

**MESSAGE OF
THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL DEFENCE ORGANISATION
(ICDO)
ON THE OCCASION OF
CIVIL DEFENCE WORLD DAY
1st MARCH 2005**

It is already a decade since the 10th Civil Defence World Conference meeting in Amman, Jordan (1994) invited Governments to consider that the very concept of the term “*Civil Defence*” appearing in Article 61 of Additional Protocol 1 of 1977 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 should be widened beyond armed conflicts and not be limited to certain humanitarian tasks and disasters occurring in a country prey to an armed conflict, and that the expression “Civil Defence” should be used to designate all humanitarian measures aimed at safeguarding the life of the populations, its property and the environment from accidents and disasters of all nature.

It was thus that, in 1995, the theme of Civil Defence World Day was: “*Civil Defence, safeguard of life, property and the environment*”.

Protection of the environment is therefore a serious and constant preoccupation for national civil defence services and for the International Civil Defence Organisation (ICDO). It was stressed then that Civil Defence, acting in a multi-sector framework, was the ideal organ for conducting the many and diverse operations for safeguarding life, property and the environment before, during and after disasters.

It goes without saying that Civil Defence is well and truly a means of protection of the environment. The facts and actions of Civil Defence bear witness to this. As an example, it could be said that the prevention of hydrocarbon fires, the operations leading to their extinction and those aimed at rehabilitation the ecosystems that could be affected by them are all part of the protection of the environment.

Civil Defence and protection of the environment are before indissociable and this is recognised by all.

This is why on the occasion of the Civil Defence World Day of 1st March 2005, the International Civil Defence Organisation would wish States and their Civil Defence services to highlight the role of Civil Defence in promoting the protection of the environment, because this is one of the major challenges to our societies at the dawn of the 21st century. Wars, natural and technological disasters which result in human victims are also the source of attacks on the environment which day by day and year after year seriously hinder the development of our societies. The nuisances caused to the environment are also nuisances caused to man.

Civil Defence must thus proclaim loud and far its attachment to the protection of the environment and contribute to the promotion of efforts made to this end by Governments and civil society.

To conclude, the slogan of Civil Defence World Day of 1st March 2005 is as follows:

“Let us protect the environment thanks to Civil Defence”