

# Revised statutes of the International Committee of the Red Cross submitted to the XVIIIth International Red Cross Conference and adopted on August 5. 1952

Autor(en): [s.n.]

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## Annex V

### REVISED STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

submitted to the XVIIIth International Red Cross Conference,  
and adopted on August 5, 1952 <sup>1</sup>

#### *Article I*

1. The International Red Cross shall comprise all National Red Cross Societies recognized in accordance with Article VI of the present Statutes, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies.
2. The supreme deliberative body of the International Red Cross shall be the International Conference. The International Conference of the Red Cross shall be composed of delegations of duly recognized National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies, delegations of the States parties to the Geneva Conventions and delegations of the International Committee of the Red Cross and of the League of Red Cross Societies <sup>2</sup>.
3. The International Conference, subject to the provisions of the present Statutes, shall be governed by its Rules of Procedure.

#### *Article II*

1. The International Conference shall have power to take decisions within the limits of the present Statutes, make recommendations and express wishes.

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<sup>1</sup> See above, pages 67 and 68.

<sup>2</sup> As an abbreviation, the titles "International Conference of the Red Cross", "National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies", "International Committee of the Red Cross" and "League of Red Cross Societies" will be replaced by the expressions "International Conference" (or "Conference"), "National Societies", "International Committee" and "League".

2. The Conference shall be responsible for ensuring unity in the work of the National Societies, the International Committee and the League.
3. It may assign mandates to the International Committee and to the League and make proposals concerning the humanitarian Conventions and other international Conventions relating to the Red Cross.
4. It alone shall be competent to revise and interpret the present Statutes and Rules of Procedure and to take the final decision on the differences of opinion referred to in Article X.
5. It may not deal with political matters nor serve as a forum for political debate.
6. It may not modify either the Statutes of the International Committee or those of the League. Similarly, the International Committee and the League shall take no decision contrary to the Statutes of the International Red Cross or to the resolutions of the Conference, nor any decision contrary to the agreements concluded between them and confirmed by the Conference.
7. The Conference shall elect its Chairman.

### *Article III*

1. The International Conference shall normally meet every four years. It shall be convened by the Central Committee of a National Society, or by the International Committee, or by the League, under a mandate conferred for the purpose by the previous Conference or by the Standing Commission provided for in Article IX. As a general rule, favourable consideration shall be given as far as possible to any offer made during a Conference by a National Society, the International Committee or the League to act as host to the Conference for its next session.
2. As an exceptional measure the date of the Conference may be advanced at the request of the Standing Commission or of the International Committee or of the League or of at least one third of the duly recognized National Societies.

### *Article IV*

1. During each International Conference there shall be meetings of the Council of Delegates and Board of Governors of the Council of Delegates and Board of Governors of the League.

2. The Council of Delegates shall be composed of delegates of duly recognized National Societies, delegates of the International Committee and delegates of the League. The Council shall elect its Chairman.
3. The functions of the Council of Delegates shall be :
  - (a) to meet, prior to the opening of the Conference, in order to propose the names of persons to fill the posts of Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, Secretary General and Assistant Secretaries General ; these proposals shall be submitted to the Conference,
  - (b) to determine the order in which questions and proposals submitted to the Conference are to be brought up for discussion,
  - (c) to give an opinion upon, and, where necessary, take decisions in respect of such questions and proposals as may be referred to it by the Conference or by the Standing Commission.
4. The Constitution and the powers of the Board of Governors are laid down in the Constitution of the League. The Board of Governors shall furthermore give an opinion upon, and, where necessary, take decisions in respect of such questions and proposals as may be referred to it by the Conference or by the Standing Commission.
5. The Chairman of the Conference, the Chairman of the Council of Delegates and the Chairman of the Board of Governors shall, as a rule, be three different persons.

#### *Article V*

1. When the Board of Governors meets in the interval between two International Conferences, the Council of Delegates shall meet at the same time and in the same place if one third of the duly recognized National Societies or the International Committee or the League or the Standing Commission so request.
2. The Council of Delegates at any such meeting may give an opinion upon, and, where necessary, take decisions in respect of such questions and proposals as may be referred to it by the National Societies, the Standing Commission, the International Committee or the League.
3. When the Council of Delegates or the Board of Governors meet outside the sessions of the International Conference they shall take no final decision on any question which, according to the present Statutes, is within the exclusive competence of the Conference, nor any decision contrary to the resolutions of the latter, or concerning questions already settled by the Conference or reserved by it for the agenda of a forthcoming Conference.

### *Article VI*

1. The International Committee of the Red Cross is an independent institution, governed by its own Statutes and recruited by co-optation from among Swiss citizens.
2. It maintains the fundamental and permanent principles of the Red Cross, namely : impartiality, action independent of any racial, political, religious or economic considerations, the universality of the Red Cross and the equality of the National Red Cross Societies.
3. After having assembled all pertinent data, it announces the recognition of any newly established or reconstituted National Red Cross Society which fulfils the conditions for recognition in force.
4. It undertakes the tasks incumbent on it under the Geneva Conventions, works for the faithful application of these Conventions and takes cognizance of complaints regarding alleged breaches of the humanitarian Conventions.
5. As a neutral institution whose humanitarian work is carried out particularly in time of war, civil war, or internal strife, it endeavours at all times to ensure the protection of and assistance to military and civilian victims of such conflicts and of their direct results. It contributes to the preparation and development of medical personnel and medical equipment, in co-operation with the Red Cross organizations, the medical services of the armed forces, and other competent authorities.
6. It takes any humanitarian initiative which comes within its role as a specifically neutral and independent institution and intermediary and considers any question requiring examination by such an institution.
7. It works for the continual improvement and diffusion of the Geneva Conventions.
8. It accepts the mandates entrusted to it by the International Conference of the Red Cross.
9. Within the framework of the present Statutes and subject to the provisions of Article VII, it maintains close contact with National Red Cross Societies. It also maintains relations with Governmental authorities and any national or international institutions whose assistance it considers useful.

### *Article VII*

1. The League of Red Cross Societies is the international federation of the National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies. It is governed by its own Constitution.

2. The object of the League is, within the framework of the present Statutes and subject to the provisions of Article VI, to encourage and facilitate at all times the humanitarian action of the National Societies and to assume the responsibilities incumbent upon it as the federation of those Societies.
3. For this purpose, the functions of the League are :
  - (a) to act as the permanent organ of liaison, co-ordination and study between the National Red Cross Societies and to co-operate with them,
  - (b) to encourage and promote in every country the establishment and development of an independent and duly recognized National Red Cross Society,
  - (c) to be the official representative of the member Societies in the international field on any matters in connection with resolutions adopted by the Board of Governors, and to be the guardian of their integrity and the protector of their interests,
  - (d) to accept the mandates entrusted to it by the International Conference of the Red Cross.

#### *Article VIII*

1. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies shall maintain contact with one another in order to co-ordinate their activities as far as possible and avoid overlapping.
2. There shall be a meeting at least once a month of representatives of the International Committee and of the League to ensure such contact which may furthermore be assured by a representative of the International Committee accredited to the League and a representative of the League accredited to the International Committee in accordance with their respective Statutes.

#### *Article IX*

1. The Standing Commission of the International Red Cross shall comprise nine members, namely :
  - (a) five members elected in a personal capacity by the International Conference of the Red Cross and holding office until the close of the following Conference ; the Standing Commission itself shall fill any vacancy which may occur by appointing a new member, also in a personal capacity,
  - (b) two representatives of the International Committee of the the Red Cross, one of whom shall, in principle, be the President,

- (c) two representatives of the League of Red Cross Societies, one of whom shall, in principle, be the Chairman of the Board of Governors.
- 2. The Commission shall invite to its meetings, in an advisory capacity and at least one year before the International Conference is to meet, a representative of the National Society which is to be host to that Conference.
- 3. Should an elected member be unable to attend a session of the Standing Commission, he may appoint a substitute.

#### *Article X*

- 1. The Standing Commission, in co-operation with the organization acting as host to the Conference, shall establish the provisional programme and agenda and make the arrangements for the next International Conference. It shall fix the date of the Conference or select its place of meeting should this not have been already decided by the preceding Conference or should exceptional circumstances so require.
- 2. During the interval between sessions of the Conference and subject to any final decision the Conference may take, the Standing Commission shall settle any difference of opinion which may arise as to the interpretation and application of the present Statutes as well as any questions which may be submitted to it by the International Committee or the League in connection with differences that may arise between them.
- 3. It shall also be the duty of the Standing Commission between sessions of the Conference to ensure the co-ordination and harmony of the efforts of the International Committee and of the League. With this object in view it shall examine, at its meetings, all questions which are of general interest to the Red Cross and concern the activities of both institutions.
- 4. In this connection and subject, where necessary, to final decision by the Conference, the Standing Commission shall take any measures which circumstances demand. The independence and initiative of the various bodies of the International Red Cross in their respective spheres shall, however, continue to be strictly safeguarded.

#### *Article XI*

- 1. The Standing Commission shall have its headquarters in Geneva.



2. As a general rule it shall meet at its headquarters in ordinary session twice yearly. If exceptional circumstances so require, it may meet in another place selected by its Chairman and approved by a majority of its members.
3. It shall meet in extraordinary session when convened by its Chairman or at the request of three of its members.
4. A quorum of five members shall be necessary. All decisions shall be taken by a majority vote of the members present.
5. The Standing Commission shall elect from among its members for the period between one Conference and the next a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman. The Chairman may appoint one of the elected members to assist him and to act as Secretary of the Commission.

### *Article XII*

1. The Chairman of the Standing Commission, the President of the International Committee and the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the League, or, failing them, deputies appointed beforehand by each of them, may freely consult one another or meet in cases of emergency to take whatever measures may be required.
2. As a general rule the Three Presidents shall meet once between the half-yearly sessions of the Standing Commission and in addition whenever one of them shall so request, in order to examine any matters which have been brought to their knowledge or discussed at the periodic meetings between the International Committee and the League.
3. The Presidents shall, at the following session of the Standing Commission, submit a report on such measures as they may have taken.

### *Article XIII*

1. The Rules of Procedure of the International Conference shall be adopted in conformity with the present Statutes, by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Conference present and voting and after the views of the International Committee and the League have been ascertained.
2. The Conference, following the same procedure, may amend the present Statutes. Any proposal to revise the Statutes must, however, be placed on the agenda and its text sent to the National Societies, to the International Committee and to the League at least six months in advance.



*Article XIV*

1. The present Statutes shall come into force on September 1st, 1952.
  2. They shall replace the Statutes adopted by the XIIIth International Conference. Any earlier provisions which conflict with the present Statutes are hereby repealed.
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