



Personal Contribution to the Helsinki Process

A New International Humanitarian Order

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In 1981, the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus a resolution relating to a New International Humanitarian Order. The following year, the GA adopted a further resolution relating to the New International Humanitarian Order in which it noted “the proposal for establishment, outside the UN framework, of an Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues composed of leading personalities in the humanitarian field or having wide experience of government or world affairs”.

The Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues was established in 1983. HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal co-chaired this Commission with the late HH Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan. In 1985, the Report, *Winning the Human Race?* was published. The conceptual framework within which the Commission functioned was based essentially on an ethical core to help build a wider consensus. The cornerstones of this framework were the values that from time immemorial have been a part of the collective consciousness of the human species, which have ensured their survival and well-being, and which have stood the test of time:

- Respect for life;
- A responsibility towards future generations;
- Protection of the human habitat;
- Altruism nurtured by a sense of mutual interest and a recognition of human dignity and worth.

Challenges taken up by the Commission included global issues such as: population; environment; poverty and development; global militarization; terrorism and the international drug problem. The Commission talked about man-made disasters, including famine; desertification; deforestation; commercial nuclear power; genetic engineering and industrial disasters.

By way of background information is a list of resolutions relating to the ‘New International Humanitarian Order’ and Reports of the UN Secretary General relating to the ‘New International Humanitarian Order’; the GA Report A/57/583 of 1 November, 2002; the GA Resolution A/Res/57/184 of 23 January, 2003 and the GA Report of the Secretary-General A/59/554 and supporting papers of 9 November, 2004. These can be found on the UN website.

In point 4 of the Secretary-General’s Report of 9 November 2005, it is stated that the Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues (chaired by HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal), will be involved in “developing it further and will assist in the implementation process”. His Royal Highness intends to take this forward.