



## Recommendation 714 (1973)<sup>1</sup>

# Current development in international humanitarian law

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering that the Council of Europe's work for the protection and promotion of human rights represents one of its most important achievements and gives expression to the devotion of the peoples of all member States to the spiritual and moral values which are their common heritage and which guarantee their individual freedom, political liberty and the rule of law ;
2. Considering that there is a close connection between human rights law and humanitarian law, both having the same objective, and that humanitarian law is therefore also of interest to the Council of Europe ;
3. Considering that nearly a quarter of a century has elapsed since the codification of a broad sector of humanitarian law in the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 ;
4. Welcoming the action of the International Committee of the Red Cross in organising two conferences of governmental experts which were held in Geneva in 1971 and 1972 and produced two additional protocols to the Geneva Conventions relating respectively to "the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts" and to "the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts" ;
5. Expressing its satisfaction that the Swiss Federal Council has convened a Diplomatic Conference which will be held in 1974 to examine these two draft protocols ;
6. Having considered the report of its Legal Affairs Committee ([Doc. 3336](#)),
7. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

*communicate this report to member governments and incite them to participate in the Diplomatic Conference in 1974 in a positive and liberal spirit, with a view to supplementing and developing the existing rules of humanitarian law, with special emphasis on :the rules applying to armed conflicts not of an international character ;*

- a. *the rules applying to armed conflicts not of an international character ;*
- b. *the protection of the civilian population in times of armed conflict, in particular by the prohibition of attacks against the civilian population as such and by establishing that the general principles of the law of war apply to nuclear weapons ;*
- c. *the protection of the police which must be able to continue the exercise of its function without disturbance in the interest of the civil population ;*

*study and promote the adoption of a system of supervision by an impartial international organ of the observance of the rules of humanitarian law ;*

*intensify their efforts to ensure dissemination of and instruction in the international humanitarian conventions and their application, not only to military personnel at all levels, but also in schools and universities, including law schools, medical schools and teachers' colleges ;*

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1. Assembly debate on 27 September 1973 (12th Sitting) (see [Doc. 3336](#), report of the Legal Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 27 September 1973 (12th Sitting).



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*report to the Assembly in due course on the results of the Diplomatic Conference in 1974.*