



General Assembly

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Agenda item 100

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2004

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/59/498)]

59/171. New international humanitarian order

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 57/184 of 18 December 2002 and all previous resolutions concerning the promotion of a new international humanitarian order¹ as well as all relevant resolutions, in particular resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations, and the annex thereto,

Reaffirming the fundamental importance of adherence to and implementation of international humanitarian law, refugee law and human rights law as well as internationally accepted norms and principles, in particular the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Recognizing the importance of action at the national and regional levels and the role that regional organizations can play in certain cases to prevent humanitarian crises, and noting with appreciation the complementary role played in this regard by the United Nations entities, including the agencies, funds and programmes,

Aware of the important role that international organizations, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector can play, within their respective mandates, in the humanitarian context,

Concerned by the increasingly difficult context in which humanitarian assistance takes place in some areas, in particular the continuous erosion, in many cases, of respect for the principles and rules of international humanitarian law,

Emphasizing the importance of continued international cooperation in support of the efforts of affected States in dealing with natural disasters and complex emergencies in all their phases,

Reiterating that humanitarian assistance should be provided in a way which is not to the detriment of resources made available for international cooperation for development,

¹ Resolutions 36/136, 37/201, 38/125, 40/126, 42/120, 42/121, 43/129, 43/130, 45/101, 45/102, 47/106, 49/170, 51/74, 53/124 and 55/73.

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,²

1. *Expresses its appreciation* for the continuing efforts of the Secretary-General in the humanitarian field, and urges Governments to assist him in promoting a new international humanitarian order that corresponds to new realities and challenges, including the development of an agenda for humanitarian action, in accordance with international law;

2. *Reaffirms* the obligation of all States and parties to armed conflicts to protect civilians in armed conflicts in accordance with international humanitarian law, and invites States to promote a culture of protection, taking into account the particular needs of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities;

3. *Calls upon* all Governments and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies, in particular armed conflicts and post-conflict situations, in countries in which humanitarian personnel are operating, in conformity with the relevant provisions of international law and national laws, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel in order to allow them to perform efficiently their task of assisting the affected civilian population, including refugees and internally displaced persons;

4. *Urges* Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and others concerned to extend cooperation and provide support to the efforts of the Secretary-General, inter alia, through the relevant United Nations agencies and organizational mechanisms set up to address the assistance and protection needs of victims of complex emergencies as well as the safety and security of United Nations and other humanitarian workers;

5. *Invites* the Secretary-General to continue to promote strict adherence to refugee law, international humanitarian law, human rights law and internationally accepted norms and principles in situations of humanitarian emergency;

6. *Recognizes* the complementarity between humanitarian assistance and human rights;

7. *Encourages* the international community to improve its response to humanitarian emergencies, including those of a protracted nature, including efforts by donors with regard to policies and practices of good donorship;

8. *Encourages* intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations as well as the private sector to assist and support national and international efforts to respond to humanitarian challenges and alleviate human suffering;

9. *Recognizes* the important need to address more effectively the transition from relief to development, and welcomes in this regard the request made by the Economic and Social Council to the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the issue for further consideration by the Council and the General Assembly;

10. *Invites* Member States, the Secretary-General and the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, to strengthen the capacities of regional and subregional organizations, where applicable, in the context of the response to humanitarian crises;

² A/59/554.

11. *Invites* Member States, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, relevant entities of the United Nations system, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including the Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues, to reinforce activities and cooperation so as to continue to develop an agenda for humanitarian action;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to support the process of developing an agenda for humanitarian action and to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session on the overall progress made.

*74th plenary meeting
20 December 2004*