

Address by Konstantin Kosachev, Head of the Russian Delegation, on the topic: “Upholding humanitarian standards and supporting humanitarian action during crises”
(151st IPU Assembly, General Debate, Geneva)

Dear Ms. President,

Mr. Secretary General, esteemed colleagues!

This year, Russia, along with China and other nations solemnly commemorated the 80th anniversary of the Victory in World War II. In the USSR alone, 27 million people fell victim to German Nazism, Italian fascism and Japanese militarism. Russia honors the memory of all those who sacrificed their lives in that dreadful war **and has legally acknowledged the Soviet people as victims of genocide.**

Remembering the victims of war, our country played a key role in the formulation of the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols. We regard these treaties as the cornerstones of international humanitarian law, which all civilized nations are obliged to uphold during any crisis or conflict.

Unfortunately, the world has not become more secure over the past 80 years. Our allies from the anti-Hitler coalition, France and the UK, have subsequently failed to stay on the right track of history. Jointly with NATO, they have nurtured neo-Nazism in the Baltic States and later in Ukraine, supported discrimination against the Russian-speaking individuals, where the latest case with unhuman deportation of native Russians from Latvia speaks for itself, and then denied Russia its rightful claim to security in Europe. The Western nations’ disregard for the Russians’ rights to self-determination and security has been the fundamental cause of today’s geopolitical crisis.

The disregard by Israel and several Western nations for the people’s right to self-determination and security in Palestine has in a similar way precipitated the crisis in the Middle East that cannot be deemed resolved, despite the encouraging news of recent days. The general wording of the peace plan requires clarification, particularly concerning the identification of what will ultimately be established in the West Bank. **Our position is well known: the UN General Assembly Resolution 181 must be fully implemented, an Arab state in Palestine must be created, and these realities must be acknowledged.**

We, as Russian parliamentarians, are committed to supporting humanitarian efforts. This year, we are in the process of finalizing the adoption of a federal law concerning the legal status of the Russian Red Cross, aimed at enhancing the organization’s ability to respond to humanitarian emergencies, including those occurring internationally. By approving the budget, we allocate donor assistance

to the aid programs of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and other global partners.

From our point of view, the main task for parliaments is to implement humanitarian standards into national legislation and law enforcement practice.

- Firstly, this involves the inclusion of the Geneva Conventions' provisions in military regulations and other legal documents relevant to the armed forces;

- Secondly, to establish legal responsibility for breaches of the Geneva Conventions;

- Thirdly, to introduce humanitarian law teaching for military personnel, diplomats, and lawyers.

All these efforts are being undertaken in Russia. The degree of incorporation of the Geneva Conventions into Russian national law is high, as confirmed by international organizations.

We agree with the IPU's concerns regarding the violations of humanitarian law in the context of armed conflicts around the world. For instance, the Kiev regime, with Western backing, has organized a blockade of water and energy supplies to Crimea. **However, the blockades during wartime are strictly prohibited by the IV Geneva Convention!**

Furthermore, by obtaining NATO weapons, financial resources, and ideological backing, Ukraine avoids entering into a peace agreement. Rather than pursuing peace, the Kiev regime employs the military against civilians, takes hostages, engages in acts of terrorism, inflicts torture, performs biological experiments, and murders journalists and socio-political figures. All of these crimes are “Grave violations of the Geneva Conventions” and warrant not only political condemnation, but also legal prosecution.

In the context of the Ukrainian crisis, the Russian authorities maintain ongoing communication with the International Committee of the Red Cross. Despite the blatant lies of representatives from Kiev here, in IPU Assembly, the ICRC is verifying the process of reuniting Ukrainian children with their families. A confidential dialogue is being held regarding the exchange of prisoners of war, humanitarian access, and other matters, according to our international obligations. As far as we are aware, the ICRC has no grievances against Russia in this context.

How can we improve humanitarian law? We, Russia, are confronted not only with hybrid aggression from Western nations. NATO is directly involved in strikes on Russian territory. **Nevertheless, coalitions and alliances of states are not**

signatories to the Geneva Conventions and, as a result, do not bear responsibility. We advocate for the extension of international warfare regulations to military coalitions and alliances, irrespective of their legal standing.

I urge the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the ICRC to focus on this issue and leverage their influence to compel NATO and other coalitions to legally join the Geneva Conventions.

In all other issues, Russia is open for discussions on humanitarian matters, through the work of national committees and, of course, at the main International Conference of the Red Cross here in Geneva.

Thank you for your attention.