

# Contribution of the ICRC to the work of International Organisations

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## IX. CONTRIBUTION OF THE ICRC TO THE WORK OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

As well as maintaining constant liaison with the League of Red Cross Societies, the ICRC keeps in touch with the numerous international governmental or private organisations.

It follows the development of humanitarian law in the world and the work done in this field by international or private organisations.

International organisations of many kinds turn to the International Committee mainly because of its action in behalf of victims of conflicts ; in return, the ICRC frequently needs the assistance of international agencies in order to bring relief to certain categories of victims who spontaneously appeal to it.

Liaison is maintained through the exchange of periodicals and reports, discussions and conversation, official visits, and by the attendance of observers at international conferences and assemblies, etc.

### UNITED NATIONS

On July 10, 1957, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, visited the ICRC. This visit confirmed the high esteem for the Red Cross which he expressed in the following message :

“ Ten years ago a unanimous resolution of the United Nations General Assembly paid a worldwide tribute to the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies by drawing the attention of

Member States to the importance of assisting the establishment of those voluntary national agencies, and of co-operating with them.

They have continued to win the gratitude of untold millions by great and dedicated work to meet human needs during times of emergency.

In this tenth annual message on World Red Cross Day, May 8, I note with pleasure that in recent months the United Nations and the Red Cross have been directly associated in certain humanitarian work. The International Committee of the Red Cross, by agreement, became the channel in Hungary for distributing the supplies obtained through the United Nations contributions for relief to the Hungarian people. The League of Red Cross Societies, in the course of its welfare work for refugees from Hungary, came into closer contact in that field with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. When, in the Middle East this year, the United Nations arranged and carried out the transfer of prisoners of war, the International Committee of the Red Cross lent valued assistance.

On the basis of recent experience I would first like to take the opportunity to express gratitude to the Red Cross for the skill and devotion of its many workers during our work together.

To these examples of direct co-operation between the United Nations and the Red Cross can be added countless other Red Cross actions serving the needs of peoples in time of emergency, and in many parts of the world. I would, therefore, like to pay a sincere and full tribute to the Red Cross not only for what it has done in conjunction with the United Nations but also for its much wider traditional service to mankind which is universally recognised on World Red Cross Day."

In the course of the year, the United Nations worked in co-operation with the ICRC for relief action in Hungary<sup>1</sup>. It was agreed that the ICRC should be responsible for distributing relief supplies received by the United Nations from its members. The text of this agreement was published in the Report on the ICRC Relief Action in Hungary, to which reference has already been made. The necessary contacts were established with the United

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 13 to 18.

Nations Secretariat in New York through the European Office of the United Nations in Geneva. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) also co-operated in this activity directed by the ICRC<sup>1</sup>.

The International Committee kept in close contact with the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees. It was represented at two sessions of the Executive Committee of UNREF and took part in many discussions on the subject of Hungarian children who had left their country following the events in the autumn of 1956<sup>2</sup>, and Algerian refugees in Tunisia<sup>3</sup>.

The ICRC was represented by observers at the twenty-fourth session of the Economic and Social Council, held in Geneva in July 1957, and also at the tenth World Health Assembly.

#### OTHER ORGANISATIONS

As in previous years, the ICRC kept in touch with the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM), particularly during the events in Egypt<sup>4</sup>, as well as with the International Committee of Military Medicine and Pharmacy, the World Medical Association and the Conference of non-governmental Organisations concerned with migration problems.

The ICRC also maintained its contacts with many other governmental or non-governmental institutions, including: the Anti-Slavery Society, the Arab League, the Committee for Medical Neutrality, the European Association for the Study of the Refugee Problem, the European Broadcasting Union, the Friends Society (Quakers), the Information Centre of International Catholic Organisations, the International Committee for the "Lieux de Genève"<sup>5</sup>, the International Council of Nurses, the International Dental Federation, the International Federation for the Welfare of Populations, the International Hospital Federation, the International Institute for Peace, the International Social Service, the

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<sup>1</sup> See pp. 18.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 42 to 44.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 27 to 33.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 21 to 26.

<sup>5</sup> Now called the International Organisation for the Protection of Civilians.

International Society for the Welfare of Cripples, the International Union for Child Welfare, the Jewish Agency for Palestine, the Rotary International, the Sovereign Order of Malta, the Universal Alliance of Young People's Christian Unions, the World Council of Churches, the World Peace Council, the World Veterans Federation, etc.

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