



The role of humanitarian engagement with armed actors in safeguarding health care and vaccines

Eurasia Health Care in Danger Meeting, Feb 3, 2021





Geneva Call mission

Geneva Call is a neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian organisation.

Its mission is to improve the protection of civilians in armed conflict through humanitarian engagement of armed actors on their respect for international humanitarian law.

This includes the protection of health care in times of armed conflict.



What is humanitarian engagement with armed non-State actors?

Humanitarian engagement

Sustained and constructive process of interaction with armed actors conducted for humanitarian purposes only.

Humanitarian engagement can take various forms, ranging from advocacy, negotiation, policy development and integration through training or public commitment to comply.

Typology of armed actors

De facto

Non-recognised States

Para-military groups

Freedom fighters

Rebels

Self proclaimed States

Militias

Insurgents

Guerillas

Why non States armed actors are favorable to humanitarian engagement?

Reciprocity
with States
in regards
with the
respect of
IHL

Legitimacy
as political
actor

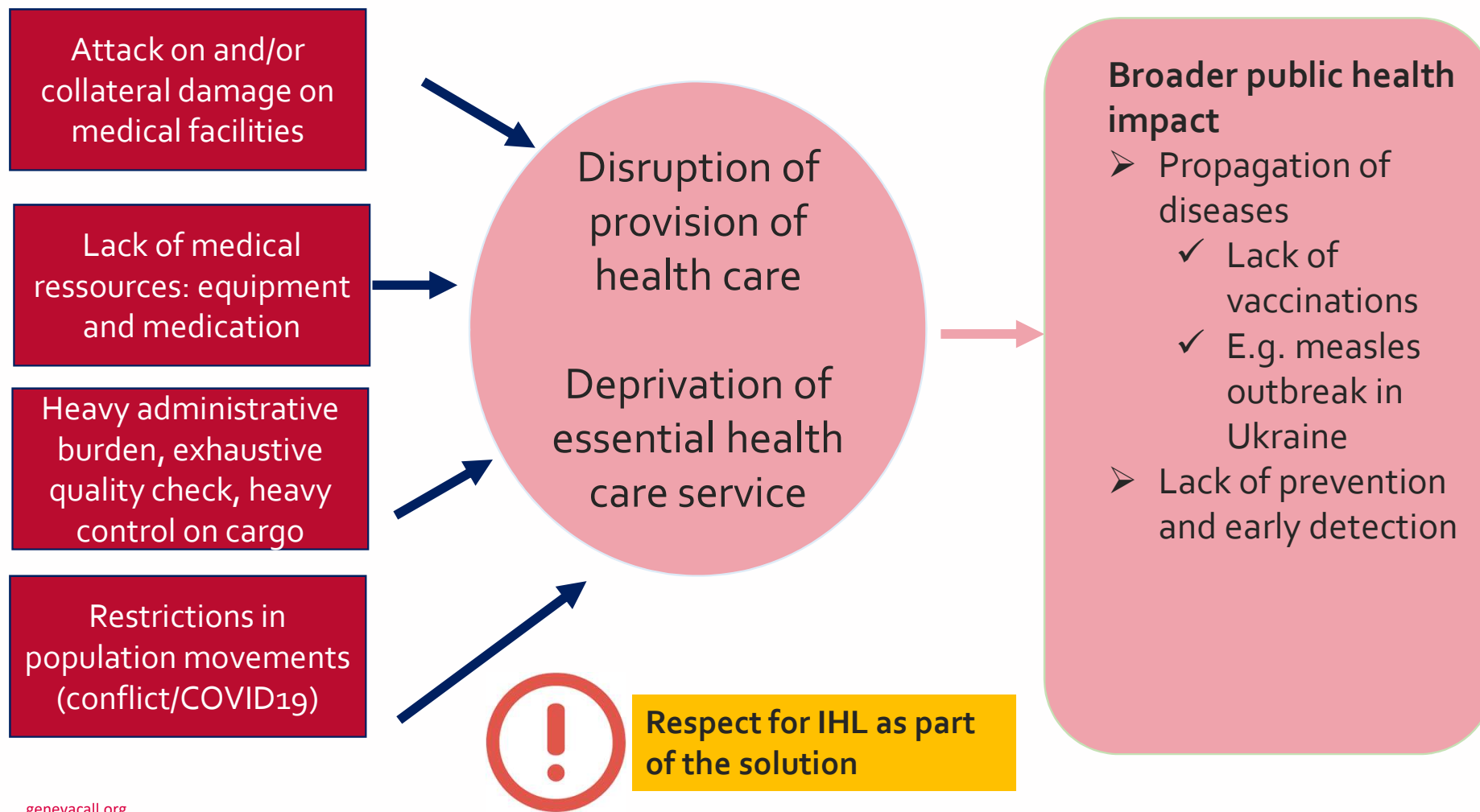
Probability
to increases
dialogue
with States
increases

Live saving,
dignity and
respect of
civilian
population
and
infrastructure

More fluid
aid
assistance
delivery

Protection of
person hors
de combat
and
efficiency

Armed conflict in Ukraine: complex emergencies?



IHL obligations to respect and protect health care: facilities, personnel, vehicles and supplies

Negative obligations to respect

- Not attack or harm in any way
- Abstain from interference

Positive obligations to protect

- Measures to facilitate provision of health care
- Includes facilitation of passage medical supplies



Broad definitions:

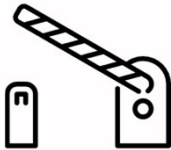
- All health care related functions
- Includes disease prevention, i.e. also vaccines

Humanitarian relief operations

Parties to the conflict must **allow and facilitate** rapid and unimpeded **humanitarian relief** for civilians in need **subject to their right to control**. Such relief must be impartial in nature and without adverse distinction



Humanitarian relief: Covers medical supplies



Right to Control: the question of consent

- Consent by whom? Question of State sovereignty
- Arbitrary withholding of consent

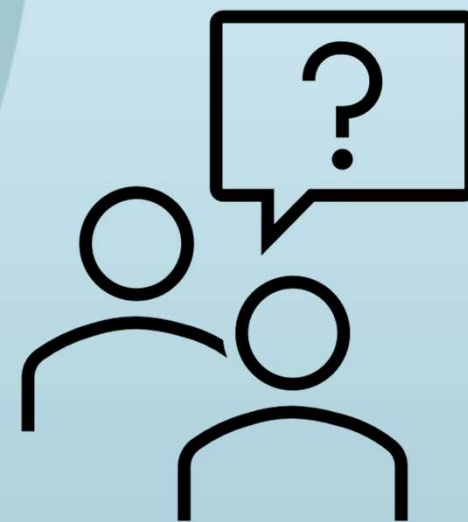


Allow and facilitate

- once consent is granted
- Entry and movement within country
- Technical arrangements



Thank you.





Eurasia Regional HClD meeting

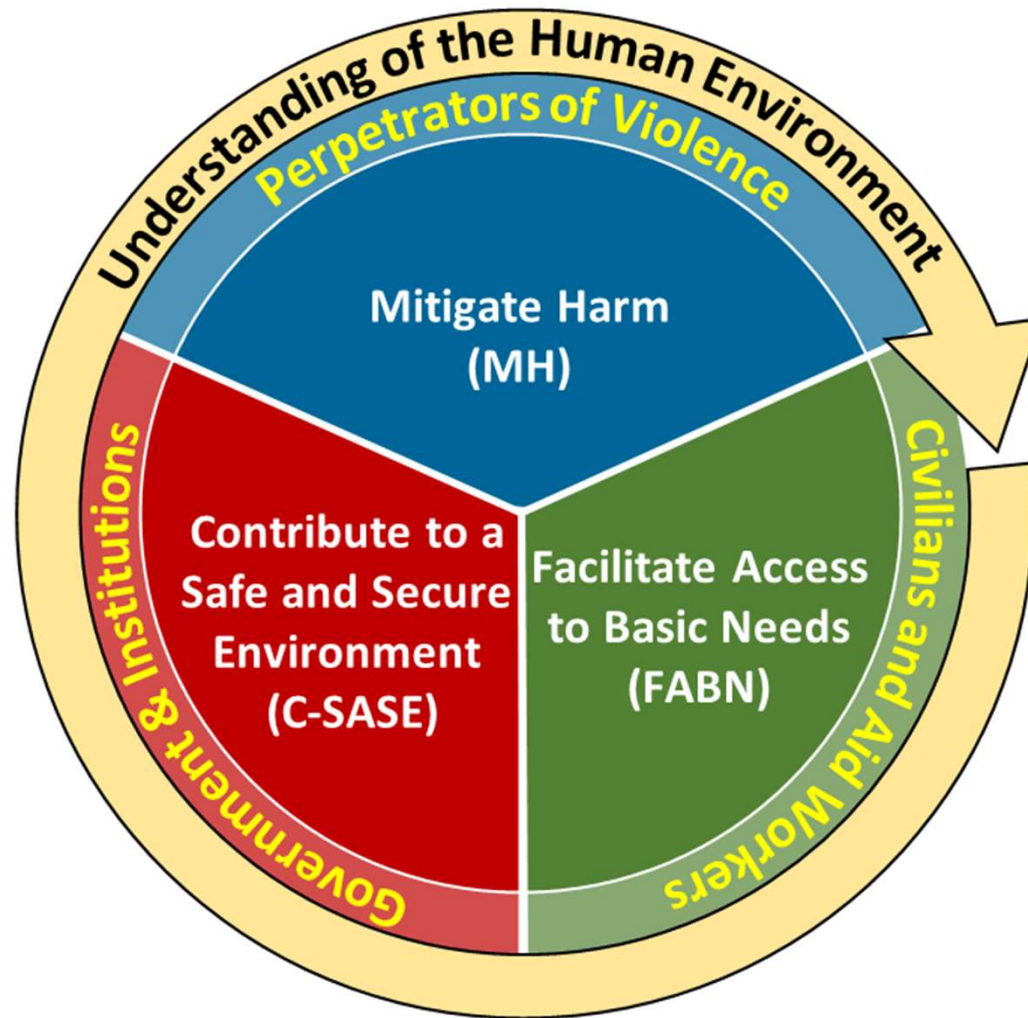
Marianna Tonutti

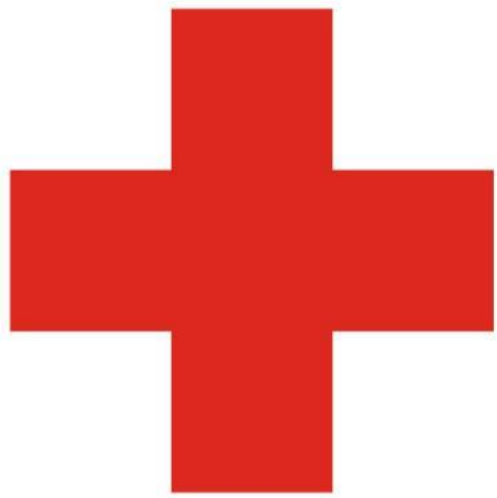
SHAPE J9, Cooperation and Liaison

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NATO UNCLASSIFIED

Protection of Civilians Framework





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Study on the Protection of Healthcare by State armed Forces

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**HEALTH IT'S A
CARE MATTER
IN OF LIFE
DANGER & DEATH**



ICRC



Government Offices of Sweden



The Netherlands
Red Cross

Research objective

Military doctrine and practice

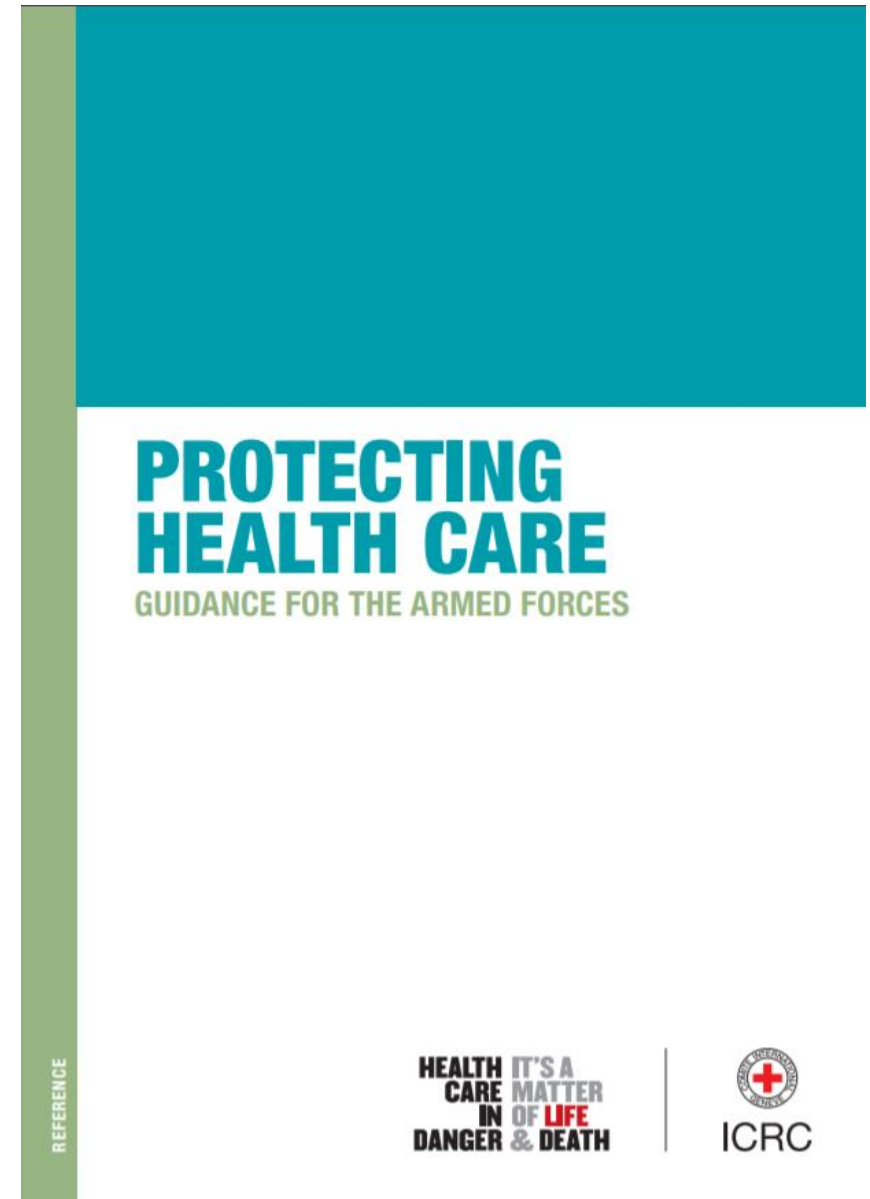
- Implementing the legal framework
 - Operationalisation: *How* armed forces protect health care in armed conflict
 - Identifying and decontextualize good practice
- Approach armed forces as enablers

Background:

- Risks of armed forces presence
- Impact on civilian health-care services
- Opportunities to ensure continued health-care delivery



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Research findings

Observed practice

- Limited integration of legal framework in doctrine
- Pragmatic interpretation of protection
- Disconnected: existence practical practice

Understanding the operational environment

- Sensitivity to protection activities
- Excess of scenarios
- Alternative objective existing practical measures
- Re-interpreting existing practical measures:
 - Evaluating impact
 - Recognise as contributions to protection
 - Expand applicability
 - Inclusive approach and diversification

Protecting Healthcare

Guidance for the Armed Forces

Focus Areas

Generic Measures

Armed Forces Medical Services

Civil-Military Coordination

Rules of Engagement

Precautions in Attack

Targeting in Aerial Operations

CASEVAC and MEDEVAC

Checkpoint procedures

Search Operations in Healthcare Facilities

Practical Measures:

Considerations for Commanders
and military staff

- Personnel
- Intelligence and security
- Operations
- Logistics
- Plans
- Signals
- Education and Training
- Resource Management
- Civil-military Coordination
- Accountability



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Example: Protecting Healthcare Guidance for the Armed Forces

Focus Areas
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Checkpoint procedures
Search Operations in Healthcare Facilities

**Assess the availability and
quality of care**

Plan an exit strategy

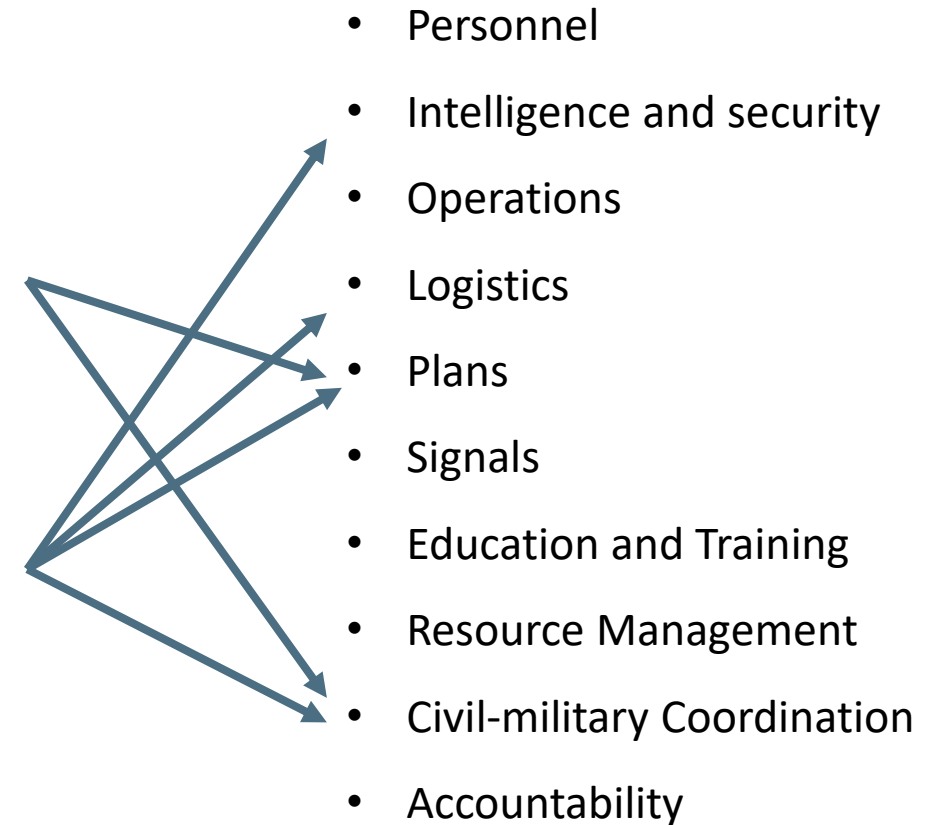


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Provide civilian healthcare providers with security information on curfews

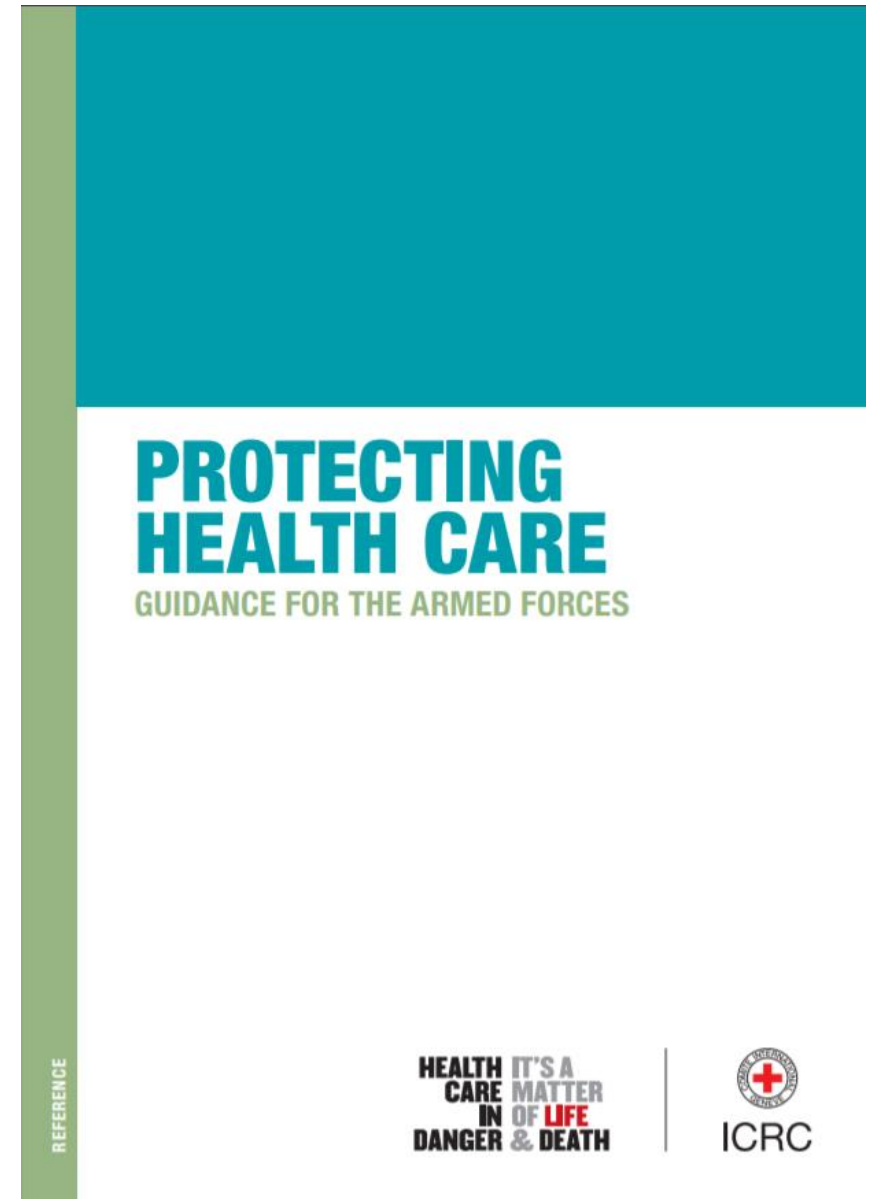
Conduct contingency planning to address the potential disruption to medical services



Relevance for Healthcare practitioners

Transparency and assistance

- Understanding the armed forces
- Promoting the medical mission
- Coordination with the armed forces





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