

AMMAN DECLARATION ON CIVIL DEFENCE

**adopted by the Xth World Conference on Civil Defence
3 - 5 April 1994
Amman, Jordan**

*We, participants
in the Xth World Conference on Civil Defence*

MINDFUL of the recognition of "Civil defence" in international humanitarian law in a world where the increase of the number of disasters and the multiplication of risks constitute a great threat for all mankind,

CONSIDERING that Civil defence encompasses all humanitarian measures with a view to protecting the population, its environment and its property,

AWARE that not all technological or natural disasters are unavoidable and that progress in the modern world makes them foreseeable to a large extent and allows their mitigation,

RECALLING the decision of the General Assembly of the United Nations to launch a far-reaching global undertaking for the 1990s to save human lives and reduce the impact of natural disasters, as well as Resolution 46/182 which set up the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) with the mandate of coordinating all emergency assistance and relief,

REAFFIRMING the relevance of Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration regarding the need for the international community to assist States afflicted by natural disasters and other emergencies likely to produce sudden harmful effects in the environment of those States,

RECALLING the World Health Assembly resolution on Emergency and Humanitarian Relief Operations, which urged Member States to appraise and strengthen the capabilities of their health systems to prepare for emergencies in collaboration with Civil Defence, non-governmental and private organisations,

CONSIDERING that the International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO), created in 1972 as an intergovernmental Organization, has the mandate to promote and develop Civil defence all over the world,

BENEFITING from the constructive debate and exchange of views during this world conference, on the basis of the official information documents submitted by ICDO to the various technical sessions,

1. EMPHASIZE THAT:

a) in the management of all emergency measures, priority should be given to dealing with prevention, and preparedness measures which are of primary importance in reducing the impact of disasters and the need for relief assistance.

b) civil defence responsibility belongs to the States, and risks and consequences of disasters are not limited by national borders, and their prevention depends largely on international cooperation.

2. CALL ON GOVERNMENTS

a) to consider emergency prevention and preparedness as an integral part and an important aspect of development policy and strategies, and hence to integrate them in the socio-economic planning at all in-country levels.

b) to consider that the very concept as well as the definition of "Civil Defence" provided in article 61 of the Additional Protocol I of 8 June 1977 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 should be enlarged outside armed conflicts and no longer limited only to certain humanitarian tasks in case of disasters in a country in a situation of armed conflict, and to recognise that the concept of civil defence should be understood to encompass all humanitarian activities related to protecting the population, their property and environment against accidents and disasters of all kinds,

c) to review and further strengthen the National civil defence structures in order to enable them to fully play their key role as overall coordinator of national efforts related to preparedness and response efforts,

d) to create in countries which do not have a civil defence Organization, such structures with the help of developed and developing countries through the International Civil Defence Organization.

3. EXPRESS THE WISH that the United Nations Organization

a) better clarifies the roles and responsibilities of its various operational entities in emergency management, in order to avoid duplication among these entities as well as among national authorities,

b) and reinforces its emergency assistance programs so as to strengthen the existing national structures and to avoid duplicating the assistance by creating new channels.

4. ENCOURAGE

a) the international community, as well as all private firms having activities creating risks, to contribute effectively to the promotion of civil defence all over the world,

b) the donor countries to allocate resources from their voluntary contributions to international humanitarian assistance to civil defence at national and international levels.