Shipwrecked, Protection of the Medical
Mission, Civilian Harm Prevention and Mitigation,

17-19 November 2026 - London

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) of the United Kingdom and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have the pleasure to invite you to the multi-state operational workshop on “Reducing the human cost of Large-Scale Military Operations in the Maritime Domain” which will take place in London, United Kingdom from 17 to 19 November 2026.

This three-day workshop will provide an opportunity to discuss challenges facing naval operators related to the humanitarian consequences and the operationalisation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) when contemplating large-scale International Armed Conflict (IAC) at sea. This recognises that large-scale, high-intensity maritime conflict not only presents unique dynamics, challenges and complexities that bear on IHL compliance but also represents an area where both States and the ICRC have less recent experience to draw upon. As detailed in the Concept Note attached at the Annex, the workshop will focus upon the operational challenges and examine practical solutions around issues such as detention and the protection of Prisoners of War and civilians; the respect and protection of the sick, wounded, shipwrecked and dead; the processes to account for protected persons, and how to prevent and mitigate harm to civilians.

The workshop proposes to bring together naval representatives from the United Kingdom, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Spain and Sweden as well as representatives of NATO’s Maritime Command and the European External Action Service to practically address these challenges that are common to warfare everywhere but certainly amplified at sea. The ICRC and UK MOD are, therefore, honoured to invite States to send two to three naval officers to tackle the objectives set out in the Concept Note. It is believed these objectives will be best served by officers of OF5/OF4 level with operational experience principally in the operations (N3) and plans (N5) areas complemented by legal (N9) and/or medical expertise (N4).

The joint organisers very much look forward to welcoming all the participants.

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