

Law and practice in respect of the media in armed conflicts: reflections on Rwanda

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In this study the author refers to the term media to mean the aggregate of organs "whose function is to collect, process and impart information including print, electronic and verbal means by which messages, sounds and visions are communicated to the public. The general role of the media in a human society is well known and documented. However, despite its active role in times of armed conflicts, the media institution seems to have attracted little attention, if any. of international and national lawyers in terms of the rights and duties of the media in times of armed conflicts, such that the legal role of the media in armed conflicts remains unaddressed and, therefore, unclear. This research has employed the two methods, primary and secondary methods of data collection, to study, analyze, and assess the role of the media In armed conflicts in general, and the 1994 Rwandan genocide in particular the research has revealed that apart from the insufficiency of the law, both international and municipal, in defining the rights and duties of the media in armed conflicts, there has been extreme disobedience of the law by of, or the whole of the media fraternity. The researcher is convinced that, come what may, the role of the media in the human society need not be overemphasized By way of recommendation, therefore, he points out the minimum Measures which if retorted to by the addressees, the world will have the media that is not only better informed of Its international legal obligations, but also which is facilitate in the discharge of functions that go in the long way in enhancing the protection of victims of armed conflicts