

Co-operation within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Objekttyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **Annual report / International Committee of the Red Cross**

Band (Jahr): - **(1988)**

PDF erstellt am: **27.05.2024**

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Co-operation within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The work of the statutory bodies

Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace

The Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace, which was set up by the Council of Delegates in 1977, met twice in 1988 under the chairmanship of Mr. Alexandre Hay. Its 24th meeting was held in Geneva on 16 April and its 25th meeting took place in two separate sessions in Leningrad on 10 and 14 October.

At its April meeting, the Commission studied the report of the working group responsible for preparing the seminar ('Information and Dissemination of International Humanitarian Law as a Contribution to Peace') that was to be organized as part of the Commission's twenty-fifth meeting. It also studied the proposals of the working group responsible for preparing the World Campaign for the Protection of Victims of War and examined the interim report of the Group of Experts on Human Rights concerning the National Societies' contribution to respect for those rights. Finally, it took note of the ICRC's information policy on violations of international humanitarian law.

In accordance with Resolution 4 of the 1987 Council of Delegates, the seminar on "Information and Dissemination of International and Humanitarian Law as a Contribution to Peace" was held in the course of the Commission's expanded 25th meeting. The seminar, which was hosted by the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR, opened in Leningrad on 10 October. Besides the actual members of the Commission (ICRC, League, Henry Dunant Institute and 11 of the 14 National Societies on the Commission, namely Australia, Benin, Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, France, the German Democratic Republic, Jordan, Sweden, Yugoslavia and the Yemen Arab Republic), it was also attended by information specialists from the National Societies of Kenya, Morocco, Bulgaria, the Federal Republic of Germany, Spain, the Philippines, Mexico and the United States; dissemination specialists from Burkina Faso, Algeria, Hungary, Norway, Lebanon, China, Canada, Haiti and El Salvador; and finally, non-Movement communication

experts from Pakistan, Thailand, Cuba, Peru, the USSR, Great Britain and Portugal.

The participants, divided according to geographical area into four working groups, reviewed the Movement's ability to make known its work as a factor of peace. In this context they discussed ways of making the National Societies and all their members aware of the need to publicize their peace work more effectively; to create a constant flow of co-operation with the media, since they alone can arouse public attention to the Movement's peace message; to make a particular dissemination effort among children and young people in schools and universities; finally, to develop a consistent and coherent communication strategy. The Commission took cognizance of the four reports compiled by the working groups and the subsequent summary report and decided to submit to the 1989 Council of Delegates a paper containing the seminar's main recommendations and what should be done to implement them.

At the end of the seminar, the Commission studied the report from the joint working group on the World Campaign for the Protection of Victims of War. This report dealt with the campaign's financing, possible co-ordination with the International Conference and the expansion of the existing group to include other National Society representatives.

The Commission also reviewed the work of the Group of Experts on Human Rights (see below) and discussed the possible holding of a third World Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on Peace. The Commission concluded that it would be premature to consider organizing a third such conference; the question could be reconsidered after the World Campaign for the Protection of Victims of War and after assessing the follow-up given to the Aaland Conference recommendations.

Group of Experts on Human Rights

The Group of Experts on Human Rights, set up by the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace in April 1987, held its second meeting in Geneva on 4 and 5 July. It was chaired by Mr. Diego Uribe Vargas of the Colombian Red Cross Society.

The group, which is made up of representatives from the ICRC, the League and 10 National Societies (both members and non-members of the Commission), studied the summary of the 41 replies from National Societies to the questionnaire based on the two UN International Covenants on economic, social and cultural rights and on civil and political rights. The group agreed that this initial survey of the contribution made by National Societies to respect for human rights should be completed in order to gain a comprehensive view of the contribution made by the Movement as a whole, given its specific nature and the limits imposed by the Fundamental Principles.

The group then discussed whether a similar study should be undertaken on other human rights instruments and studied the connection between the Movement's contribution to true peace and respect for human rights and the promotion of peace through its contribution to development.

The working group made an oral report on its work to the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace in October and expected to submit its final report in April 1989, thus enabling the Commission to present its conclusions to the 1989 Council of Delegates.

STANDING COMMISSION

In 1988 the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, under the chairmanship of Dr. Ahmad Abu Gaura, President of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society, met on 10 April and on 17 and 18 October. These meetings were attended by all its members. The ICRC was represented by its President and its Director General.

At the first meeting the Standing Commission asked the ICRC and the League, on the basis of oral and written remarks by the Commission's members, to draft regulations for the award of the Red Cross and Red Crescent prize for peace and humanity. The Commission also approved the sending of a letter signed by its Chairman and addressed to all the States party to the Conventions reminding them of their obligation to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law, an appeal also made in a resolution by the Twenty-fifth International Conference.

In October, the Standing Commission decided that the Twenty-sixth International Conference would be held in Cartagena, Colombia, in October 1991. The Commission also adopted regulations for the Red Cross and Red Crescent prize for peace and humanity and a draft letter to National Societies inviting them to nominate candidates.

It likewise approved a circular to National Societies concerning candidacy for the Henry Dunant medal. Finally the Commission, which under the Movement's new Statutes has the task *inter alia* of furthering the implementation of International Conference resolutions, examined the follow-up to be given to the resolutions adopted by the Twenty-fifth Conference.

Relations with the components of the Movement

NATIONAL SOCIETIES

Dialogue with the National Societies

Convinced of the need to strengthen its links with the National Societies and increase its specific contribution to their development, the ICRC continued its missions to meet their leaders and hold detailed discussions on what the National Societies expect from the ICRC and vice versa. Further such missions were carried out in 1988 by members of the Committee: Mr. Rudolf Jäckli travelled to South Africa in June; Mr. Athos Gallino went to Argentina and Uruguay in August; Mrs. Anne Petitpierre went to Nicaragua and El Salvador, and Mr. Maurice Aubert visited China in October.

As part of this dialogue with the National Societies, which the ICRC intends to continue, an informal meeting with the Nordic National Societies was held in Geneva on 8 and 9 December. Under the chairmanship of Mr. Rudolf Jäckli, the participants exchanged views in particular on the various forms of support those Societies give to relief operations for the victims of conflict and on the development strategy for the nineties. During his missions to various countries in 1988, President Cornelio Sommaruga was likewise able to have many talks with leading National Society officials. He went to Norway and Sweden in January, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe in February, Spain and Canada in March, Cuba in April, the United States and Ethiopia in May, the Federal Republic of Germany in June, Hungary in September, Finland, France and Yugoslavia in October, Senegal in November and Bern in December. On each of these visits he was able to speak directly with both officials and volunteers at the Societies' headquarters and sometimes at their local branches as well. (See also the above-mentioned countries in the section *Field operations*.)

Recognition of new National Societies

On the recommendation of the Joint ICRC/League Commission on National Society Statutes and after verifying that the Societies met the ten conditions for recognition set out in Article 4 of the Movement's Statutes, the ICRC announced the formal recognition of the Red Cross of Chad on 15 April 1988 and the Mozambique Red Cross on 29 September 1988.

In accordance with its mandate, the ICRC promptly informed all National Societies and the League of these recognitions, which brought to 147 the number of member Societies of the Movement.

The Red Cross of Chad was founded in 1970 and recognized by its government in January 1973. However, the hostilities of 1979 to 1982 practically wiped out the Society's existing structures and it was forced to suspend most of its activities. It began to reorganize in 1983 and in June of that year the government decree of 1973 was replaced by a new decree recognizing the Red Cross of Chad as a relief society auxiliary to the public authorities.

The Mozambique Red Cross Society was founded in 1981 and recognized as a voluntary relief society auxiliary to the public authorities by government decree in May 1988.

Development of National Societies

The ICRC continued contributing to the development of a number of National Societies. Its development programme is an integral part of the League Strategy for the Eighties approved by the second session of the League General Assembly and the Twenty-fourth International Conference of the Red Cross (Resolution XXV), and comprises:

- strengthening the National Societies' operational capacity in, or preparedness for, emergency situations (armed conflict);
- in conjunction with the League, technical and legal assistance in founding or reorganizing National Societies;
- promoting and supporting National Society projects for their dissemination programmes and information services (see also the section on *Dissemination of international humanitarian law*);
- assistance in implementing the Geneva Conventions and especially the regulations on the use of the red cross and red crescent emblems;

- training officials of National Societies for their responsibilities in the event of armed conflict;
- training National Society delegates and personnel assigned to carry out ICRC missions.

Many missions were carried out from Geneva or regional ICRC delegations to National Societies to meet their leaders, obtain information on their activities and needs or take part in regional or national meetings.

The Central Tracing Agency, pursuant to Resolution XVI of the Twenty-fifth International Conference, continued its efforts to co-ordinate activities, harmonize operating principles and working methods and train personnel in tracing and family reunification. Courses in French and English were organized in Geneva in January and August for representatives of 14 National Societies. Visits giving a comprehensive view of its work were arranged for representatives of the American and Chinese National Societies. The Agency also organized a training course for representatives from five Central American National Societies in Costa Rica in October and for the Red Cross of Viet Nam in Ho Chi Minh City in December.

In addition, the ICRC took part in three technical seminars, devoted exclusively to the work of tracing services and organized respectively by the French Red Cross, the German Red Cross (FRG) and the British Red Cross.

Participation in meetings of National Societies

In 1988, the ICRC took part in the following meetings and seminars (seminars dealing more specifically with dissemination are reported in *Dissemination of international humanitarian law and the principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement* or under the country concerned in *Field operations*).

Africa

- Annual meeting of SAP (Southern Africa Programme) in **Maseru, Lesotho**, from 18 to 20 March. The meeting was organized by the League and brought together representatives of nine National Societies and the donor National Societies. Two representatives of the South African Red Cross Society attended as observers.
- Fourth General Assembly of ACROFA (Association of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of French-speaking Africa) in **Dakar** on 18 November. The meeting was addressed by the ICRC President.

- Second Pan-African Conference of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in **Dakar** from 22 to 25 November. The conference, which the ICRC President addressed on the subject of co-operation within the Movement, brought together representatives of 40 African and 12 other National Societies and representatives of the League and the ICRC. The title of the conference was "What kind of development for the African National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies? Perspectives for 1989-1992" and the participants were divided into three groups, one to discuss "international humanitarian law and African traditions", a second on the subject "from emergency aid to development aid" and a third on "co-operation between the National Societies".

Latin America

- Seminar on the planning of social welfare activities, held in **Lima** from 28 November to 6 December. The seminar was organized by the Spanish Red Cross and assembled 46 representatives from 23 Latin American National Societies. The ICRC gave an account of its work in that part of the world.
- Meeting of National Society Presidents from the Americas in **Caracas** from 9 to 11 December, attended by some 30 Spanish and English-speaking National Societies. After studying League and ICRC reports on their respective activities in Latin America, the participants discussed the situation of the Inter-American Regional Committee (CORI) and the next Inter-American Conference of the Red Cross.

Asia and the Pacific

- Regional workshop in **Singapore** held by the ICRC (Central Tracing Agency) from 1 to 8 June for the tracing services of National Societies in Asia and the Pacific. The workshop brought together 33 people from 24 National Societies. This was the second such workshop, the first having been held in Budapest in 1987 for European and North American National Societies. The purpose of these meetings has been to familiarize participants with the Agency's "Guide for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies", deal with the various subjects covered in the guide and encourage the Societies to set up offices capable of conducting the necessary individual enquiries. Mrs. Liselotte Kraus-Gurny, a

member of the International Committee, attended part of the workshop, as did a representative of the League.

- Meeting of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies from the ASEAN countries. The meeting was held on 4 and 5 August in **Jakarta** and dealt with regional problems connected with refugees and subjects related to international humanitarian law, disaster preparedness, social-welfare work and fund-raising. The five Societies taking part (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) adopted a recommendation stressing the problems confronting refugees in the long term and urgently calling on the Movement and the international community to explore all possible means of finding a rapid solution.
- Regional seminar on refugees and displaced persons, held from 21 to 26 November in **Kuala Lumpur**. Its purpose was to provide a forum for discussion between representatives of the National Societies and various organizations active in the field so as to harmonize their policy *vis-à-vis* the massive influx of refugees. The seminar, which was organized by the League and the Malaysian Red Crescent Society and attended by representatives of 13 National Societies, governments, the UNHCR and other organizations, gave the Movement an opportunity to express its humanitarian concern about a major problem of our time.

Europe

- Seminar for first-aid officials from African National Societies, held from 25 to 30 April in **Las Palmas, Spain**. The seminar, which was organized by the Spanish Red Cross in conjunction with the Federal German, Belgian and French National Societies, brought together first-aid officials from 19 West and Central African National Societies and representatives of the League and the Portuguese Red Cross. Its purpose was to prepare an African first-aid handbook by assessing first-aid activities in the various African National Societies, studying training programmes, defining the basic methods and specialized aspects of first-aid work and suggesting a list of contents for the handbook. The participants reached a consensus on all points.
- Ninth Congress of the Bulgarian Red Cross. The congress was held on 13 and 14 May in **Sofia** and was attended by representatives of other National Societies in Socialist countries, the League and the ICRC. The lat-

ter was represented by Mr. Daniel Frei, a member of the Committee.

- Meeting of the European National Societies on the subject of refugees and asylum-seekers. The meeting was held from 14 to 16 September in **Geneva** and was attended by some 20 representatives from 14 European National Societies, the League and UNHCR. The participants described the situation in their respective countries and the work done by their National Societies to assist refugees and asylum-seekers. The meeting reached a number of conclusions and made recommendations stressing the importance of co-operation and the exchange of information both between the National Societies themselves and with the ICRC and the League.
- Meeting between the Presidents/Chairmen of 17 National Societies (from Angola, Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Kampuchea, Laos, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Poland, Romania, the USSR and Viet Nam). The ICRC was represented at the meeting, which was held in **Budapest** from 20 to 22 September, by President Cornelio Sommaruga, who gave a talk on co-operation between the ICRC and the National Societies.

Middle East and North Africa

- Workshop on refugees and displaced persons for National Societies of the Middle East and North Africa. The meeting, which was organized by the League and held in **Istanbul** from 27 May to 7 June, was attended by 14 representatives of the National Societies of Qatar, Lebanon, Syria, the Yemen Arab Republic, Libya and Turkey and representatives of UNHCR and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. Among other things, it studied the relevant body of law, the role of the ICRC and the National Societies *vis-à-vis* refugees and displaced persons, family reunification and public health. It was the fifth such workshop. Previous ones were held in Geneva in 1985 for European Societies, in Rwanda and Swaziland in 1986 for African National Societies and in Costa Rica in 1987 for Latin American National Societies. These meetings are held pursuant to Resolutions XXI and XVI adopted respectively by the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth International Conferences and are intended to make National Societies better prepared to assist refugees and displaced persons and familiarize them with the problems involved.

- Nineteenth Regional Conference of Arab National Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies. The Conference was held in **Cairo** from 5 to 9 November and brought together 17 National Societies from North Africa and the Middle East. It was also attended by 19 observers, including representatives of 10 National Societies from around the world and various governmental and non-governmental organizations. The ICRC delegation was led by Mr. Rudolf Jäckli, a member of the Committee. Resolutions and recommendations were adopted on ratification of the Protocols, dissemination of international humanitarian law, increased co-operation between the League, the ICRC and the General Secretariat of Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies, increased publications in Arabic and the setting up of a Red Crescent documentation centre which will conduct research and train senior National Society staff.

Meetings between the National Societies and the ICRC

A briefing on special operations financed by fund-raising appeals was held at ICRC headquarters on 28 and 29 March. It was attended by representatives of the League and 16 National Societies from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

As in previous years, the ICRC held two information sessions, on 19 April and 19 October (presentation of the ICRC's current main activities and several general problems within the Movement, followed by discussions) for representatives of some 50 National Societies and the General Secretariat of Arab National Societies who were in Geneva for meetings at the League, as well as representatives of the League and the Henry Dunant Institute.

In addition, the ICRC held a meeting to consult National Society experts in order to reach a common interpretation of the basic concepts in the Movement's Fundamental Principles. The meeting took place at the Henry Dunant Institute in Geneva on 14 and 15 October and followed up the first such consultation in October 1987 in Budapest. The Geneva meeting was attended by National Society representatives from Hungary, Canada, the United Kingdom, Zimbabwe, Colombia, Switzerland, Malaysia and Bangladesh. It was chaired by Mr. Pierre Keller, a member of the International Committee and chairman of the ICRC working group on respect for and dissemination of the Fundamental Principles. A report on the group's work is to

be prepared by the ICRC and submitted to the 1989 Council of Delegates.

Empress Shôken Fund

This Fund was created in 1912 by a gift from the Empress Shôken of Japan to promote the development of the National Societies' humanitarian activities in peacetime. Since then, the Fund has received regular gifts from the Japanese Imperial family, the government, and the Japanese Red Cross Society.

The Joint League/ICRC Commission for the distribution of income from the Empress Shôken Fund met in Geneva on 18 March under the chairmanship of Mr. Maurice Aubert, ICRC Vice-President, and in the presence of Japan's Ambassador and Permanent Representative in Geneva. The Commission decided to carry out the 67th distribution of income among 11 National Societies, those of Barbados, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Djibouti, Greece, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, the Solomon Islands, Syria, Tanzania and Thailand for the purchase of ambulances and other vehicles, blood-transfusion and other equipment, and material for the training of relief workers (for details of the distribution, see the May-June 1988 edition of the *International Review of the Red Cross*).

LEAGUE OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

Meeting of the ICRC/League Co-ordinating Body

A meeting of the ICRC/League Co-ordinating Body, set up by the 1969 Agreement between the two institutions, took place at the Henry Dunant Institute on 5 September.

The main purpose of the meeting, which was held at the request of both institutions, was to review problems that had arisen in Red Cross operations in Ethiopia; other areas of activity were also discussed. The meeting expressed its support for the ICRC and for enabling it to resume its protection and assistance work in northern Ethiopia; it also expressed its support for the work carried out under League supervision in Ethiopia by the Ethiopian Red Cross Society; finally, with reference to the respective competences as defined by statutory provisions, it reaffirmed the im-

portance of strengthening the procedures of consultation between the ICRC and the League on operational matters in order to maintain unity and solidarity within the Movement.

Joint ICRC/League Commission on National Society Statutes

The Joint ICRC/League Commission on National Society Statutes met six times in 1988. In accordance with International Conference resolutions (Res. VI of the 1973 Tehran Conference and Res. XX of the 1981 Manila Conference), the Commission studied draft amendments to their Statutes submitted by 10 National Societies. It also followed and did its utmost to support the development of 11 emerging Societies.

After ICRC and League delegates in Chad and Mozambique had assessed the respective National Society's operational capacity, the Commission recommended that the two Societies should be officially recognized by the ICRC and admitted to membership of the League.

Henry Dunant Institute

The ICRC, the League and the Swiss Red Cross are members of the Henry Dunant Institute and take it in turns to supply a Chairman for the Institute for a two-year term of office. Since October 1988, the Chairman has been Mr. Mario Enrique Villarroel, President of the League, who succeeded Mr. Maurice Aubert (ICRC).

The ICRC joins in certain studies undertaken by the Institute, for example on international humanitarian law, and has taken part in various seminars organized by the Institute. In 1988, the ICRC provided instructors for:

- ☐ the twelfth introductory course on the international activities of the Red Cross, for National Society leaders and volunteers (Geneva, 30 May-10 June), held in French and attended by 25 National Society representatives from Africa, Asia and Europe;
- ☐ the fifth seminar on public international law and international humanitarian law for American law students, organized in conjunction with the University of Santa Clara in California (Geneva, 8 June-1 July).