

Cooperation within the movement

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COOPERATION WITHIN THE MOVEMENT

The work of the statutory bodies

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

On 26 November 1991, the Standing Commission decided to adjourn *sine die* the 26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent which was to be held in Budapest. It took this decision after noting that, despite intensive diplomatic efforts, agreement could not be reached as to the form that Palestinian participation in the Conference should take. However, the ICRC and the other components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement remain convinced that the efforts made to prepare the Budapest Conference were not futile, since they enabled a large number of questions to be examined in consultations with several States during the preparatory phase of the Conference and a number of the documents prepared to be discussed in detail by the Movement. The postponement of the meeting nevertheless means that consideration must be given to ways of avoiding the snags that prompted this decision and, more generally, to the relations between the governments and the various components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

Because of the postponement of the 26th International Conference, the Standing Commission decided at its meeting of 27 November to extend the duration of the Council of Delegates and include on its agenda several subjects that were to have been considered by the Conference.

Thus it was a particularly substantive Council of Delegates — held, in deference to the host National Society, under the chairmanship of Mr. Reszö Sztuchlik, Secretary-

General of the Hungarian Red Cross and President of its Executive Committee — that met in Budapest from 28 to 30 November.

During its meeting the Council of Delegates adopted 23 resolutions. It established a nine-member study group on the future of the Movement (two members for the ICRC, two for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and five representatives of National Societies designated by the President of the Federation), which will report to the next Council of Delegates. It also renewed the mandate and broadened the membership of the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace (see below).

Numerous resolutions

In conformity with the wishes of the ICRC, the Council of Delegates adopted the *Regulations on the Use of the Emblem by the National Societies* and decided, in view of the postponement of the 26th International Conference, to submit them by circular letter to the States for their approval. It reaffirmed the need for greater harmonization of information work within the Movement, encouraged the Movement's activities on behalf of refugees, gave its support to the plan of action for women in Red Cross/Red Crescent development, called on the Movement to continue its work to protect the victims of war, recalled the importance of humanitarian assistance in situations of armed conflict, and adopted a resolution on the protection of the civilian population against famine in situations of armed conflict and a text on the situation of child soldiers.

In addition, the Council of Delegates adopted two resolutions on disaster relief in time of peace, and one on a code of conduct on humanitarian assistance in the event of natural and technological disasters. It likewise endorsed the proposals of the Commission for the Financing of the ICRC, and examined the report of the Joint ICRC/Federation

Commission on National Society Statutes and the report of the Empress Shôken Fund.

The Council of Delegates also revised the regulations governing the Florence Nightingale Medal so that it could also be awarded to male nurses, and not only to female nurses. Finally, the Council of Delegates issued an appeal for peace in Yugoslavia and set the place and date for its next meeting, to be held in the United Kingdom in 1993.

The Council of Delegates also approved the *Guidelines for the '90s*, designed to spur the dissemination effort on a worldwide scale. They are supplemented by a resolution inviting the Red Cross and Red Crescent to maintain and increase activities conducted hitherto. A general report describing the dissemination activities carried out by the States and the various components of the Movement since the adoption in 1977 of the first programme of action was also presented on this occasion, showing that since then seminars, courses and meetings have multiplied and covered increasingly widespread areas and sections of the public.

STANDING COMMISSION

In 1991 the Standing Commission met on five occasions, on 23 April, 3 September, and 20, 26 and 27 November. It was chaired by Dr. Ahmad Abu-Goura, President of the Jordanian Red Crescent.

The Commission devoted the bulk of its work to the 26th Conference, supervising preparations for it (programme, agenda, list of members and observers) in accordance with its statutory responsibilities and maintaining constant contact to this effect within the Movement and with governments, in particular through a group of ten ambassadors posted in Geneva who were consulted regularly by two members of the Commission.

The Standing Commission also examined nominations for the Henry Dunant Medal and awarded this distinction for services of particular merit to five members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: G. Baron Kraijenhoff

(Netherlands Red Cross), Dr. Carlo Alberto Vera Martinez (Paraguayan Red Cross), Mrs. Quamar Quazoon Choura (Syrian Arab Red Crescent), Mr. Janos Hantos (Hungarian Red Cross) and Mr. William Cassis (Federation). In addition, the Standing Commission also honoured the memory of Mr. Faquir Yar and Mr. Zamany Mohd Osman (local ICRC staff who died in Afghanistan), Mr. Walter Berweger (ICRC delegate killed in the Philippines), Mr. Juanito Patong (member of the Philippine Red Cross who died at Mr. Berweger's side), Mr. Peter Altwegg (ICRC delegate killed in Somalia), Mr. Graeme Whyte (former President of the New Zealand Red Cross) and Mr. Alexandre Hay (former President of the ICRC), by posthumously awarding them the Henry Dunant Medal.

Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace

Set up by the Council of Delegates in 1977, the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace met twice in 1991, on 24 April and 23 November.

At the first meeting, chaired shortly before his death in August by Mr. Alexandre Hay, then by Mr. Alan McLean (Australian Red Cross), the Commission embarked on a review of its terms of reference. During the discussions a broad consensus was found to favour continuing the Commission as a forum particularly conducive to consideration and dialogue within the Movement, and agreement was reached on the frequency with which the Commission should meet (twice yearly, on average) and on the number of National Societies that should be its members.⁶

On 23 November, the Commission held its second session in Budapest, shortly before the meeting of the Council of Delegates. Meeting under the acting chairmanship of Mr. Alan McLean, the Commission first of all paid fervent tribute to the recently deceased Mr. Alexandre Hay, its chairman from 1987 to 1991.

It then continued its consideration of its role, activities and, in accordance with the request by the Council of Delegates in

1989, a proposal relating to its membership. Finally, its terms of reference were broadened.

The Commission also took note of the report on the World Campaign for the Protection of Victims of War. It considered that the part played by National Societies in the events to mark 8 May, when the Campaign was launched, had been a success and that its overall results could be considered satisfactory, even though lessons should be drawn as to the management and financing of such projects.

Lastly, the Commission discussed the Movement's possible role with regard to minorities. This subject will be examined in greater detail by the Commission as part of its broader mandate. The question of a "right to humanitarian assistance", which was likewise on the agenda of the Council of Delegates (see above), was also considered.

***Ad hoc* Group against Racism and Racial Discrimination**

Established in October 1989 and consisting of representatives of National Societies (Ethiopian, Swedish and Yugoslav Red Cross), the ICRC and the Federation, this working group submitted its report to the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace on 24 April.

The preliminary enquiry carried out by the *Ad hoc* Group, to which 26 National Societies replied, showed that even though many

Societies are still hesitating in the face of the size and complexity, and sometimes the dangers of the struggle against racial, ethnic or cultural discrimination which may exist in their respective countries, their interventions have had worthwhile results. An increased effort is expected of the Movement in disseminating its Fundamental Principles and propagating its ideal of human solidarity.

Finally, noting that none of the National Societies had called on it to intervene in specific cases, the group ended its work, and the account of its activities was included in the report presented to the Council of Delegates by the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace.

Relations with the components of the Movement

NATIONAL SOCIETIES

Dialogue and contacts

To cope with the tremendous international upheavals of 1991 the ICRC spared no effort to intensify its dialogue with the National Societies and involve them more closely in its work.

For this purpose the President and members of the ICRC carried out numerous visits to Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to keep them informed of activities undertaken by the ICRC, request their opinion, attend meetings of the Movement or represent the International Committee on various commemorative occasions.

Thus, the ICRC President visited Great Britain, France and Jordan (February), Italy (February, April and June), Brazil, Luxembourg and the Federal Republic of Germany (March), the United States (March and June), and Kuwait (October), to build up the ICRC's contacts with National Society leaders and meet members of the various governments.

Members of the Committee also carried out visits for the same purpose. In March, Mr. Rudolf Jäckli and Mr. Jacques Forster respectively visited Belgium and Peru. ICRC

⁶ In November 1991, in addition to the permanent members (the ICRC and the Federation), the Council of Delegates increased from 14 to 16 the number of member National Societies of the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace. They are the Australian Red Cross, the Brazilian Red Cross, the Colombian Red Cross, the Egyptian Red Crescent, the Ethiopian Red Cross, the French Red Cross, the Hellenic Red Cross, the Hungarian Red Cross, the Republic of Korea Red Cross, the Red Cross of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Malaysian Red Crescent, the Nigerian Red Cross, the Paraguayan Red Cross, the Sudanese Red Crescent, the Swedish Red Cross and the Tunisian Red Crescent. In addition, the Council of Delegates decided to set up a rotational system for the member Societies, and elected Mr Maurice Aubert, member of the ICRC, as Chairman of the Commission.

Vice-President Claudio Caratsch went on mission to Côte d'Ivoire and Benin (June), and to Nigeria (June and November). Mrs. Anne Petitpierre attended the 50th anniversary of the Uganda Red Cross Society (July), whilst Mrs. Liselotte Kraus-Gurny made a visit to the Fiji and New Zealand Red Cross Societies (October).

The ICRC also attached great importance to dialogue with the National Societies on a regional basis. The President of the ICRC, several members of the Committee and other ICRC officials accordingly attended several major regional meetings such as the 14th Inter-American Conference (Ottawa, June), the 21st Conference of the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies (Damascus, August) and the 9th Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the Balkan Countries (Athens, September).

Following an approach by several National Societies, the President, the Vice-Presidents and the members of the Committee and Executive Board of the ICRC met representatives of the member Societies of the Federation's Executive Council. This informal meeting, the first of its kind, was held in Yverdon-les-Bains (Switzerland) on 31 August and 1 September. The participants set themselves the objective of strengthening the spirit of solidarity among the components of the Movement and consolidating the image and work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent so as to respond more effectively to the challenges of the future.

The Yverdon meeting enabled several of the Movement's problems with regard to the world it operates in and its own organization to be clarified. In view of its success, the participants decided to hold a second such meeting.

Development of National Societies

The ICRC's activities in this area grew considerably in 1991. In accordance with its specific tasks, the ICRC concentrated first and foremost on increasing the operational capacity of National Societies in emergency situations (armed conflicts) and preparing

them to cope with such situations. In view of the crisis and subsequent conflict in the Gulf and the upheavals in Central and Eastern Europe, the ICRC intensified its cooperation in this respect with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in those parts of the world. However the National Societies of Africa, Asia and America were not disregarded as a result. Delegates, both local and regional, took every possible opportunity to strengthen the National Societies' operational capacity by increased contact with them in the field.

The ICRC also provided technical and legal assistance for the establishment or reorganization of National Societies. Both from Geneva and in the field, particular help was given to Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies that so wished in drafting or revising their statutes.

In its activities to contribute more effectively to the development of National Societies, the ICRC likewise gave priority to support for programmes to spread knowledge of humanitarian law and the Fundamental Principles of the Movement and concentrated on building up their information services.

The ICRC also helped with implementation of the provisions of the Geneva Conventions and especially the rules relating to the use of the red cross and red crescent emblems. Similarly, the ICRC supported the National Societies in their efforts to persuade their respective States to become party to the Additional Protocols.

Last but not least, the ICRC took an active part in the training of National Society staff, particularly in Tracing Agency work or to prepare National Society delegates seconded ICRC field missions.

Empress Shôken Fund

This Fund was created in 1912 by a gift from the Empress of Japan to promote the development of National Society activities in peacetime. Since then the Fund has received several gifts from the Japanese Imperial family, the government, the Japanese Red Cross, various associations and the Japanese public.

The Joint Federation/ICRC Commission for the distribution of income from the

Empress Shôken Fund met in Geneva on 19 March 1991 under the chairmanship of Mr. Maurice Aubert, ICRC Vice-President, and in the presence of Japan's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva.

In accordance with the criteria it set itself in 1990 (more equitable geographical distribution of awards, priority for development projects), the Commission decided to carry out the 70th distribution of its income among the National Societies of the following countries: Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Haiti, Mali, Morocco, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, South Africa, Tunisia and Venezuela. The money will be used to purchase vehicles and ambulances, training material and equipment for health activities, emergency aid and social assistance, and to finance programmes for Youth Sections.⁷

French Maurice de Madre Fund

The Board of the French Maurice de Madre Fund, which was set up in 1970 to assist members of National Societies who suffer injury, illness or an accident in the service of the Movement and, in the event of their death, to assist their families, met on 26 June and 12 December 1991 at ICRC headquarters in Geneva.

After examining and approving the Fund's financial report, the Board considered the cases submitted to it. Four cases received a positive reply (Hungary, Mozambique, Portugal and El Salvador). Payments are being made for three other cases (Haiti, Uganda and Sri Lanka). Four cases (Benin, Nigeria, Philippines and Zaire) require additional information. The Board was notified that it would soon be receiving information pending for a request for allocations to the families of 23 Bangladeshi rescue workers who lost their lives during an operation to rescue victims of a natural disaster.

⁷ The reader will find details of this 70th distribution of income in the *International Review of the Red Cross*, No. 283, July-August 1991.

Florence Nightingale Medal

The Florence Nightingale Medal Commission, composed of members of the International Committee and the institution's Chief Medical Officer, awards the highest distinction that can be received within the Movement by a member of the nursing profession.

The Commission met in Geneva on 9 April and 24 May 1991. It awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal to 25 nurses recommended by the National Societies of the following countries: Australia, Bahamas, Canada, China (People's Republic), Ethiopia, France, Korea (Republic of), Iceland, Italy, Japan, Lesotho, Netherlands, New Zealand, Philippines, Poland, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia.

It should be recalled that after the adoption of Resolution 21 by the Council of Delegates in Budapest in November 1991, the regulations governing the Florence Nightingale Medal were altered so that it can henceforth also be awarded to male nurses, and not only to female nurses.

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

In order to strengthen the unity of the Movement, the ICRC and the Federation kept in steady contact on operational matters and consulted each other regularly on all questions related to major meetings or the work of the Movement's statutory bodies.

The ICRC was accordingly invited by the Federation to be present as an observer at the XXVIIth session of its Executive Council in Geneva on 25-26 April, and at the VIIIth session of its General Assembly in Budapest on 26-28 November.⁸

The Federation President and Secretary General likewise attended the meeting of the

⁸ During this meeting, the General Assembly voted in favour of changing the League's name. It is henceforth known as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and is referred to as such throughout this report.

ICRC Executive Board on 11 April and the ICRC Assembly on 1 May as observers.

Joint Federation/ICRC meetings

Representatives of the ICRC and the Federation periodically attend formal joint meetings at which senior officials of the two institutions discuss matters of mutual interest.

Such meetings took place on 29 January, 6 February, 8 April, 23 September and 18 November at the headquarters of either the ICRC or the Federation. The subjects discussed included preparations for the major meetings of the Movement (26th Conference, Council of Delegates), the work of its statutory bodies (Standing Commission) and the supervision of joint studies and projects (for example, the World Campaign for the Protection of Victims of War, and the Regulations on the Use of the Emblem).

These meetings also gave rise to exchanges of information on current activities and consideration of missions of mutual interest.

Joint Commission on National Society Statutes

The Joint ICRC/Federation Commission on National Society Statutes met eight times in 1991, on 6 February, 10 April, 23 May, 10 July, 10 September, 8 October, 12 November and 18 December.

In accordance with Resolution VI of the 22nd International Conference and Resolution XX of the 24th International Conference, the Commission examined draft statutory amendments submitted by 19 National Societies. It also followed the development of nine emergent Societies or Societies that had applied for recognition.⁹

⁹ As a result of these discussions, three National Societies were recognized by the ICRC and admitted as full members of the Federation in 1991: the Solomon Islands Red Cross, the Lithuanian Red Cross and the Latvian Red Cross (confirmation of the ICRC's previous recognition of the latter two National Societies in 1923).

It also considered the cases of six National Societies facing internal reorganization problems and seeking support from the two umbrella organizations of the Movement.

Lastly the Commission studied the replies to its letter of 26 November 1990 to Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies whose statutes were drawn up before 1990. The results were included in the report the Commission submitted to the Council of Delegates in November 1991.

HENRY DUNANT INSTITUTE

The ICRC, the International Federation 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 1990, the Chairman has been Mr. Hubert Bucher, Secretary General of the Swiss Red Cross.

In 1991 the ICRC joined in several studies and projects undertaken by the Institute, for example on international law and respect for the Fundamental Principles.

In addition, ICRC staff members acted as instructors at several meetings organized as part of the Institute's activities, in particular:

- the 16th annual introductory course on the international activities of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, for National Society leaders and volunteers, which was held in Geneva from 20 to 31 May and attended by 24 participants from 20 French-speaking National Societies;
- the seminar for the heads of penitentiary administrations in French and English-speaking Africa, which was held in Mauritius from 4 to 8 November. It was attended by 50 participants from 20 countries, who were able to discuss their experience, compare the organization of their respective penitentiary systems and lay the groundwork for a common penitentiary management policy that would nevertheless respect the specific features and requirements of each system.