

ANOTHER INSPIRING VISIT FROM THE ICRC



On Wednesday 15 November 2018, the Law School at ZJGSU again had the great pleasure of hosting experts in International Humanitarian Law from the Beijing office of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mr Larry Maybee, the Deputy Head of the ICRC's Regional Delegation for East Asia covering China, the two Koreas and Mongolia, was joined by his colleague, Ms Margherita D'Ascanio, the ICRC's Regional Legal Advisor. The two visitors came to ZJGSU to address students, particularly those on the International Law of Armed Conflict course. They also came to discuss a conference that the Law School is co-hosting with them here in Hangzhou in 2019 to mark the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949.

Mr Maybee first spoke about the ICRC's work in China, introducing the organisation and its mission, and operational work.



Larry Maybee explaining the ICRC's work in East Asia



At ZJGSU, we are proud to be able to teach a course called the International Law of Armed Conflict. Our students learn about International Law on the use of force (which is mainly governed by the United Nations Charter) and then they learn about the law of armed conflict (which is the area of law that applies when there is actually an armed conflict). The second part of Mr Maybee's lecture comprised a focused discussion on operational issues in the *jus in bello*, or the laws of war, designed especially for students taking the International Law of Armed Conflict. Mr Maybee comes from a military background so his insights were exceptionally meaningful and authoritative. Prior to joining the ICRC, he served for 26 years in the Canadian Forces and the New Zealand Defence Force where he was the Head of International and Operations Law. In his capacity as a military officer, he has seen service in Bosnia, Croatia, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea (Bougainville) and the Middle East. For the ICRC, he has worked in some of the most challenging conflict situations, including the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Mr Maybee used a specially developed virtual reality scenario to illustrate how central principles of distinction, proportionality and the prohibition of indiscriminate attacks work in operational practice. The virtual reality video was based on a fictional internal armed conflict in a state called Kurkum. The government was dealing with an insurgent movement that had the town of Kavala as its main base. On 28 September 2016, the government decided to attack the rebels. The attacks turned out to be controversial. The students were tasked to take on the role of investigators from the International Criminal Court.

Learning through virtual reality: The government of Kurkum's 28 September 2016 operation against insurgents in Kavala.



According to Professor Suzannah Linton, who has been engaged in this area of the law for many years, 'this is an example of how modern technology can be harnessed to provide an exceptionally effective tool for instruction'. She added, 'there are so many technical rules in the large number of treaties in this area'. 'Despite the exciting subject matter, it can get tedious for students; role-play and now virtual reality are probably the most effective methods of classroom teaching.' ZJGSU law students were genuinely engaged with the presentation, and called on the ICRC to provide more such virtual reality experiences to enhance their experiences of learning about the laws of war in armed conflict. And they would of course like to have annual visits from the ICRC as part of their course!



The audience of ZJGSU law students from all over the world listened intently, and participated actively in discussions about legal issues arising from the Kavala attacks

