

Press Release

District Court of The Hague scheduled to deliver verdict on Chora case brought against Dutch State

The Hague, 19th November, 2022

On Wednesday, 23rd November 2022, the District Court of The Hague will deliver its verdict on the Chora case that has been brought against the Dutch State for alleged violations of International Humanitarian Law during a battle for the town of Chora, Afghanistan in 2007 which resulted in the death of between 50-80 civilians. This civil case has been brought against the Dutch State by four Afghan relatives of victims who are being represented by lawyer Liesbeth Zegveld. The plaintiffs are seeking to hold the Dutch State accountable for the civilian deaths caused by the bombing of Chora by Dutch military forces, which included the deployment of F-16s, Apache helicopters and an armoured Howitzer.

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) upholds the principle of proportionality by ensuring that incidental and involuntary damages caused to the civilian population during a military attack should not be excessive in comparison to the direct military advantage obtained. Under IHL, launching an attack which may be expected to cause incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objects, or a combination thereof, which would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated, is prohibited. IHL also provides that each party to the conflict must ensure distinction between civilian objects and military objectives, notably by using specific methods of warfare, and that each party to the conflict must give effective advance warning of attacks which may affect the civilian population, unless circumstances do not permit. The plaintiffs argue that the bombing by the Dutch military in Chora, by using F-16s, Apache helicopters and Howitzers, was disproportionate in its force. The plaintiffs also argue that the civilian population of Chora and the surrounding area was insufficiently warned of the bombardments, and that the disproportionate use of force and the insufficient warnings issued to the civilian population of Chora amount to a violation of International Humanitarian Law.

The plaintiffs are pursuing the case in accordance with Dutch law which upholds the principle of universal jurisdiction in civil proceedings for individuals who are unable to gain access to justice elsewhere. At a hearing at the District Court of The Hague in March 2021, the presiding judge decided that the court has insufficient information to pass judgment, and demanded that the State better reconstruct what exactly happened in the run-up to the bombing. This information was provided to the Court at a hearing in September 2022, based on which the final verdict will now be provided by the Court.

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Practical information

The hearing will begin at **10:00 AM CEST** on **Wednesday, 23 November 2022** at the **District Court of The Hague**:

District Court of The Hague
Prins Clauslaan 60
2595 AJ
The Hague
The Netherlands

The court is located within walking distance of The Hague Central Station. Please be advised that those who wish to attend the hearing should be at the court before time to go through security procedures.

Please note, the proceedings will be in Dutch.

For further information on the case or the hearing, please visit the Nuhanovic Foundation website by clicking [here](#), or reach out to us via [email](#).