

**UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION ON INCENDIARY
WEAPONS AND OTHER CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS**

On 19 December 1977 the United National General Assembly, at its 106th plenary meeting of its thirty-second session, adopted a resolution on the prohibition or restriction, for humanitarian reasons, of certain weapons.

This resolution is based mainly on the work of the Conference of Government Experts on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, which held two sessions, in Lucerne (1974) and Lugano (1976), under ICRC auspices. The results of their deliberations were published by the ICRC in two reports (*Conference of Government Experts on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons*, I, ICRC, Geneva 1975 and II, ICRC, Geneva 1976).

The text of the United Nations resolution is as follows:

RESOLUTION A/32/152

**Incendiary and other specific conventional weapons which
may be the subject of prohibitions or restrictions of
use for humanitarian reasons**

The General Assembly,

Convinced that the suffering of civilian populations and combatants could be significantly reduced if general agreement can be attained on the prohibition or restriction for humanitarian reasons of the use of specific conventional weapons, including any which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects,

Mindful that positive results as regards the non-use or restriction of use for humanitarian reasons of specific conventional weapons would serve, in

addition, as encouragement in the broader field of disarmament and might facilitate subsequent agreement on the elimination of such weapons which were completely banned for use,

Recalling that the issue of prohibitions or restrictions for humanitarian reasons of the use of specific conventional weapons has been the subject of substantive discussion for a number of years, notably at the sessions of the Conference of Government Experts on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons held, under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, at Lucerne, from 24 September to 18 October 1974, and at Lugano from 28 January to 26 February 1976, and at four sessions of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts and in the General Assembly since 1971,

Taking note of the reports of the Secretary-General on the work of the Diplomatic Conference as regards the work of the Conference relevant to the present resolution,

Having concluded from these reports that discussions have taken place primarily on the questions of prohibiting the use of conventional weapons, the primary effect of which is to injure by fragments not detectable by X-ray; of restrictions in the use of land-mines and booby traps; and of prohibitions or restrictions of use of incendiary weapons, including napalm, and that consideration was also given to other conventional weapons, such as small-calibre projectiles and certain blast and fragmentation weapons, and to the possibility of prohibiting or restricting the use of such weapons;

Noting resolution 22 (IV) on follow-up regarding prohibitions or restrictions of use of certain conventional weapons adopted by the Diplomatic Conference on 7 June 1977, in which the Conference recommends, inter alia, that a conference of Governments on such weapons should be convened not later than 1979,

1. Believes that the work on such weapons should both build upon the areas of common ground thus far identified and include the search for further areas of common ground and should in each case seek the broadest possible agreement;

2. Decides to convene in 1979 a United Nations conference with a view to reaching agreements on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of specific conventional weapons, including those which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or have indiscriminate effects, taking into account humanitarian and military considerations, and on the question of a system of periodic review of this matter and for consideration of further proposals;

3. Decides to convene a United Nations preparatory conference for the conference referred to in paragraph 2 above and requests the Secretary-General to transmit invitations to all States and parties invited to attend the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts;

4. Recommends that the preparatory conference should meet once in 1978 for organizational purposes and, subsequently, with the task of establishing the best possible substantive basis for the achievement at the United Nations conference of agreements as envisaged in the present resolution and of considering organizational matters relating to the holding of the United Nations Conference;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to assist the Preparatory Conference in its work;

6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-third session an item entitled "United Nations Conference on Prohibitions or Restrictions of Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be Deemed to be excessively injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects: report of the United Nations preparatory conference".

CORRIGENDUM

In its December 1977 issue, *International Review* published the text of a United Nations resolution entitled "Respect of human rights in armed conflicts".

The number of this resolution is A/32/44 and its date is 8 December 1977. Readers are kindly requested to note that the reference number which appeared in our last issue (A/C.6/32/L.6) was that of the Committee which examined the resolution and not of the General Assembly.