



**American
Red Cross**

**Int'l Humanitarian Law
Youth Action Campaign**

American Red Cross' International Humanitarian Law Youth Action Campaign: Emblem Talk

International Humanitarian Law Youth Action Campaign Summit Representatives attended a meeting with Allison Leader to learn about the protection of the Red Cross Emblem.

Tuesday, July 22nd, 2025, 10:00 - 11:10 AM ET

Written by: Hannah Moon

SUMMARY: During Allison Leader's presentation on July 22nd, Summit Representatives learned how the Red Cross Emblem can be used. It is important that the emblem is used appropriately, so that the meaning of the Red Cross emblem stays strong and signifies neutrality, impartiality, and protection for those seeking humanitarian aid during armed conflict. Misuse of the emblem could lead to undermining the effectiveness of humanitarian efforts, potentially costing lives. Allison Leader's insights were an eye-opening experience into the challenges of ensuring compliance from partners and the difficulties artificial intelligence can pose in the future.

On July 22nd, 11:30 AM, Allison Leader, a graduate of George Washington University Law School and Vice President of the Chief Council, joined youth advocates at the International Humanitarian Law Youth Action Campaign Summit to teach them about the protection of the Red Cross emblem and its significance. Allison began by describing her primary role within the Red Cross, which entailed making sure that the Red Cross emblem—designed under the Geneva Conventions—is used correctly and appropriately. She defined the protective use of the emblem,

which serves to ensure that Red Cross members are not targeted in combat. She then led advocates through a series of examples of protective use, one being the use of the Red Cross emblem on a medical helicopter flying extremely low and sending debris flying during a Black Lives Matter (BLM) protest. The controversy of this situation was that because the emblem was used during a BLM protest, it technically meant that the Red Cross took a stance on this social matter. The key takeaway was that although the Red Cross stands for morality and justice, it is a neutral organization, and therefore, the emblem should not have been used on the helicopter. This is one of many scenarios, however. Misuse of the emblem was often present in games, movies, and medical products as well.

In order to address controversies such as these, Allison mentioned that the marketing/communications team of the Red Cross reaches out to organizations and negotiates with them to preserve the value of the emblem while also preventing further disagreement with organizations. One major method is to slightly change the image of the emblem by switching the red cross to a white cross—a cost-efficient and simple solution to the issue. Allison ended her presentation by expressing possible concerns about the rising use of artificial intelligence and how youth can gain awareness of this topic going forward. The insights of Allison were a true learning experience for advocates, as they learned how every aspect of the Red Cross, including the emblem, is of great depth and value.