

Figure 3

Principles of a Just War

- ✓ A just war is waged only as a last resort.
- ✓ Only a legitimate authority can wage a just war. Only an authority sanctioned by whatever the society and those outside the society deem legitimate can serve a just cause.
- ✓ A just war only is waged to redress a wrong or injury. Self-defense against an armed force is a just cause.
- ✓ A just war is fought with “right” intentions.
- ✓ There is a reasonable chance for success. Deaths and injuries are not morally justified in a hopeless cause.
- ✓ The goal is to reestablish peace.
- ✓ The violence used is proportional to the injury suffered.
- ✓ The use of weapons distinguishes between combatants and noncombatants.

*Adapted from Vincent Ferraro, Professor of International Politics, Mount Holyoke College
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