

Convention for the Exemption of Hospital Ships, in Time of War, from The Payment of all Dues and Taxes Imposed for the Benefit of the State. The Hague, 21 December 1904.

(List of Contracting Parties)

Taking into consideration that the Convention concluded at The Hague on 29 July 1899 for the adaptation to Maritime Warfare of the Principles of the Geneva Convention of 22 August 1864, has sanctioned the principle of the intervention of the Red Cross in naval wars by provisions in favour of hospital ships;

Desirous of concluding a convention to the end of facilitating by additional provisions the mission of such ships;

Have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries, to wit:

(Here follow the names of Plenipotentiaries)

Who, after communication of their full powers, found to be in good and due form, have agreed on the following provisions:

Article 1. Hospital ships, concerning which the conditions set forth in Articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Convention concluded at The Hague on 29 July 1899, for the adaptation to Maritime Warfare of the principles of the Geneva Convention of 22 August 1864, are fulfilled shall be exempted, in time of war, from all dues and taxes imposed on vessels for the benefit of the State, in the ports of the Contracting Parties.

Art. 2. The provision of the foregoing article does not prevent the application, by means of visitation or other formalities of fiscal or other laws in force at said ports.

Art. 3. The rule laid down in Article I is binding only on the Contracting Powers in case of war between two or more of them.

The said rule shall cease to be binding from the time when a non-Contracting Power shall join one of the belligerents, in a war between Contracting Powers.

Art. 4. The present Convention which bearing the date of this day, may be signed until 1 October 1905 by the Powers expressing their desire to do so, shall be ratified as soon as possible.

The ratifications shall be deposited at The Hague.

A 'procès-verbal' of the deposit of the ratifications shall be drawn up and a copy thereof, duly certified, shall be delivered through the diplomatic channel to all the Contracting Powers.

Art. 5. The non-Signatory Powers are permitted to adhere to the present Convention after 1 October 1905.

They shall, to that end, make their adhesion known to the Contracting Powers by means of a written notification addressed to the Government of the Netherlands and communicated by the latter to the other Contracting Powers.

Art. 6. In the event of one of the High Contracting Powers denouncing the present Convention, such denunciation shall not take effect until one year after the notification made in writing to the Government of the Netherlands and immediately communicated by the latter to all the other Contracting Powers. This denunciation shall only affect the notifying Power.

In testimony whereof the Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Convention and affixed

their seals thereto.

Done at The Hague the twenty-first of December one thousand nine hundred and four, in a single copy which shall remain filed in the archives of the Government of the Netherlands and copies of which, duly certified shall be delivered through the diplomatic channel to the Contracting Powers.

(Here follow signatures)

FINAL ACT

At the moment of proceeding to sign the Convention having for its object the exemption of hospital ships in time of war in the ports of the Contracting Parties from all dues and taxes imposed on vessels for the benefit of the State, the Plenipotentiaries signing the present Act express the wish that, in view of the highly humanitarian mission of these ships, the Contracting Governments may take the measures necessary in order to exempt these ships within a short time also from the payment of the dues and taxes collected in their ports for the benefit of others than the State, especially those collected for the benefit of municipalities or of private companies or persons.

In witness whereof the Plenipotentiaries have signed the present 'procès-verbal,' which, bearing the date of this day, may be signed up to the first October, 1905.

Done at The Hague, the twenty-first of December, nineteen hundred and four, in a single copy, which shall remain on file in the archives of the Government of the Netherlands, and of which certified copies shall be delivered through the diplomatic channel to the Powers signing the aforementioned Convention.

(Here follow signatures)