



## **DEED OF COMMITMENT UNDER GENEVA CALL FOR THE PREVENTION OF STARVATION AND ADDRESSING CONFLICT-RELATED FOOD INSECURITY**

We, (name of signatory), through our duly authorized representative(s),

*Accepting* that International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law apply to all parties to armed conflict;

*Taking due account* of our international legal obligations to endeavour to meet the basic needs of the civilian population in areas where we exercise control, and in particular those enshrined in International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law;

*Affirming* our determination to protect the civilian population and other persons not or no longer taking part in hostilities from the direct and indirect effects or dangers of military operations, and to respect their fundamental rights, in particular their right to life, health, food, safe water, human dignity and humane treatment;

*Recognizing* that the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare is prohibited by International Humanitarian Law and is also a crime under international law;

*Asserting* that the deliberate deprivation of the civilian population of food, water and other objects indispensable for their survival or access thereto is never justified;

*Reaffirming* the protections to which humanitarian relief personnel, supplies and equipment are entitled;

*Expressing* our commitment to respect the impartiality, independence and neutrality of humanitarian actors;

*Bearing in mind* the linkages between conflict-related food insecurity, displacement, health and environmental degradation, and *recognizing* that International Humanitarian Law protects persons from and during displacement, access to health care, and the natural environment;

*Considering* that the rights to food, safe water and a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment are indispensable for human dignity;

*Acknowledging* the harmful direct and indirect impacts of armed conflict on food security, and *deeply concerned* by the long-lasting consequences thereof, including for health, education, displacement, the environment, sustainability and durable peace;

*Resolved* to actively address conflict-related food insecurity in armed conflict;

Hereby solemnly commit ourselves to the following terms:

1. TO PROTECT civilians and civilian objects, including those contributing to the prevention of starvation and food insecurity.
2. TO ADHERE to the prohibition of starvation of the civilian population as a method of warfare.
3. TO PROTECT objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, such as foodstuffs, agricultural areas for the production of foodstuffs, crops, livestock, drinking water installations and supplies and irrigation works, including when such objects are part of the natural environment. This includes not attacking, destroying, removing, looting, or otherwise rendering useless such objects for the specific purpose of denying them for their sustenance value to the civilian population or to the adverse party, whatever the motive, whether in order to starve out civilians, to cause them to move away, or for any other motive. It also includes not poisoning water sources and taking measures to avoid contamination of agricultural and grazing areas, for example by the use of landmines, explosive remnants of war, or other explosive devices.
4. TO RESPECT AND PROTECT humanitarian relief personnel, supplies and equipment. This includes not attacking, threatening or pressuring humanitarian relief personnel. It also includes not attacking, destroying or looting supplies, materials, or vehicles involved in humanitarian relief operations, or otherwise interfering with the provision of humanitarian relief in accordance with the principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence.
5. TO ALLOW AND FACILITATE rapid and unimpeded passage of impartial humanitarian relief which is impartial in character and conducted without any adverse distinction, subject to our entitlement to prescribe technical arrangements.
6. TO TREAT humanely and without adverse distinction all persons not or no longer taking active part in hostilities, including in relation to the access and availability of means of subsistence. In this respect, humane treatment requires taking into account the specific needs of particular groups, such as children, youth, women, older persons, persons with disabilities, and displaced persons.
7. TO FURTHER ENDEAVOUR, in areas where we exercise control, to respect the means of subsistence of the civilian population and to meet their basic needs. This includes taking concrete measures to:
  - i) Facilitate access to and availability of means of subsistence, including in cooperation with humanitarian or development organizations where appropriate;
  - ii) Provide means of subsistence, for example through food or water distribution, to the extent of our capacity;
8. TO ISSUE the necessary orders and directives to our political and military organs, commanders and fighters for the implementation and enforcement of our commitment, including measures for information, dissemination and training. Commanders and superiors are responsible for their subordinates. In case of non-compliance, we will take all necessary

measures to cease violations immediately, initiate appropriate investigations and impose sanctions in accordance with international standards.

9. TO ALLOW AND COOPERATE in the monitoring and verification of our present commitment by Geneva Call and other independent international and national organizations associated for this purpose with Geneva Call. Such monitoring and verification include visits and inspections in all areas where we operate, and the provision of the necessary information and reports, as may be required for such purposes in the spirit of transparency and accountability.
10. TO TREAT this commitment as one step or part of a broader commitment in principle to the ideal of humanitarian norms, particularly of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, and to contribute to their respect in practice as well to the further development of humanitarian norms in armed conflict.
11. This *Deed of Commitment* shall not affect our legal status, pursuant to the relevant clause in common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949.
12. We understand that Geneva Call may publicize our compliance or non-compliance with this *Deed of Commitment*.
13. We see the desirability of attracting the adherence of other armed actors to this *Deed of Commitment* and will do our part to promote it.
14. This *Deed of Commitment* supersedes any conflicting undertaking related to our present commitment.
15. This *Deed of Commitment* shall take effect immediately upon its signing and receipt by the Government of the Republic and Canton of Geneva which receives it as the custodian of such *Deeds*.