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# V. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND INFORMATION

## Relations with international organizations

The delegate to international organizations followed the work of the thirty-third session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission in February and March and the two sessions of the Economic and Social Council. Contacts were maintained with the U.N. secretariat both in New York and Geneva, as required by operational needs and questions of doctrine and law.

The humanitarian concerns of the ICRC over the situation in southern Africa impelled the institution to send two observers to the International Conference in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia, organized by the United Nations at Maputo from 16 to 21 May (see chapter on southern Africa).

The 29th session of the World Health Assembly at Geneva was also followed by an ICRC observer, as was the 30th session of the United Nations Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

Contacts were maintained with regional organizations or their representatives, notably with the Council of Europe, in connection with various aspects of human rights, torture and political prisoners, and with the OAU concerning the work of the Diplomatic Conference.

The ICRC followed the work of the 32nd session of the General Assembly, which was of special interest because the Secretary-General presented to the Sixth Committee an overall report on the work of the Diplomatic Conference, and the First Committee discussed the follow-up to be given to work on the limitation of certain conventional weapons (resolution 22 (IV)) of the Diplomatic Conference. As usual, several aspects of ICRC activities were dealt with in the discussions, dealing for example with the Middle East, Cyprus, Chile, the Sahara, western Africa and eastern Timor.

Representatives of the ICRC also maintained their co-operation with various United Nations specialized institutions such as the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR), the United Nations Disaster Relief Office (UNDRO) and UNICEF and with a number of non-governmental organizations sharing common interests with us relating to human rights, the protection of detainees, the fight against torture and other questions concerning international humanitarian law.

## Information and Public Relations

Co-operation between the League and the ICRC in information and public relations reached a new stage during the year, especially on the occasion of the Twenty-third International Red Cross Conference. In connection with study of the Report on the Re-appraisal of the Role of the Red Cross, the Information Bureau of the League and the Press and Information Division of the ICRC made a number of proposals designed to harmonize and rationalize their means of action and to develop more systematic co-operation in the planning of objectives and programmes of action. These proposals were welcomed by the Conference, especially by the National Societies.

Audio-visual means of communication appeared to be the sector in which possibilities for co-operation between the League and the ICRC were most apparent. The intention of the two institutions to pool their energies, equipment and other resources to create a common audio-visual centre (photo, films, video, exhibition material, etc.) was unanimously approved.

In the field of radio, the Red Cross Broadcasting Service (RCBS) which had hitherto been limited to programmes on the ICRC and its activities was opened up during 1977 to the Red Cross movement as a whole. Thereafter the programmes were planned and prepared jointly with the League, with production remaining under the responsibility of the ICRC.

While it is true that the major international information media at Geneva play a decisive role in spreading news about the ICRC and the League throughout the world, the National Societies constitute a vital relay system as well. Since there is a close relation in every country between the image of the International Red Cross and that of the National Society, it is indeed quite natural for every National Society to speak to the people of its own country for the Red Cross movement as a whole. Such solidarity demands close liaison not only between the League and the ICRC but also between these institutions and each National Society. It is therefore essential for the League and the ICRC to adapt their information policies and means for action to the needs and realities of the National Societies. Recognizing that this objective can only be attained through regular dialogue among all the parties concerned, the Twenty-third International Conference emphasized the importance for the two international Red Cross institutions to convoke periodic meetings with the persons responsible for information

and public relations of National Societies having comparable needs and a common culture.

### The International Review of the Red Cross

The International Review of the Red Cross, founded in 1869, was published in 1977 in three principal editions—English, French and Spanish—with an average of 60 pages for each monthly issue, and a German abstract of 16 pages.

Through its major articles and reviews of new legal publications, the International Review is the only basic periodical in the International Red Cross movement and the only publication specializing in international humanitarian law, to the development and diffusion of which it contributes regularly.

As the official organ of the International Red Cross the Review keeps its readers informed of the activities of the ICRC

in Geneva and in its delegations throughout the world. It also reports on the most important activities of National Red Cross Societies, meetings and regional seminars, the formation of new Societies, outstanding anniversaries of existing Societies, the special activities of various Societies, etc. It also serves as a liaison organ maintaining a flow of information among the members of the International Red Cross. Several of its articles were reproduced in National Society publications.

Among the texts published in 1977 by the International Review particular attention may be drawn to three: the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, adopted in June by the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law applicable in Armed Conflicts; the resolutions and decisions of the Twenty-third International Red Cross Conference; the list of States parties to the Geneva Conventions as of 30 June 1977.

In December 1977 the International Committee for imperative financial reasons was obliged to reduce the number of issues of the International Review in 1978 from twelve to six.

## VI. PERSONNEL

In 1977, the number of persons employed at ICRC *headquarters* ranged between 236 in January and 262 in November, with a monthly average of 251. Included in this average, which was ten more than the average in 1976, there were about 80 persons whose work was directly related in one way or another with field operations. The work of the remaining employees was connected with activities of the Central Tracing Agency, the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law, the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions, the Twenty-third International Red Cross Conference, relations with National Societies, information and press relations, fund-raising, administration, etc.

The number of persons employed in the *field*, delegates and technical workers sent from Geneva, averaged 89 per month. The number reached a maximum of 107 in April after which it progressively diminished with the end of the operations in Cyprus and reductions made in the delegations in Lebanon and in Latin America starting in May. There were 69 persons employed in November. There was a slight increase, to 81, in December, due mainly to the events in southern Lebanon.

The total number of employees both in Geneva and in the field ranged therefore between 326 in December and 358 in April, with an average of 340.

The delegations also had the assistance of locally employed personnel of whom there were 197 from April to August. The

number decreased thereafter to 174 in December, so that the monthly total of all employees at headquarters, in the field and persons locally employed, numbering 555 in April, was reduced to 500 in December.

A total of 256 persons were sent on field missions:

- 18 heads of delegation
- 10 regional delegates
- 116 delegates, 8 of whom were provided by National Societies
- 32 doctors, 2 of them from National Societies
- 11 nurses, 5 from National Societies
- 10 Agency delegates
- 11 administrators
- 18 secretaries
- 24 radio operators
- 6 technicians

The ICRC organized at Cartigny, near Geneva, three training courses for prospective delegates and technical workers attended by 82 persons.