

# Ten of the Commandments



## of the Geneva Conventions



1. PERSONS TAKING NO ACTIVE PART IN THE HOSTILITIES, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES WHO HAVE LAID DOWN THEIR ARMS AND THOSE PLACED HORS DE COMBAT BY SICKNESS, WOUNDS, DETENTION, OR ANY OTHER CAUSE, SHALL IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES BE TREATED HUMANELY, WITHOUT ANY ADVERSE DISTINCTION FOUNDED ON RACE, COLOUR, RELIGION OR FAITH, SEX, BIRTH OR WEALTH, OR ANY OTHER SIMILAR CRITERIA.

2. TO THIS END THE FOLLOWING ACTS ARE AND SHALL REMAIN PROHIBITED AT ANY TIME AND IN ANY PLACE WHATSOEVER WITH RESPECT TO THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PERSONS:

- (A) VIOLENCE TO LIFE AND PERSON, IN PARTICULAR MURDER OF ALL KINDS, MUTILATION, CRUEL TREATMENT AND TORTURE;
- (B) TAKING OF HOSTAGES;
- (C) OUTRAGES UPON PERSONAL DIGNITY, IN PARTICULAR HUMILIATING AND DEGRADING TREATMENT;
- (D) THE PASSING OF SENTENCES AND THE CARRYING OUT OF EXECUTIONS WITHOUT PREVIOUS JUDGMENT PRONOUNCED BY A REGULARLY CONSTITUTED COURT AFFORDING ALL THE JUDICIAL GUARANTEES WHICH ARE RECOGNIZED AS INDISPENSABLE BY CIVILIZED PEOPLES.

3. PRISONERS OF WAR MAY IN NO CIRCUMSTANCES RENOUNCE IN PART OR IN ENTIRETY THE RIGHTS SECURED TO THEM BY THE PRESENT CONVENTION.

4. PRISONERS OF WAR ARE IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY POWER, BUT NOT OF THE INDIVIDUALS OR MILITARY UNITS WHO HAVE CAPTURED THEM. IRRESPECTIVE OF THE INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES THAT MAY EXIST, THE DETAINING POWER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TREATMENT GIVEN THEM.

5. PRISONERS OF WAR MUST AT ALL TIMES BE HUMANELY TREATED. ANY UNLAWFUL ACT OR OMISSION BY THE DETAINING POWER CAUSING DEATH OR SERIOUSLY ENDANGERING THE HEALTH OF A PRISONER OF WAR IN ITS CUSTODY IS PROHIBITED, AND WILL BE REGARDED AS A SERIOUS BREACH OF THE PRESENT CONVENTION.

6. PRISONERS OF WAR MUST AT ALL TIMES BE PROTECTED, PARTICULARLY AGAINST ACTS OF VIOLENCE OR INTIMIDATION AND AGAINST INSULTS AND PUBLIC CURIOSITY.

7. MEASURES OF REPRISAL AGAINST PRISONERS OF WAR ARE PROHIBITED.

8. PRISONERS OF WAR ARE ENTITLED IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES TO RESPECT FOR THEIR PERSONS AND THEIR HONOUR.

9. NO PHYSICAL OR MENTAL TORTURE, NOR ANY OTHER FORM OF COERCION, MAY BE INFLICTED ON PRISONERS OF WAR TO SECURE FROM THEM INFORMATION OF ANY KIND WHATSOEVER. PRISONERS OF WAR WHO REFUSE TO ANSWER MAY NOT BE THREATENED, INSULTED, OR EXPOSED TO ANY UNPLEASANT OR DISADVANTAGEOUS TREATMENT OF ANY KIND.

10. EVERY PRISONER OF WAR CAMP SHALL BE PUT UNDER THE IMMEDIATE AUTHORITY OF A RESPONSIBLE COMMISSIONED OFFICER BELONGING TO THE REGULAR ARMED FORCES OF THE DETAINING POWER. SUCH OFFICER SHALL HAVE IN HIS POSSESSION A COPY OF THE PRESENT CONVENTION; HE SHALL ENSURE THAT ITS PROVISIONS ARE KNOWN TO THE CAMP STAFF AND THE GUARD AND SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF HIS GOVERNMENT, FOR ITS APPLICATION.