

# BEIJING DECLARATION

adopted by the 11th World Conference on Civil Defence  
26-28 October 1998  
Beijing, People's Republic of China

*Protection and assistance for all in the face of disasters in the XXI<sup>st</sup> century  
World Action Plan for the Development of Civil Defence*

*We, the Participants  
in the 11th World Conference on Civil Defence,*

**CONSIDERING** that:

- protection and assistance in the face of all kinds of disasters, natural and man-made are fundamental human rights as are those of life and health;
- the creation of national civil defence structures which in the first instance is the responsibility of States meets this need;
- at the dawn of the 21st century, given the increase in the frequency of disasters and the number of their victims, civil defence is increasingly called upon;
- the creation, development and strengthening of these structures are more than ever worthy of unequivocal support and encouragement;

**RECALLING** the resolutions in the field of disaster management of the United Nations General Assembly, and particularly Resolution 2034 calling on Governments to establish an appropriate planning and executive body with a view to coordinating the management of relief operations.

Having examined the proposals of the International Civil Defence Organisation (ICDO) aimed at formulating a basic civil defence doctrine, as well as the proposals made by representatives of States, organisations and other entities concerned by this question:

**1. REAFFIRM** the absolute necessity to ensure protection and assistance to all in the face of disasters;

**2. STRESS** that civil defence structures, working in a multi-sectorial framework are the most appropriate management bodies for the many and diverse operations to save lives, property and the environment, before, during and after disasters;

**3. EMPHASIZE** the need to include prevention as an essential component in development policies and plans;

**4. STRESS** the importance of developing and strengthening international cooperation in the field of disaster management and civil defence in general; in this regard, States which excel in expertise, resources and technology should assist those from developing countries to build civil defence structures for effective protection of the population;

**5. HAVE ADOPTED** a World Action Plan for the development of civil defence structures which proposes:

- a basic doctrine relating to national civil defence structures,
- a framework convention for international cooperation and mutual assistance,
- an appeal in favour of the standardisation of management procedures in emergency situations,
- Fundamental Principles of Civil Defence based on values which could be universally recognised and accepted,
- a plan of promotion and dissemination of International Humanitarian Law relating to civil defence;

**6. COMMIT OURSELVES** to promoting this plan amongst States and national and international, governmental and non-governmental organisations concerned;

**7. CALL UPON** all States, and in particular those most vulnerable to both man-made and natural disasters, to refer to the World Action Plan for the development of civil defence in their efforts to develop or strengthen their national civil defence services;

**8. and UNDERLINE** the role of ICDO as the organisation federating national civil defence services and as a policy-maker in the field of protection of populations in the face of natural and man-made disasters.