



Recommendation 601 (1970)¹

Application of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 to police officials

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering that members of the police force during war-time and in particular under enemy occupation are placed under a severe mental and moral stress ;
2. Considering that it is undesirable to give police officials "combatant" status, as they must continue to exercise their functions of protecting persons and property during enemy occupation in the interests of the civilian population and that, for that reason, the provisions of the Third Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, relative to the treatment of prisoners of war, cannot apply ;
3. Convinced that police officials, as well as other categories of the civilian population, need protection by international legal provisions during war-time ;
4. Convinced of the desirability that the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war, and in particular Articles 27, 51, 54, 65, 67 and 70, paragraph 1, be applied to the police in the event of international military conflicts ;
5. Considering that, from a strictly legal point of view, the Fourth Geneva Convention is applicable to members of the police force, but that it is desirable to make certain that all contracting parties, in the event of armed conflicts, will effectively apply the provisions of the Convention to them ;
6. Believing in the usefulness of a unanimous and authoritative interpretation of the Convention by all contracting states ;
7. Inviting its members to take action in their national parliaments, urging their governments to declare themselves at an early date along the lines of this recommendation,
8. Recommends the Committee of Ministers :
 - a. to invite the governments of member states to make known as soon as possible to the Swiss Federal Council as the depositary of the Conventions, any objections or comments they may have to make in regard to the application of the Fourth Geneva Convention to police officials in the sense indicated above ;
 - b. to invite governments of member states to make every endeavour to induce non-member states which are parties to the Convention to make known their objections and comments to the Swiss Federal Council in the same conditions as member states and to do so as soon as possible but in any case within two years of the adoption of this recommendation ;
 - c. to invite the Swiss Federal Council to lend its full support and assistance to this operation ;

1. Assembly debate on 20 April 1970 (3rd Sitting) (see [Doc. 2692](#), report of the Legal Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 20 April 1970 (3rd Sitting).



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- d. to invite member governments to consult each other on whether and to what extent it would be useful for those concerned, and desirable in pursuance of this recommendation, to introduce an international distinctive badge for those police officials responsible only for the maintenance of public order and the fight against crime.