

Annex 2: Code of Crimes against International Law

Part 1 **General provisions**

Section 1 Scope of application

This Act shall apply to all criminal offences against international law designated under this Act, to offences pursuant to sections 6 to 12 even when the offence was committed abroad and bears no relation to Germany. For offences pursuant to section 13 that were committed abroad, this Act shall apply independently of the law of the place where the act was committed if the perpetrator is German or if the offence is directed against the Federal Republic of Germany.

Section 2 Application of the general law

The general criminal law shall apply to offences pursuant to this Act so far as this Act does not make special provision in sections 1, 3 to 5, and 13 subsection (4).

Section 3 Acting upon orders

Whoever commits an offence pursuant to Sections 8 to 15 in execution of a military order or of an order comparable in its actual binding effect shall have acted without guilt so far as the perpetrator does not realise that the order is unlawful and so far as it is also not manifestly unlawful.

Section 4 Responsibility of military commanders and other superiors

- (1) A military commander or civilian superior who omits to prevent his or her subordinate from committing an offence pursuant to this Act shall be punished in the same way as a perpetrator of the offence committed by that subordinate. Section 13 subsection (2) of the Criminal Code shall not apply in this case.

- (2) Any person effectively giving orders or exercising command and control in a unit shall be deemed equivalent to a military commander. Any person effectively exercising command and control in a civil organisation or in an enterprise shall be deemed equivalent to a civilian superior.

Section 5

Non-applicability of statute of limitations

The prosecution of serious criminal offences pursuant to this Act and the execution of sentences imposed on their account shall not be subject to any statute of limitations.

Part 2

Crimes against International Law

Chapter 1

Genocide and crimes against humanity

Section 6

Genocide

- (1) Whoever with the intent of destroying as such, in whole or in part, a national, racial, religious or ethnic group
1. kills a member of the group,
 2. causes serious bodily or mental harm to a member of the group, especially of the kind referred to in section 226 of the Criminal Code,
 3. inflicts on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction in whole or in part,
 4. imposes measures intended to prevent births within the group,
 5. forcibly transfers a child of the group to another group
- shall be punished with imprisonment for life.
- (2) In less serious cases referred to under subsection (1), numbers 2 to 5, the punishment shall be imprisonment for not less than five years.

Section 7
Crimes against humanity

- (1) Whoever, as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population,
 1. kills a person,
 2. inflicts, with the intent of destroying a population in whole or in part, conditions of life on that population or on parts thereof, being conditions calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part,
 3. traffics in persons, particularly in women or children, or whoever enslaves a person in another way and in doing so arrogates to himself a right of ownership over that person,
 4. deports or forcibly transfers, by expulsion or other coercive acts, a person lawfully present in an area to another State or another area in contravention of a general rule of international law,
 5. tortures a person in his or her custody or otherwise under his or her control by causing that person substantial physical or mental harm or suffering where such harm or suffering does not arise only from sanctions that are compatible with international law,
 6. sexually coerces, rapes, forces into prostitution or deprives a person of his or her reproductive capacity, or confines a woman forcibly made pregnant with the intent of affecting the ethnic composition of any population,
 7. causes a person's enforced disappearance, with the intention of removing him or her from the protection of the law for a prolonged period of time,
 - (a) by abducting that person on behalf of or with the approval of a State or a political organisation, or by otherwise severely depriving such person of his or her physical liberty, followed by a failure immediately to give truthful information, upon inquiry, on that person's fate and whereabouts, or
 - (b) by refusing, on behalf of a State or of a political organisation or in contravention of a legal duty, to give information immediately on the fate and whereabouts of the person deprived of his or her physical liberty under the circumstances referred to under letter (a) above, or by giving false information thereon,
 8. causes another person severe physical or mental harm, especially of the kind referred to in section 226 of the Criminal Code,
 9. severely deprives, in contravention of a general rule of international law, a person of his or her physical liberty, or

10. persecutes an identifiable group or collectivity by depriving such group or collectivity of fundamental human rights, or by substantially restricting the same, on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural or religious, gender or other grounds that are recognised as impermissible under the general rules of international law shall be punished, in the cases referred to under numbers 1 and 2, with imprisonment for life, in the cases referred to under numbers 3 to 7, with imprisonment for not less than five years, and, in the cases referred to under numbers 8 to 10, with imprisonment for not less than three years.
- (2) In less serious cases under subsection (1), number 2, the punishment shall be imprisonment for not less than five years, in less serious cases under subsection (1), numbers 3 to 7, imprisonment for not less than two years, and in less serious cases under subsection (1), numbers 8 and 9, imprisonment for not less than one year.
- (3) Where the perpetrator causes the death of a person through an offence pursuant to subsection (1), numbers 3 to 10, the punishment shall be imprisonment for life or for not less than ten years in cases under subsection (1), numbers 3 to 7, and imprisonment for not less than five years in cases under subsection (1), numbers 8 to 10.
- (4) In less serious cases under subsection (3) the punishment for an offence pursuant to subsection (1), numbers 3 to 7, shall be imprisonment for not less than five years, and for an offence pursuant to subsection (1), numbers 8 to 10, imprisonment for not less than three years.
- (5) Whoever commits a crime pursuant to subsection (1) with the intention of maintaining an institutionalised regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other shall be punished with imprisonment for not less than five years so far as the offence is not punishable more severely pursuant to subsection (1) or subsection (3). In less serious cases the punishment shall be imprisonment for not less than three years so far as the offence is not punishable more severely pursuant to subsection (2) or subsection (4).

Chapter 2
War crimes

Section 8
War crimes against persons

- (1) Whoever in connection with an international armed conflict or with an armed conflict not of an international character
 1. kills a person who is to be protected under international humanitarian law,
 2. takes hostage a person who is to be protected under international humanitarian law,
 3. treats a person who is to be protected under international humanitarian law cruelly or inhumanly by causing him or her substantial physical or mental harm or suffering, especially by torturing or mutilating that person,
 4. sexually coerces, rapes, forces into prostitution or deprives a person who is to be protected under international humanitarian law of his or her reproductive capacity, or confines a woman forcibly made pregnant with the intent of affecting the ethnic composition of any population,
 5. conscripts children under the age of fifteen years into the armed forces, or enlists them in the armed forces or in armed groups, or uses them to participate actively in hostilities,
 6. deports or forcibly transfers, by expulsion or other coercive acts, a person who is to be protected under international humanitarian law and lawfully present in an area to another State or another area in contravention of a general rule of international law,
 7. imposes on, or executes a substantial sentence in respect of a person who is to be protected under international humanitarian law, in particular the death penalty or imprisonment, without that person having been sentenced in a fair and regular trial affording the legal guarantees required by international law,
 8. exposes a person who is to be protected under international humanitarian law to the risk of death or of serious injury to health
 - (a) by carrying out experiments on such a person, being a person who has not previously given his or her voluntary and express consent, or where the experiments concerned are neither medically necessary nor carried out in his or her interest,
 - (b) by taking body tissue or organs from such a person for transplantation purposes so far as it does not constitute removal of

- blood or skin for therapeutic purposes in conformity with generally recognised medical principles and the person concerned has previously not given his or her voluntary and express consent, or
- (c) by using treatment methods that are not medically recognised on such person, without this being necessary from a medical point of view and without the person concerned having previously given his or her voluntary and express consent, or
9. treats a person who is to be protected under international humanitarian law in a gravely humiliating or degrading manner shall be punished, in the cases referred to under number 1, with imprisonment for life, in the cases referred to under number 2, with imprisonment for not less than five years, in the cases referred to under numbers 3 to 5, with imprisonment for not less than three years, in the cases referred to under numbers 6 to 8, with imprisonment for not less than two years, and, in the cases referred to under number 9, with imprisonment for not less than one year.
- (2) Whoever in connection with an international armed conflict or with an armed conflict not of an international character, wounds a member of the adverse armed forces or a combatant of the adverse party after the latter has surrendered unconditionally or is otherwise placed hors de combat shall be punished with imprisonment for not less than three years.
- (3) Whoever in connection with an international armed conflict
1. unlawfully holds as a prisoner or unjustifiably delays the return home of a protected person within the meaning of subsection (6), number 1,
 2. transfers, as a member of an Occupying Power, parts of its own civilian population into the occupied territory,
 3. compels a protected person within the meaning of subsection (6), number 1, by force or threat of appreciable harm to serve in the forces of a hostile Power or
 4. compels a national of the adverse party by force or threat of appreciable harm to take part in the operations of war directed against his or her own country
- shall be punished with imprisonment for not less than two years.
- (4) Where the perpetrator causes the death of the victim through an offence pursuant to subsection (1), numbers 2 to 6, the punishment shall, in the cases referred to under subsection (1), number 2, be imprisonment for life or imprisonment for not less than ten years, in the

cases referred to under subsection (1), numbers 3 to 5, imprisonment for not less than five years, and, in the cases referred to under subsection (1), number 6, imprisonment for not less than three years. Where an act referred to under subsection (1), number 8, causes death or serious harm to health, the punishment shall be imprisonment for not less than three years.

- (5) In less serious cases referred to under subsection (1), number 2, the punishment shall be imprisonment for not less than two years, in less serious cases referred to under subsection (1), numbers 3 and 4, and under subsection (2) the punishment shall be imprisonment for not less than one year, in less serious cases referred to under subsection (1), number 6, and under subsection (3), number 1, the punishment shall be imprisonment from six months to five years.
- (6) Persons who are to be protected under international humanitarian law shall be
 1. in an international armed conflict: persons protected for the purposes of the Geneva Conventions and of the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions (Protocol I) (annexed to this Act), namely the wounded, the sick, the shipwrecked, prisoners of war and civilians;
 2. in an armed conflict not of an international character: the wounded, the sick, the shipwrecked as well as persons taking no active part in the hostilities who are in the power of the adverse party;
 3. in an international armed conflict and in an armed conflict not of an international character: members of armed forces and combatants of the adverse party, both of whom have laid down their arms or have no other means of defence.

Section 9

War crimes against property and other rights

- (1) Whoever in connection with an international armed conflict or with an armed conflict not of an international character pillages or, unless this is imperatively demanded by the necessities of the armed conflict, otherwise extensively destroys, appropriates or seizes property of the adverse party contrary to international law, such property being in the power of the perpetrator's party, shall be punished with imprisonment from one to ten years.
- (2) Whoever in connection with an international armed conflict and contrary to international law declares the rights and actions of all, or of a substantial proportion of, the nationals of the hostile party abolished,

suspended or inadmissible in a court of law shall be punished with imprisonment from one to ten years.

Section 10

War crimes against humanitarian operations and emblems

- (1) Whoever in connection with an international armed conflict or with an armed conflict not of an international character
 1. directs an attack against personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as long as they are entitled to the protection given to civilians or civilian objects under international humanitarian law, or
 2. directs an attack against personnel, buildings, material, medical units and transport, using the distinctive emblems of the Geneva Conventions in conformity with international humanitarian lawshall be punished with imprisonment for not less than three years. In less serious cases, particularly where the attack does not take place by military means, the punishment shall be imprisonment for not less than one year.
- (2) Whoever in connection with an international armed conflict or with an armed conflict not of an international character makes improper use of the distinctive emblems of the Geneva Conventions, of the flag of truce, of the flag or of the military insignia or of the uniform of the enemy or of the United Nations, thereby causing a person's death or serious personal injury (section 226 of the Criminal Code) shall be punished with imprisonment for not less than five years.

Section 11

War crimes consisting in the use of prohibited methods of warfare

- (1) Whoever in connection with an international armed conflict or with an armed conflict not of an international character
 1. directs an attack by military means against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities,
 2. directs an attack by military means against civilian objects, so long as these objects are protected as such by international humanitarian law, namely buildings dedicated to religion, education, art, science or charitable purposes, historic monuments, hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are collected, or against undefended towns, villages, dwellings or buildings, or against demili-

tarised zones, or against works and installations containing dangerous forces,

3. carries out an attack by military means and definitely anticipates that the attack will cause death or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects on a scale out of proportion to the concrete and direct overall military advantage anticipated,
4. uses a person who is to be protected under international humanitarian law as a shield to restrain a hostile party from undertaking operations of war against certain targets,
5. uses starvation of civilians as a method of warfare by depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival or impedes relief supplies in contravention of international humanitarian law,
6. orders or threatens, as a commander, that no quarter will be given, or
7. treacherously kills or wounds a member of the hostile armed forces or a combatant of the adverse party

shall be punished with imprisonment for not less than three years. In less serious cases under number 2 the punishment shall be imprisonment for not less than one year.

- (2) Where the perpetrator causes the death or serious injury of a civilian (section 226 of the Criminal Code) or of a person who is to be protected under international humanitarian law through an offence pursuant to subsection (1), numbers 1 to 6, he shall be punished with imprisonment for not less than five years. Where the perpetrator intentionally causes death, the punishment shall be imprisonment for life or for not less than ten years.
- (3) Whoever in connection with an international armed conflict carries out an attack by military means and definitely anticipates that the attack will cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment on a scale out of proportion to the concrete and direct overall military advantage anticipated shall be punished with imprisonment for not less than three years.

Section 12

War crimes consisting in employment of prohibited means of warfare

- (1) Whoever in connection with an international armed conflict or with an armed conflict not of an international character
 1. employs poison or poisoned weapons,
 2. employs biological or chemical weapons or

3. employs bullets which expand or flatten easily in the human body, in particular bullets with a hard envelope which does not entirely cover the core or is pierced with incisions
shall be punished with imprisonment for not less than three years.
- (2) Where the perpetrator causes the death or serious injury of a civilian (section 226 of the Criminal Code) or of a person protected under international humanitarian law through an offence pursuant to subsection (1), he shall be punished with imprisonment for not less than five years. Where the perpetrator intentionally causes death, the punishment shall be imprisonment for life or for not less than ten years.

Section 13
Crime of aggression

- (1) Whoever wages a war of aggression or commits any other act of aggression which, by its character, gravity and scale, constitutes a manifest violation of the Charter of the United Nations shall be punished with imprisonment for life.
- (2) Whoever plans, prepares or initiates a war of aggression or any other act of aggression within the meaning of subsection (1) shall be punished with imprisonment for life or imprisonment for not less than ten years. The offence pursuant to the first sentence shall be punishable only if
 1. the war of aggression has been waged or the other act of aggression has been committed or
 2. it creates a danger of a war of aggression or any other act of aggression for the Federal Republic of Germany.
- (3) An act of aggression is the use of armed force by a State against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of another State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations.
- (4) Only persons in a position effectively to exercise control over or to direct the political or military action of a State may be party to an offence pursuant to subsections (1) and (2).
- (5) In less serious cases under subsection (2) the punishment shall consist of imprisonment of not less than five years.

Chapter 4
Other crimes

Section 14
Violation of the duty of supervision

- (1) A military commander who intentionally or negligently omits properly to supervise a subordinate under his or her command or under his or her effective control shall be punished for violation of the duty of supervision if the sub-ordinate commits an offence pursuant to this Act, where the imminent commission of such an offence was discernible to the commander and he or she could have prevented it.
- (2) A civilian superior who intentionally or negligently omits properly to supervise a subordinate under his or her authority or under his or her effective control shall be punished for violation of the duty of supervision if the subordinate commits an offence pursuant to this Act, where the imminent commission of such an offence was discernible to the superior without more and he or she could have prevented it.
- (3) Section 4 subsection (2) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.
- (4) Intentional violation of the duty of supervision shall be punished with imprisonment for not more than five years, and negligent violation of the duty of supervision shall be punished with imprisonment for not more than three years.

Section 15
Omission to report a crime

- (1) A military commander or a civilian superior who omits immediately to draw the attention of the agency responsible for the investigation or prosecution of any offence pursuant to this Act, to such an offence committed by a subordinate, shall be punished with imprisonment for not more than five years.
- (2) Section 4 subsection (2) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Annex
(to Section 8 subsection (6) number 1)

For the purposes of this Act the term “Geneva Conventions” shall constitute a reference to the following:

- I. Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field (Federal Law Gazette 1954 II page 781, 783),

- II. Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea (Federal Law Gazette 1954 II page 781, 813),
- III. Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (Federal Law Gazette 1954 II page 781, 838) and
- IV. Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Federal law Gazette 1954 II page 781, 917).

For the purposes of this Act Protocol I shall constitute a reference to the following:

Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I) of 8 June 1977 (Federal Law Gazette 1990 II page 1550, 1551).