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PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL MORALITY ADOPTED
AT THE XXXVIIth INTER-PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE
Rome, 6-11 September 1948

Seeing that the work of codification of international law, which has repeatedly figured on the agenda of Inter-Parliamentary Conferences since 1899, has now, under present international circumstances, again taken on increased importance;

Seeing that members of Parliament in all democratic countries play a foremost part in the direction and control of their country's international policy, and that, in the interests of the peoples who elected them, as in the collective interests of humanity, it is their duty to bring their contribution to, and to keep watch over, the application of the same principles of morality in relations between the nations as in relations between individuals;

Seeing that, during the second world war, declarations of paramount importance for the evolution of international law were made by the spokesmen of the victorious democracies;

Seeing that the Nuremberg Charter for the prosecution and punishment of the main war criminals has endowed international penal law with principles that are also worth codifying;

Seeing that those various declarations deserve to be preserved from oblivion and must continue to inspire the work of codification of international law undertaken by the United Nations;

Seeing that, moreover, such a vote would imply that the members of the various Parliaments affiliated to the Union endorsed those declarations (which, in most cases, were made by Governments), regarded themselves as directly bound by their terms and declared themselves ready to direct the foreign policy of their respective countries on the lines thus indicated;

Consequently, the XXXVIIth Conference recalls the leading principles of international morality contained in the Declaration of the Four Freedoms, the Atlantic Charter, the Moscow, Teheran and Yalta Declarations, the United Nations Charter

Nations Charter, the Potsdam Declaration, the Act of Chapultepec, the Nuremberg Charter, the Bogotà Charter, and similar international documents, as also in the main international statements made during hostilities by the spokesmen of the great democracies, and transmits to the United Nations, as the contribution of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to the work of codification provided for in Article 13 of the Charter, the Declaration joined to the present text, in which the Inter-Parliamentary Union has endeavoured to summarise those principles.

The Conference also recommends that the Inter-Parliamentary Committee on Juridical Questions continue its efforts for the development of the work it has undertaken with a view to proclaiming the principles of international morality.

DECLARATION ON THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL MORALITY

1. Relations between states are governed by principles of morality as are relations between individuals.

2. All states are solidary and form a de facto community of which it is desirable that the United Nations should, as soon as possible, become the universal juridical expression.

3. The members of the community of states are equal before the law, without prejudice to the limitations of sovereignty required for the benefit of the international community, in the interests of peace and security.

4. States have the strict duty to respect the obligations resulting from international conventions.

A treaty may only be annulled or modified with the consent of the states concerned or in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

5. No state may claim to be judge in its own cause. Every dispute between states which cannot be settled amicably must be settled by conciliation, arbitration, or in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter. All states must carry out in good faith the decision reached.

6. The independence of states is inviolable. Respect for that independence excludes the use of political, economic, or other pressure on the part of a state for the purpose of modifying the political or social structure of another state, without prejudice to measures taken as a result of decisions of the United Nations Organisation to safeguard peace and democracy.

7. No state may use its armed forces on the territory of another independent state except with the agreement of the state concerned or for military action authorised by the terms of the United Nations Charter.

8. As all propoganda in favour of war and all forms of incitement to aggression constitute a threat to that peace towards which the efforts of all states should be directed, all governments should take active steps to implement the resolution condemning such propoganda voted unanimously at the second General Assembly of the United Nations in 1947 and at the Conference on Freedom of Information in 1948.

Furthermore, in the interests of peace, all states are required to encourage by publicity and propoganda and by any other means at their disposal friendly relations between peoples based on the aims and principles of the United Nations Charter.

9. As, under the terms unanimously adopted by the Conference on Freedom of Information which met in Geneva in March and April 1948, "the attainment of a just and lasting peace depends in great degree upon the free flow of true and honest information to all peoples and upon the spirit of responsibility with which all personnel of the press and other agencies of information seek the truth and report the facts", it is in particular the duty of all governments to see that all official communications issued by foreign governments relating to international disputes in which they are concerned should be disseminated on their territory effectively and on a basis of reciprocity.

As the attainment of a just and lasting peace depends largely on freedom of opinion, it is the duty of states to give their nationals the right to express different opinions, including even opinions contrary to those of the party in power.

10. Since aggression is a crime, those who prepare, promote and execute it must be prosecuted and punished by joint action of states.

The collectivity of states must adopt as soon as possible an international penal code and create an international penal court for the punishment of crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity, including in particular the crime of genocide.

Mutual assistance between states in the matter of prosecution and punishment of war criminals and persons guilty of genocide or other crimes against humanity must take place without restrictions and without time-limits contrary to the spirit set forth above.

A state victim of aggression has the right of legitimate defence and the community of states must lend its support.

11. Armaments, which are a heavy burden on world economy, cannot legitimately serve any other purpose than that of protecting the nations individually and collectively against aggression. Their arbitrary fixation by sovereign states and the competition arising between those states in this

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field have often been stigmatized as a cause of insecurity. It is therefore the urgent duty of states to collaborate for their limitation and progressive reduction under international control, inspection, and supervision.

Under that same guarantee, international morality makes it the duty for states to agree upon international control, inspection and supervision of atomic weapons, as also other instruments of war making possible mass destruction of human life and material wealth, in view of the final abolition of those arms.

12. Peoples have the inalienable and imprescriptible right of free self-determination and the international community the duty to secure the exercise of that right.

13. States must not exploit for their own profit populations of a different civilisation placed under their trusteeship. It is their duty to co-operate for the improvement of their material, moral, and intellectual condition in such a way as to lead them as rapidly as possible towards autonomous administration, independent government, or any other solution desired by those populations. In the territories inhabited by them no privilege must be granted, of a commercial or industrial nature, to nationals of the state responsible for administration.

14. It is the duty of states to collaborate for the general welfare of mankind. They must grant one another mutually, as regards access to raw materials and foreign trade, the facilities necessary to the economic prosperity of each one of them.

15. In every state there should be granted to all citizens, without distinction of religion, race, sex or nationality, the exercise of rights which will ensure the free development of their individuality.

16. Since every human being has a right to life it is the duty of states to bear, within the limits of their respective means, the burden resulting from the harbouring of displaced persons, refugees, stateless persons or persons fleeing from war pestilence or natural catastrophes.

Except in the case of persons guilty of crimes of common law and in the case of war criminals, a state has the right to give asylum on its territory to individuals, without distinction of age, who have fled from their own country through fear of political, religious, or racial persecution.

17. Further, states having on their territories, or on territories occupied or controlled by them, displaced persons, refugees, emigrés, etc., shall refrain from any form of propaganda the aim of which is to influence the said persons in a tendentious manner with a view to preventing them from taking a decision to return to their own country, and they shall use all the legal means at their disposal to combat propaganda of this sort.

The removal of children from their own country without the consent of their parents or legal guardians and the placing of obstacles in the way of their repatriation are a flagrant violation of international morality.

Any displaced person or refugee wishing to return to his home has the right to do so; it is the duty of the international collectivity and, particularly, of the state concerned to lend them all effective aid and assistance.

18. Each state must endeavour to secure for all manual and intellectual workers respect for their dignity, their right to work, to rest and leisure, and a fair remuneration for their labours.
