

*Translated from Spanish*

The Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to LA/COD/2 of 9 April 2010, related to General Assembly resolution 63/125 of 11 December 2008, entitled "Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts", has the honour to transmit the following information from the Government of the Republic of Cuba.

Armed conflicts give rise to abuses and the armed forces directly involved in such conflicts are not the only ones exposed to such abuses. Civilians are increasingly the victims and direct targets of such conflicts.

Today, more than ever, it is of the utmost importance to strengthen the legal regime governing armed conflicts by ensuring that it is universally accepted.

In the wake of the recent series of notorious violations of international humanitarian law caused by unilateralist or imperialist policies, the international community and the United Nations are hereby called upon to enhance compliance with the rules governing the protection of victims of armed conflicts.

Cuba would like to reaffirm that only if all States foreswore expansionist wars and committed themselves to multilateralism, the United Nations and its Charter, would it be possible to enhance respect for humanitarian rules governing the protection of civilians in any armed conflict. Significant efforts should also be made to fully implement international humanitarian law at the national level and ensure its broadest dissemination.

Cuba highly values and lives up to its status as a party to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977 and reaffirms its commitment to the defence of international humanitarian law. Cuba has incorporated all the requisite guarantees in its domestic law to ensure strict compliance with those instruments, especially the rules relating to the protection of civilians.

Cuba has a great deal of experience in the dissemination and teaching of international humanitarian law. The Centre for Studies in International Humanitarian Law was established in Cuba more than 15 years ago; with the assistance of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), it makes a significant contribution to the dissemination, teaching and development of international humanitarian law, for the leadership of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and staff and officials of the Ministry of the Interior, State bodies and agencies. Cuba has thus been able to include international humanitarian law in the curricula of the national education system. It has also contributed to the dissemination and teaching of international humanitarian law among foreign students in Cuba and professionals from Central America and the Caribbean.

The Centre, which was recently fully accredited as a postgraduate teaching

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institution for the National Health System, is under the University of Medical Sciences of Havana.

The Centre offers, inter alia, basic courses for instructors, postgraduates and degree holders, as well as workshops and lectures. It is involved in various national and international events, promoting an active exchange of up-to-date information on international humanitarian law. The Centre also has a documentation and information centre which is visited by officials and experts in the field, and organizes meetings for military attachés accredited to Cuba.

The Cuban Red Cross Society, the National Union of Jurists, universities and schools of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Public Health are also involved in the dissemination and teaching of international humanitarian law, for their respective audiences.

Cuba reaffirms its readiness to provide further assistance to ICRC and Red Cross societies of different countries in their noble task of spreading a knowledge of international humanitarian law in Cuban society and in other countries.

The Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations takes this opportunity to convey to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the renewed assurances of its highest consideration.

New York, 27 May 2010

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