Recommendation 945 (1982)[1]

International humanitarian law

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Aware that in times of armed conflict between or within states, the ideals of the Council of Europe, and especially human rights, are in constant peril ;

2. Considering that international humanitarian law and the objectives of the Council of Europe in safeguarding human rights stem from identical convictions ;

3. Emphasising that the International Committee of the Red Cross, in accordance with the Geneva Conventions, endeavours in all armed conflicts to afford its protection and aid to all persons suffering from the effects of such conflicts ;

4. Observing that new forms of armed conflict have made it necessary to reaffirm and develop international humanitarian law ;

5. Recalling its Recommendation 714 (1973), on current developments in international humanitarian law ;

6. Noting that the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law applicable in Armed Conflicts, convened by the Swiss Federal Council, adopted on 8 June 1977 two protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, one relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts, the other to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts, which came into force on 7 December 1978 ;

7. Recalling that, in its Resolutions 32/44 and 34/51, the United Nations General Assembly urged its member states to consider ratifying or acceding to both these protocols without delay ;

8. Observing that over five years have elapsed since the protocols were adopted, and that among the Council of Europe member states only Cyprus (Protocol I), Sweden, Norway and Switzerland have ratified them ;

9. Expressing the wish that these instruments be ratified or acceded to as soon as possible, so that they may become as generally accepted as the Geneva Conventions ;

10. Stressing that past experience in armed conflict has established the need for the Geneva Conventions and the two protocols to be disseminated as widely as possible in the armed forces and among the civilian population,

11. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite the governments of member states :

a. to expedite their ratification of the two protocols to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, one on protection of victims of international armed conflicts, and the other on protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts, which entered into force on 7 December 1978, or accede thereto ;

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1. See Doc. 4905, report of the Legal Affairs Committee. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 2 July 1982.

b. to ensure that international humanitarian law becomes known by disseminating and teaching of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and their protocols among the armed forces and civilian population.