

## TAUGHT BY THE BEST: ICRC REGIONAL LEGAL ADVISOR LARRY MAYBEE HAS A SKYPE LECTURE WITH LAW SCHOOL STUDENTS



Mr. Larry Maybee, the Regional Legal Advisor for the ICRC's East Asia delegation, joined Law School students by Skype on 19 October 2017. This was part of a class on 'The means and methods of war' in Professor Suzannah Linton's course on the International Law of Armed Conflict.



Speaking from Beijing, Mr. Maybee spent an hour addressing questions put to him by the class. The questions revolved around the following:

1. Can you explain 'dual use objects'?
2. Can you give some practical guidance on how the principle of 'proportionality' actually works?
3. How is a party to a conflict realistically supposed to take 'precautions in attack' when a battle is underway?
4. How to calculate if suffering is 'necessary' or 'unnecessary'?
5. Can you give some practical illustrations of how to assess Art 52(2) of API:

*Attacks shall be limited strictly to military objectives. In so far as objects are concerned, military objectives are limited to those objects which by their nature, location, purpose or use make an effective contribution to military action and whose total or partial destruction, capture or neutralization, in the circumstances ruling at the time, offers a definite military advantage.'*



*Charles Owusu putting a question to Mr. Maybee*

Mr. Maybee, who is a former officer in the Canadian armed forces and a seasoned ICRC delegate, provided rare insight into both the military mindset and the humanitarian approach. He explained decision-making in relation to target selection and the obligation to take precautions in attack, and the role of military lawyers in guiding commanders. He illustrated how challenging it is to transform vague principles into operational rules that can actually lead to more humane conduct of hostilities. Mr. Maybee's vivid illustrations drew from conduct of hostilities in Iraq, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Syria, Libya, Kosovo and Serbia.