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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ITEM IN THE PROVISIONAL
AGENDA OF THE THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION

STATE OF SIGNATURES AND RATIFICATIONS OF THE PROTOCOLS ADDITIONAL
TO THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS OF 1949 AND RELATING TO THE PROTECTION
OF VICTIMS OF INTERNATIONAL ARMED CONFLICTS (PROTOCOL I) AND THE
PROTECTION OF VICTIMS OF NON-INTERNATIONAL ARMED CONFLICTS
(PROTOCOL II)

Letter dated 6 July 1982 from the Permanent Representatives of
Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to request, on behalf of the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, the inclusion in the provisional agenda of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly of an item entitled "State of signatures and ratifications of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts (Protocol I) and the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts (Protocol II)".

In submitting this item for consideration by the General Assembly, we would request you to circulate the attached explanatory memorandum as an official document of the Assembly under rule 20 of the rules of procedure.

(Signed) Wilh. ULRICHSEN
Ambassador, Permanent
Representative of Denmark
to the United Nations

(Signed) Ilkka PASTINEN
Ambassador, Permanent
Representative of Finland
to the United Nations

(Signed) Tom VRAALSEN
Ambassador, Permanent
Representative of Norway
to the United Nations

(Signed) Anders THUNBORG
Ambassador, Permanent
Representative of Sweden
to the United Nations

ANNEX

Explanatory memorandum

1. At its thirty-fourth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 34/51 of 23 November 1979 entitled "State of signatures and ratifications of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 concerning the respect for human rights in armed conflicts". The General Assembly was convinced of the continuing value of established humanitarian rules relating to armed conflict and the need to secure the full observance of human rights in armed conflicts pending the earliest possible termination of such conflicts. At the same time the Assembly noted that thus far only a limited number of States had ratified or acceded to the two Protocols, concluded at Geneva in 1977. a/ In the operative part of the resolution the General Assembly called on all States to consider without delay the matter of ratifying or acceding to the two Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and requested the Secretary-General to inform the Assembly annually of the state of ratifications of and accessions to the two Protocols with a view to enabling the Assembly to consider the matter at a later stage.

2. In its resolution VII, the twenty-fourth International Conference of the Red Cross, held at Manila from 7 to 14 November 1981, noted the fact that 18 States had ratified or acceded to Protocol I and 16 States to Protocol II. The Conference reaffirmed its will to do everything in its power so that the two additional Protocols should be as universally accepted as the Geneva Conventions b/ and invited the States which had not yet done so to ratify or accede to the two additional Protocols.

3. According to information supplied by the depositary of the two Protocols, the Swiss Government, a small number of States ratified the Protocols at the end of 1981 and at the beginning of 1982. Thus far it is still correct to say that only a limited number of States have ratified or acceded to the Protocols. It is therefore appropriate for the General Assembly to call anew on States to ratify or accede to these important instruments of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflict. It is requested that an item entitled "State of signatures and ratifications of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts (Protocol I) and the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts (Protocol II)" be included in the provisional agenda of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

a/ A/32/144, annexes I and II.

b/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 75, Nos. 970-973.