



## Economic and Social Council

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### **International Association of Soldiers for Peace**

#### **Internal functioning of the Association**

**Two international conferences have been organized:**

- **from 19 to 23 May 1995, in Lyons**

For the first time, former “Blue Helmets” of seven nationalities (Danish, Finnish, French, British, Irish, Norwegian and Swedish) came together and discussed two themes: “Former Blue Helmets and the problem of peacekeeping and the United Nations” and “Former Blue Helmets: how to take action at the international level?”

- **13 and 14 September 1998, in Lyons and Geneva**

The delegations which had attended the 1995 meeting were joined in Lyons and Geneva by delegations from the Russian Federation and Ukraine. Letters of support were received from Canada and Ghana.

The meeting in Geneva was officially included among the events celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of peacekeeping operations. A reception for delegations and a round-table discussion were organized by Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Director- General of the United Nations Office at Geneva; also present were Mr. Laurent Attar-Bayrou, President of the International Association of Soldiers for Peace (IASP), and three former “Blue Helmets” of different nationalities.

#### **Staffing**

A permanent full-time position of International Coordinator has been created at our international headquarters in Lyons.

#### **Help in establishing associations of “Blue Helmets” in Ukraine and the Russian Federation**

The Ukrainian Peacekeepers Veterans Association (UPVA) signed an agreement with IASP on 15 July 1998. IASP had provided help and support in the establishment of UPVA and was glad to welcome it into its ranks on the occasion of its second international conference.

The Russian peacekeepers’ association signed an agreement with IASP in September 1998.

#### **Worldwide contacts and promotion of the creation of “Blue Helmets” associations**

IASP has contacted all the embassies located in France and permanent missions to the United Nations in order to encourage the corresponding

States to create associations of “Blue Helmets”.

IASP is in contact with “Blue Helmets” in countries where no such association exists, in order to help them to live in accordance with their status and to motivate them to set up local associations. Activities of this type have already met with success in Ukraine, and contacts have been made with a view to creating associations in other countries.

We currently have contacts in Ghana, Senegal, Kenya, Pakistan, India, Israel, Canada, the United States of America, Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Hungary and Slovakia.

IASP regularly publishes a magazine in English which is distributed to members, affiliated associations and United Nations peacekeeping personnel on mission. It contains information on current peacekeeping missions, events relating to the United Nations and the life of IASP and its affiliated associations.

### **Internal newsletter**

A monthly “IASP Newsletter” helps to establish and strengthen relations among affiliated associations.

## **Relations with the United Nations**

### **Partnership with the United Nations Volunteers**

A declaration of intent has been signed by IASP and the United Nations Volunteers, providing for the sharing of information and help with recruiting qualified personnel for emergency programmes and for the possible organization of training programmes. In that context, IASP maintains a file containing the names of individuals who can be contacted on request by the United Nations Volunteers programme.

### **1998 — fiftieth anniversary of peacekeeping operations**

On 14 September 1998, IASP organized a meeting of “Blue Helmets” in Geneva. It also took part in a round-table discussion on peacekeeping operations attended by Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Mr. Izmat Kittani, Under-Secretary-General and Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ms. Susan de Souza of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ms. Gastaut of the Department of Public Information of the United Nations, Mr. Dimitri Borodinov, representing the Ukrainian association of “Blue Helmets”, Mr. Walter Meijer, representing the Swedish association of “Blue Helmets”, and seven other “Blue Helmets” from Norway, Denmark, the Russian Federation, Ireland, Finland and Ghana.

### **Role in welcoming Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali to Lyons**

In 1997, together with the City of Lyons and the Institut des Hautes Etudes de la Défense Nationale, IASP was involved in welcoming Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, on his visit to Lyons.

### **Role in organizing the session of UNCTAD in Lyons**

In November 1998, IASP was involved in facilitating contacts between the City of Lyons and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), received deliveries by lorry, and set up a stand at

the entrance to the venue of the session, enabling the United Nations bookshop to sell its publications.

### **Role in welcoming the G7 to Lyons**

When the Group of Seven industrialized nations visited Lyons, IASP was involved in setting up the exhibition on the United Nations.

### **Visit to New York**

A one-week visit to United Nations Headquarters was organized, during which meetings were held with the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and representatives of the Secretary-General.

### **Visits to Geneva**

Many visits to the United Nations Office at Geneva have been organized by members of the Bureau and IASP members.

## **Humanitarian activities**

### **A school for Cambodia**

From 21 August to 1 October 1995, three classrooms were built in Svayrieng by IASP members. Only the three classrooms were available to accommodate 1,500 students, since 20 others had been destroyed or had become unusable. Having returned to France, the IASP members organized a photography exhibition to raise awareness among the French population of the problems of Cambodia. The budget for the mission, US\$ 15,000, came from public funding and private donations.

### **Operation “100 kilometres for peace”**

In winter 1995, five lorries containing 38 tons of food supplies and equipment were sent to Jablanica in Bosnia. One thousand books were sent to a Sarajevo library. Five other journeys were made to Bosnia, in order to provide food supplies and equipment.

### **A Package for a Peacekeeper**

Thanks to an operation entitled “A Package for a Peacekeeper”, 15,000 packages were sent to “Blue Helmets” serving in Bosnia and Lebanon as gifts for Christmas and the New Year. Every year, this operation has been funded through appeals for donations from individuals, enterprises and associations. Each package contains country-style food items and items provided by IASP.

## **IASP-Mines**

In April 1996, IASP set up a branch specializing in mine-clearance matters.

### **Establishment of mine-clearance teams**

IASP-Mines has set up a network of competent persons who are prepared to travel in order to carry out targeted mine-clearance operations. These teams are formed either during their service with peacekeeping operations in their respective countries or by former “Blue Helmets” who have already taken part in peacekeeping operations.

## **Conferences**

IASP-Mines has set up a network of experts who are prepared to speak at any international conference on mine-clearance matters. It has also attended many conferences organized by the United Nations, including those in Geneva in 1995 and Vienna in 1996.

## **Development of operational techniques**

IASP-Mines has produced a brochure of about 50 pages on “awareness and decontamination ... in the interest of peace through action ...” and has published a theoretical manual on mine clearance.

## **Public awareness**

To promote public awareness, stands have been set up in Deauville (1997), Zurich (1998) and yearly at the Uni-Terre exhibition in Lyons. These stands comprise an exhibition of photographs, drawings and explanatory diagrams showing mines and the dangers they represent, as well as simulated mine-clearance operations.

## **Planned creation of a school to teach about mine clearance, security in humanitarian operations and peacekeeping**

In comparing their experience acquired in the field during United Nations missions or during activities organized by IASP, the members of the Association have noted the following major issues:

- The training in mine-clearance operations provided by the armed forces of different countries is by no means standardized. This variation makes it extremely complicated, sometimes inefficient and even dangerous for personnel of different nationalities to coordinate United Nations operations;
- It is unfortunate that different people’s experiences are not compared in order to improve mine-clearance techniques;
- There are also problems relating to peacekeeping techniques and security in the field.

This project will help to implement the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly relating to the establishment of a standing United Nations army.

## **Training centre**

The role of the training centre will be to teach techniques for mine clearance, security in humanitarian operations and peacekeeping. It will be open to civilians having proven aptitude for such professions, to international non-governmental organizations, to senior national and international officials and to military personnel within the framework of cooperation agreements with the United Nations. Decentralized branches may be set up in areas of intense conflict where the international community is present.

## **Centre for research and documentation**

It would be useful to set up a research facility so that different individual experiences can be compared and a unified method adopted.



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### 1. International Association of Soldiers for Peace

#### General, 1995

##### Introduction

The Soldiers of Peace International Association (SPIA) was created in 1988 in France. The organization gathers civilians and soldiers who have carried out Peacekeeping Operations under the United Nations since 1948.

##### Aims and purposes of the organization

The organization operates in mine-related emergency and humanitarian development. The organization's deminers and personal remain at the disposal of the United Nations and have served in different operations. Some members of the association also offer their services in other areas of mine action such as mine-free and explosive remnants of war, related advocacy, victim assistance, and mine risk education.

##### Significant changes in the organization

SPIA created new offices in Mongolia, Poland, Slovakia, and Czech Republic.

##### Contribution of the organization to the work of the United Nations

SPIA participated in demining activities. It signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in 2013. In 2013, it also organized the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, and at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris, France. Further, every year, SPIA participates in the Graduate Study Programme at the United Nations Offices in Geneva. Finally, in 2013, it created a decoration called "Grand-Croix de la Commémorative de la Paix" for people who took part in the peace culture, especially Heads of States.

##### Participation in meetings of the United Nations

The organization participated in the following meetings, among others:

- Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW);
- Annual Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons;
- Intersessional Work Programme, Meetings of the Standing Committees of the anti-personal Mine Ban Convention, Geneva;

- Intersessional Meeting of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM); and
- Participation in the Human Rights sessions, Geneva.

### **Cooperation with United Nations bodies**

SPIA collaborated with the United Nations Office at Geneva (ONUG). It cooperated with UNMAS in the context of the CCW. Finally, it signed a Protocol Agreement with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) on the International Peace Academy.

### **Initiatives taken by the organization in support of the Millennium Development Goals**

The association undertook humanitarian actions and donated material and medical consumables to hospitals in Togo and Somalia. Additionally, in every country where SPIA is present, it ensured that the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers or the Day of Memory for soldiers dead in operation was celebrated every year.

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