

TWENTY-SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT  
PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

OPENING CEREMONY

*The detailed programme of the Opening Ceremony will be drawn up in agreement with the Hungarian Red Cross. The Chairman of the Standing Commission and the Presidents of the ICRC and the League will each deliver a short speech. There will be a solemn reading of the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.*

PLENARY MEETINGS

FIRST PLENARY MEETING

1. Address by the Chairman of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.
2. Address by the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross.
3. Address by the President of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Break

4. Election of the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, Secretary-General, and two Assistant Secretaries-General of the Conference.
5. Report on the work of the Council of Delegates of 28 November 1991.
6. Appointment of the Conference Commissions and adoption of their respective agenda:
  - . Commission I : International humanitarian law
  - . Commission II: Development, relief and general matters.
7. Information on the procedure for the election of the members of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.
8. Report of the Chairman of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT PLENARY MEETINGS

1. Election of the members of the Standing Commission
2. Report of Commission I and adoption of resolutions
3. Report of Commission II and adoption of resolutions
4. Place and date of the Twenty-seventh International Conference
5. Other business

MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSIONS

A. COMMISSION I: INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN, THE VICE-CHAIRMEN, THE RAPPORTEUR AND THE MEMBERS OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

2. RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND ACTIVITIES OF THE ICRC

*The oral report to be presented by the President of the ICRC will review the institution's activities with emphasis on operational developments in 1991. The President will also discuss recent and ongoing conflicts and analyse them from the standpoint of the application of international humanitarian law. The occupation of Kuwait, for instance, and the ensuing action taken on the basis of United Nations resolutions as well as the events which have occurred after the cease-fire gave rise to a number of problems which will be closely examined. ICRC documents and the statement by its President will provide the Commission with a basis for the resolutions the Conference may wish to adopt with respect to the application of international humanitarian law in ongoing armed conflicts.*

3. SIGNATURES AND RATIFICATIONS OF AND ACCESSIONS TO THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS AND THE PROTOCOLS ADDITIONAL THERETO

*The accession of all States to the principal instruments of international humanitarian law will confirm its universal character. A document will give an account of the action taken to promote these instruments and will contain suggestions as to how to encourage States which have not already done so to adopt them. The relevance of the humanitarian rules to be observed in the conduct of hostilities and which are taken up or expanded in the Protocols will be discussed in the light of recent conflicts.*

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

4.1. National measures

*To be fully effective, the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols require legislative and other measures to be adopted at the national level. Efforts to promote the adoption of such measures should be made already in peacetime, but to date they are still far from adequate. It is therefore necessary to find the most effective possible ways of encouraging those efforts in the future.*

As requested at the Twenty-fifth Conference, the ICRC has been gathering information about such measures. It will present the results of this exercise so as to enable governments to draw their conclusions.

4.2. Protection of the civilian population and persons "hors de combat"

Civilians, especially women and children, are increasingly affected by armed conflicts and suffer particular hardship when these occur in regions where there is widespread poverty. The protection of civilians and all persons "hors de combat" continues to be a burning issue. Various matters in this connection will be examined, in particular the problem of famine in armed conflicts. Another issue worthy of particular attention is the disastrous impact which the conflict in the Middle East and other recent conflicts have had on the environment.

4.3. International Fact-Finding Commission

Fact-finding is difficult in practical terms and politically sensitive when it comes to alleged violations of international humanitarian law. Article 90 of 1977 Additional Protocol I provides for the setting up of a Commission to help with this task once 20 Contracting Parties to the Protocol have accepted its competence; this condition has now been met. It is important at present to promote this Commission so that it will be more widely accepted and to examine how it could make an effective contribution to the implementation of international humanitarian law. This might lead to a broader study of possible ways of enhancing the effectiveness of existing means of implementing international humanitarian law.

5. PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW AND OF THE PRINCIPLES AND IDEALS OF THE MOVEMENT

5.1. Guidelines for disseminating international humanitarian law and the principles and ideals of the Movement

International humanitarian law can be effective only if it is known, particularly by those who must apply it in the first place, i.e. members of the armed forces. Furthermore, the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols expressly stipulate the obligation to disseminate international humanitarian law.

The ICRC and the League will propose "guidelines" for the dissemination of international humanitarian law and the Fundamental Principles of the Movement during the Nineties.

*These guidelines will be based on the experience acquired by the National Societies, the ICRC and the League over the last fifteen years, notably as part of the implementation of the three Programmes of Action adopted in this connection in 1977, 1981 and 1986 respectively.*

5.2. Results of the World Campaign for the Protection of Victims of War

*The Twenty-fifth International Conference recommended the launching of a World Campaign to draw attention to the tragic plight of war victims and the humanitarian standards which must be respected during armed conflicts. This Campaign, organized by the National Societies, the ICRC, and the League, is currently under way and reached its peak on 8 May 1991. A report will be submitted to the Conference to assess the results and draw preliminary conclusions.*

6. REAFFIRMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

6.1. Non-international armed conflicts

*Most of today's armed conflicts are non-international. Since the provisions governing these conflicts are far less numerous and detailed than those applicable to international armed conflicts, it is necessary to recall the general principles and the treaty and customary rules applicable to these conflicts and to clarify their scope and possible implications, particularly with regard to the methods and means of combat. For example, the application of existing rules on the use of mines, which are particularly deadly for civilians, merits examination. A report by the ICRC will detail the various aspects of this problem.*

6.2. Information concerning work on international humanitarian law applicable to war at sea

*This branch of international humanitarian law was not re-examined during the 1974-1977 Diplomatic Conference and merits further study. The ICRC will report on work in progress, in particular that being done under the auspices of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law of San Remo.*

6.3. Prohibitions or restrictions of the use of certain weapons and methods in armed conflicts

6.3.1 Promotion of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons of 10 October 1980, together with its three Protocols

*This Convention and its three Protocols are a logical extension of the rules governing restrictions on the conduct of hostilities as reaffirmed and developed in 1977 Additional Protocol I. However, far fewer have acceded to these instruments than to 1977 Additional Protocol I. The reasons for this must be examined and ways sought to encourage States in this respect.*

6.3.2 Developments in relation to certain conventional weapons and new weapons technologies

*The developments in relation to certain conventional weapons refer principally to recent work on small-calibre weapons.*

*The item "new weapons technologies" will cover in particular antipersonnel laser weapons, discussed at four meetings of experts held at the ICRC between 1989 and 1991.*

*ICRC reports will therefore be submitted to the Conference to enable States to consider what steps to take, notably the possibility of adding further Protocols to the 1980 Convention.*

6.4. Identification of medical transports

*The protection of war victims during hostilities is impossible to undertake without clear means of identification for the personnel and equipment intended to help them. To that end, Art. 98 of 1977 Additional Protocol I provides for a periodic review of Annex I ("Regulations concerning identification") so that the latter can be adapted to new techniques and brought in line with decisions taken by specialized organizations.*

*In the framework of this procedure, a meeting of government experts was convened by the ICRC in 1990. The report on this meeting has been sent to the depository State, the Swiss Confederation, with a view to a possible Diplomatic Conference to revise Annex I. The task of the International Conference will be to review the technical problems examined and report on progress made.*

7. OTHER BUSINESS

B. COMMISSION II: DEVELOPMENT, RELIEF AND GENERAL MATTERS

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN, THE VICE-CHAIRMEN, THE RAPPORTEUR AND MEMBERS OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

2. ACTIVITIES OF THE LEAGUE

*The oral report will deal essentially with League activities in 1991 and a written report will highlight major events since 1986, including the follow-up to resolutions which are not the subject of separate reports.*

3. DEVELOPMENT

3.1. Role of the League, the National Societies and the ICRC

*Underdevelopment is one of the principal causes of armed conflicts and other disasters. The economic and social development of the poorest regions of the world and the necessary co-operation involved constitute one of the major challenges in our time.*

*The Movement's responsibility for emergency aid, in the event of armed conflicts or other disasters, led it to consider its role as regards prevention and, hence, development. However, the challenge raised by development greatly exceeds the capacity and terms of reference of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, alone. Therefore the role the Movement can play in this sphere needs to be defined. Generally speaking, it is clear that the Movement must act principally through the National Societies, which constitute a vast network throughout the world. The scale of priorities for developing these Societies to enable them to play an effective role in their own countries' development will be closely examined.*

*The League is primarily responsible for promoting and co-ordinating the development activities of National Societies; it will draw up a report on this subject and make reference to various documents which it has recently adopted: "Principles and Rules for Development Co-operation"; "Strategic Work Plan of the League for the Nineties"; and "The Development Fund".*

*The ICRC has a role to play in certain areas, in particular by preparing National Societies for their activities during armed conflicts, and the ICRC's policy in this respect will also be presented.*

3.2. Development plans for National Societies

*The development of National Societies must be planned on a national level; the League will help the National Societies to draw up these plans and, with the co-operation of the ICRC, to put them into effect. An assessment of the situation will be given in a League report.*

4. RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT RESPONSE TO NATURAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL DISASTERS

4.1. Role of the League in natural and technological disaster reduction

*It is now recognized that many natural and technological disasters are caused by human activities. Therefore efforts to prevent them must be increased, in particular by promoting greater awareness of the effects of certain activities on the environment and the part they play in causing disasters. The role of the League will be examined in that connection, particularly its contribution to the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. (IDNDR).*

4.2. Co-ordination and conduct of emergency relief operations

*This involves reaffirming, or even developing, the ethical principles and legal rules which must be observed when providing emergency relief. Attention will be drawn to questions relating to co-ordination.*

5. THE MOVEMENT AND REFUGEES

*Since the sudden upsurge of refugee movements worldwide in the early 1980s, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement declared its readiness to respond to the needs of refugees in its Resolution and Statement of Policy at the XXIVth Conference. This solidarity was reinforced by the corresponding Resolution of the XXVth International Conference. Since then, hopes for a settlement of long standing refugee problems have faded away. Numbers of refugees continued to grow, but resources for help have declined. Moreover, pressure of asylum seekers and internally displaced persons, who are all in need of assistance, increased. At this stage, new dramatic refugee influxes, claiming the lives of the most vulnerable and exposed, have moved the refugee problem into unprecedented dimensions. Moreover, potential refugee flows require timely preparedness. This calls for firm commitment by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in a spirit of sharing*

the responsibility placed on the international community. A fresh view is required to maintain the dignity of refugees in adversity, particularly for the most severely affected people. A report will be presented to the International Conference.

6. REVISION OF THE REGULATIONS ON THE USE OF THE EMBLEM BY THE NATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

The red cross and red crescent emblems are primarily intended to indicate and protect army medical personnel and vehicles and medical establishments during armed conflicts. Originally, National Societies earned their names and the right to use the emblem by acting as auxiliaries to the armed forces medical services. Use of the emblem, both in time of armed conflict and in peace time must nevertheless be clearly defined so as to resolve the numerous questions confronting National Societies in that connection.

Regulations in this respect were adopted in 1965. They must now be updated to take into account the provisions of the 1977 Additional Protocols, for the Societies of States party to those instruments, and to define acceptable limits on the use of the emblem for the promotion and financing of the National Societies.

A draft submitted to the 1986 Conference was not examined for lack of time. To take subsequent developments into account, some changes have been made to the draft which the Council of Delegates will submit for the Conference's approval.

7. REPORT OF THE JOINT ICRC/LEAGUE COMMISSION FOR NATIONAL SOCIETY STATUTES

The Movement's identity and cohesiveness are derived from the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. To be recognized by the ICRC as full members of the Movement, applicant Societies must honour those Principles and show that they fulfil the conditions laid down by the Movement's Statutes. The task of the Joint Commission is to ensure that National Society statutes conform with these Fundamental Principles and with the above-mentioned conditions. The joint ICRC/League report will give an account of the Commission's work and will include general remarks stemming therefrom.

8. REPORT OF THE COMMISSION FOR THE FINANCING OF THE ICRC

*The financing of the ICRC by National Societies and by governments will be examined under this heading. The Conference will, moreover, have to appoint new National Societies to replace one-third of those which are members of the Commission.*

9. REPORT BY THE JOINT COMMISSION FOR THE EMPRESS SHOKEN FUND

*This Fund was created thanks to a donation made by H.M. the Empress of Japan to promote relief work in peace time. It is administered by a joint ICRC-League Commission.*

*A report shall be presented on the situation of the Fund, on the allocations made since the preceding International Conference and on their use by National Societies.*

10. FOLLOW-UP TO VARIOUS RESOLUTIONS OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

*Several resolutions of the Twenty-fifth Conference require a follow-up. Where appropriate, accounts of the action taken will appear in the relevant reports under the various agenda items for each Commission. In addition, a joint ICRC/League report will describe the action taken on resolutions which are not substantially dealt with under any one of the items on the agenda.*

11. OTHER BUSINESS

*It is planned to deal with the following items under this heading:*

- *An amendment to the Regulations for the Florence Nightingale medal, which in the past has been awarded only to nurses of the female sex, enabling male nurses also to apply;*
- *The report of the Council of the Foundation for the ICRC;*
- *A suggestion that various texts in force, particularly the document "Principles and Rules for Red Cross Disaster Relief", be adapted to conform with the terms used in the Movement's Statutes.*

*Furthermore, a request may be submitted for an amendment to the Movement's Statutes should the League change its name. This is a point currently being considered.*