

which states that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.⁶ In war, loss of life is inevitable. Soldiers, due to the nature of their profession, are often obliged to forfeit this human right in wartime. Civilians have no such obligation. Yet, as either a direct or indirect result of prolonged armed conflict, the civilian's right to life is often forfeited. It is those situations where loss of civilian life is avoidable or preventable that should be the focal point of international action on their behalf.

The Articles in the Universal Declaration that address quality of life provide the basis of such action. Article 25, for example, states:

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health, and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

The stipulations in paragraph 1 of this Article provide grounds for humanitarian intervention even when conditions for civilians in war zones are less than immediately life-threatening. The reference in paragraph 2 to special care for mothers and children tends to intensify the salience of these conditions in regard to both those groups, making intervention on their behalf even more compelling.

International Covenants on Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was augmented in 1966 by the UN's proclamation of the International Covenants on Human Rights.⁷ They consist of two

⁶ *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, New York: United Nations Department of Public Information.

⁷ *International Covenants on Human Rights*, United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2200 (XXI), 16 December 1966.