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Right to Life in Peace

Prepared by the Czechoslovak Red Cross

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RIGHT TO LIFE IN PEACE

Report by the Czechoslovak Red Cross

Second World Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on Peace,

bearing in mind the close connection between international protection of human rights and maintaining and safeguarding of international peace and security expressed in the UN Charter;

recalling that in the Charter the peoples of the United Nations proclaimed their determination to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and that one of the fundamental purposes of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security, to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of a humanitarian character and to promote and to encourage respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all;

mindful of Resolution XXXVII, unanimously adopted by the XIXth International Conference of the Red Cross in New Delhi, which proclaimed that aims and principles of the UN Charter are and remain authoritative guidelines for the Red Cross (movement) and confirmed the moral and humanitarian obligation of the Charter also for the Red Cross movement;

noting that the violation of fundamental human rights is forbidden by international instruments relating to human rights, by international humanitarian law and the general principles of international law;

convinced that the Red Cross shall encourage all the efforts leading, in conformity with its fundamental principles of humanity to prevent and alleviate human suffering in all circumstances, to protect life and health, to ensure respect for the human being and to promote mutual understanding, friendship, co-operation and lasting peace amongst all peoples;

drawing attention to the fact that the Red Cross has shown constantly particular concern about the use and existence of weapons of mass destruction, which cannot make distinction between combatants and non-combatants, which cause damage without discrimination and which represent for the whole of humanity a threat of extermination;

endorsing the report of the Secretary General of the United Nations, presented in document A/3/511 to the XXXVIIIth session of the General Assembly, and the opinion of the whole international community, that

in the present circumstances the right to life is the most important human right, an absolutely basic and fundamental right, without respect of which all other human rights would lack meaning;

recognizing that peace among nations and therefore the right to life in peace are mankind's paramount values of the highest priority and of the highest esteem by all humanitarian national and international organizations and by all principal, political, humanitarian, social and religious movements;

recalling the Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples, adopted in the Resolution 2037/XX of December 7, 1965 by the General Assembly of the UN;

further recalling the Declaration of the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace of December 15, 1978 adopted by the General Assembly of the UN in its 85th Meeting, which "reaffirms the right of individuals, States and all mankind to life in peace" and which in his Principle No 1 declares that "every nation and every human being has the inherent right to life in peace";

having in mind that the Diplomatic Conference on Reaffirmation and Development of the International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, held in the years 1974-1977 in Geneva, and codified unanimously the principle of survival in Art. 54-56 of Protocol I and in Art. 15-16 of Protocol II, principle which is the expression of the need for safeguarding the survival of civilians and of the civilian population and therefore an expression of the right to life;

having further in mind that the resolution No 23 adopted by the Tehran International Conference on Human Rights in 1968 declared that "peace is underlying condition for the full observance of human rights and war is their negation";

being aware of the fact that the General Assembly of the UN by its unanimous Resolution No 24 of December 19, 1968 fully confirmed the above quoted Resolution from Tehran and that all three components of the International Red Cross have many a time recalled the mentioned Resolution from Tehran as well as the Resolution of the UN General Assembly;

is solemnly declaring that

1. Right of the human being to Life in Peace is considered to be ethic, moral and humanitarian principle of the Red Cross movement on national and international level, and that
2. Right of the human being to Life in Peace is from the point of view of fundamental principles and humanitarian activities of the Red Cross a natural and inherent right of every human being, and that
3. International Red Cross and all its components is to endeavour in the sphere of its competence and in the framework of its possibilities in all possible way to acknowledge, assert and respect this principle.