

OEA/Ser.P  
AG/RES. 1706 (XXX-O/00)  
16 May 2000  
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## RESOLUTION

### **PROMOTION OF AND RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW**

(Resolution adopted at the first plenary session, held on June 5, 2000)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

RECALLING its resolutions ag/res. 1270 (XXIV-O/94), ag/res. 1335 (XXV-O/95), ag/res. 1408 (XXVI-O/96), ag/res. 1503 (XXVII-O/97), ag/res. 1565 (XXVIII-O/98), and AG/RES. 1619 (XXIX-O/99);

HAVING CONSIDERED the report of the Secretary General on the implementation of resolution AG/RES. 1619 (XXIX-O/99) (CP/CAJP-1649/00) and the report of the Permanent Council on the promotion of and respect for international humanitarian law (CP/doc.3314/00);

DEEPLY CONCERNED over the persistent violations of international humanitarian law occurring throughout the world and, in particular, over the fate of the civilian population, which is increasingly subject to attacks that contravene the applicable fundamental rules;

RECALLING that it is the obligation of all states to observe and enforce in all circumstances the standards established in the 1949 Geneva Conventions and, where applicable, for the states that are parties thereto, those contained in the 1977 Additional Protocols to those conventions;

UNDERSCORING the need to strengthen the principles of international humanitarian law by achieving its universal acceptance, its widest possible dissemination, and its implementation;

AWARE of the need to punish those responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other grave breaches of international humanitarian law;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT IN THIS CONTEXT the historic significance of the adoption in Rome of the Statute of the International Criminal Court;

RECOGNIZING ONCE MORE the ongoing efforts of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to promote and disseminate knowledge of international humanitarian law and the activities it carries out as an organization that is independent, neutral, and impartial under any and all circumstances;

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the recommendations made in 1995 by the Group of Experts to study practical means of promoting full respect for and compliance with international humanitarian law, in particular, regarding the establishment of national committees or commissions to advise and assist governments regarding the dissemination and implementation of international humanitarian law;

RECOGNIZING the important part that these national committees or commissions play in ensuring that the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols thereto, as well as the other

instruments of international humanitarian law, are incorporated into the domestic law of the member states, so that compliance with those instruments and the dissemination thereof are ensured; and

EXPRESSING its satisfaction with the increasing cooperation between the General Secretariat of the Organization and the ICRC, resulting from the agreement signed on May 10, 1996, which has furthered efforts to disseminate international humanitarian law in the Americas,

RESOLVES:

1. To welcome the increase in the number of member states that, in the past year, have ratified or acceded to various instruments of international humanitarian law, particularly the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.
2. To urge the member states that have not yet done so to consider ratification of, or, if applicable, accession to the 1977 Additional Protocols I and II to the 1949 Geneva Conventions.
3. Also to urge the members states that have not yet done so to consider signing or ratification, as appropriate, of the Statute of the International Criminal Court.
4. Further, to urge the member states that have not yet done so to consider ratification of, or, if applicable, accession to, the following instruments relating to weapons, which may be excessively injurious or have indiscriminate effects:
  - a. The 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (and the Protocols thereto);
  - b. The 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction; and
  - c. The 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.
5. To underscore how important it is for the states, in implementing the body of international humanitarian law, to pay special attention to the following provisions:
  - a. The widest possible dissemination of international humanitarian law among the armed forces and security forces, by including it in official instruction programs and in the training of permanent armed forces staff in this area (Article 83 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions);
  - b. The enactment of criminal legislation required to punish those responsible for war crimes and other grave breaches of international humanitarian law (Article 86 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions);
  - c. The enactment of legislation to regulate the use of emblems protected under international humanitarian law and to punish the improper use thereof (Article 38 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions and its Annex containing the regulations thereto); and
  - d. The obligation, in the study, development, acquisition, or adoption of a new weapon, to determine whether its employment would violate international humanitarian law, and, if it would, not to adopt it for use within the armed forces

or security forces or manufacture it for other purposes (Article 36 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions).

6. To urge the member states that have not yet done so to study, with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the advisability of establishing national committees or commissions to implement and disseminate international humanitarian law.

7. To urge the member states and all parties to an armed conflict to help preserve the impartiality, independence, and neutrality of humanitarian action in accordance with the guiding principles adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 46/182, dated December 19, 1991, and to ensure that the staff of humanitarian organizations are protected.

8. To invite the member states to continue to cooperate with the International Committee of the Red Cross in its various spheres of responsibility and to facilitate its work, in particular, by using its advisory services to support states' efforts to implement international humanitarian law.

9. To request the Secretary General to report to the Permanent Council before the thirty-first regular session of the General Assembly on the implementation of this resolution.