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Effect of Conventional Weapons on Civilian Injuries

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Conclusion

The data from Kabul is particularly concerning in the global trend of urbanization of societies and show how the potential of any weapon to injure civilians is exaggerated in urban settings.

Weapons, law and medicine

The process of making or promoting policy and law entails analyzing data that clarify the nature of the problem that the policy or law is trying to avoid. International humanitarian law is not exception. These data show that the number of civilian injuries is related not only to whether weapons are in the hands of untrained and undisciplined users but also to the type of weapons in those hands. This argues for a greater need to control the transfer of weapons of increasing military efficiency and warrants urgent and serious examination of States' obligations under international humanitarian law in relation to arms transfers. Such an examination should naturally follow the precedent set by the drawing up of a treaty banning the production, stockpiling, transfer and use of anti-personnel mines. The medical profession has a responsibility to examine the global weapon problem as a health issue; this is a form of preventive medicine.