

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

Budapest, 28-30 November 1991

VERBATIM REPORT

prepared by
the International Committee of the Red Cross
and
the International Federation of Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies

Geneva, 1993

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COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

(28-30 November 1991)

First session

Thursday, 28 November 1991

2.30 p.m.

ITEM 1 ON THE AGENDA: OPENING OF THE SESSION BY THE
 CHAIRMAN OF THE STANDING
 COMMISSION OF THE RED CROSS AND
 RED CRESCENT

Dr. Ahmed ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The first item on the agenda of the Council of Delegates is the opening of the session by the Chairman of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

The Council of Delegates is convened today after the decision taken by the Standing Commission to postpone the XXVI International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. While we all feel sorry about the decision, we should accept the facts of the situation and the reasons for the postponement. The Fundamental Principles of our Movement were the basis of that decision. In each meeting that we had with the different parties concerned, we told them the following: we need a successful Conference, we need a humanitarian Conference and we would not like to have a politicised Conference. We started work on this issue immediately after the closure of the XXV International Conference.

In 1965 the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement adopted seven Principles. The first one of these is Humanity, and Humanity was explained as follows: "The Red Cross, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours -in its international and national capacity- to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples". I would like to repeat the last sentence: mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I feel that the most important step towards guaranteeing the enjoyment of these rights and fundamental freedoms by all human beings is the abolition of servitude and slavery in all its forms. To reach this end and build a peaceful world where everyone can freely flourish, man should give up his colonial ambitions, his greed and his selfish desires. All of mankind belongs to one race, that is the human race, or, should we say, one big human family. This highlights the unity and equality of all human beings on Earth.

If we cast an examining look at the world we live in, we will see that right now no fewer than 30 armed conflicts are taking place around the globe. We will also see that millions of women, children and elderly people are suffering, that millions of people have been killed or tortured and that countless others have had to leave their homes and have become refugees.

In the new and civilized world, the people who suffer are the innocent and defenceless. Those who suffer the most are defenceless civilians, including women, children and the elderly. The reasons for war vary from country to country and from one nation to another. Some wars are waged for freedom, others for colonial aims or in search of wealth. However, war is indisputably a selfish and inhuman act which tears humanity apart, and an expression of utmost egoism.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let us look at the cost of the arms race. Every minute, the world spends on it no less than two million United States dollars. One half-hour of military spending by developed countries costs 36 million US dollars. One nuclear test explosion costs 12 million dollars. This figure is equivalent to the annual budget of the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. One twin-engine military helicopter costs 11.5 million dollars. One fighter jet plane, which is not good for anything other than killing and destruction, costs millions of dollars. In the face of such a trend, we can not stand idly by. I have had first-hand experience of caring for victims fleeing war zones, and I have witnessed the horrors and ravages of modern war, where advantage in technology and weapons of mass destruction were the decisive elements and inflicted serious damage to the life and infrastructure of warring countries. Bearing all this in mind, I firmly believe that at this critical stage we should focus first of all on promoting peace and on educating youth, who represent our hope for the future. Second, we should focus on disarmament, a vital and highly important issue, because armaments constitute a major menace to world security.

To recapitulate, I would say that humanity cannot be achieved unless peace and social justice prevail. This cannot be realized without implementing what was adopted by the first World Red Cross Conference on Peace, held in Belgrade in 1975, and I quote: "The Red Cross does not view peace simply as the absence of war, but rather as a dynamic process of cooperation among all States and peoples: cooperation founded on freedom, independence, national sovereignty, equality, respect of human rights, as well as a fair and equitable distribution of resources to meet the needs of peoples".

Ladies and Gentlemen, I hope that what happened this week, I mean of course the postponement of the XXVI International Conference, will not happen again. I also hope that we will demonstrate to world opinion our solidarity and maintain our dignity. Thank you.

Applause

ITEM 2 ON THE AGENDA:

READING OF THE MOVEMENT'S
FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Mrs. Agnes JANTSITS (Hungarian Red Cross)

The Fundamental Principles were proclaimed by the XX International Conference in Vienna in 1965. A revised version was adopted by the XXV International Conference of the Red Cross in Geneva in 1986.

Humanity

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary Service

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity

There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

Applause

ITEM 3 ON THE AGENDA:

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
COUNCIL OF DELEGATES AND THE
CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

Item 3 on the agenda is the election of the Chairman of the Council of Delegates.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the traditional policy of the Council of Delegates is that the President of the ICRC is the Chairman of the Council of Delegates and the President of the Federation is the Vice-Chairman. The two Presidents have expressed the wish that, subject to your approval, the President of the Hungarian Red Cross, Mr. Sztuchlik, should be elected Chairman of the Council of Delegates.

Applause

Mr. Rezső SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Dear friends, distinguished delegates of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, may I first of all thank you for the honour of having elected me Chairman of the Council.

My first remark will be a solemn one. I would like to welcome the new Red Cross Societies which have recently become members of our International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, that is, the Solomon Islands Red Cross Society, the Lithuanian and Latvian Red Cross Societies, and to welcome them also to the Council of Delegates.

Dear friends, we have gathered here in Budapest, all the components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, to discuss urgent humanitarian matters we have to face worldwide, to examine how our Movement is coping with the humanitarian challenges of the late XX century and also how we can operate in an increasingly politicised world. I think we can show great achievements in bringing assistance to the victims of conflicts, natural disasters, famine and social strain, but we face serious difficulties in gaining access to all the victims, in ensuring that our emblem is respected and that those protected by it really get the necessary protection. The past few days have shown that we also face increasing difficulties in making sure that our dialogue with the political world is conducted strictly on our own terms, that is, in full compliance with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. We must be realistic and look at this phenomenon as a further signal in our permanent duty to adapt our Movement to changing realities, not with the aim of giving up any of our Principles, but to ensure that we can apply them more effectively, for the benefit of all the victims. If we all heed this signal, then the difficulties we face and were faced with here can perhaps also bring about a new determination to make the changes that will allow us to communicate better with the rest of the world and have a stronger humanitarian

influence on it. Let us unite our experiences and intellectual capacity in this undertaking; I can assure you that the Hungarian Red Cross, as host to these meetings, will do its best to participate in such an effort. We can start to demonstrate this determination by giving our full attention to all the points on our agenda. The Council of Delegates now has an even greater responsibility to discuss all those humanitarian issues which are of interest to the whole Movement and which cannot be pushed aside indefinitely. I hope our work will be successful.

Applause

ITEM 4 ON THE AGENDA:

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE
RED CROSS

Mr. Cornelio SOMMARUGA (President of the ICRC)

The Council of Delegates is a unique forum where all the components of our Movement can listen to one another, exchange ideas and seek common ground when opinions differ. It takes on an even greater importance today, since our meeting follows on an extremely regrettable decision that the Standing Commission was compelled to take. As you all know, I am referring to the fact that the International Conference is being postponed, at a time when humanitarian needs throughout the world are overwhelming. This most unfortunate event is the result of a political battle of wills which took place at the expense of the world's largest apolitical organization -our own. Indeed, the International Conference of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent is so far the only apolitical forum in which those dedicated to the humanitarian cause can engage in a broad dialogue with the representatives of governments the world over.

But although this event -or should I say non-event- is disappointing, the ICRC, for its part, refuses to jump to any negative conclusions for the medium and long term. The ICRC is still confident that the States are committed to supporting its efforts and humanitarian activities in behalf of the victims of armed conflicts, as they undertook to do in becoming party to the Geneva Conventions. The ICRC also wishes to express its gratitude to all the governments that over the past few weeks have spared no effort in seeking ways to enable the Conference to take place, thereby demonstrating their firm dedication to the Red Cross and Red Crescent cause.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is alive and well. Millions of men and women -be they volunteers, first-aiders, leaders, staff or delegates of National Societies and of the Movement's international components- are doing remarkable work in pursuing their common goal, namely to prevent and alleviate the suffering of fellow human beings and protect human life, health and dignity. We are here, in the Council of Delegates, to talk about our activities in a society undergoing profound political and economic change which is a source of considerable hope in many parts of the world, especially in countries where we can see growing respect for the rights of the individual and the loosening of State control. But the hope that many regions of the globe are moving towards a more humane society is overshadowed by the fact that human suffering in all its forms remains universal, that it is often caused by man himself, and that the means to alleviate it are pitifully inadequate.

Disregard for rules which should help prevent or lessen suffering caused by violence is so widespread that concern for the problem has become almost commonplace. This Council of Delegates provides us with a prime opportunity to convey to the governments -and hence to the international community following our deliberations- any suggestions and proposals we formulate together during our discussions.

I am happy that this joint effort, which will involve giving serious thought to a number of issues, exchanging views and acting on our conclusions, is being conducted here in Budapest, under your guidance, Mr. Chairman. The ICRC greatly appreciates the hospitality and enthusiasm with which the Hungarian Red Cross and the Hungarian authorities have organized this meeting within the extremely short time at their disposal. We regret that the Conference cannot take place as planned, all the more so because the warmth with which we were received should have shown and confirmed to the governments, too, that the Hungarian Red Cross and the Hungarian people have always been devoted to the Red Cross and Red Crescent cause.

Let us not forget that as a result of the political division of the Hungarian nation in the last century, Hungarians fought on both sides in the war between Austrian forces and those of France and Italy, the battle of Solferino being a particularly cruel episode. The desire to heal that wound explains in part the great success of Henry Dunant's idea in Hungary and the fact that by the end of the century the Hungarian Red Cross had become -and has remained- one of the most active and dedicated National Societies in Europe.

Allow me to mention briefly two events connected with the Red Cross in this country, which illustrate Hungary's pioneering role in promoting the humanitarian ideal and which, I am sure, augur well for the Council's work, since they are of topical importance even today. Hungary, together with Belgium, was the first country to enact special rules providing for the protection of the Red Cross emblem and preventing its misuse. And it was in Hungary that in 1919 the ICRC first visited political detainees, thereby extending its humanitarian work to a category of victims that is very much exposed to suffering, isolation and arbitrary treatment. Since then, the ICRC has been called upon to provide protection and assistance in Hungary within the context of other dramatic events: this is something that we have not forgotten.

We have a full agenda before us and many of the items will undoubtedly lead to discussions on relations between the Red Cross and Red Crescent and the States. Before we proceed, allow me to extend my warmest greetings and the best wishes of the ICRC to all the National Societies that are taking part in the Council for the first time and also to those National Societies whose former recognition has been confirmed.

In my opinion, the desire of governments and of our Movement to give greater consideration to the problems involved in humanitarian action is well founded. The discussions on international coordination that are now under way in various fora are indeed necessary and important. However, such consideration must proceed in an atmosphere of serenity, so that every argument can be properly weighed. Care must be taken in particular to ensure that the difficulties encountered in international assistance do not prompt States to monopolize the issue, with the danger of politicization that this would entail.

Enthusiasm should not be curbed, but more effectively channelled. Humanitarian work must not become the prerogative of bureaucrats, however well intentioned they may be.

The International Committee of the Red Cross, for its part, recognizes the importance of increased cooperation and supports recent efforts in this direction. At the same time, it considers that it is vital for the Red Cross, particularly in situations of armed conflict, to retain complete independence in carrying out its work.

The issue of international coordination requires an overall view of the problems to be solved. This brings me to a concept that is of particular concern to me, that of solidarity.

No one can remain indifferent to the sight of a starving child or a person mutilated by a mine. Such tragedies, wherever they occur, must not be accepted as inevitable.

The first and indeed legitimate reaction to this suffering is usually to blame the soldiers who indiscriminately destroy crops or lay mines. But what about the authorities who allow this to happen? Or the people who sell weapons without worrying about how they will be used? What about the failure of the media to report on certain conflicts because interest in them has waned? Or the complacency of governments towards violations of humanitarian law? What about the wealthy nations that cannot be bothered about the poor ones?

Current efforts to promote the implementation of international humanitarian law, which recognizes the right to assistance of all those who are deprived of goods essential to their survival, are certainly to be commended, and the focus of renewed discussions on removing obstacles to relief operations is fully justified. However, we must also ensure that these humanitarian endeavours are supported by public opinion and governments. Indifference also claims lives and must be denounced.

While there is a limit to the problems with which one can deal, and while it is important to empathize with the suffering of those closest to oneself, an institution like the International Committee of the Red Cross is duty-bound to stress that there are no good or bad victims, only men, women and children who are in distress and deserve impartial attention and compassion.

I have highlighted solidarity first and foremost because it is the key component of the philosophy of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement and because it embraces the fundamental principles of humanity, impartiality and universality. But should not solidarity also play a prominent role in international politics?

I have already mentioned that in our society violence is rife, but it is far from being the only scourge. Many of you here could bear more eloquent witness to the ills afflicting modern society, the fight against which is our Movement's *raison d'être*.

Is it not our duty to help bring about a universal awareness of the fact that the general interest surpasses individual concerns? Indeed, we must do everything in our power to avoid an impasse in which, for fear of the poor, the rich become impervious to their despair. This is why we must champion causes of solidarity.

I have no desire to plunge the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement into a lengthy political debate. To assist the victims of war regardless of its causes constitutes the very essence of humanitarian law; this approach remains the basic condition of successful humanitarian action.

Nevertheless, those broader issues must be raised because humanitarian action, for which there is an ever-increasing demand, will no longer be able to meet expectations unless we deal with the root causes of the suffering it seeks to alleviate.

How can we expect young, uneducated and often hungry combatants who face a bleak future and are devoid of hope to understand and spontaneously comply with humanitarian rules? Let us not forget that some of our delegates have paid for their humanitarian commitment with their health and in some cases even with their lives. Others have been subjected to the terrible ordeal of abduction. No institution has the right to disregard the safety of those who serve it!

Humanitarian action cannot compensate for political shortcomings. We must not fall prey to the illusion that it is possible, in the long term, to control the effects without tackling the causes. This is the message we must -all of us together- convey to the governments. They must heed that message, even if they are not at present in this room to hear us voice our concern.

And what about us in the Movement? As regards the ICRC, I would like to tell you that we are aware, both in Geneva and in our 52 delegations throughout the world, that greater imagination and energy are needed if we are to further enhance our efficiency and absolute impartiality. We must also do our best -together with many of you here today- to strengthen the less developed National Societies.

Every one of us must make sure that the tone of our discussions and the spirit of cooperation shown during our proceedings give hope to all those who are following this Council of Delegates around the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we can no longer allow cynicism and indifference to human suffering to take the upper hand. I urge you all, once this gathering is over on Saturday, to go from being delegates *to* the Council of Delegates to being delegates *of* the Council, to take this humanitarian spirit back to your respective countries and thus give fresh impetus to the humanitarian mobilization which my predecessor, the late Alexandre Hay, launched in 1985. We shall promote the resolutions we adopt and the new opportunities we create. As men and women members of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, we will do our utmost to reach and help those of our fellow human beings who are suffering and, as citizens, insist that international humanitarian law be fully respected.

I would like to conclude by saying that it is the Movement in its entirety that must demand that humanity receive renewed and fuller attention from the powers that be; we must make sure of this, for what is foremost in our minds -and always will be- is *per humanitatem ad pacem*.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Thank you, President Sommaruga, for that profound and impassioned reminder of our humanitarian duty. And may I say that I particularly appreciated what you said about the history of the Red Cross and our country's role in it.

ITEM 5 ON THE AGENDA:

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED
CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

Dr. Mario Enrique VILLARROEL LANDER (President of the International Federation)

Recent world history has been marked by major social, political and military upheavals. Unprecedented political and economic developments have brought about radical changes in international relations, arousing firm hopes that conflicts would die down but -as always happens in times of transition- also creating new threats to peace in different parts of the world. The Middle East was recently the scene of a major conflict. War is currently raging in the heart of Europe; the political map of Europe, which has remained unchanged for over 40 years, is now being redrawn and the end results are impossible to predict. This is a crucial period of history, a time of uncertainty which nevertheless offers vast opportunities for improving the lot of millions of human beings. The developments I have just described should serve as a constant reminder of the interdependence of world events. Wisdom compels us to recognize that the world in which we live, fraught as it is with rivalries and tensions, is indeed a global village. We as members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must rise to these challenges, and the magnitude of the problems facing us in these troubled times must not weaken our determination. On the contrary, the challenges before us must stimulate our courage and imagination and the conviction that our strength lies in our ability to stand united and provide assistance wherever needs arise. We must improve our capacity to help the victims, whatever their plight and wherever they may be. Our primary duty is to serve mankind, and that is the rule that must guide our every action.

Despite our efforts and hopes, the number of people in need of assistance is growing, everywhere. Over the last ten years, the gap between rich and poor nations has widened. In many parts of the world, the fall in average earnings of low-income sectors of the population has fuelled social tensions and led to outbreaks of violence. Most developing countries are struggling with a vast array of problems, such as excessive population growth, deterioration of the environment and the quality of life, diminishing food supply, disease, cultural underdevelopment and economic recession. According to UN statistics, billions of people are still living in extreme poverty. The resulting social tensions develop into conflicts which in turn cause even greater suffering and hardship. Moreover, population groups incapable of achieving basic stability and self-sufficiency are marginalized and are therefore the first victims of natural disasters.

Seeing the growing number of vulnerable groups throughout the world, we must recognize that much remains to be done not only to improve emergency assistance but also to reduce the vulnerability of these people. Our task is to try and slow down the trend and prevent peoples of developing countries from being relegated to the fringe of society. The way to go about this is not only to help those who

suffer, but also to create lasting conditions of security and respect for human dignity, particularly among the most underprivileged members of society. We must provide assistance, but without forgetting that prevention is better than cure. We must all reflect on the best way to improve the situation by planning ahead so that both these goals may be achieved.

Since we are all representatives of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement gathered here today, we should use this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to providing aid and protection to vulnerable groups. We should also agree on a number of positive measures that will enable us to work towards a more just and humane world. It is incumbent upon our Movement to adapt to present-day requirements, the most important being the struggle for social justice among individuals and nations. Underdevelopment is totally incompatible with today's level of social, scientific and technological development.

All five continents have had their share of hardship and tragedy. Assistance efforts have focused primarily on Africa, where the effects of war and natural disaster are taking an ever-increasing toll. Food supply has been a subject of major concern, although to a lesser degree than during the terrible years of famine in 1984 and 1985. This scourge has once again reached alarming proportions, since more than 20 million people's lives are threatened. We have had to send out urgent international appeals to be able to provide assistance to many drought-stricken countries, particularly Sudan and other countries of the Horn of Africa and the Sahel.

The Asian continent, too, has suffered from the widest possible range of natural disasters. For example, how could one ever forget the terrible scenes of desolation and death after the cyclone that struck Bangladesh at the beginning of this year, the floods which have devastated entire regions of China since May or the natural disasters in the Philippines? Cholera has wrought havoc in Latin America this year. For the first time in many years, Europe too was at the centre of the Federation's relief operations, after a terrible earthquake struck Armenia. Last but not least, a major operation was launched by the Federation in the Middle East at the end of 1990.

Apart from providing assistance to the victims of natural disasters, the Federation is now dealing more and more frequently with problems arising from mass population movements, particularly in Africa where conflicts are rife. There has been an enormous influx of refugees in Mauritania and Senegal, and in countries bordering on Liberia.

An equally tragic situation, which received wider media coverage, was that of the countless refugees forced to leave their homes before and after the Gulf conflict. In Europe, too, refugees are now making the headlines.

In spite of all this human tragedy, considerable progress has been made these last few years in reinforcing the Federation's capacity to assist vulnerable groups all over the world. By 25 November, the number of National Societies members of the Federation had increased from 147 to 150. This has further strengthened the universality of our institution, and we now have a vast network of members extending to the outermost reaches of the globe. We must be proud of this achievement, but it also constitutes a considerable challenge, since universality also requires us to succeed in accomplishing our humanitarian task worldwide.

Urgent humanitarian requirements and the need to be professionals in our field compel us to make optimum use of our huge potential, which must serve to achieve true international solidarity. Any failure in this regard will compromise our future as a progressive humanitarian force committed to defending the most vulnerable. We must therefore step up our efforts and be firmer than ever in our determination. We have not only extended our presence worldwide; we have also set new goals for our activities and programmes on the basis of an in-depth analysis of the Federation's mandate and priorities, thus putting an end to a period of relative uncertainty. There has been a definite improvement in the coordination of international relief and development activities, particularly as regards our operational capacity at the national and international levels.

Our efforts have also led to a reinforcement of the Federation's Secretariat and field operations. I am, however, convinced that maximum efficiency in helping the victims of conflicts and natural disasters can be achieved only by increasing our ability to cooperate in areas of common concern. It is necessary to ensure better coordination between humanitarian organizations, which should step up their capacity to provide advance warning before disasters. We fully support UN initiatives in this respect, but the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the community of non-governmental organizations must deploy parallel efforts to achieve proper coordination of their own activities, so as to avoid any confusion in the course of relief operations.

In this connection, it is gratifying to note that there has been a definite strengthening of cooperation between the Federation and the International Committee of the Red Cross. This will undoubtedly benefit the entire Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

In 1989, the seventh General Assembly of the League ratified a new agreement establishing a framework for future cooperation between the two institutions and clarifying their respective responsibilities and functions in international Red Cross and Red Crescent relief operations. The agreement also provides guidelines for promoting development and recognition of National Societies and for launching activities in areas such as public relations, information, fund-raising and training.

I should also mention the meeting that brought together a number of members of the ICRC Assembly and the League Executive Council in Yverdon on 30 August and 1 September 1991. This was the first meeting of its kind, and it provided an opportunity for the members of the governing bodies of both institutions to get to know each other and to exchange views on their respective expectations, areas of concern and hopes for the future. A similar meeting is scheduled to take place in the first half of 1992.

Close cooperation has also been maintained with various intergovernmental organizations, such as UNHCR, the UN Committee on Disarmament and WHO, and with a whole series of non-governmental organizations both in Geneva and in the field. The agreement reached with the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator in October 1991 was a major step forward and contributed significantly to reinforcing our cooperation with the United Nations system. The Federation is determined to carry on this process.

But coordination is by no means the be-all and end-all of disaster relief: prevention, preparedness and efforts to alleviate the victims' suffering are other essential aspects of disaster response. This requires a multifaceted approach. National Society structures must be reinforced, particularly in developing countries, so that they are ready to assume specific tasks within their respective communities. Member National Societies confronted with similar challenges must cooperate more closely. This is the only way we can make the most of our Movement's universal character and use its resources to the full when it comes to assisting disaster victims.

In recent years significant progress has been achieved in the development field. To mention but a few examples, there has been the adoption of principles and rules for development, the establishment of a development fund and of a general framework for development cooperation in an increasing number of countries. Perhaps the greatest step forward was the adoption of the Federation's Strategic Workplan for the '90s, which clearly identifies the most vulnerable population groups and the main beneficiaries of our activities. It also urges all the components of the Federation to step up their efforts to meet the needs of this sector of the population.

The Workplan is based on the fundamental notion that disasters cannot be dealt with in isolation, on a case-by-case basis, and that poverty and vulnerability require a long-term commitment in areas such as development, preparedness, reconstruction and rehabilitation. Despite the progress made so far, it is still extremely difficult to secure funds for development activities, including those closely linked to disaster prevention and preparedness. People are generally quick enough to react when it comes to helping the victims of a major catastrophe that is making headline news, but interest flags when it comes to funding activities that are less spectacular, though just as vital, such as disaster prevention or alleviating the effects of catastrophes.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement obviously cannot promote social and economic development single-handed, nor does it have the necessary human and financial resources to do so. It is my personal conviction, however, that we have an extremely valuable contribution to make. We are present in almost all countries of the world; by strengthening National Society structures and increasing their capacity to launch development projects within their own communities, we can turn development into a process of consolidating local resources rather than one imposed on those communities from outside. To achieve this target we must enhance solidarity within the Federation and the Movement as a whole. Ensuring that National Societies become equally effective all over the world is a considerable challenge, but we must pursue that objective with the courage, faith, generosity and humanistic vision of all the great men who founded this Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Let us all join together in working towards that goal, and may the unfortunate postponement of our Conference ultimately serve to keep us united in our fundamental objective, which is to come to the aid of those most in need.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Thank you, Mr. President, for this overview of the activities and objectives of our Federation, for the course of action you have outlined and also for your call to unity.

ITEM 7 ON THE AGENDA: HENRY DUNANT MEDAL AWARD
 CEREMONY

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

May I propose that we now proceed with the award ceremony of the Henry Dunant Medal; the film will be shown after the ceremony.

I would like to call on the Chairman of the Standing Commission, Dr. Abu-Goura, to conduct the presentation ceremony.

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

It is an honour and a great pleasure for me to announce the decision of the Standing Commission to award the Henry Dunant medal to some of the people with whom I have worked and who have become my friends, some of those who have served the Movement of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent for a long time. First of all, there is Dr. János Hantos. Since 1959, when he began to work with the Hungarian Red Cross, Dr. Hantos has played an important role not only at the national but also at the international level. In 1973 he was elected Secretary General of the National Board of the Hungarian Red Cross. He was re-elected in 1977 and also held the office of President of the National Executive Committee until 1990, when he retired. Because of his wide experience in the field of humanitarian action, he attended many international Red Cross and Red Crescent gatherings. In 1981 he was elected to the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and held the office of the Vice-Chairman of the Commission. He was re-elected in 1986 as a member of the Commission. In addition, Dr. Hantos has published more than 40 essays and studies on health, pedagogic and cultural policy in several Hungarian journals. He has been decorated by several Red Cross Societies. For his enormous contribution and personal commitment to the development of humanitarian activities, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has unanimously decided to award Dr. Hantos the Henry Dunant Medal in 1991.

Applause

Dr. János HANTOS (Hungarian Red Cross)

It is a great honour for me to receive the highest award of our Movement. I am really grateful. My first thought is respect for the founding father of the Movement who, 128 years ago, launched the idea of institutionalizing humanitarian assistance, and the second for the people who, through their personal involvement, have been showing that Henry Dunant's initiative has found an ever-resounding echo all over the world. My third thought is respect for those who have worked

hard to defend the Fundamental Principles expressing the philosophy of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. These Principles constitute a force of cohesion and unity in this multi-faceted Movement. This aspect represents the most important moral and practical value of the Principles. The Movement is an extraordinary alliance of people who are conscious of their cultural, social and political differences; but through common ideals and the Fundamental Principles they have created a Movement of universal nature. That is why the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement could preserve its appeal and the Fundamental Principles become the driving force behind all our personal action. That is why we should do our best to achieve full implementation of and respect for the Fundamental Principles. If we do this, more and more people will join us and our Movement will be wider and stronger. I hope this will be so. Thank you for your attention.

Applause

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

Baron Kraijenhoff was President of the Netherlands Red Cross from 1966 to 1986. He is now honorary member of the National Society, member of the Board and, since 1990, President of the Society which manages the Central Laboratory of the Blood Transfusion Service of the Netherlands Red Cross. As President of the National Society, he undertook many important activities which contributed to its development. Baron Kraijenhoff was Vice-President of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies from 1973 to 1985, President of the League's Permanent Scale of Contributions Commission and member of the League's Finance Commission. He played an important role at the international level for many years. For all these reasons, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has unanimously decided to award Baron Kraijenhoff the Henry Dunant Medal in 1991.

Jonkheer C. KRAIJENHOFF

I would like to thank the Standing Commission for this high award, which I am of course extremely happy with, and especially for the nice words by the Chairman of the Standing Commission, who is a rather exceptional person, because I don't think there is any Chairman in the world who has sat on a Standing Commission for more than 10 years. I think you qualify for the Guinness Book of Records.

Applause

It is already quite an honour, I feel, to be associated with this unique Movement and I would therefore say that what has happened to me now is beyond what I could expect. This Movement, it has already been said, is really exceptional in that the principles which have been valid for over a hundred years are still as valid as ever and, as far as I can see, will be valid forever. I think there is no Movement that can plan such a thing. Moreover, talking in commercial terms, and I am afraid

I cannot help doing it, we are operating in a growth market. Even in times of recession the need for our Movement will grow and of course so will competition, but that is good for us. I think we need competition to keep us awake. One thing I am afraid I have to mention is that there are also some cases of unfair competition. I want to mention that here and now, because at this very moment there is a development which may spread to other countries. In the Netherlands we now have a television campaign by "Médecins sans frontières" who proclaim that they are the only organization in the world that will help against the wishes of a government. Any organization is free to do so, but in this case it is doubly bad because they also have a logo which bears a striking similarity to ours. Apart from that, they openly state that they would not work under the protection of the Red Cross. I think we cannot be lenient with this kind of development and I wanted to warn you because it may also come to your country, so that at least you will be prepared. I think if we let this go it will endanger our credibility, and we all know that credibility is like virginity, you can only lose it once.

I just want to say, and I think that if one gives a swan song one is allowed a last wish, my wish would be that we continue to protect our emblem and our principles the same way that we expect our emblem and our principles to protect us. I wish you well. Thank you.

Applause

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

This morning one of the items on the agenda of the General Assembly had to do with the rights of women. The Standing Commission will not forget women, either. This is the tribute to Mrs. Kamar Kazoon Choura, who has been a very active figure in the Syrian Red Crescent since its foundation in 1946. Mrs. Kazoon Choura has devoted herself wholeheartedly to humanitarian principles. She has always been full of new ideas and persistent in her efforts to preserve the tradition of voluntary humanitarian services for the sick and wounded. She participated in many Red Cross and Red Crescent Conferences and was very active in many emergency situations. In 1948 she set up a recreation centre for wounded soldiers and in 1950 created the first Red Cross Youth section. She has received many foreign and national decorations. Her enormous personal contribution to the development of humanitarian activities and her devotion to the care of wounded, sick and war-stricken people have made her an outstanding example of humanitarian commitment. For all these reasons the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has unanimously decided to award Mrs. Kamar Kazoon Choura the Henry Dunant Medal in 1991.

Applause

Mrs. Kamar Kazoon CHOURA

The days pass, the years go by, and to my joy I realize that I have now spent 46 years carrying the humanitarian banner as a member of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, drying the tears of a sick or injured child here, bringing a smile to the lips of a disabled person there. And how could it be otherwise with me who was raised in a family so imbued with righteousness and the desire to help the needy, by a devoted mother and a learned, cultivated father, God rest his soul. They passed on to me the principles, virtues and values of our thousand-year-old Arab civilization. Later, my husband and helpmate encouraged me to continue. Mr. Chairman, allow me to pledge before you and all my dear friends assembled here to continue my humanitarian service until my last breath and to pass on my experiences to all those around me.

Allow me on this occasion so dear to my heart to express my warmest thanks and respect to the members of the Standing Commission, to its Chairman, to the President of the Federation, the President of the ICRC and the members of the International Committee for awarding me the Henry Dunant Medal for my work in the Red Crescent. This medal is a source of encouragement and pride -great pride- for me, my Society and the entire Movement. Rest assured that this is one of the happiest days of my life.

Applause

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

Dr. Carlos Alberto Vera Martínez is a well-known doctor in Paraguay. For more than 50 years he has tirelessly worked to promote the principles of the Movement and to contribute to the progress of the Paraguayan Red Cross. In cooperation with other National Societies he successfully expanded various areas of activity of his National Society, areas such as first aid, youth and volunteer services, health and community development. He received the highest distinction of the Paraguayan Red Cross. During the difficult years between 1954 and 1989 he was able to preserve the neutrality and independence of the Red Cross, and he helped the ICRC obtain access to the governmental authorities and receive permission to visit political prisoners. Having noted his immense contribution to and involvement in the advancement of the humanitarian cause, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has unanimously decided to award Dr. Carlos Alberto Vera Martínez the Henry Dunant Medal in 1991. The medal will be handed over to the President of the Paraguayan Red Cross Society.

Applause

Dr. Hugo Raúl GONZÁLEZ MARTÍNEZ (Paraguayan Red Cross)

It is an honour for me to receive the Henry Dunant Medal on behalf of Dr. Carlos Alberto Vera Martínez, Honourary President of the Paraguayan Red Cross. The medal was awarded to him in recognition of the 45 years he spent serving the cause of the Red Cross and the International Movement. He staunchly defended the Fundamental Principles over the 35 difficult years our country has been through. More than 120 political detainees have paid tribute to the work he did with delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Several of those former detainees are now in positions of authority in our country's new administration. Doctor Martínez wishes to dedicate this award, which we accept with humble thanks, to all volunteers working for the Red Cross in Latin America.

Applause

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

From the mid-1960s to the early '90s, Mr. William Cassis guided and managed, with great devotion, personnel and administrative policies at the headquarters of the League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. From Lebanon, the land of his ancestors, Egypt, his native country, France, his cultural home, and Switzerland, his adopted country, he brought to his tasks a sense of subtlety and a taste for debate tempered by discipline and humour. He was personally concerned with the welfare of each of the nearly two hundred staff members of some fifty nationalities, and his calm organizational skills enabled him to keep the headquarters running smoothly, in accordance with the Movement's humanitarian aims, in times of limited resources and a constantly changing international climate. He helped to organize statutory meetings and International Conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent around the world for over two and a half decades, and contributed to the great issues underlying the whole Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement during that time. For all these reasons, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has unanimously decided to award Mr. William Cassis the Henry Dunant Medal in 1991.

Applause

Mr. William CASSIS (Federation)

Thank you, Chairman Abu-Goura, for your kind words. May I just recall here what I have said to you and to the Presidents of the ICRC and the Federation and to the Federation Secretary General. I accept this medal not because of my own merits -I think that many people deserve it probably more than I- but as recognition of the work carried out by the Federation's secretariat during all these years. This being said, with your permission, Sir, I would not like to miss this opportunity to make a quick retrospective. Since joining the League in 1963 as Director of personnel and administration, I served under five Presidents: John MacAulay from Canada,

José Barroso from Mexico, Justice Adefarasin from Nigeria, Enrique de la Mata from Spain and Mario Villarroel, and three Secretaries General, Henrik Beer, Hans Hoegh and Pär Stenbäck. During these 28 years I have maintained regular contacts with the ICRC where I have so many friends, and I have been able to follow its growth and development. I remember the time of Jean Pictet and Roger Gallopin and my friend Claude Pilloud with whom I organized so many Conferences. When I joined the League, Leopold Boissier was President of the ICRC, followed by Samuel Gonard, Marcel Naville, Prof. Eric Martin, then Alexandre Hay and now Cornelio Sommaruga. I have also had the privilege of attending the Standing Commission meetings since 1964, as a technical resources person, not more than that, mostly for the preparation of the International Conferences. At that time Ambassador François Poncet was Chairman of the Standing Commission. He was followed by Lady Limerick, then Sir Geoffrey Newman-Morris, who proposed the creation of the Henry Dunant Medal, then Sir Evelyn Shuckburgh, followed by yourself, Dr. Abu-Goura, since 1981. If I recall all this, it is not to add to my merits. It is merely to indicate that during my career at the Federation I have had the privilege of being involved in so many events and of witnessing many others, including international meetings, secretariat reorganizations, changes in the Federation's Constitution, by-laws, Tansley reports, etc., etc. It is impossible to mention them all here. Certainly, not everything was always for the best. Mistakes were made, difficulties and problems arose. But what I shall remember is that this Movement is great, and that to belong to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a great privilege. Allow me to say that if we want this institution to remain great, its members, at all levels, must always try to be great. Great in the sense of having a greater heart, because the needs are immense all over the world, in the sense of having greater creativity and imagination because the world is changing rapidly and life means change and adaptation: let us never forget, if you allow me to say this very modestly and very humbly, let us not forget that we are here to serve. My wish is that every one of us, whatever our level and with the means at our disposal, will contribute to making this Movement greater and greater. Knowing the human condition it will not be an easy job and it will require everyone's best efforts. Chairman Abu-Goura, dear friends, thank you for your attention.

Applause

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

A few months ago we suffered the loss of a gentleman who was the President of the ICRC for ten years and, after that, the President of the Peace Commission. This is a posthumous tribute to Alexandre Hay, who was imbued with the awareness of the responsibility inherent to his position and deeply convinced that he was above all a servant in the high office he held. His primary concern was therefore to be attentive to his surroundings, irrespective of legal, diplomatic or political considerations. He never lost sight of the ultimate aim handed down by the Movement's founders: humanity. He had to deal with poverty, despair and cruelty every single day, but his profound humanistic and humanitarian conviction

endowed him with serenity and optimism that radiated from him. Alexandre Hay was a man of action. His deeds and actions, especially as President of the ICRC from 1976 to 1987, are an outstanding testimony of the achievements of a goodhearted, courageous, trusting man who never deviated from an ideal of love for others. We are immensely grateful to him. The members of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent have thus unanimously decided to award the Henry Dunant Medal posthumously to Alexandre Hay. The medal will be handed over to his son.

Applause

Mr. F.-O. HAY

In the name of my stepmother and my two sisters who unfortunately could not join us today, I would like to express our gratitude to the Standing Commission and to all the members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for the honour bestowed on our father today. I would like to continue in French if you do not mind.

The years spent by our father in the Red Cross were certainly the most intense of a rich and varied career. And they were without doubt the most gratifying of his entire life. As the long and difficult years went by, the experiences he had around the world strengthened his devotion to the most fundamental human values. That is why we are very proud to accept from you, his Red Cross and Red Crescent family, this tribute to the service that he rendered in his simple way to this Movement. We are happy to be here with you to pay tribute to the moral authority and courage with which he contributed to respect for humanitarian ideals and peace throughout the world. It is our hope that he will serve as an example in further noble endeavour. Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, we thank you for this Henry Dunant Medal in his memory.

Applause

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

I am here also to pay tribute to those who have sacrificed their lives in the service of the humanitarian cause. It sometimes happens that, as a result of inhuman acts, some of our activists lose their lives. In memory of those people and for the sake of humanity, we should keep our Movement going strong. In memory of those people, we should not hesitate to increase our activities in the humanitarian field.

During his two years with the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr. Peter Altwegg worked with deep motivation and determination for the humanitarian cause he had chosen to serve. In his capacity as an ICRC delegate he went on three missions to Africa, where working and living conditions were extremely precarious. In Southern Sudan, Mozambique and Somalia he ceaselessly

stroved to alleviate the suffering of innocent victims of war. He tragically lost his life in Somalia on 6 October 1990, while carrying out his humanitarian mission, as he did every day. The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has therefore unanimously decided to award the Henry Dunant Medal posthumously to Mr. Peter Altwegg.

Applause

Mr. Walter Berweger took part in the humanitarian activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross for more than five years, working in Lebanon, Pakistan, El Salvador and the Philippines. He also worked at ICRC headquarters in Geneva. During his missions he discharged many functions, always displaying outstanding personal commitment, concern for the victims he steadily defended, and an exceptional willingness to cooperate with both his expatriate colleagues and local employees. He tragically lost his life while on mission in the Philippines, where he had run the Mindanao sub-delegation for six months, working tirelessly and courageously for the humanitarian aim he had chosen to pursue. The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has therefore unanimously decided to award the Henry Dunant Medal posthumously to Mr. Walter Berweger.

Applause

Mr. Mohammad Osman had worked at the ICRC's rehabilitation centre in Kabul, Afghanistan, since the very beginning of the project, in July 1987. The father of four children, he was a very pleasant and quiet man, known for his total dedication to the centre. He was involved in very humble tasks, cleaning and washing, when a rocket hit the centre's main yard, on 16 August 1990, killing him and injuring many others. The work of Mohammad Osman was always appreciated by the patients and all ICRC staff working in the centre. For all these reasons, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has unanimously decided to award Mr. Mohammad Osman the Henry Dunant Medal posthumously in 1991.

Applause

Mr. Abdul Qayum Faqir Yar was killed on 1 September 1990 while on a humanitarian mission with the ICRC in Herat province, Afghanistan. During his several months at the tracing agency, Mr. Abdul Qayum Faqir Yar displayed a profound and genuine concern for the suffering of his fellow countrymen. He involved himself wholeheartedly in the tasks of receiving families looking for a missing relative, and of collecting and distributing messages between separated family members. It was while distributing such messages with a Swiss colleague from the ICRC that he was shot. He will be remembered as a trustworthy and gentle person, who believed in the simple and good values of honest social behaviour. He always volunteered for risky missions, in spite of the fact that he was the father of three wonderful boys, and he was always enthusiastic when

coming back from a successful mission. His memory will remain alive among all foreign and Afghan colleagues who had the opportunity to work with him. For all these reasons, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has unanimously decided to award Mr. Abdul Qayum Faqir Yar the Henry Dunant Medal posthumously in 1991.

Applause

Ladies and Gentlemen, these four medals will be handed over to the President of the ICRC.

Mr. C. SOMMARUGA (President of the ICRC)

Mr. Chairman of the Standing Commission, Mr. Chairman of the Council of Delegates, it is with a feeling of deep emotion that I accept these four Henry Dunant Medals awarded to ICRC delegates and employees who have lost their lives in the humanitarian cause. On behalf of the families of Peter Altwegg, Walter Berweger, Zahmani Mohd Osman and Faqir Yar, I would like to thank you for acknowledging their sacrifice. The International Committee of the Red Cross greatly appreciates this gesture for it symbolizes the entire Movement's appreciation of and solidarity with the 10,000 ICRC employees who work in the humanitarian cause, often putting their well-being and even their lives at risk.

Applause

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

Mr. Juanito Patong, a Philippine National Red Cross/ICRC contractual driver, was killed on 19 January 1990, along with ICRC delegate Walter Berweger, in an ambush in Buldon, Maguindanao, a province in the south of the Philippines. Patong, Berweger and the rest of the accompanying group were returning from a relief operation when their car was suddenly blocked by unidentified armed men. Patong was known to his colleagues as a hard working man. In his seven years with the Red Cross, he did all the jobs assigned to him with great efficiency and dispatch. He never had an idle moment, and when there were no assignments, he would look for things to do -answer the telephone, repair broken windows, and other odd jobs. His motto in life was "Smile and be happy. No problem can be solved with a frowning face". He demonstrated that he was basically a happy person. His jolly mood uplifted the spirits of his colleagues, especially in times of stress. Patong is survived by his wife and six children. For all these reasons, the Standing Commission has unanimously decided to award Juanito Patong the Henry Dunant Medal posthumously in 1991. This medal will be handed over to the President of the Philippine Red Cross, General Espino.

Applause

General Romeo C. ESPINO (Philippine Red Cross)

I am proud to receive this award on behalf of Juanito Patong, who gave his life in the service of humanity. The Philippine Red Cross officially came into being only in 1947, when the country became a sovereign state, but we were involved in Red Cross activities much earlier than that. During the Spanish-American war, in 1898, some members of the revolutionary forces had set up a sort of a Red Cross Society and then when we were under America, we were a Chapter of the American Red Cross. As far as I can recall, this is the first time that we have been awarded the Henry Dunant Medal, which is a very prestigious distinction in the Red Cross Movement. I shall see to it that this medal is handed over to Juanito Patong's widow and children in an appropriate ceremony. Thank you.

Applause

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

Mr. Graeme Whyte, Consultant on International Affairs and former President, Chairman and Treasurer of the New Zealand Red Cross, was a member of the League's Scale of Contributions Commission from 1977 until it merged with the Finance Commission in 1989, when he became its Vice-Chairman. He was also a current member of the Commission for the Financing of the ICRC. His wide experience in the Movement and in financial matters generally, his positive nature, hearty laughter and sense of humour were very much appreciated by all those who knew him. His consideration for those who needed help and assistance and his concern for young National Societies were manifestations of the Movement's spirit. For all these reasons the Standing Commission has unanimously decided to award posthumously to Mr. Graeme Whyte the 1991 Henry Dunant Medal. It will be handed over to his wife.

Applause

Mrs. G. WHYTE

It is my privilege to be here today to accept this honour you have awarded to my late husband and I do so with pride and with humility, as I know he would have done. For almost half his life, he served the Red Cross both in New Zealand and internationally, as you have just mentioned, and his profound faith in the worth of this great organization in all its many facets was his guiding star. Graeme valued the friendships he found with so many of you and he believed that the bonds created by friendship contribute in great measure to the strength of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies throughout the world. I too have shared in your friendship over all these years and I thank you all most sincerely. May I conclude by quoting from my husband's speech, given when he retired as President of the New Zealand Red Cross Society in 1981:

"Let us all be entirely vigilant in protecting and promoting the Red Cross cause which we hold so dear. Remember always that our strength will lie in people and in the quality of the service that we give."

Applause

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

I hope that our Movement will continue to be strong enough in overcoming the difficulties we are now facing in the field. With this, I thank you.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I think we all listened with emotion to the records of merit of the personalities who have been awarded the Henry Dunant Medal. One of the speakers just asked whether we could say that our Movement was rich? I think we can, when we see that so many distinguished personalities have devoted all their work to the Red Cross cause.

ITEM 6 ON THE AGENDA: FILM

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

We shall now screen a film which was made for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's Campaign for the Victims of War. No fewer than 130 countries participated in the campaign, and hundreds of events were held on all the continents.

A report on the subject will be submitted at a later Council of Delegates meeting. The essence of the campaign was the unique contribution of the Movement to the protection and assistance of victims of war.

* * * * *

Second session

Friday, 29 November 1991

9 a.m.

ITEM 8 ON THE AGENDA:

ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMEN AND
SECRETARIES OF THE COUNCIL OF
DELEGATES

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

The first item on this morning's agenda is the election of the Vice-Chairmen and the Secretaries of the Council of Delegates. I propose that Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Dr. Mario Villarroel, President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, be elected Vice-Chairmen of the Council of Delegates.

Applause

I further propose that Mr. William Cassis and Mr. Jean-Louis Cayla be elected Secretaries of the Council of Delegates.

Applause

ITEM 9 ON THE AGENDA: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I suggest that we now move to the adoption of the agenda.

In accordance with Article 18, paragraph 4 b) of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the Standing Commission makes proposals regarding the agenda of the Council of Delegates. You have received the draft agenda which has been expanded, as compared to the first draft, and a number of items have been added in order to allow the Council to discuss urgent matters of our humanitarian work. The background documents which refer to these additional items on the agenda are to be found in the Conference Commission files.

Before proceeding to the approval of the agenda, I would like to make another announcement. This is now the session of the Council of Delegates; of course we all know that when the decision was taken some government delegations were already on their way here. I would like to remind all of you and all the delegates that this is a strictly Red Cross and Red Crescent meeting, and government delegations are not party to it. I would also like to remind you that no documents may be distributed without the prior permission of the chair. Thank you very much. I would now like to ask if you agree with the draft agenda or if you have any additional suggestions.

Mr. Maurice AUBERT (ICRC)

Speaking on behalf of the ICRC I would like to add two points, which can be put under item 22, "Miscellaneous": the report concerning the Empress Shôken Fund, prepared initially for the International Conference, for Commission II, point 9, and the report on the Florence Nightingale Medal, item 11.1 on the agenda of the same Commission. This, I hope, will meet with the agreement of the National Societies; the resolutions and the necessary amendments will be presented to you.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I would also like to add a third item. The Philippine Red Cross asked whether we would allow them to confer a commemorative medal on certain National Societies which provided substantial assistance in the wake of the recent disasters in the country. It will not take much time, so I would like to have your agreement, Ladies and Gentlemen, to include this additional point on the agenda. With your permission, then, I am adding these three points to the agenda, and would like to ask the Council of Delegates to adopt the agenda as it now stands.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Award of medals by the Philippine National Red Cross Society

I would like to ask the President of the Philippine Red Cross, General Espino, to proceed with the handing over of the awards.

General R.C. ESPINO (Philippine Red Cross)

The Philippine Red Cross is grateful for this opportunity to express its gratitude to those who have helped our country in its hour of need. The last two years have been turbulent ones for the Philippines. We had man-made and natural disasters one after the other. In December 1989 there was a big attempted *coup d'état* and the Philippine Red Cross was able, in collaboration with the ICRC, to handle the evacuation of the dead and wounded. This was followed six months later by the earthquake that devastated many areas of the Philippines and left destruction in its wake. After that there was a typhoon that destroyed communication facilities and buildings in the Visayas. As if that was not enough, there came the eruption of Mount Pinatubo, a volcano that has been dormant for six hundred years; erupting in all its fury, it destroyed a lot of property and killed many people. First a rain of ashes destroyed many buildings, then the flood of lava swept through the towns. One town, Bokalor, is covered by lava and is now useless. The volcanic eruption was followed by one typhoon after another. When I left the Philippines, we had a typhoon that flooded our coasts and caused no fewer than seven thousand deaths. The Philippine Red Cross thus had ample opportunity to prove its worth in the matter of assistance to people and we are proud that we were able to do it with the help of all of you who generously came to the aid of the Philippine Red Cross. I would like to call now on our Secretary General, who is a woman -I stress this because yesterday we were talking about increasing the role of women in our Movement. I am happy to report to you that the Philippine Red Cross has a woman as its Secretary General. More than half of the administrators are women, and five of our directors at headquarters are women. So you can see that men are outnumbered by women: seven to two.

Mrs. Gloria B. SENADOR (Philippine Red Cross)

We would like to express our gratitude to the benefactors who helped the Philippine Red Cross deal with the major catastrophes in 1990 and 1991. Allow me first to read the inscription on the plaques of appreciation.

The first plaque of appreciation reads: "To (the name of the Red Cross Society) for the generous support to the relief efforts for victims of 16 July 1990, killer-earthquake. Given this 29th day of November 1991, at Budapest, Hungary: signed General R.C. Espino, Chairman; attested: Gloria B. Senador as Secretary General".

The second plaque of appreciation reads: "In grateful recognition of assistance rendered in favour of the helpless victims of the Mount Pinatubo eruption on 12 June 1991. Given this 29th day of November 1991 at Budapest, Hungary; signed General R.C. Espino, Chairman; attested: Gloria B. Senador, Secretary General".

May we now call the representatives of the National Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent of the following countries: Germany, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Republic of Korea, Spain, United States of America, Finland, Great Britain, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Norway, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Iran, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, USSR, Yugoslavia. May we now call the Secretary General and the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Mr. Stenbäck and Dr. Villarroel, to receive the plaque. May we now call President Sommaruga to receive the plaque for the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Thank you very much, General Espino, for this demonstration of solidarity within our Movement.

ITEM 10 ON THE AGENDA:

FUTURE OF THE MOVEMENT

10.1 Consideration of the decision of the Standing Commission to postpone the XXVI International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

May I ask the Chairman of the Standing Commission, Dr. Abu-Goura, to make an introductory note to this item.

Dr. A. ABU-GOURA (Chairman of the Standing Commission)

Thank you very much for giving me the floor to speak for the Standing Commission. A paper was circulated yesterday to all Council members, and before I comment on it, I would like to say something about the Standing Commission. What is the Standing Commission? It is the trustee of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, which it represents during the period between two Conferences. It draws up the agenda, it has the authority to name the place and the date of the International Conference and, in exceptional circumstances, it might postpone a Conference. The Standing Commission has an additional role, which is to safeguard the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, to safeguard every component of the Movement, to resolve all the problems that might arise between Red Cross and Red Crescent Conferences. Now I come to the question: why did the Standing Commission take the decision to postpone the XXVI Conference? Immediately after the last speech of the Chairman of the XXV International Conference of the Red Cross, I received a protest concerning the last paragraph of his speech, in which he transmitted the message of the Bureau of the Conference to the Standing Commission to consider inviting Palestinian representatives to the next International Conference. From then on, the Standing Commission continued to consider the situation. At the beginning of this year, 1991, we received a protest against extending an invitation to a Palestinian delegation. We considered that it would not be just to invite an observer which might be a reason for a full member to leave the Conference or to withdraw from it. So we tried our best with all the parties concerned, without going into the political issues of concern to the different parties. We were looking for a reasonable arrangement, for a compromise which would enable us to have a nice and safe International Conference. When we met the different parties, we asked them to apply and implement the Movement's Fundamental Principles; we insisted on having a successful Conference, a humanitarian Conference, and not a political one. Taking all these conditions into consideration, meeting the different parties at different places and at different times, the Standing Commission postponed its decision. In April this year we had a meeting at which a decision was to be taken. It was postponed for July, in the hope that a solution would be found in the meantime, and then it was postponed to September and from 3 September it was postponed to 25 November and, because of the urgency, we held an extraordinary

meeting in Geneva on 20 November. During that time, this year and the years before, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, together with the members of the Standing Commission, were doing their best to find a solution to this problem. I think you heard that the President of the ICRC and the Chairman of the Standing Commission travelled to visit one of the parties and came back the same day. We went from here to Tunis and then we came back. With all these efforts, the Standing Commission gave its full consideration to all the situations, and we wondered: How can we save the Movement and how can we save the International Conference? Should we postpone the Conference? It will be a harmful decision for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Or should we hold the Conference, with the risk that during the first hour of the Conference there might be a confrontation and the matter would be taken out of the hands of the Red Cross and Red Crescent people and go to the politicians? If something like that were to happen, it would be even more harmful for the Movement. Because of all these considerations, on 26 November 1991 the Standing Commission took the decision to postpone the Conference. We are very sorry, the Standing Commission is very sorry and we regret that this decision was taken, but we were forced to do it. We regret it because the Hungarian Red Cross and the Government of Hungary organized everything for the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. We appreciate very much what the Hungarian Red Cross and the Government of Hungary have done to host the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. We are very sorry about the decision, but I hope that you will understand that its aim is to save the Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Thank you Dr. Abu-Goura. The floor is now open for comments.

Mr. Yves SANDOZ (ICRC)

The postponement of the XXVI International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is a failure. We cannot be oblivious of this fact. The Chairman of the Standing Commission, in the statement he just made, and the President of the ICRC, in his speech yesterday, have already spoken about the implications of this failure. I shall not dwell on them further. Instead, I shall confine myself to a preliminary analysis of the reasons for this failure with a view to the future. To begin with, I would like to make two remarks. First of all, we must realize that political problems in respect of participation in the International Conference are, in one form or another, inherent to it. There can be disagreement as to the legitimacy of the representatives of a State or as to the very existence or non-existence of a State. For this Conference, as for the others, we had several of these problems to solve. Most of them were solved, but a solution was not found to one particularly acute problem, prompting the Standing Commission to opt for a deferment of the

Conference. Secondly, as these problems are basically much-debated political ones, discussing them at the Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is detrimental to the Movement's image and prevents the Conference from tackling humanitarian problems in a positive spirit. We must therefore first consider whether it is possible to guarantee solutions to these problems before the Conference. What means do we have today? The Standing Commission, entrusted with overseeing the preparations for the International Conference, is a body comprised solely of members of the Movement. It is bound by the principle of neutrality and is therefore not empowered to decide on political problems. The Standing Commission is aware of this and must therefore encourage the community of States to solve any political problems that arise during the preparation phase. I can honestly say that the international community was consulted more than usual during the preparation for this Conference: a group of ten ambassadors from all the regions of the world was set up in Geneva, missions were made to several capitals of the world, and the Permanent Missions in Geneva were informed bilaterally or in their respective regional groups. Intense diplomatic negotiations with regard to the most delicate problem remaining to be solved, that of Palestinian participation, continued right up to the definitive confirmation by the Standing Commission of its decision to postpone the Conference. I shall not dwell on the very intense and dramatic activity over the past few days, but I would like you all to be aware that neither the members of the Standing Commission nor the parties directly concerned spared any effort, and yet we failed. Would other procedures allow us to guarantee a solution to such problems before the Conference? This deserves consideration. It could, for instance, be envisaged that a group of governmental representatives be set up long before the Conference. Although such solutions deserve study, I nevertheless doubt that it would be possible to guarantee in advance that the Conference will be spared all dispute with respect to the problem of participation. We are thus confronted with a second question: is the Movement prepared to face this type of discussion at the Conference? How to minimize the negative impact of such a discussion can also deserve consideration. Before deciding on deferment, the Standing Commission examined suggestions from the ICRC in this regard, namely that the Movement should refrain from taking part in any discussion or vote on the matter. Many other ideas deserve consideration here. I have the feeling, however, that although it can be hoped that the impact on the Movement of such discussion can be minimized -the 1986 Conference in Geneva was indeed a traumatic experience, as we remember- there can be no guarantee that all negative repercussions can be completely avoided. As we don't know what the replies and solutions to our two previous questions will be, I feel it is necessary to ask a third one. If there can be no guarantee that political problems would not be raised at the Conference itself, or that the discussion of these problems would not have a negative impact on the Movement, can the organization of International Conferences still be envisaged? In any case, it seems clear to me that the risk cannot be taken again of cancelling a Conference just a few days in advance, except for reasons such as the outbreak of armed conflict or the occurrence of a natural disaster in the host country. A National Society and everyone who prepares the Conference, both the organization and the substance, cannot be asked again to put in the enormous effort required if they do not have a guarantee that their work will not be in vain. What happened in Budapest must not be repeated. The

real question we must answer is this: is the Movement sufficiently interested in this exceptional type of dialogue with the governments to face the risks inherent in this type of dialogue? I have a distinct feeling that there is not just one reply for the entire Movement. This dialogue is essential for the ICRC, given the special mandate entrusted to it in the field of international humanitarian law. A number of National Societies probably also consider it important, but perhaps not essential. Moreover, National Societies are more seriously affected by the negative repercussions of political discussion than the ICRC which, as everyone knows, is confronted daily with politically delicate situations. Dear friends, ladies and gentlemen, we must first ascertain whether or not we can find ways that allow us to hold International Conferences using the current formula and with the guarantee that neither what happened in Geneva, nor what happened in Budapest, will be repeated. If this is not possible, then we must clearly say so now. Other forms of dialogue with the governments must be studied equally. I think we must pursue our analysis quite rapidly on the basis of these premises. The uneasiness resulting from the deferment of the Budapest Conference must be dispelled immediately. The States party to the Geneva Conventions are legitimately asking questions to which we must reply. The ICRC will make proposals. It is important for the Standing Commission to examine this problem in depth and immediately. But we first wish to hear your analysis and proposals so that the Movement can be strengthened by this ordeal.

Applause

Mrs. Elizabeth DOLE (American Red Cross)

The American Red Cross is deeply concerned that political issues continue to impede our ability to come together with our governments to help solve humanitarian problems. We sincerely regret the situation which prompted the decision of the Standing Commission to postpone indefinitely the XXVI International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. This painful decision was made to preserve and protect the humanitarian principles we hold in such high regard. These principles have been the foundation and the guiding force of the Red Cross and Red Crescent throughout our rich history. We cannot set aside any of the principles which have served us and the victims we protect so well. We could not thrust ourselves into the midst of a political controversy which has raged for many years. It is a matter which has no place in our Movement and no place in our Conference. If we had allowed this issue to come to a vote, we would have done great damage to the Movement. We at the Red Cross and Red Crescent cannot take sides in this or any other political controversy. Throughout this year, my first as president of the American Red Cross, I have spoken often about our tradition of trust. In the United States and throughout the world, people trust the Red Cross and Red Crescent to be there when needed and to do what is right. We can only retain this trust if we remain above reproach in matters inherently political. We deeply regret the tremendous inconvenience that the decision to postpone the Conference has caused the Hungarian Red Cross as the organizers of the Conference. But we cannot fail those who served the Red Cross

before us and entrusted us with an honoured legacy. More importantly, we cannot fail those who trust in our service.

Mr. Chairman, the American Red Cross does look forward, however, to the important exchanges which will occur in the Council: the role of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent in humanitarian relief and dissemination of international humanitarian law, among other issues. Let us always strive, in our daily work to help of victims around the globe, to be guided by the Fundamental Principles which have prevailed even in the difficult decisions of the past few days.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

May I ask all the speakers to give their names and titles before they start to speak.

Dr. J. HANTOS (Hungarian Red Cross)

We have listened with great interest to the statement of Mr. Abu-Goura, Head of the Standing Commission, and as far as I know there has never been a similar agenda before the Council of Delegates. I think it very regrettable that we have this item on the agenda of the Council of Delegates. At the same time, we should consider it natural that the postponement of the XXVI International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent should be debated immediately by the Council of Delegates. It is very clear that in this matter a really good decision is very difficult to reach. This decision of the Standing Commission I will consider as the least of all evils. As a member of the Standing Commission myself, I also think that there would have been strong feeling within our Movement if there had been a repetition of what happened during the XXV International Conference, which jeopardized the unity of the Movement. This is why it is essential to eliminate political discussion and to avoid this very political dissension within our Movement. I am sure that we now have, within the Council of Delegates, an opportunity to discuss those items on the agenda which deal with humanitarian matters.

I believe that at the meeting of the Council of Delegates in Budapest, we have to face a real contradiction, a contradiction that we did not really want to consider. I refer to the absence of coordination between one of the Fundamental Principles of our Movement, the principle of independence, stating that the Movement is totally independent, and the new Statutes of our Movement, accepted in 1986, concerning membership of the International Conference. The 1986 Statutes state that the highest statutory body of our Movement is the International Conference. This is true. Yet the membership of the International Conference, the fact that it is the highest statutory body, and the fact that its decisions are taken by all the National Societies of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent together with the governments, raises a question to the outside world as to whether the Movement is independent and whether it is able to take decisions on its own activities, on the scope of its work. Many of you will remember that, at the time of drafting the new Statutes, there was a proposal that the highest statutory body of the Movement

should be the Council of Delegates, where the Red Cross and Red Crescent family is together. All Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies belong to the Council and I am sure that it would have a most beneficial effect if it were the highest statutory body. You all know the result of the XXV Conference; I myself consider it a favourable result that the XXV International Conference accepted by consensus the new Statutes of the Movement. It would have been out of place and, I am sure, would have caused problems if the basic Statutes that we presented at the XXV Conference had been subject to amendments. That is why the Hungarian Red Cross was in favour of the new Statutes being accepted by consensus, as we explained during the Conference. Nevertheless, events have now shown that, given the circumstances, the problem we face is very difficult to solve. We have to look for solutions, which would imply some form of organizational arrangement for regular meetings between the governments and the National Societies, since we must work together to implement the Geneva Conventions. This joint forum between governments and National Societies is greatly needed. The idea I would like us to consider is not against regular meetings with the governments, on the contrary. We need Conferences and we should strive to hold them, under a practical title such as "Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and governments". Such Conferences could be held regularly, to discuss questions that have to do with the Geneva Conventions and humanitarian law exclusively. These Conferences should be organized jointly with the governments. I think that there is a realistic possibility for this.

Perhaps we should consider how this could be achieved in practice. Amendments to the Statutes can be made only by the International Conference, as the Statutes prescribe. We should give consideration to drafting an amendment that would be to the benefit of the Movement and which I believe would be accepted by the government representatives since logic dictates that facts must be faced. Up to now there has been a kind of misapprehension concerning the membership of the International Red Cross Conference: how can governments be entitled to vote? If they are, it is not a Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent exclusively. Although this amendment seems to be a formal one, I think it is fundamental. We should even consider whether the character of the Council of Delegates should be changed so as to make it the highest statutory body of the Movement. We probably do not have to decide at today's meeting, but we could produce a common standpoint in the Council of Delegates. A working group could then be set up, maybe with the participation of government delegates, to discuss the question and propose a solution. We may be able to present a draft amendment to improve the present situation. We refer a great deal to the basic Statutes; but we must realize that if the basic Statutes suffer from some kind of weakness, then it is our responsibility to remedy that problem. If we do not change the membership of the International Conference, and if people are unsure of the unity and the integrity of our Movement, it means that we are neglecting the Fundamental Principle of independence. This is why I think we should consider this problem. The Standing Commission, which will meet after this Council of Delegates, should look into the consequences of the problem. One thing we cannot do is pretend that 1986 did not happen and that 1991, in Budapest, has not happened. To strengthen the Movement is our most important task; and a unified Movement with a variety of

tasks can be strengthened only if we have very clear ideas about its mission in the world and about the mandate bestowed on it by international humanitarian law. The mandate of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is to coordinate with governments the implementation of the Geneva Conventions. This is why we should have Conferences that are not called International Conferences of the Movement but Conferences of the Movement and governments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the opportunity to express my ideas on this issue.

We have received sympathetic messages from many National Societies regarding the present situation of the Hungarian National Red Cross. The postponement of the Conference has caused financial loss to our National Society. You are experienced Conference organizers, so you know that we have had to write off a large budget. I would like to thank those delegates and National Societies that have decided to help with the financing of the International Conference.

Mr. Johann Wilhelm RÖMER (German Red Cross)

Together with the Standing Commission, we regret the postponement of the International Conference. At first glance, it is a disappointment, but this is a short-sighted view. We were in a situation in which we had to protect our Movement from serving as a tool in a political struggle. In times of armed conflicts, our humanitarian work depends especially on the total absence of any suspicion of taking sides. Neutrality is the basis of our work. Therefore it was right to save the Fundamental Principles and not the Conference. We are confident that we will find good structures and forms for renewing the dialogue between governments and the Movement. One step towards accelerating this process could be the establishment of a study group on the future of the Movement. A proposal supported by our Society will be discussed under the next item on our agenda.

Dr. Håkan HELLBERG (Finnish Red Cross)

We all regret what has happened; but, as suggested by the previous speaker, we should now consider what to do next. This week we have recognized the need to discuss, openly and frankly, the present status and the future of the Movement. We need to continue that discussion. Two points are important: one, as has been pointed out, is the need to ensure the continuation of the relationship between the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the signatories of the Geneva Conventions. That we must do. But before that, and for us in the Council of Delegates, the first task is to consolidate the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, to do our own homework, and because of the dramatic events we should move quickly. At this moment there is a need for extraordinary measures, and, as has been pointed out, these should include strengthening the role of the Council of Delegates. Since the Council meets only every two years we need to work now in between on behalf of the whole Movement. The Standing Commission will continue its work, but we need more. I would support the proposal just mentioned by the delegation of the German Red Cross. But the

question is: what will happen if we have a working group that starts very quickly on its task of reflection and analysis and comes up with some proposals? What will happen? To wait for the next Council of Delegates in two years' time is too long a period, because something should happen now. In the meantime, we should use the statutory bodies that we have in the Movement: the Executive Council of the Federation and the ICRC bodies, its members and its Executive Board. As we know, there have already been steps in the direction of these bodies getting together, the "code word" being Yverdon. I may say that somebody not very familiar with European geography confused this with Verdun, which is further north and is an old battlefield of the First World War. What we need to avoid now is getting bogged down in old battlefields, which also exist within the Movement, as we must frankly acknowledge. We cannot afford to be locked in old disputes: we need a launching pad for the next stage of the Movement, if I may use a term of modern warfare, though launching pads can also be used for peaceful satellites. We must act now and quickly, use every possibility that will enable us to work quickly and get visible results for the good of the Movement. Then, in two years, when we meet as a Council of Delegates, we will be much further advanced and will find the whole Movement stronger and better able than before to respond to the needs of the world around us. We need to work quickly with a small group which would report to the governing bodies at the executive level and in this way we will be able to strengthen the work of the Council of Delegates.

Mr. Eigil PEDERSEN (Danish Red Cross)

Enormous efforts have been made, especially by the Standing Commission, the Hungarian Government and the Hungarian Red Cross Society. Two days ago we were forced to postpone the XXVI International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent because some governments and others have been unable to find a solution for their political differences, a solution necessary for the Conference to take place. This, Mr. Chairman, is an extraordinary situation facing the Movement, a Movement which works for the victims of war and disasters. For people generally, normal people of good will, our supporters who remember the political discussions in 1986, when our last Conference took place, there is a growing conviction that this kind of situation is unacceptable, not to mention, Mr. Chairman, the victims of the civil war in Yugoslavia, and of wars and strife elsewhere. I feel there is an urgent need to start taking measures which will effectively safeguard against similar situations in the future. This feeling, moreover, is shared by many Societies present here. For this reason, together with a number of other alarming developments in the world today, a draft resolution will be presented under item 10.2 on the agenda. This resolution is backed by a considerable number of National Societies and details ways and means to remedy the situation. It proposes the immediate establishment of a study group to present suggestions and recommendations to this august body, the Council of Delegates, on how to deal with these problems. I shall give details of this resolution when we begin discussion on the next sub-item. But since the resolution also deals with the problems we are discussing now, and referred to by many delegations, I felt it

necessary to mention that under the next sub-item we have a draft resolution dealing with this extraordinary situation and in fact embodying some of the ideas expressed by our friend and colleague from the Hungarian Red Cross, Dr. Hantos.

Mr. Pär STENBÄCK (Federation)

During the last few days we have been reminded in a dramatic way how close we are to political events and to the political environment of the world. I have sometimes disputed the saying that if you live by the river you have to learn to swim with the crocodiles. I wonder whether the Red Cross and Red Crescent world has learnt to swim with the crocodiles. During these last few days I have had some doubts, and I would like to make some comments on how we could solve these problems. First of all, I would like to say: There is no need for excuses. I think that those who participated in the decision-making had available all the facts which we possibly could have in order to take a decision which would be beneficial to the Movement, or at least minimize the bad effects. Of course, we must admit that the decision-makers were as traumatized as many other National Societies by the events of 1986. At that time, we were drawn into a political drama and we have since received, from many National Societies, expressions of regret that we were forced to take the stand we did in 1986, regardless of the opinions prevailing among National Societies about how to solve the matter. We have been asked whether the current situation could have been avoided. Was there some decisive action that would have prevented the postponement of the Conference only a few days before it was due? Many perhaps take the view: Why postpone at such a late stage, causing so many practical problems? I think we must leave aside the practical difficulties that have been created for all of us. That is not the important issue. What was important was to interpret the Fundamental Principles and to safeguard the integrity of the Movement. That is the reason for our action. But it is inevitable that National Societies should ask whether we could have avoided that. I agree with most of what Mr. Yves Sandoz of the ICRC said when he opened the debate. We did almost everything which could have been done in order to avoid this situation. It is easy to criticize of course, but for my own part, and for the League I must stress that the ICRC and the League took part in all phases of the preparations, with and through the diplomatic missions in Geneva. We were engaged in prolonged negotiations, we pointed out all the alternatives, and nobody could give us a definite answer during the preparatory stage. As a matter of fact, it is my feeling that no guarantees could have been given by anybody at that time. It is characteristic of politics that things evolve less predictably than perhaps one would wish. There was a political mechanism in play, we were drawn into that. Nobody could have known, when we decided that the Conference would be held in Budapest, that the Madrid Conference was to take place at a certain moment. That was a secret to everybody, even a month before. We were caught up in those events and we could not possibly get out of them. We live in a political environment, even if we try our best to isolate ourselves from the bad aspects of events. So I feel that political guarantees could not have been given to safeguard the success of our Conference. The question may be: Should we ask for political guarantees? The other question is: Do we really need the governments in order to

pursue our humanitarian mandate? This is a very pertinent question, already touched upon by several delegations. But it is too early to draw conclusions. Of course, many of us are upset at what has happened; but should we today draw the final conclusions about our relationship with the governments? This relationship could be discussed from many angles. First, I would like to ask: What is the interest of governments in an International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement? Unfortunately, my analysis will be quite pessimistic. Do governments really need the International Conference as a forum for important humanitarian dialogue with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement? A few governments are interested and have humanitarian issues on their political agenda. They might be interested in meeting regularly to exchange information and views and pass resolutions, the resolutions of the International Conference, which is the instrument of cooperation between governments and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. But I feel that the majority of governments do not see that forum as so essential that they would sacrifice some of their political interests for the good of the Conference. We may appeal to them and discuss with them, but finally, when other political issues are at stake, I am not sure that they will sacrifice their own priorities. Of course the situation differs from country to country, it depends very much on the position of the individual Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in the individual country. Some Societies -and they should be congratulated- have a natural and fruitful relationship with their government, a relationship which contains no element of interference or undue influence, and which guarantees the independence and autonomy of the National Society. It is the right kind of relationship, and the governments concerned certainly have an interest in continuing to attend a forum like the International Conference.

One of my preliminary conclusions would be that we must adapt -here I come back to the saying "to live by the river and to learn to swim with the crocodiles". Some biologists say that you can tame a crocodile; we must make a little effort to learn how to deal with those dear animals, to find ways and means to have natural and relaxed relations with the governments. The process must start at national level, and not initiated one year before an International Conference. If we can have dialogue at national level and persuade more and more governments that there might be a forum free of politics, so fruitful and vital that it is worth maintaining as a non-political forum, then we might be successful. Meanwhile, we need time for reflection, time to analyze the situation, to consider how we proceed from here. We should not be annoyed by the practical inconvenience and the delays. Nobody can answer the question which I have been asked many times during these few days: When will the next Conference take place? It will depend on many factors. The situation might change: in the history of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, there have been other occasions when we have had to postpone a Conference for political reasons, and each time there will be different reasons, which may emerge at any time. A pertinent question, of course, is: If we could not meet the challenges now, how can we ever meet them with our political partners in an International Conference? Their agenda will remain unchanged. But we must accept that the world's atmosphere changes, and is sometimes more heated. The Palestinian question is one of the big political issues of the century, at least of the period after the Second World War. It also clearly has humanitarian aspects, and

we cannot deny that the question has a definite place in the world's political agenda. The Standing Commission, when taking its final decision, had to strike a balance between taking a step forward in humanitarian terms, which would certainly have occurred during the International Conference, and the repercussions of a confrontation between divergent political views within the Conference. In the end, the decision was unavoidable and clear. We had to take it in view of the risks involved. It is too late to ask, and we will never know, whether we would have succeeded, if we had gone ahead with the Conference, in avoiding that confrontation. It is pointless to debate that question: we must make use of this time to reconsider our relationship with our government partners, not only in the legal sense, in the context of an International Conference, but also in our own countries. National Societies are dependent on their relationship with their governments. What is their attitude? How much can they benefit from that relationship? And how much can the Movement as a whole benefit? There are many questions, but we could not possibly answer them all today. Of course, we must discuss the process up to a point. We should not overestimate our capacity to solve the problems. Many other questions will arise in the future in world politics, because humanitarian issues are now influenced by political considerations to a much greater degree than they were even a few years ago. Then, there were other issues, based on cold-war tensions; nowadays, many more governments are willing to include humanitarian issues in their political agenda. We saw this during the Gulf war, we see it in many other situations: governments are more sensitive to humanitarian issues, both in the positive and in the negative sense. Positive, leading to more resources for humanitarian assistance, but negative when humanitarian issues are misused by governments to promote their own political ends. It is their mixed motives that make it difficult to swim with the crocodiles. We do not always have the skill to distinguish what is political. We must be careful, and at the same time we must be clear concerning our own goals, in order to safeguard the integrity of the Movement and to avoid its sustaining more damage than it has already suffered through the preparation of this Conference.

I would like to conclude by saying that this is not the end of anything: it is the beginning of a reconsideration of our relationship with the governments, and in the end our analysis can be beneficial. We may find new forms, new procedures, as I and many other speakers are quite sure we can. In the meantime, we should use this opportunity to analyze our relationships with different external friends, which affect our decision-making and our ability to survive in this world of challenges.

(Break)

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I now ask the delegate of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR to take the floor.

Dr. Ibrahim ALNOURI (Iraqi Red Crescent)

Mr. President, point of order.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Yes, please, Iraqi delegation.

Dr. I. ALNOURI (Iraqi Red Crescent)

As we have heard this morning from all the National Societies, the influence of political affairs in our Movement leads to a bad result such as this postponement of the International Conference. Unfortunately, we have in this Council of Delegates a National Society which insists on a political matter being imposed on our Movement. Some documents and elegant files containing booklets published by the Kuwaiti Government and some Kuwaiti political society are now being distributed in the meeting of the Council of Delegates. I do not know whether this has your approval, Mr. President, or not. I have in the hotel ten boxes of an Iraqi government publication concerning violations of international humanitarian law by the Kuwaiti Government against Iraqis and Arab nationals in Kuwait during this period. I would like to ask you, Mr. Chairman, for all the Kuwaiti publications to be withdrawn. I am not going to distribute any publications because they are governmental, and we are a National Society, we have nothing to do with politics. I will leave the Iraqi government publications in the hotel, and not distribute them; but I kindly request you to ask our friends from the Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society and the Kuwaiti Government to withdraw these publications.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I have taken note of your point of order, and I repeat what I said at the beginning of the session: that no document may be distributed in the hall without the prior approval of the chair. I ask all delegates, all delegations to respect this ruling. May I also recall Article 15 of the Statutes of the Movement, point 3, which says: "All participants in the Council shall respect the Fundamental Principles, and all documents presented shall conform with these principles. In order that the debates of the Council shall command the confidence of all, the Chairman and any elected officer responsible for the conduct of business shall ensure that none of the speakers, at any time, engages in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature". Once again I strongly urge everybody not to distribute any document without the prior approval of the chair. Any such document has nothing to do with our deliberations.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Thank you for your support.

Now the delegate of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR has the floor.

Dr. Dimitry VENEDICTOV (Alliance)

This morning we received two anonymous draft resolutions. They combine items 10.1 and 10.2. And we see that discussion is already dealing not only with the decision to postpone the Conference but with the future of our Movement. Of course, we all regret deeply that the International Conference in its full composition is postponed, and postponed at the very last moment. Nobody can say what we will gain or lose by this. This will become clear in the future, from the reactions of the governments and the world community, which are not yet apparent. We cannot expect a very heated reaction to this situation. I am more afraid of indifference, which will also be rather significant, since the question is whether we shall in future keep the unique character of our International Conferences, where the Red Cross family meets with the governments, where we are able to explain to the governments what humanitarian mobilization, in our sense, means: that all political, economic, military and other problems have human aspects, and that solving these human aspects helps to solve major problems. I think it is a pity if we forfeit this opportunity. Incidentally, thinking about it, I wonder which governments in general are entitled to participate in the Conferences. Our Statutes say "those governments that have signed the Geneva Conventions", but is that correct? Do we really select the governments that come to the Conference? Suppose there is a new country, or a new government, that does not know about the Geneva Conventions. Shall we tell them: we do not want them to come, even to get acquainted with what it is all about? Here is something which needs reflection, at least in theory. We have changed the agenda for our Council of Delegates, and perhaps we should have made the meeting slightly longer than two days, since the new agenda is larger than it was for the one-day session; but it is not as complete as was the agenda for the International Conference. In the meeting of the Council of Delegates, we could have discussed all the problems we thought important for the Conference, within our family, and maybe we could have come to some general conclusions. The decision is made now, and we are working, but I think this should be kept in mind for the future. We are considering the future of our Movement, and of course this question is wider and more serious: the unity of our Movement, the role and the image of the Red Cross, the efficiency of our programmes, competition with other non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, etc. We talk about humanitarian law and its dissemination, and we are proud when we think this or that country is smart in distributing these documents. We see international humanitarian law violated in practically every international or internal military conflict, and nobody cares: there are victims who suffer in spite of it. Maybe our information policy is not efficient enough, for nobody cares -or let us say, many countries are indifferent. Who is thinking on behalf of the whole Movement? We

were warned yesterday that there are some external Movements which come with ideas and even emblems similar to ours, but who act in violation or in contradiction of our principles. We talk about refugees throughout the world, and we see that this problem, far from being solved, is more and more acute, and there are more obstacles to moving refugees between countries. All these questions have been touched on in the meeting in Yverdon. It was a very successful and very important meeting, about which we have some information; but I agree with previous speakers that we cannot rely on this Yverdon process which was planned to be relatively slow: the cancellation of this International Conference shows that we have no time, we must move quickly. Therefore I completely agree that in general we need a very rapid yet thorough and responsible analysis of the situation. Such an analysis should obviously be oriented towards decision-making, not a theoretical study. It must really examine our future, to guide decisions on our conduct. I am not quite sure that I understand the resolutions which we got: there are two of them, and I don't know who made them, I saw a different one. We must use the constitutional possibilities of our Movement, the Executive Council, the Vice-Presidents of the Federation, the ICRC, the regional conferences, which have their own procedures. Why should we limit the study group to five? why not seven? nine? eleven? but let us use the possibilities and the Secretariats both of the Federation and of the ICRC, experts if necessary, the Henry Dunant Institute, and all the rest. This study should be conducted quickly and responsibly, and should really address the decisions which we have to take in the very near future. We are ready to take part in this endeavour in any way that may be appropriate.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

May I just take one element of your contribution, namely the duration of the session of the Council of Delegates? The Council has the right to decide the duration of its meetings. I think it very important to recall that.

Ambassador Remo PAOLINI (Italian Red Cross)

Mr. Chairman, I have followed with much interest the analysis made by several Red Cross Societies, and above all by the ICRC and the representative of the Federation and some other representatives. I would like, in a few words, to explain my feelings and my thoughts in this regard. We should avoid continuing to express regret at what has happened even though we have good reason to do so. To console ourselves, we could say that it was necessary to take this decision; in order to avoid what happened in 1986, we had to accept this very heavy blow. It is heavy because we have to work in a world full of victims: victims of conflicts, of famine and of natural disasters, and in the eyes of the public such things are not constructive. That is why I wish to turn to the constructive aspect, on which our Hungarian colleague very wisely placed the emphasis. This episode should be a warning for us, was what he said. First of all, it should enable us to recover what we have lost, because we have lost something, we have to admit it; and second, we must start thinking what we can do in future to avoid the repetition of what

has occurred in Budapest. To recover what we have lost, we have to strengthen cooperation and unity among the various components of the Movement, the ICRC, the Federation, the National Societies, all those present in the Council of Delegates. I think that the Council of Delegates is the place in which this recovery could be made. This is why I am very satisfied with the draft resolution that has been tabled for discussion under item 10.2 of the agenda. The resolution refers to the setting up of a study group: this is the line we should take in the near future, since if we wait for two years, or even for six months, there may be long-term repercussions. The proverb says: "Strike while the iron is hot". Our reaction has been very warm, and we should not allow time for the iron to cool down. Goodwill is also important.

We have heard a number of ideas. Perhaps we have not enough time to think over the question of our future within the National Societies. However, I don't agree that we should consider the possibility of removing the presence of governments in our Conferences. If we except the one in 1986 in Geneva, twenty-four Conferences have had excellent results. I have been in government, and I have to tell you that governments in general are extremely interested in taking part in our Conferences. We should not forget that the governments have signed the Geneva Conventions and the Protocols and that they are responsible for observing all the Conventions, for the respect of humanitarian law and the Conventions, even if the Red Cross is responsible for their dissemination. Governments keep in touch with the National Societies to know what is going on in the humanitarian sector. Most governments show interest in humanitarian programmes, particularly in the past few months. The ICRC maintains permanent contact with the governments, which are our partners, which give us contributions. They have always been interested in briefing themselves about the essence of our programmes, and they have close contact with the Societies. By taking part in the Conference, in collaboration with the National Societies, the governments will see how significant our programmes are. The preparation of a Conference should not be dependent on political conditions. We should not wait until the last moment, in the hope of an improvement. The Conferences should be prepared in the best possible way. This subject will be discussed mainly in the Standing Commission, which I would urge to act in consultation with the National Societies, since all should have the opportunity to express their views on this very important issue.

Mr. Dario L.R. REIS (Cape Verde Red Cross)

As President of the Cape Verde Red Cross, I, like many other delegates here, have experienced the pressure and disappointment of the 1986 Geneva Conference. At that time I began to realize that things are changing and that it is not realistic to expect certain governments not to speak about politics, or not to deal with political questions. Often, it depends on circumstances and on topical interest. I felt the negative consequences for the Movement of the extraordinary events of 1986 in Geneva, which we all remember. In the past few days I experienced the same feeling here in Budapest, when the Conference was postponed. We have already changed the name of one of the components of the Movement; now the time has come to think over the function and importance of the Council of Delegates, and

perhaps to reconsider the nature of the Conference. I am happy that we have started to think over this problem together, here and now.

Mr. Kenneth MONPLAISIR (Saint Lucia Red Cross)

The postponement of the International Conference is regretted, but, in the view of the overall considerations, it was the right decision. At the XXV Conference in Geneva I was extremely embarrassed, and hoped then that such a thing would never happen again. The Standing Commission's decision has spared us this embarrassment. Some may say that we have had contacts with governments in the past and that this has never happened before. But the world is changing: the political sensitivities of States make it likely that similar situations will affect us from time to time. It happened four years ago, it has happened now and, who knows whether it may recur in four years' time?

So we must take stock and must not be dismayed. Let us examine our situation, to see what it is that causes the Conference to be used as a forum. There is no doubt that the International Red Cross is a well-meaning and noble organization, but as far as politics is concerned, it is an easy target for manipulation. Since we cannot control the States, we are powerless. On that basis, we should try to reduce the high profile of the International Conference, which they wish to use as a forum. We have three tasks ahead of us. First, we should redouble our efforts to remain faithful to the Fundamental Principles, so that this is manifest to the whole world. Second, we must maintain contacts with the signatories to the Geneva Conventions, though in a more modest, less high-profile way. Third, we need to analyze the situation facing us, since, if the pessimistic forecast is correct, we must be prepared. I propose therefore that, in order to find solutions, a study group be set up to examine the problems and to report back.

Egyptian Red Crescent

Since the Arabic language is no longer used, I speak in another working language, in response to what has been said, particularly by the representative of the ICRC and by the Secretary General of the Federation. The ICRC representative suggested that the issue which the Standing Commission could not solve should be submitted to continued discussions between all concerned, the Federation, the ICRC and the governments, immediately, providing that such dialogue could be relaunched without delay. We share the concern of all components of the Movement and support the initiative of the ICRC representative which paves the way towards a solution of the problem. The Secretary General raised a number of issues, among them the question as to whether the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement can isolate itself from the dramatic changes occurring on the political scene. Some changes may be welcomed, but many bring with them the possibility of other problems in many fields, including that of the application of humanitarian law in armed conflicts and the need to strengthen the ability of the Movement to face this challenge. The dangers of current conflicts, whether internal or international, and the frequent flouting of rules and principles of the Geneva Conventions and the

Protocols by the parties involved add to the already heavy burden of the Movement, which is sometimes called upon to deal with groups having no status whatsoever. Moreover, the inability of the Movement to respond to provide urgent and minimum humanitarian assistance has at times prompted governments and governmental and non-governmental agencies to take the lead in relief operations. This is one of the areas in which the Movement must rejuvenate itself and live up to the new challenges. Why? Because of its neutrality and its universality, and because of the general acceptance of its role and the confidence in its experience and efficiency. The problem which has caused the postponement of the International Conference is not the first of its kind, nor will it be the last to face the Movement. Future Conferences will have to face problems of participation, not necessarily of the same kind, but other problems will occur. A ruling has therefore to be made, once and for all. The relationship between governments, and components of the Movement, and the subject of the Conferences, outlined by the Secretary General, require us to do some sober thinking. Are we able to change the position of governments on particular political issues? Do we need the governments in order to further the effective role of the Movement? Yes, we need the governments. They are the only component mentioned in the Geneva Conventions. A National Society cannot work without the support of its government. What is the impact of the decision by the Standing Commission on the governments who were prepared to come here to the Conference? Have they been consulted? How many have been consulted? There was consultation with a few; what about the others? Why did the Standing Commission not find it necessary to consult the representatives of groups of countries? Why did the Standing Commission, which had to postpone its meeting twice, not continue its work here in Budapest while the Conference was taking place, and possibly find a solution during the course of the Conference? I may appear somewhat aggressive, but I am reacting to the unfortunate event which we have witnessed. A little more effort on the part of the Standing Commission, even during the Conference, would certainly have produced a solution to this problem. It is not the first problem of this kind that Conferences have faced. So much has occurred; and it is impossible to isolate the work of a Conference, even a humanitarian one, from what is going on in the world. We have in front of us a number of draft resolutions, but I would like to concentrate on one of these only, the revised text of CD/10.2/Res.2. The preamble is essential to the kind of action this Conference or this Council will take, specifically in recognizing that the Movement must adapt to the realities of the changing world, while upholding the Fundamental Principles and operating in accordance with them. This should be the motive and the subject matter of the whole study. The role of the study group would be to recommend to the Council a strategy for the Movement in response to emerging trends involving humanitarian issues. We would like to associate ourselves with the draft resolution and, like Dr. Venedictov of the Alliance, I feel that the composition of the group is perhaps somewhat limited. It should be representative of all regions, and membership should be expanded to allow wider participation, since the issue is one that concerns us all and to which we wish to find a solution. The study must really be made within the shortest time possible, for the issues cannot be deferred.

Mrs. Mavy A.A. HARMON (Brazilian Red Cross)

I refer to item 10.1, and I speak as President of my National Society. In Budapest, we have opted openly for our humanitarian role, we have opted for the victims and for our volunteers. The unity and integrity of our Movement have won over political considerations and the inherent risks to impartiality and neutrality. We have transferred the responsibility of jeopardizing an International Conference to the States party to the Geneva Conventions, to the same governments who have guaranteed in writing, to the ICRC and the Federation, all the conditions for the recognition and affiliation of National Societies, including their full support of these Societies. We are auxiliaries of our government, and we bring massive relief to the victims of war and of disaster. Donor societies often serve as instruments for distributing financial and material resources because of their credibility, because the emblem commands universal respect and provides the certainty that goods and financial resources will be distributed according to our Fundamental Principles and will also be audited. As we have heard from its Chairman, the decision of the Standing Commission was taken after exhaustive attempts to avoid an imminent confrontation and to provide a guarantee of the observance of our Statutes and of our Fundamental Principles, which incidentally have been approved by the same States that are party to the Geneva Conventions. The Hungarian Red Cross, with the support of the Hungarian Government, worked very hard until the last minute to prepare the International Conference, and we thank them for their untiring efforts. And let us not forget that the National Societies, some at great sacrifice, have organized delegations, have expended considerable time and financial resources, and have undertaken long journeys to attend the International Conference. But between our integrity, between the humanitarian role of our Movement, and the protection of the credibility of our symbol, our choice was obvious. The Fundamental Principles must come first. Besides, we have obligations to our volunteer workers, our members and our backers. We teach them international humanitarian law, the Fundamental Principles, the ideals and philosophy of our Movement and, as the senior executives, we have to give them the example. When we return to our countries I hope that those of us who are able to do so will take the time to explain to our governments this very important issue, adherence to the signed Conventions and the danger, as pointed out by the President of the ICRC, that they may do away with the only apolitical forum left in the world. Many of our members are, have been or will be in government. Furthermore, as National Societies, we all have to face situations where groups, whether political or commercial, try to use us. I am an optimist: I think this experience can be used to further our Movement. We have shown the maturity to take an unprecedented decision based on our Principles. This is the view of the Brazilian Red Cross.

Mr. Joseph OUABARI (Congolese Red Cross)

We wish to express our solidarity with the Hungarian Red Cross on this unfortunate occasion. In 1978, as a very young member of the Red Cross, I was at a seminar in Belgrade, in Yugoslavia, attended by Alexandre Hay, who was then President of the ICRC. I asked him what was his conviction about the survival of the seven Fundamental Principles, in particular impartiality, independence and neutrality. He answered me, but his answer did not satisfy me. Now we are in Budapest in 1991. I have spent seventeen years in the Red Cross, and I feel that my conviction of 1978 has not much changed. I am afraid that the Movement is greatly influenced by external forces. If our Movement fails to take a decision to proceed in such a way that the Fundamental Principles will be respected by the governments which are signatories to the Conventions and to the Additional Protocols, then it will face even more serious failures. And the victims of such failures are not the Northern countries, but the Third World countries. They are victims in two ways, first, because our States have made efforts to enable us to take part in the Conference, and, second, because the populations of our countries expect a lot from the Movement, so that such a failure is unfortunate. Third, the National Societies of the Nordic countries, the ICRC and the International Federation have done their utmost to ensure that governments understand the humanitarian interest and value of the Movement. I think that our Movement is the victim of a political system which is becoming more and more complex. Finally, I would say that if we today do not do all we can to promote the interests of the Movement, then young people, the youth we talk a lot about today, might blame us in the future.

Dr. Ahmed A. EL SHERIF (Libyan Red Crescent)

We are now discussing an item of the greatest importance, the future of our Movement. To my mind, and I am sure to yours, the importance of this item outweighs that of all other items on our agenda. It requires the widest possible participation from the different components of our Movement to come up with a clear-cut understanding and a true vision of the future we desire for our Movement. The time allocated for this discussion, and for concrete proposals to be considered, together with all the other items on the agenda, is not enough. So my remarks will be brief. Having heard some of the very articulate and clear statements dealing with the depth and the extent of the question, I feel that some colleagues are now more prepared than before to deal with this issue on our agenda. From the beginning, following early developments on this question, I felt that the Conference in preparation would fail. International Conferences are, first of all, occasions where the components of the Movement sit with governments party to the Geneva Conventions to discuss matters of common interest. The intentions were sincerely good, and are still good; but in practice difficulties in the deliberations of the Conference have become more and more evident in recent years, particularly on borderline issues as to whether items were political or humanitarian in character.

We need governments, no doubt, to support our work. The question which I always have in mind is: How far do we need permanent or regular government participation within the statutory bodies of our Movement? In other words, is it possible to have a permanent forum including governments that can in practice be useful, with no difficulties at all? Despite the situation we now face, it might be advantageous for us not to come to a final conclusion on this issue at present, in view of the associated difficulties and the complexities. It is very useful to debate the issue with the widest possible participation, in order to formulate substantial views and agreement. This should be followed by a responsible and careful study to produce clear and objective recommendations to be submitted to the Council of Delegates at the opportune moment.

Dr. Musi MOKETE (Lesotho Red Cross)

The Lesotho delegation, having listened to other delegates, having read the relevant documents, also having participated in this meeting from the beginning, wishes to state that, in the circumstances prevailing, the Standing Commission did a good job. We are aware that the Commission had some problems that caused us some distress, since our delegations could not decide how long to remain here, or what to tell our government concerning attendance at the Conference that was supposed to take place. It was also very difficult for us to decide on other issues relevant to the meeting, even had solutions been found to the problems outstanding. It is obvious therefore that the small group to be constituted as proposed in the draft resolution will have to consider consulting not only the groups which have scores to settle but also the groups that were supposed to come to the Conference, since some governments already had delegations travelling to Budapest, who have had to return home. We realize that the Hungarian National Society and the Hungarian Government put a great deal of effort into preparing for our meeting here and for welcoming the governments that were to come to the Conference. Unfortunately, these efforts have largely been lost. Yet all of us have lost: we have lost the contacts we would have made, we have lost the beneficial results of the Conference, and some of us from smaller and distant places have also suffered material loss, since we have to pay extra for our changed travel plans. So the Hungarians' loss is our loss, not only in material terms, but also with regard to conferring with our governments. In that respect, we must decide whether the component of governments is important or not within the Movement. Our delegation insists that it is important. It is very difficult for a National Society to approach its own government and persuade it to accede to a Protocol. We believe that if our governments had come here, even those who have not yet signed the Additional Protocols would have found a reason to sign them. We also believe that, had all the delegations of governments come here to meet within the Red Cross family, they would have recognized the folly of having violated the Protocols and the Conventions that they had previously signed. We have all suffered a loss, and as the draft resolutions propose, we must all make a concerted effort with our own governments to disseminate international humanitarian law and the Principles of the Red Cross Movement, both within our

countries and at regional level. We must decide to meet again at some more convenient time and to persuade those who have scores to settle that they must do so elsewhere than at the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Dr. Esmildo GUTIÉRREZ SÁNCHEZ (Cuban Red Cross)

Many statements have been very profound, and I will not repeat comments already made. First of all I would like to express my frustration with the decision of the Standing Commission to postpone the XXVI International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. However, the decision of the Standing Commission was a very courageous one, defending the integrity of our Movement and its Fundamental Principles and ideals. This is not a defeat but a strategic withdrawal, which we should take as an opportunity to reflect and to determine our future activities. This is no time to take precipitate decisions. Nevertheless, we must work fast. This is not the end of the road, it is the beginning. We should be very pragmatic: when we return home, we will hold meetings with the management of our National Societies, talk to our advisers and have meetings with our governments, to see what they think about the possible future effects of this situation. So we are going to work, we will draw our own conclusions and we shall communicate them to the leaders of the Federation, so that they can be taken into account.

Mr. Martin GOOD (Irish Red Cross)

The present structure of the International Conference and the link with governments has proved a unique and valuable instrument in our Movement, in that it exposes national governments to the fundamental humanitarian principles of our Movement. Through this forum we endeavour to work in closer cooperation and mutual understanding with various national governments. The Irish Red Cross has close links and cooperation with the Irish Government. The International Conference, providing links with other governments, is an extension of such a relationship, and facilitates the work and recognition of the Irish Red Cross at national and at international level. Therefore, the Irish Red Cross would not be in favour of discontinuing this important contact with governments. Yet we recognize the reality: that, due to political influences and implications, which will always exist, the International Conference is not a viable entity in its present form. Consequently, the Irish Red Cross Society supports a fundamental review by a study group, such as that proposed in 10.2/Res.2, of the governing and operating structures of the International Conference. It should proceed as quickly as possible and its findings should be evaluated and implemented as quickly as possible.

Major Abdul HUG (Bangladesh Red Crescent)

My delegation feels greatly the postponement of the scheduled meeting of the Movement and of member States, known as the International Conference. This unexpected postponement not only creates another bad precedent but will have serious effects on the work of the Federation and the ICRC. The General Assembly considered a number of important issues concerning the growth, development and effective operation of our organization, necessitating greater involvement of the Federation and the National Societies in social and humanitarian tasks. The delay and uncertainty about holding the International Conference will hamper the necessary growth and development of the organization, since most of the measures decided by the Assembly cannot come into effect until they are formally endorsed by the Conference. Anyway, what is done is done. We will now hope that the main issue that led to the postponement will be resolved very rapidly, but this will involve mutual dialogue and discussion, if necessary with assistance from the Federation and from other governments. To further a rapprochement will be in tune with the present trend in international relations. However, if an understanding is not in sight, let the Federation think over a suitable alternative in order to come out of the present stalemate. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society has emerged as a stronger organization since the recent reconstitution of its managing board. Very capable and experienced social leaders have now been put at its head. It is hoped that our National Society will be fully able to fulfil its commitment to the Federation and through it to the international community.

Dr. Mamoun Yousif HAMID (Sudan Red Crescent)

I feel sorry that the XXVI International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has been postponed, and I am sorry for the inconvenience to the Hungarian Red Cross and to all delegates of National Societies and some governments who had already arrived and have difficulty in arranging return travel. Yet in spite of all these inconveniences, the decision is a wise one. It will keep the Movement intact, and I commend the Standing Commission on this grave decision. We now have to begin to consider the wisdom of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies sitting in a single Conference with their governments. Sometimes there are very delicate issues on which the Societies differ with the political views of their governments. They may be embarrassed to speak in such a Conference, and many Societies need to be able to think and work according to our basic principles in some independence from their governments. At the same time I feel that all the humanitarian issues could be discussed in the Council of Delegates. The resolutions could be raised by our representatives, the ICRC and the Secretariat of our International Federation at a diplomatic Conference where the governments could decide on any new protocols. They can quarrel, they can do what they like, but in the end they will agree and they will add to the Geneva Conventions. This would be an ideal way for the future of the Movement, and I am in favour of the group which should consider the structure of this Movement for the future.

Ambassador John PESMAZOGLOU (Hellenic Red Cross)

Ups and downs will always occur in the changing international climate, and we need not panic when confronted with these situations. Of course our Movement cannot isolate itself from international events. It is too soon to evaluate the impact of the present situation on our Movement. Several speakers have paid tribute to the tremendous efforts of all those involved in this situation, mainly the Standing Commission, and we would like to thank them for their assiduity. We must not be discouraged by these events, but ready to face a possible repetition -much though we hope to avoid it- in the future. And should this occasion be repeated it will have to be faced with the same courage. I would like to endorse Mr. Sandoz's comments in this respect. We must also adapt our procedures to be able to cope with such occurrences. A resolution will be submitted which the Hellenic Red Cross considers as a step towards establishing a means and a climate appropriate for studying the problems that arise from time to time. We shall examine this question under item 10.2.

Dr. A.A. AL-AWADI (Kuwait Red Crescent)

First of all, congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, on your election. It is another compromise in this system of our Conferences. Usually the Council of Delegates is headed by the President of the ICRC, but it is a compromise because we, as a humanitarian Movement, always have so much room for compromises. I would like to really congratulate you on this occasion. Let us hope that we can achieve some concrete and constructive proposals after what has happened. We all know that your Society and your country have sustained a great loss. You have all our sympathy for that, and we know that it happens all the time to this Movement when we talk about politics and the involvement of politics in our Movement. A very important point is raised: can we under any circumstances be free from politicians? I doubt it myself. Politics influence our lives whether we like it or not. I am sorry that we are not able to have our Palestinian friends with us today or at the Conference. They deserve their rights: they have suffered so much and this situation adds to their suffering and their whole plight, their attempts to gain independence and to get their own land back. This challenge must be addressed in a very blunt way, since the Movement is confronted with blunt issues. We need a new methodology that will be more efficient than what we now have. The task is too big for a small working group, it should have the widest possible cooperation and collaboration, since the issues are far from easy to settle. Maybe, as our friend from Egypt said, we could have had more discussion, have reached some kind of compromise, even if the Conference was convened. The Standing Commission had no choice but to postpone it after the tragedy of the previous Conference. But we should have some kind of special meeting, no matter what we call it. The issue must be discussed and we must decide where we are going in future. It is possible that our Movement is becoming secondary to political movements, having been to the world a symbol of peace and cooperation for humanitarian protection. Let us look at other options: I hope that we will meet again in this same country,

Hungary, in Budapest. This is a milestone in our Movement. Maybe we could meet specifically to work out a declaration, to be called the Budapest Declaration, whereby we can put things together again. It is time to think soberly about these things. As the Secretary General of the Federation said: it is time for those who live near the river to learn how to swim with the crocodiles.

Dr. Byron HOVE (Zimbabwe Red Cross)

I am National Chairman of the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society. I speak in that capacity and no other. There is here a school of thought indicating very strong concern that we sit together with governments when we discuss purely Red Cross matters; and there is a view that we might have to review our structures so that we can be more effective. I would like to sound a word of caution, since at least one of the criteria for our existence is that we are recognized by those governments who have signed the Geneva Conventions. The International Committee of the Red Cross itself, its very existence, is based on acceptance by the international community, which includes the governments. There are mandates to be fulfilled. We can sit here, away from governments, and discuss delicate matters. Some delegates may be embarrassed to have their government here; but at the end of the day, whatever and however we discuss our work, it has to be carried out in territory under the control of governments. In Europe, at least, public opinion is overwhelmingly in favour of the existence of Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies and their operations and understands fully the mandate of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. I am afraid I cannot say the same for the Third World countries. So whatever frustrating moments we may face, this is really the world. As one speaker has reminded us, we have had many Conferences; and those one or two where people felt frustration are by far in the minority. Do not, therefore, hasten to take a decision on policy based on one or two experiences to which you might have been exposed.

Perhaps there is a need for a change of attitudes. Perhaps we should re-examine structures, and re-designed structures might help to induce a change of attitudes in the direction we want, but in the end we are in the real world, we must make decisions in the real world, and that real world is largely controlled by governments. If there is a typhoon or an outbreak of war somewhere, President Sommaruga cannot send his men without the consent of governments. That is the real world. The emphasis is on change of attitudes, and in order to get governments to change their attitudes, we have to present ourselves to them. The International Conferences are the occasions where they are in contact with us collectively, speaking the same language, interpreting the Fundamental Principles together in a way that unites us all. Governments may not always be convinced, and there is a need for patience, a need to sit down and talk. So I urge caution, even though there may be references to political matters. What matters is our discipline in accepting a ruling. While we may be suffering some trauma as a result of what has happened, it is an isolated instance, a frustrating moment. We must not rush whatever we want to do, we must not put ourselves in a position which

isolates us from the governments, especially from those of the Third World countries. We need more time in order to educate our own governments on the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and we need forums at which they can experience these Principles.

Mr. Carl-Ivar SKARSTEDT (Swedish Red Cross)

Since many speakers have eloquently analyzed the situation and commented on the decision of the Standing Commission, I will not repeat their arguments. To follow up the thinking of Dr. Hove, I will touch on another problem, not on solutions. The governments and all of us in the Movement have spent time and much work on preparing a thorough discussion about the important topics of humanitarian law which were to have been dealt with, especially in Commission I, by the XXVI Conference. All these governments, or most of them, expect that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement will act to take up these topics again, not necessarily in a Conference, but in other ways. We support the idea of a study group; but we think that it is necessary to do more than merely to refer problems to a study group, even if the group is able to work rapidly. Let us act, let us not lose time and tempo, in the words of Mr. Stenbäck, let us try to swim at least with most of the crocodiles, in different waters, and let's do it next year. The staff of the ICRC and of the Federation are fully capable of organizing such swimming parties, perhaps in cooperation with organizations as the San Remo Institute on humanitarian law.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

There are no more speakers on my list. If there are no delegations still wishing to speak on item 10.1, then the debate on the item is closed. Before closing the morning session, a few words. It was your decision that this item on the agenda should be an open discussion on the decision of the Standing Commission to postpone the XXVI International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. I do not believe that the intention was to come to conclusions. Some questions as to how we should look at the future and in which forum we should organize our analysis will come up under the next item on the agenda. We shall leave it at that. I would like from the chair to thank you very much for the thorough analyses which you are giving to this recent occurrence. It has been made very clear in your statements that there are at least two elements requiring great attention. One is the continued ability of our Movement to conduct our operations and to perform our work in total and unfailing conformity with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. The second is to examine how to formulate our necessary dialogue with the governments. Thank you for the time and thought which you have given to this item on the agenda, which is now completed.

Third session

Friday, 29 November 1991

2 p.m.

10.2 Report on the Yverdon meeting

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

We now turn to item 10.2 on our agenda, the report on the Yverdon meeting. Mr. Pierre Keller, member of the International Committee of the Red Cross, will present the report.

Mr. Pierre KELLER (ICRC)

On 30 August and 1 September this year, a meeting took place in Yverdon-les-Bains, Switzerland. It brought together the President, Vice-President and Secretary General of the League, and representatives of National Societies that are members of the League Executive Council, on the one hand, and the President, Vice-Presidents and members of the Assembly and Executive Board of the International Committee of the Red Cross, on the other. As chairman of the final plenary session of that meeting, I have been asked to report to the Council of Delegates on the proceedings of this informal gathering which, as far as I know, is the first of its kind ever held within our Movement. The idea for it had been put forward by 31 National Societies in October 1990, in the hope that it would help to dispel the misunderstandings and tensions that arise from time to time within our Movement. After a series of consultations that included the governing bodies of the Federation, agreement was reached on the formula described above. A number of Federation and ICRC representatives were present as experts. All in all, some 60 people attended the meeting, which had the following general theme: given the challenges that lie ahead, what can be done to strengthen mutual confidence between the Movement's components and to further the work and enhance the image of the Red Cross and Red Crescent? After a first plenary session devoted to the organization of the proceedings, the meeting split into three working groups, all of which considered the same general theme, with special reference to the following matters:

1. Priority for the humanitarian work of the National Societies, the ICRC and the Federation.
2. Cooperation between the National Societies and the ICRC in international operations.

3. Coordination between the Federation and the ICRC.
4. Coordination versus bilateral operations in the event of natural disaster or armed conflict.
5. Development of the National Societies and the respective roles of the Movement's components.
6. Coordinating the work of the Movement's components with the United Nations and other international organizations.
7. Promoting the identity and enhancing the image of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Having completed its work, each group presented its report in plenary. Without going into details of the results of their discussions, a number of common concerns clearly emerged. Among these were the major challenges facing the Movement as a whole in the future, particularly in view of the magnitude of the needs for assistance and protection, the pressing nature of health and development problems and the growing competition in the humanitarian field from numerous official and private aid organizations. The complexity of the Movement itself was also frequently mentioned as sometimes giving rise to tensions among its components, notably in relation to the distribution of tasks. This in turn may have an adverse effect on the way the Movement is perceived from the outside.

All the groups expressed the wish that the members of the Red Cross/Red Crescent family should get to know one another better and they emphasized the need to improve communications within the Movement so as to present a more coherent image to the mass media and the public. The participants generally agreed that there was no need at this stage to review the respective mandates of the Movement's components as set out in the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and provided for in the Geneva Conventions, but that efforts should be made to improve working relationships and promote better coordination within the Movement. They even proposed a new study of the Movement similar to the Tansley study of the early 70s -that idea will be taken up at a later stage. Finally, the participants showed the clear intention of enhancing the role of the Council of Delegates, an invaluable forum for dialogue within the Movement. The Yverdon meeting did not produce any conclusions or a formal report, indeed had no mandate to this effect. It was, however, decided that the Council of Delegates would be informed of the discussions, which is what I have the pleasure of doing today. Those attending the Yverdon meeting also agreed to hold another meeting with the same composition, when the Federation's Executive Council meets at the beginning of 1992. Preparations for the second meeting will be made by the three people who chaired the working groups in Yverdon: Mr. Darrell Jones of the Canadian Red Cross, Mr. Lloyd During of the Sierra Leone Red Cross, and Prof. Jacques Forster of the ICRC, in cooperation with Mr. Pär Stenbäck and Mr. Yves Sandoz.

The Yverdon meeting took place in an excellent atmosphere of openness and willingness to listen, and all participants undertook to work in the same spirit in the service of the Movement. This "spirit of Yverdon", as it has been called, should also prevail at our next meeting. I propose that the Council of Delegates take note of the present report and give those who attended the Yverdon meeting a mandate to continue their discussions. This could lead to the constitution of a study group whose composition and mandate remain to be defined, but which would include representatives of the Federation, a number of National Societies and the ICRC, and which would be responsible for pursuing this work. That group would then report in due course on the result of its deliberations and make any recommendations it may consider appropriate.

Mr. Rudolf JÄCKLI (ICRC)

I wish to present resolution CD/10.2/Res.1. This is sponsored by the ICRC: please add this to the document for clarification. As you heard, the two large groups that met last autumn -the Executive Council and the Secretary General of what soon will be called the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the Assembly of the ICRC and its Executive Board- came together mainly in an endeavour to enhance relations between the two bodies, which had not always been in harmony in recent years. Those attending realized from the outset that whether you looked at the Movement or at the environment within which the Movement works, it was impossible merely to talk about harmonizing the relationship. Discussion would have to go further. And with general consent the discussion became very far ranging. That was normal, to say something about the problems and to arrange to meet again to tackle them. (This is, incidentally, what most of you this morning, after analyzing the postponement of the XXVI International Conference, also expressed in a very rich variety of opinions and perceptions.)

Now I refer to a resolution which will be presented to you separately, CD/10.2/Res.2, and comment that the group presenting it deserves our support and our applause for the ideas it contains. However, the first group which met was the group of the Federation's Executive Council and the ICRC and, as Mr. Keller indicated, they are in action, and have undertaken to report back to the next Council of Delegates after one or more such meetings. The Yverdon meeting was highly significant. Two statutory bodies met together in an *ad hoc* manner, so the meeting was not a statutory meeting. Two statutory bodies that knew each other for a long time finally had the good idea to get together, to sit down together for several days. I do not wish to be presumptuous, but I think that what is mentioned on, for instance, page 2, points 1 and 2, in the second resolution will probably be approved by many, maybe by most of you. There have been references to a study group, and that is why, rather unusually, the ICRC resolution refers to the other resolution. The time was too short to pursue discussions and negotiations far enough to present just one document, which would have been preferable to all of us. We now have two documents, and, in an unorthodox way, one refers to the other. A quick parenthesis: the mandate of the study group is very wide. There are

problems and issues which can be dealt with by the current structures. To mention one: we spend time and effort and imagination discussing alternatives to an International Conference. Why not? It is time to start talking, as Pär Stenbäck said, to "make haste slowly". Yet, we should not lose sight of the normal, classic International Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference. For that we do not need this body, for that we have the Standing Commission. I mention this for clarification, so that there is no mistake: the study group is not going to replace anything. The "Yverdon body", that is, the Federation's Executive Council and the ICRC Assembly, forms a study group; it meets to serve the Movement. So that if you accept the resolution proposed by the ICRC, the second study group would become, as it were, auxiliary. I respectfully suggested to the chair to refer the matter back to both groups, with a request that they submit a single proposal. The Assembly expects one proposal, not two proposals which overlap to a large extent, though conflicting here and there. Where is the difference between the two proposals? I ask merely for the purpose of clarification. The difference is between an isolated small study group and a very large group comprising the two statutory bodies, which might be father and mother of the study group. In that way there would be cooperation and coordination between the Federation and the ICRC and such a study group. It is not a question of control, it is a matter of coordination and cooperation, of support in such things as secretarial services and finances, which would be decided by consensus among the participants of the proposed study group, the Federation and the ICRC, as may be required.

In short, I urge you to give preference to the solution proposed in the ICRC resolution, which refers to the work accomplished in Yverdon, takes note, expresses thanks and looks forward to what may be achieved in future, entrusting the formation of such a study group of specialists to the Executive Council of the International Federation and the ICRC.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

In view of the references to the second draft resolution -and the proposals are very similar- I would suggest that, before deciding about the exact debating procedure, we hear an introduction to the second document by Mr. Pedersen, of the Danish Red Cross.

Mr. E. PEDERSEN (Danish Red Cross)

Having listened carefully to the report of Mr. Keller on the Yverdon meeting, on which I would like to congratulate him, I wish to refer to the discussion on the previous agenda item and the announcement of the draft resolutions. We need to take measures immediately to adjust our Movement to a rapidly changing world. This may mean that we would be better able to withstand pressures from the outside, to which we have proved very vulnerable, as in this case of postponement of the International Conference.

The world is changing very fast these days: there are the developments in Eastern and Central Europe and in the Soviet Union. A peace process has finally started in the Middle East, while the international community is still licking its wounds from the Gulf War; and in many countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, too numerous to mention, armed conflicts which started decades ago are still continuing.

All these facts have led governments to reassess the situation. Not just the UN bodies and other, intergovernmental organizations, for example, the European Community and the Nordic Council, but also various non-governmental organizations are debating how to adjust to the new situation, especially the experiences drawn from the Gulf War, about how disaster relief operations should be conducted and coordinated. For example, several governments are studying how they might use military forces in relief operations. The Nordic Council is studying the possibility of establishing a Nordic disaster relief unit. Within the European Community, the Commission has decided to establish a disaster relief department which might have its own operational units within a few years. At the United Nations, discussions are in progress on strengthening the UN's disaster relief capacity.

Furthermore, the UN is increasingly concerned with improving the humanitarian law system. On the basis of these facts, aware of the problems relating to the application of humanitarian laws in recent armed conflicts, aware of the growing number of participants in the field of international humanitarian assistance and the problems associated with the coordination of disaster relief operations, numerous National Societies representing all geographic groupings have decided to present to you for adoption the draft resolution contained in document CD/10.2/Res.2, concerning the establishment of a study group on the future of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. This study group should be established as a subsidiary body of this Council, in accordance with Article 14, paragraph 7, of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. This means that the study group would report directly to the Council of Delegates. Its role would be to recommend to the Council of Delegates a strategy for the Movement in response to emergent trends and involving humanitarian issues. The group's responsibilities would be to review, study and discuss current and future trends in the humanitarian field, with a view to achieving common processing on matters of concern to all components of the Movement. Furthermore, the group would scrutinize the governing and operating structures of the Movement and suggest appropriate courses of action enabling the Movement to carry out its humanitarian mandate with the utmost effectiveness and cohesion. I remind the Council that the Tansley report already contains a number of suggestions along these lines.

The composition of the study group would be five members representing National Societies, one member representing the Federation and one member representing the International Committee of the Red Cross. The seven members would be elected in a personal capacity by the President of the Federation and the President of the ICRC. The sponsors of this draft resolution considered absolutely necessary that the study group, if established, should be supported by a secretariat, such as,

for example, the Henry Dunant Institute. The group should also be able to seek advice and expertise within and outside the Movement before formulating its recommendations to the next Council of Delegates. However, the next Council of Delegates does not take place until two years from now; and, as urgent action is needed, I would like to amend the text of the draft by adding at the end of the resolution the following sentence: "Furthermore, the study group shall report to the Federation's Executive Council and the ICRC Assembly every six months, in order for these two bodies within the Yverdon process to take appropriate action". This amendment, we believe, takes into account the viewpoint expressed by Mr. Jäckli of the ICRC, that any action taken should be coordinated, in particular between the General Assembly of the ICRC and the Federation Executive Council.

Finally, I would like to underline that in the views of the sponsors of this draft resolution, such a study group will be complementary to and not in competition with the Yverdon process, a process which we all find useful and necessary. But I must remind you that there is a fundamental difference between the study group suggested in draft resolution CD/10.2/Res.1, introduced by the ICRC, and the study group suggested in the draft resolution which I am presenting. In the ICRC resolution, the study group would be a subsidiary body to the informal non-statutory Yverdon meeting, whereas the study group suggested in our resolution would be subsidiary to this very important statutory body, the Council of Delegates. However, with the amendment to this draft resolution I think we are very close to incorporating the ideas behind the ICRC draft resolution. I submit this draft resolution for approval, hopefully by consensus, and I most respectfully suggest to the ICRC that it withdraw its draft resolution, in view of the amendment to our draft resolution.

Unfortunately we were not able to contact all delegations before drafting and tabling this resolution. It is at present sponsored by some sixty delegations, namely: Jamaica, Egypt, the Netherlands, Sudan, the Soviet Union, the Philippines, Luxembourg, Nepal, Norway, Venezuela, Lebanon, Colombia, Honduras, Canada, Ecuador, Iceland, Ireland, Denmark, Spain, United States, Great Britain, Belgium, Germany, Cuba, France, Australia, Austria, Portugal, Malaysia, Finland, Latvia, Sweden, Lithuania, Hungary, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Greece, Switzerland, Italy, Poland, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Japan, Mozambique, Kenya, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Turkey, Zimbabwe, Czechoslovakia and Republic of Korea. Should other delegations wish to become co-sponsors of this important resolution, they are heartily welcome.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

From the introductions to the two drafts it appears that there are really many common points. So unless the meeting decides otherwise, I suggest that we open the debate on the essence of both these drafts, also with the intention, which is customary at Council of Delegates meetings, to try to have a consensus. So I open the debate.

Mrs. E. DOLE (American Red Cross)

The American Red Cross endorses the resolution presented by a number of National Societies including ours, CD/10.2/Res.2, on the creation of a study group regarding the future of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, a study group which would advise and recommend to the Council of Delegates a strategy for the Movement in response to emerging trends and evolving humanitarian issues. Our Fundamental Principles and ideals are as relevant today as when our founder Henry Dunant conceived this great Movement more than a hundred and twenty-five years ago. Adherence to these important principles was poignantly demonstrated by the Standing Commission's decision earlier this week to indefinitely postpone our International Conference. As we move forward now, if we are to continue to be a source of services to those whose only means of survival may be the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, then our Movement must adapt the translation of those principles to a changing world. We must urgently seek solutions both to the political problems which resulted in the postponement of our International Conference and to the problems within our Movement which prevent the unity we so desperately need. Because of the importance of this effort, we believe that the governing body of this Movement, the Council of Delegates, should recommend how we should face that future together as one strong, responsive and responsible Movement. The diversity within our Movement is one of our greatest assets, but it also offers one of our greatest challenges. Our 150 National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC are each strong individually. But our strength is enhanced when we are united into one humanitarian force unique in the world; and our effectiveness is weakened, our credibility undermined, when there is discord in our Movement, for our public sees us as one organization. We should build on that perception rather than diffuse our energies with multiple identities, which may not serve the overall progress of our Movement. A few moments ago, we heard Mr. Keller, recounting the experience that has now been labelled the "spirit of Yverdon", a spirit of cooperation and renewal. I congratulate the ICRC and the International Federation for their preliminary efforts in this regard. However, we run the frightening risk that the Yverdon spirit may become elusive, that it may even disappear and thus rapidly harm each of us, National Societies, the International Federation, the ICRC and, most importantly, the victims we seek to serve. In a world beset by tension, natural calamities, increasing human needs and shrinking resources, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must be even more cohesive in order to remain at the forefront of humanitarian service. This study group would be an effective means of making real the solidarity we proclaim, solidarity for the benefit of people's needs. Since the distinction between armed conflict and peace in the current world is blurred, the assumption of institutional responsibility within the Movement for humanitarian relief is blurred, and eliminating such confusion requires consolidated efforts by all three elements of the Movement. To give one specific example: 16 January 1991, the ICRC and the International Federation signed a Memorandum of Understanding by which integrated programmes were envisaged for relief activities arising from the Gulf conflict. A joint appeal for funds to support this programme was issued, and our Societies and our donors welcomed that appeal. However, by 28 February, the ICRC and the International Federation had different perceptions of what were

conflict-related needs and what were peace-related needs. The joint programme was dissolved and separate appeals were issued. Donors noted potential overlapping and competing programmes in these appeals, thus weakening our Movement's ability to capture the financial resources necessary to provide maximum relief to victims. Questions raised by these donors caused the ICRC and the International Federation to issue a joint statement in April in which the respective responsibilities of the two bodies were defined. The public's main concern is that we provide quick and effective relief to the victims, many viewing us as perhaps the only organization capable of doing that. The effort and energy we spent explaining this issue could have been far better used to serve the needs of victims. Something similar happened in Ethiopia a couple of years ago. In both instances, donors were confused by the respective responsibilities for humanitarian assistance of the ICRC, the International Federation and the National Societies. Our responsibility to future generations is to strengthen our Movement. Let us be impelled by the vision of our founder, Henry Dunant, who, upon seeing the suffering in Solferino, faced the challenge with no other goal in mind than to help the victims. Let us empower this study group to look at the future with the same optimism and the same practical focus of Henry Dunant when he founded the Red Cross. I believe that the Movement is up to the task, that we can unite the Yverdon spirit with the Dunant spirit as we face this challenge. I urge the Council of Delegates to support the formation of the study group on the future of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Mrs. Victoria GRIGORE (Romanian Red Cross)

I speak on behalf of the President of the Romanian Red Cross, Mr. Nicolae Nicoara. I also share with you the wish with which we came here to Budapest, the wish which we think is shared by all fellow delegates, to contribute to the strengthening of cooperation between the components of the Movement. The decision of the Standing Commission to postpone the International Conference has been taken as a wise and courageous decision to maintain the unity of the Movement. We believe, as do other delegates, that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is more than ever in great need of unity and that its strength lies primarily in this unity. Here in Budapest we have remained united. But can anyone guarantee that future developments will find the Movement as united? What has happened here should make us think long and hard. The Romanian Red Cross would like to support and endorse draft resolution CD/10.2/Res.2, and we are very sorry we did not know the sponsors of this resolution, as we would have liked to be co-sponsors. As a matter of fact, during the Balkan Conference in September this year, our Society put forward to the delegates of the Balkan Societies the idea of setting up a commission to analyze the present state and the future prospects of the Movement. We had several reasons for that, since after December 1989 we were confronted with many changes in our Societies and all over Europe. We may add that such a working group should make a fresh appraisal of the world of the Red Cross today, although the Tansley Report still contains some valid conclusions. Allow me to mention just two reasons for such a review. One is that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is no longer able to count two hundred and fifty

million members, as we used to like to believe in the past. The world now is fundamentally different from that which existed fifteen years ago, when the Tansley Report was drawn up and adopted during the International Conference of the Red Cross in Bucharest. We believe that the first condition for a National Society to be credible, useful and efficient is to be well anchored in the realities of the world in which it lives and acts. This is why we wish to stress once again that we are in favour of this resolution and that we consider it necessary to establish a working group of more than five members. We should analyze the Movement in all its aspects, including relationships with governments and with other non-governmental organizations. We sincerely hope that the Council of Delegates will decide in favour. If surgery is required in our Movement, then now is the right moment.

Dr. M.E. VILLARROEL LANDER (President of the International Federation)

I would simply like to say that I think it absolutely necessary that our Movement should adjust to the dynamic development of the world today. It is impossible for us to reject creating a group to study the future of our Movement. At a time when we need integrity and unity, we need to analyze the future life of our Movement. I must absolutely share my opinion with you: we should unanimously support this resolution.

H.R.H. Princess Margriet (Netherlands Red Cross)

As co-sponsor of this resolution, we support it, with the amendment that the Danish Red Cross has just made. I would like to explain our motives. We are all only too well aware of the dramatic situation in many parts of the world, with armed conflicts and other disasters continuing to produce victims in ever-increasing numbers and of all kinds, whether wounded, prisoners or refugees, men, women and children alike.

In his opening address to this session of the Council of Delegates, the President of the Standing Commission eloquently described these facts, and other speakers after him and the film we saw yesterday sharpened our awareness of them. To provide protection and assistance to the victims of disasters, whether man-made or otherwise, has from the outset been the task and indeed the *raison d'être* of the Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and for a long time it had a monopoly in this regard. At any rate it had and continues to have the most widespread network in this field. In spite of this, it has to face increasing competition from other organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, deploying activities in the same area, at times in ways that succeed in attracting a good deal of public attention. This may be healthy, as Baron Kraijenhoff indicated yesterday, but it will only be so if the challenge is taken up. It is an important effect that nowadays our Movement often is neither the first nor the most

conspicuous among those bringing humanitarian assistance to those in need; and when we are visible, the various faces we show may in themselves be a cause of confusion among the public.

In these circumstances the Netherlands Red Cross shares the conviction that it is urgent that the Movement take a fresh look at itself. The "Yverdon process", no matter how welcome, is not sufficient in this respect. Indeed, the governing and operating structures of the Movement need to be studied in depth and where necessary adapted to the requirements of the rapidly changing world, all this, as the draft resolution specifies, in full accordance with our Fundamental Principles established by the International Conference in 1965. We also have to be careful not to do irreparable damage to what may be the most outstanding feature of our Movement: its global character through its 150 or so National Societies, and the unique internationally recognized functions and responsibilities of that particularly precious component part of the Movement which is the International Committee of the Red Cross. More generally in developing our strategy and policies for the next decade and beyond, we must take care to retain and reinforce those elements that guarantee our efficacy and our capacity to achieve our mission. I was told by several persons who are behind the initiative to enhance the role of the United Nations in providing humanitarian assistance that they not only have a great deal of sympathy for our Movement but positively recognize the immense value of our worldwide network. However, as other organizations and agencies are doing, we certainly should embark on the process of self-appraisal that the draft resolution asks us to undertake; and we may conceivably find that, here or there, changes to the structures and procedures of the Movement are unavoidable. In that event, we should not shy away from measures that we might now regard as unacceptable, radical innovations -after all, a surgeon may occasionally have to cut deep to save the patient. One final point concerns the composition of the study group which the resolution asks should be established. When it comes to nominating members, there is a natural tendency to think first of those holding high office in National Societies, and probably some members will have to belong to this category. But precisely in view of the task of the study group, we strongly recommend the inclusion of at least some persons of a different status and a younger generation. This might significantly contribute to the realization of our goal, which is to take a fresh look at the Movement.

Dr. Dawit ZAWDE (Ethiopia Red Cross)

We in the Ethiopian Red Cross are indeed pleased that the time has come for the Movement to consider a suggestion that we put forward before our last General Assembly, namely, the establishment of such a task force, our working group, to look into the future of our Movement. Often a subject of heated conversations, this issue has been in the minds of a number of our friends in the Movement, who continue to be seriously concerned that we may miss the train for the next century. We belong to a cherished but aging Movement. We should not appear to be living only on past glories, shackled to archaic institutions, lacking in flexibility, and presenting a somewhat confusing image to the public. We now have not one

but two draft resolutions attempting to address this issue, not aggressively enough to my mind, and, again, addressed to us from above, to look into certain aspects only, not calling for a thorough overhaul. The process should start with each one of us, National Societies, big and small, exercising self-scrutiny and self-assessment. A start has to be made, and my Society supports these moves fully. There are elements in each of the resolutions which we could merge, as suggested, to give us a suitable start. This has already been attempted in the amendment to the second draft resolution. One draft resolution proposes that the study group report to the Council of Delegates, which only meets once in two years; this would entail considerable delay. The other draft resolution suggests that a similar but specialized study group report to a non-statutory, informal grouping. I do not know whether the Yverdon type of non-statutory, informal gathering is to continue. I see no need to call for extraordinary sessions of this Council, just for this purpose, however important it may be, before we reach an appropriate stage in our thinking. I would like to bring these two draft resolutions together, to merge the approaches. If there is sincerity in all the attempts we all have been subjected to these few days, I think it should be an easy exercise. I also hope that our venerable Geneva institutions, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Federation, will take up these proposals, to be fully and actively engaged and fully responsible for this activity. Could we look into the possibility of utilizing the Henry Dunant Institute which, given appropriate support, is the best suited of our institutions to address such issues?

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

So far, speeches have been very much on the same lines, supporting the idea of a study group. One concrete proposal came from Mr. Pedersen, when he introduced a modification of his original draft. In order to facilitate continuation of our discussion, may I ask whether Mr. Jäckli would agree with such a modified text.

Mr. R. JÄCKLI (ICRC)

I have listened carefully to the debate and, as far as I am concerned although I cannot consult my colleagues in the ICRC delegation, I think there is no question of withdrawing the first draft resolution. All that can be done is to amend this resolution where it refers to the study group, in the penultimate paragraph. Then, as discussion proceeds, the Chairman will probably call for a consensus on the second draft resolution. I would still like the Yverdon group to be mentioned in either resolution and, in the last paragraph, a requirement that it report back to this august assembly. As far as the study group goes, I have always said that I wholeheartedly support it; there is only that matter of how to anchor it, either directly to this assembly or to the other two bodies which I mentioned -not a major difference.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Then my proposal would be to ask a drafting group to produce a common text. There is obviously a lot of support for the study, and in that way we may gain some time, unless there are differing views which some delegations might like to express.

Mr. C. SOMMARUGA (President of the ICRC)

I would not wish to complicate your discussion. The decision you are about to take, to try to find a text which would embody the proposal in resolution two with a small modification, is a good one. However, there is a personal matter for me in the draft resolution presented by Mr. Pedersen: this suggests that the President of the ICRC should select the representatives of National Societies. I am not prepared to do this, I would like to keep my impartiality. It is not the role of the President of the ICRC to select members of National Societies to participate in such a group. I will most probably have enough difficulty selecting the persons to represent the ICRC in the group!

Major A. HUG (Bangladesh Red Crescent)

My delegation solidly supports the present move to a study group to look into our affairs and to devise an appropriate strategy for ourselves, for our future cause and activities. Certainly we cannot afford to have obstacles in the way of our work. We have been in existence a long time and the world around us has changed substantially. Situations have also changed, and many developments have taken place across the globe. It is time for us to wake up to reality and try to relocate ourselves with respect to our activities and operations. This study group is a timely proposal and should come into operation immediately. Our name may be mentioned along with those who sponsored this resolution.

However, I find that a long period has been allowed for the working group to finalize its work and make recommendations: two years is a long time. The study group should be requested, if possible, to submit its recommendations earlier to the President of the ICRC, who then could distribute them to the member countries, so that by the time the next meeting of the Council of Delegates took place, the members could come fully prepared with their views on the recommendations made by the group. I am not quite clear on the idea of a separate secretariat for the group: would it involve the recruitment of separate personnel in the Federation headquarters, or the regrouping of existing manpower? This point should be made clear.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I propose that we form a drafting group which, if you agree, would consist of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Danish Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Netherlands Red Cross, the Ethiopian Red Cross, the Romanian Red Cross and the American Red Cross. I would ask them to produce a proposal which would enjoy the consensus of all. If you agree, we could now suspend discussion on this item. I have duly noted all the other speakers. Now, please comment only on my proposal, since, if it is not accepted, we will continue the debate. Does anybody oppose the proposal I have just made?

Mr. E. PEDERSEN (Danish Red Cross)

On a point of order: I was very pleased to hear the President of the ICRC, Mr. Sommaruga, express support for the amendment to resolution two. It appears that the only difference between the ICRC and this huge group of National Societies supporting draft resolution two is the fact that the President of the ICRC does not wish to select National Society members. It could easily be arranged, for example, that the President of the Federation should select these five National Society members. Could I have a comment from the President of the ICRC on this question, before we go to a drafting list?

Mr. C. SOMMARUGA (President of the ICRC)

As there is the decision to have a drafting group, and the ICRC will be represented there, I think matters of this kind will be discussed there.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Then I would suggest that we form the drafting group.

Dr. A.A. EL SHERIF (Libyan Red Crescent)

The draft resolution presented by Mr. Pedersen addresses the question of the future of the Movement and we very much endorse it. But, before the group works on the draft, I would like to be sure of the financing required by this long and extensive study. I think it is customary for the ICRC and the Federation to cover the expenses of the Council of Delegates. If so, it would be better if we could reflect this in the draft resolution, and perhaps invite National Societies to donate voluntarily to secure the funds required for this considerable study.

Dr. B. HOVE (Zimbabwe Red Cross)

As I understand it, the only objection raised by the ICRC to this draft resolution is as explained by the President of the ICRC. If that is so, are you saying that you are forming a working group merely to resolve a technicality? We want progress.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I move the following: that we adopt draft resolution two, as modified, with the reservation that the final drafting, if it is of a technical nature, be done by the group which I mentioned. Is this acceptable?

Applause

10.3 Report of the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace on its activities since the 1989 Council of Delegates and proposals for the future

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

We move to item 10.3 on the agenda. I ask Mr. Alan McLean, Acting Chairman of the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace, to introduce the subject.

Mr. Alan McLEAN (Australian Red Cross)

The name of President Alexandre Hay has been synonymous with the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace. The Commission mourns his loss, and our Movement is poorer for his death last August. As Australian Acting Chairman of the Commission, I have been asked to report to this Council. When the Council met in Geneva in October 1989, certain tasks were set. I will comment on these shortly. The Council also asked us to submit proposals regarding the Commission's future, its mandate, duration and composition.

For the benefit of newcomers, let me recall that the Commission was created in 1977. In the period 1978 to 1981, the Commission worked from the Belgrade programme of action of the Red Cross as a factor of peace. Between 1981 and 1983, the Commission considered the contribution of youth to peace and the Red Cross/Red Crescent contribution to disarmament, which the Movement's three Presidents presented to the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament in 1982. From 1985 to 1987, and indeed subsequently, we have examined the

possibility of an annual Peace Day. No consensus, as required by our working method, was reached within the Commission. The relationship between peace and disarmament, and what they may do for development, has formed part of other discussions. Indeed, since development is a prerequisite for peace, the studies and the publications of the Henry Dunant Institute on development deserve wide attention, support and use. The prize for peace and humanity was proposed by our Commission and accepted by the Council of Delegates. The Standing Commission awarded it to the Lebanese Red Cross in 1989. The Commission promoted the World Campaign for the protection of victims of war. At our Commission meeting, on 23 November 1991, we warmly commended the Campaign's Steering Committee and the International Promotion Bureau for what we agreed was an innovative, progressive campaign to raise public awareness. The Council will hear more on this subject from Mrs. Christina Magnuson, of Sweden.

You will recall that the 1989 Council adopted the Commission's Study on the Movement's contribution to respect for human rights. Please do not allow this study to gather dust. It notes that the Movement's activities are useful and necessary in promoting human rights, particularly in health care, protection of the family and of children, and the safety of detained persons. In the matter of refugees, the Commission sees a need to tackle the causes of population displacement, in particular through development, cooperation, and respect for human rights. As requested, we have endeavoured to reactivate the plan of action against racism and racial discrimination, under the guidance of Dr. Dawit Zawde of Ethiopia. Where racial tensions divide a country's population, only a constant process of information and education is able to hold them in check. A greater effort should thus be made by the entire Movement to promote our Fundamental Principles, in accordance with the specific resolution on this subject by the Council in 1989. It is a statement of the obvious, but worldwide respect for our Principles would consign most problems to the history books, and our Commission could be dissolved. The Commission also takes the view that improvement in the effectiveness of all our actions will help to communicate and disseminate the thrust of our work towards peace. Actions may speak louder than words, but there is no harm in using words, as we did during the World Campaign for the protection of victims of war.

We report on a piece of unfinished business: we have had only two preliminary discussions on a possible role for the Movement with respect to minorities. If the mandate is revised, this would become a priority. We also briefly discussed the right to humanitarian assistance. This topic could be examined later in the present session of the Council of Delegates.

Any Movement needs both a practical, active and effective component and a component which gives inspiration and nurtures our philosophical basis. Dunant was himself both practical and a philosopher. The Commission should continue to function as a forum for frank debate on questions arising for the Movement, given the speed of change around the world, and an amendment is proposed in an attempt to keep pace with these changes. Objective and detailed study will be needed on various issues for the report from our Council to National Societies, the

International Federation and the ICRC. As given in the draft resolution which you have before you, the tasks would be the following:

- a. To follow up on the recommendations of the Council of Delegates and carry out preparatory work for the Council in the following specific areas:
 - dissemination and promotion of respect for international humanitarian law and the principles and ideals of the Movement;
 - the Movement's role in promoting respect for human rights and the rights of refugees and minorities and in situations not covered by international humanitarian law;
 - humanitarian mobilization for the respect of the fundamental rights of the individual, particularly the prohibition of torture, discrimination, summary executions and hostage-taking, and for the respect of the specific rights of women and children;
 - specific Red Cross action to foster greater understanding between different cultures, ethnic, social and cultural groups.
- b. Our second task:

To fulfil any other task assigned to us by the Council of Delegates which falls within the Commission's mandate. The Commission may submit proposals to the Council of Delegates on studies to be undertaken.

The draft resolution also addresses matters that are always of interest to everyone: membership and title. We were directed by the Council to propose our future membership, a difficult task as many National Societies -not only those within the Commission as it now stands, but also others- are interested. The Commission, having regard to the principle of fair geographical representation and the need for a mixture of experienced and new members (and having regard only to those factors -no other facts were considered) believes that the following membership would be appropriate. As permanent members: the ICRC, the International Federation, the Henry Dunant Institute and 14 National Societies (the Brazilian Red Cross, the Colombian Red Cross, the Ethiopian Red Cross, the French Red Cross, the Hungarian Red Cross, the Jordan National Red Crescent, the Republic of Korea Red Cross, the Malaysian Red Crescent, the Mauritanian Red Crescent, the Nigerian Red Cross, the Paraguayan Red Cross, the Swedish Red Cross, the Tunisian Red Crescent and the Australian Red Cross). To ensure continuous new contributions, the Commission invites the Council of Delegates to approve a rotational system, whereby every four years five long-standing members would be replaced by five new National Societies, at least one from each region. The Commission failed to reach consensus concerning a new title, but accepted its present title, unless the Council of Delegates has another suggestion. We present the report and the draft resolution for the consideration of the Council.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

There is a second report, basically part of the report of the Commission on Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace, which deals with the World Campaign for the protection of war victims. Before we discuss the draft resolution, I ask Mrs. Magnuson to present the report on that Campaign.

Mrs. Christina MAGNUSON (Swedish Red Cross)

On behalf of the Steering Committee of the Campaign for Victims of War, I present the report CD/5/2, which you have received and which should also have been submitted to the International Conference. In May 1990, the Campaign was in difficulties. Despite being endorsed by the 1986 International Conference, and unanimously applauded by the Council of Delegates in 1987 and 1989, there were very real doubts about whether it would ever happen. One year later, in May 1991, one hundred and thirty-five National Societies were actively participating in the Campaign. Hundreds of events were organized worldwide, and a chain of light encircled the globe. Many Societies reported new members, and the Campaign can reasonably claim that its key message of protection and assistance reached more than one thousand million people. This figure is based on the certified audit of newspapers and magazines carrying written reports and advertisements, and on the audit of radio and television audiences. In Beirut, the streets were lit by candles in memory of war victims. Television news readers started each bulletin by lighting a candle in honour of the work done by our Movement. In southern Africa, youth members travelled hundreds of kilometres to make a human chain across the borders of Zambia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Botswana, Namibia and South Africa, as did young Irish and British members across their frontiers. In Amman, they formed an enormous human Red Cross and Red Crescent. In China, thousands and thousands lit up the Great Wall. In Malaysia, the King was actively involved, as were heads of State, Prime Ministers, Nobel Prize winners and distinguished jurists, artists and sportsmen and women worldwide. We were present at the Taj Mahal, at the Pyramids, in the fjords of Norway, in Rio de Janeiro, outside Buckingham Palace, at Hiroshima, in the centre of Rome, Washington, Moscow, and hundreds of other locations across all continents.

In each location, men, women and children paid public testimony to the unique role of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in protecting and assisting the victims of war. The very detailed report and the National Societies' evaluation prepared by the International Promotion Bureau for this Council gives all the details.

I will therefore confine my remarks to very broad lines. In doing so, I bear in mind Pär Stenbäck's remarks, in the Federation Assembly this very Tuesday, that the survival of our Movement depends on our coordinated image, and the statement by so many other speakers that the message of the Movement is the key to success in our age of humanitarian competition. This campaign was obviously first

and foremost about the victims of war. But it was also a first attempt, an experiment if you like, in taking a single message to the whole world simultaneously.

Some ingredients worked well. The report on the casualties of conflict was widely disseminated by National Societies and used extensively by journalists worldwide. It also provided the intellectual basis for the campaign. The video of the song "Imagine" was shown, without charge, at least six hundred times on national television stations around the world. It shows that this Movement should not be frightened to use pop music, professionally produced, in disseminating its serious message. And the BBC programme "Light the Darkness", a shortened version of which we viewed yesterday, this time using classical music intercut with hard and unforgettable images and extracts from the Geneva Conventions, has so far reached an audience of over six hundred million people. The children's drawing contest, which attracted over fifty thousand entries, gave National Societies a high profile in their own media. One entry has been selected by UNICEF, others for the Federation's New Year's cards and the ICRC calendar. A further example is the poster prepared by the International Promotion Bureau for AIDS next year. Another first was the use of free advertising, where major publications -the *Economist*, the *International Herald Tribune*, the *Magyar Hirlap*, here in Hungary, for instance, to mention only three of over thirty-five influential papers and magazines- donated several hundred thousand dollars' worth of space to the Movement. All these efforts showed that international humanitarian law can be presented in everyday language using modern communication techniques in a way that is immediately intelligible to the general public, which was of course the initial idea of the project.

The key factor, however, was the work done by National Societies. Some of the most imaginative and creative work was by Societies with very few resources. The IPB outputs, regular background briefings, speeches, press releases and media kits for adoption and re-use by National Societies in their own countries, thereby enhancing their own image, were widely appreciated. The Campaign was clearly the biggest project of its type ever launched by this Movement, and many of the techniques of global communication are well worth retaining in the future.

Between the resolutions passed by the Council of Delegates and the many activities of the Campaign, there were of course substantial difficulties as well. The Gulf War, as the Australian Red Cross noted in its reports, had a significant impact. Through satellite communications it brought the reality of war into the living rooms of millions of families. But it also produced some hesitancy among a number of Societies, the armed forces of whose countries were involved, and it meant that the BBC programme had to be made in seven weeks, since it was not judged possible to produce it while the fighting continued. The biggest problem, however, was funding for the Campaign. The original director, working within the Council of Delegates resolution, sought financing from sponsors and other donors worldwide. This activity was opposed by a number of National Societies. In April 1990, the International Promotion Bureau recommended cutting the budget presented to the Council by 4 million Swiss francs, and this was done. Even so, it was a constant struggle to keep the Campaign financed. The bulk of the money came from the

Geneva institutions plus generous contributions from twenty-one Societies and two commercial sponsors. The lesson we have learned for the future is quite clear. This Council should not approve events of such magnitude until a detailed plan and budget has been agreed with all major partners. Global communications do not come cheap, as the report clearly shows. But the sums extended are significantly less than those spent by what one speaker the other day called "our humanitarian opposition" in their global campaigns. The expenditure also has to be judged against the greater amounts spent year after year on dissemination, on the actual number of people reached, and on the money raised by National Societies during the Campaign -from Canada and Malaysia, for example- which was subsequently sent through Geneva for the direct benefit of war victims. My colleagues from National Societies and the Steering Committee are quite clear, as am I, that this effort must continue. That does not mean another global event in the near future, but it does mean that the key message of protection and assistance must be brought to the general public, on a sustained and planned basis, and that the techniques learned and the contacts made during this Campaign must not be lost, but maintained. Finally I would like to add three words of thanks:

1. To National Societies and to their representatives from Bulgaria, Cuba, Finland, Libya and Swaziland, in the Steering Committee. It was your Campaign, and no prize is enough for what you achieved. Thank you.
2. To George Reid, Maurice Graber, Joanna MacLean and Marit van Strien and the staff of the International Promotion Bureau, for their unceasing work and for the ideas which they put into the Campaign.
3. Lastly, to that great man of the Movement, Alexandre Hay, who as Chairman steered the Campaign for its last year. His wisdom, patience and encouragement were an inspiration to all of us. In 1985, as President of the ICRC, he called for humanitarian mobilization for victims of war everywhere. On 8 May 1991, though by then a very sick man, he still insisted on coming to the global event in the Avenue de la Paix in Geneva. He knew that the chains of light were organized in over eighty locations around the world; then along the street with their candles came the first of the ten thousand or more people participating in the Geneva event. On that May day, he witnessed a significant step towards the humanitarian mobilization which he had called for. It is now incumbent on all of us to continue his work as planned and to make his vision a reality.

Applause

Mr. M. AUBERT (ICRC)

On behalf of ICRC, I would first of all like to express our thanks and congratulations to Mr. McLean for his report which was complete, precise and timely, also to Mrs. Magnuson, for her bright presentation on the World Campaign. Since Mr. McLean spoke *in extenso*, I will be brief. In my own name and on behalf of my colleagues, and not without emotion, I would like to recall the personality of Alexandre Hay. We all know his deep interest in the chairmanship of this Commission, which was a measure of the importance attached to the Commission's activities. The Commission is an indispensable body for concentrated thinking. Yesterday, as we were reading out our Fundamental Principles, I sensed in the background the reflections of this Commission on dissemination and the respect of international humanitarian law, on the role of our Movement regarding respect for human rights, and the rights of refugees, on humanitarian mobilization to implement the Fundamental Principles. The ICRC endorses the draft resolution without any reservations whatsoever, as we are convinced that it is essential to maintain this Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace. As for the World Campaign, my colleague, Mr. Keller, would like to say a few words.

Mr. P. STENBÄCK (Federation)

I have been asked to comment on the report by the Chairman of the Steering Committee. Thank you. First, I would like to congratulate Mrs. Magnuson for her excellent report in her capacity as Chairman of the Steering Committee, and I join in her general evaluation of the success of the Campaign. We are all moved by the results of that Campaign, although individually we may not grasp the real magnitude of the penetration of the message we tried to send to the world. At least we can say that we partly succeeded. Through the Campaign, we reached probably the biggest global audience ever for the Red Cross and the Red Crescent. But we had difficulties in doing so; and as one who lived with the Campaign through those years of implementation, I think, as Mrs. Magnuson so rightly said, that self-appraisal is necessary. I cannot remember whether the decision to launch the Campaign was taken in haste or whether it was well prepared before being presented to the Council of Delegates. In retrospective, I agree with Mrs. Magnuson when she warned against taking too hasty decisions without proper plans and a budget for such a Campaign, since the institutions which have to implement them will suffer from the lack of a clear plan of action before the relevant decisions are made. The first disappointment, if I may call it so, was in relation to the fund-raising, which everybody knows is vital for any Red Cross and Red Crescent activity. Fund-raising on an international basis was opposed by National Societies, on the grounds that, even though they had taken part enthusiastically in making the decision, this type of fund-raising would damage their own interests. Here we come to the inherent contradiction in our decision-making. I would point out to the representatives of the International Committee that this was touched upon in many discussions, and even in a resolution submitted to the Executive Council. The contradiction in our decision-making is that we sometimes take decisions without knowing where the funding is to be

found. It was done a moment ago: there is no provision for funding the study that we just decided should be made. The funding of the World Campaign was a major concern for the Geneva institutions and remains so to this day. How do we address such a problem? As I said at the Federation General Assembly, unless we learn to create an international Red Cross and Red Crescent image, by going beyond national boundaries and limitations, rather than emphasizing them by insisting on the rights -the legitimate rights- of each National Society, then we are in real trouble. We must realize how dependent we are on that international image. The main reason why the Federation, whose prime mandate is not, of course, the victims of conflicts, but which, in many cases, has to take care of those victims, was so enthusiastic for this Campaign was the possibility of penetrating the world community and building a better international image for the Movement. We have partly succeeded, but we also have to draw the logical conclusions and accept the consequences if we wish to continue on those lines. The world has become more and more international through satellites, through integration at all levels in the international community. Multi-national corporations have so intermingled economic relations between nations that fund-raising has become an international business. But this Movement has not yet learned this lesson: that is why we are trying to stress these factors. We can reasonably claim that we have reached a global audience, perhaps one billion people, we can even prove it, from thirty-five audits of TV, radio and newspapers audiences. If we were to calculate the real cost for that contact with the public on which we so depend, we would find that this was a very cheap campaign. If we had allowed ourselves to do more, I think that the results would have been even better. All details of the financial arrangements are given, in the annexes of the excellent report. The lessons are there, and they must be learned. On behalf of the International Federation, I express our heartfelt thanks to the Steering Committee. I may say that during the whole World Campaign there was excellent cooperation between the Federation and the ICRC, the problems that arose being solved by good teamwork. We proved to all, as National Societies sometimes say, that there would be no problem if only the Geneva institutions could be at peace with each other! But this Campaign proves that there were no major problems in that relationship. We set up the International Promotion Bureau together. It strained our administrative capacity to a certain extent; but it was an interesting experiment, and the techniques used and the contacts made worldwide through the Bureau should not be lost. We learned something, and I am sad to say that once the Seville World Exhibition is over, we are going to dismantle the Bureau. I am sorry because there is now understanding generally in the Movement, among its different components, of the need to continue to transcend boundaries in fund-raising and in image-building. When we speak about studying the future, these are crucial elements, and I hope that the study which we have decided upon will address these vital questions.

If we do not learn from the methods and techniques we used, and prevent their being forgotten after such a successful Campaign, then we will have lost a great deal in human resources, in involvement and in finance. It would be good to seek new ways of becoming a more integrated Movement, at least in the sense of image-building, and perhaps also fund-raising. This might be the Campaign's greatest contribution to strengthening our Movement. Global image is the key to

success. However, as Mrs. Magnuson has rightly pointed out, any future campaign should have a clear plan and budget to which National Societies should contribute on a sustained basis; they should open their own fund-raising markets to internationally launched campaigns jointly agreed in the Council of Delegates. Finally, to Sacha Marinov, of the Bulgarian Red Cross, to Esmildo Gutiérrez, of the Cuban Red Cross, to Mr. Nkosi from Swaziland, Mr. Niskala from Finland, Dr. El Sherif from Libya, to Mrs. Magnuson and before her, to our friend Alexandre Hay, we say "Thank you for a job well done!" We are very grateful that you took on the pains and the burdens, and we apologize to you for the trouble we sometimes gave you when fund-raising problems became difficult.

Mr. P. KELLER (ICRC)

I would like to concentrate on the World Campaign for the protection of victims of war. It may be premature to make a final assessment of this first World Campaign of our Movement. However, it seems quite clear that the objectives set by resolution 28 of the International XXV Conference and the resolutions by the Council of Delegates in 1987 and 1989 were largely met. This Campaign drew attention to the tragic fate of war victims and worked to promote international humanitarian law, which gives them protection and assistance. This was an event on a truly international scale, which spread its message far and wide, with about one hundred and thirty-five National Societies taking part, as well as the international and national media. The Campaign enabled us to speak the same language within the humanitarian Movement, which has been more necessary than ever before, in favour of the victims of war. The encouraging results, however, should not make us oblivious of the difficulties and obstacles there were to be surmounted. A major difficulty was the innovative nature of such a project for the Movement, added to a shortage of time to agree upon a central message and on the major lines of the Campaign programme. By April 1990, financing had still not been guaranteed. For various reasons, in particular the short time available, the major part of the funds had to be provided by the Movement. The ICRC and the Federation had to find the human and financial resources to sustain this Campaign to a greater extent than anticipated. It was, however, necessary to find financing of the Campaign for the year 1991 among the National Societies. These financial difficulties draw attention to the need to organize the Campaign in more detail at national level. The organization and financing of similar projects must be given much closer consideration in the future. Nevertheless, we congratulate the organizers for conducting this Campaign, and for the impact it achieved on the international stage. We realize that, within the Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the members of international commissions and of the presidency were all totally committed to the project. I would like especially to thank Mrs. Magnuson for her enthusiasm. We are convinced that such initiatives are effective, and we hope to surmount the difficulties involved. The benefits will be felt by the whole world.

Chinese Red Cross

A few words about the Campaign for the protection of war victims. Even if everyone wants peace, it has never been. As we saw yesterday on the video, 90% of war victims are civilians, and even more tragically, most of them are women, children and the elderly. The protection of those victims is a humanitarian task for us and for our Movement. Led by this idea, the Chinese Red Cross took an active part in the World Campaign for the protection of war victims. In order to remove the veneer of various social circles and to call attention to the plight of these people, who are entitled to normal human conditions, we staged various activities. To give a few examples: drawing competitions for children, the collection of signatures, the organization of a total line around the whole world, and so on. All these activities represented solidarity with the victims of war, but also promoted a wider knowledge of humanitarian law among the public. We greatly appreciate the Campaign, and the excellent work of all the organizers and participants. Similar campaigns will have to be organized on topical issues.

Dr. Guillermo RUEDA MONTAÑA (Colombian Red Cross)

I would like to refer to two points of information. First, I endorse Mr. Aubert's tribute to Mr. Alexandre Hay, whom we warmly respected and admired. Second, I would like to thank the Commission for having included in their report the name of the Colombian Red Cross Society. As regards the World Campaign, I would like, first of all, to express my admiration for Mrs. Magnuson, who was virtually the soul of the Campaign. And the Campaign was a great success. I make no mention of the financial difficulties, I leave this to others. The question of money is prosaic: what was done was a tremendous success. My country unfortunately is in search of peace, and can draw inspiration from this event. In the Caribbean Islands and on the Pacific Coast, as well as on our frontier with Brazil, we had activities by the Red Cross, our humanitarian mobilization for peace and a united world. Yet a significant part of the Campaign's impact was reminding the public that, when peace is lost, violence creates victims. In this way the Campaign had its greatest success. All those who worked untiringly for the success of the Campaign, Marit van Strien, George Reid, Joanna MacLean and Maurice Graber, deserve the highest praise and commendation from the Red Cross Movement and from the Council of Delegates.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

We continue our discussion on the draft resolution submitted by the Commission on the Red Cross, the Red Crescent and Peace.

Sudanese Red Crescent

I must thank the Commission and all its members for the excellent work they have done. But I have one reservation on item 5, proposed membership. This Commission is very important, and I believe that the Council of Delegates, which has been meeting since the 23rd, has not devised a democratic way of electing the Commission. It would be more democratic if the Commission had proposed only the number of Societies which should be in this Commission and representing the various regions of the Movement, with the Council having the right to elect the members. Just now the President of the ICRC refused to appoint any Society representative to the study group. I feel it would be more appropriate if the members of the Commission were elected.

Countess of LIMERICK (British Red Cross)

The British Red Cross welcomes the comprehensive, frank and very well written report. Also, as one of the main financial contributors to the World Campaign, we wish to congratulate and thank Mr. George Reid, Mr. Maurice Graber and the staff of the International Promotion Bureau for their professional management and success despite the obstacles. In addition, we wish to congratulate the many National Societies for their participation in an event which, as the report notes, holds numerous valuable lessons for the Movement as a whole. We wish to respond briefly to the comments about the "Simple Truth" made in the report. As noted, the "Simple Truth" appeal raised very significant sums, about fifty-seven million pounds sterling worldwide to help Kurdish victims of war. And although it is perhaps unfortunate that world events were such that the "Simple Truth" and the "Light the darkness" programmes were transmitted so close to one another, this was something over which our Society had no control. Nevertheless, the two broadcasts were complementary and mutually beneficial. We would like to point out that our contribution covered all three years of the Campaign. In supporting the draft resolution, I confess that I am not familiar with the original terms of establishing the Peace Commission. Could we be informed whether there is any term set for the duration of this Commission? The proposals for renewing its membership seem very sensible; but perhaps I could be reminded.

Hellenic Red Cross

The Hellenic Red Cross regards the report on the Red Cross, the Red Crescent and Peace as the most important subject. We must stress the importance of this work, and it is right that the introductory words of the Commission report refer to the Statutes (page 3, paragraph 3). In our world, relationships are growing in scale, and when they deteriorate, the result is large-scale conflicts, and conflicts lead to the loss of human lives. Our humanitarian task is described in a few laconic phrases concerning the safeguarding of peace amidst the suffering created by the hundreds of wars in our planet, but we must not lose sight of essentials. The draft resolution about costs, working methods and the role of the Commission can be

endorsed; but there is no special reference to the precise tasks of the Commission. The Hellenic Red Cross is keenly interested in the work of the Commission, since the geographical position of Greece means that the refugee problem has reached a significant scale. We have reservations concerning the composition of the Commission. This appears somewhat restricted in the sense that it is based solely on proportional representation of geographic location. This is only one of the possible principles to be followed. We should consider other points, such as the representation of countries or regions where there are armed conflicts or large numbers of refugees. Naturally, the working method outlines the provision which can be related to this question. The Hellenic Red Cross would like to suggest that the task of the Commission should be completed; and here we agree with the proposals of the delegation of Sudan. The Commission should be enlarged to include two or three more members with special insight into the objectives of the Commission. We would be glad to be a member of the Commission, having already indicated our interest in and commitment to its activities, and especially in view of the geographic location of our country. The Hellenic Red Cross hopes that these proposals will be considered by this distinguished Council.

Bangladesh Red Crescent

First of all, the Bangladesh Red Crescent delegation wishes to express deep sorrow and heartfelt condolences on the sudden passing away of Alexandre Hay, former Chairman of the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace, to which he gave such dynamic and able leadership. We commend the work done by the Commission, particularly during the last two years, and also the excellent report presented by Alan McLean, Acting Chairman of the Commission. We well understand the difficulties in fulfilling the mandate for drawing up a four-year plan caused by fast-occurring world events. The consequent adoption by the Commission of a framework for broad-based activities to meet future needs is an acceptable compromise deserving due consideration by the Council. The brilliant World Campaign for the Protection of Victims of War was indeed one of the most memorable events in the history of the Movement, but it would not have been completely successful without the active support of the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society also participated in the Campaign with a number of events, including the chain of lights. Yet the report does not mention our Society. The study on respect for human rights made for the first time showed that, through its permanent activities, such as health care, protection of the family and of children, and safeguarding prisoners, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was already promoting human rights, human rights were not "taboo" for the Red Cross and Red Crescent, as many had thought. But the Movement must do a lot more. It must be active against torture, against racial discrimination, against forced or involuntary disappearances, and against the ill-treatment of children. There is probably no better body than the Peace Commission to pursue such activities. During the past fourteen years, the Commission had earned for itself a quasi-permanent position in the Movement. It has become an active limb of the Movement, and we should not sever this limb, to the detriment of the Movement's interests. Therefore our delegation endorses

the Commission proposal that it be maintained as a subsidiary body of the Movement as to its role, task, composition and working methods. We fully support the proposal contained in the draft resolution proposed by the Commission.

Egyptian Red Crescent

The Egyptian Red Crescent Society would like to commend the work of the Commission on the Red Cross, the Red Crescent and Peace, and the devotion of its former President, Mr. Alexandre Hay, whose valuable guidance is certainly one of the main elements of its success. We also congratulate the *ad hoc* group for reactivating the plan of action against racism and racial discrimination, and congratulate the Chairman and members of this group for the excellent work they have done. The Campaign in support of the victims of war is also a very worthy project, and we feel it should continue. For reasons beyond our control, we were unable to take part in the work of the Commission, although we were members in the last session. We certainly support the draft resolution on the extension of the mandate and also on the inclusion in this mandate of other important work. We regret that the Commission has taken upon itself the arduous task of suggesting new Societies as members. Some members of the Commission feel that is not within its competence, that the decision was made without any consultation with the Societies concerned, either those who were to be dropped or those suggested as new members. A more equitable and more representative method should be found for choosing the members of the Commission, which is a very important body. The membership of the Egyptian Red Crescent was discussed in Geneva within the regional group to which our Society belongs, and it was a decision of the regional group at that time. This procedure has not been followed. I suggest that, although the Committee is not competent to name new members, it could suggest the number of members for each region, and leave it to the regional groups to decide which Societies should represent their regions. This seems the best procedure, not only in this Commission but in other bodies belonging to our Movement, to ensure equitable participation by all Societies.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

We have come to the end of the list of speakers. I ask Mr. Alan McLean, and, if she so wishes, Mrs. Magnuson, to comment.

Mr. A. McLEAN (Australian Red Cross)

I shall attempt to clarify the Commission's point of view. In answer to the British Red Cross, it is true that Article 14 of the Statutes indicates, in Clause 7, that the Council may establish, by a 2/3 majority of the members present and voting, such subsidiary bodies as may be necessary, specifying their mandate, duration and membership. However, page 2 of the draft resolution, referring to working methods, states that the Commission may ask one or more of its members to

conduct special studies on its behalf, and that National Societies not members of the Commission may be invited to contribute to such studies. Unless the Council of Delegates wishes to involve itself in a very complicated procedure for selecting members, I suggest that the Council entrust its Commission on the Red Cross, the Red Crescent and Peace to employ the working method suggested, perhaps by circulating its agenda from time to time, so that the National Societies know which topics are to be considered. I would give my assurance, as long as I am associated with the Commission, that whenever an opportunity arose to involve another National Society, not a member of the Commission, in the work of the Commission I would do my utmost to accomplish this. I hope that we do not set up a complicated procedure for appointing members of the Commission.

Mrs. Ch. MAGNUSON (Swedish Red Cross)

I would first like to thank the two Geneva institutions who, together with the members of the National Societies, collaborated so closely for so many years. I am grateful, too, for those appreciative words from the ICRC and the Federation. We never tried to hide our difficulties through the years of preparation and planning, and everybody involved in the preparatory work knows exactly what these were. I must say a special word to those National Societies that commented on their own work. It was a very special event in many Societies, and we are very happy that the Campaign really worked in the way we all hoped. I would also like to add that the Societies mentioned in the report are only sixty-five out of the hundred and thirty-five that participated. The report was prepared for the Council and the Conference, and we were able to include only the Societies that sent in their evaluation. A final report will be produced by the International Promotion Bureau at the end of this year. To comment briefly on the question of sponsoring or fund-raising by the Movement: if we ever embark again on such a project, there must be a definite policy decided by all members and components of the Movement, stating what can and cannot be done. In many Societies, this is the problem nationally and it should be taken up in the Movement as a whole.

Countess of LIMERICK (British Red Cross)

I have asked, on a point of information, what duration has been set for the Commission. The original terms of reference setting up the Peace Commission relate to its composition, its mandate and its duration: it is the duration that I was asking for information about.

Mr. A. McLEAN (Australian Red Cross)

It is my understanding that the duration of the mandate has always been four years, and I have heard no suggestion that we should depart from that.

Countess of LIMERICK (British Red Cross)

Thank you. You talked about changing the composition every four years, so I wondered whether you had set a longer term.

Egyptian Red Crescent

In the light of Mr. McLean's answer, that the mandate is four years, and the fact that it started only in the last plenary session, this means that the Commission in its original composition will continue for another two years. I think that what has taken place within this Commission is a bit irregular. I am sorry to say so, but I have to put this on record.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Many views have been expressed, but the good work of the Commission has been underlined by all. A few remarks concerned the procedure for selecting or electing the members of the Commission. I propose that we ask the Commission to prepare a proposal on this to the Council, since it is the Council which decides. The draft resolution is still a draft, and no decision has been made. More Societies may be included -it has not been discussed whether this would be an improvement or not. There is an optimum size. I suggest that the Chairman of the Commission consult the Commission again and that those Societies with other proposals contact the Chairman. Perhaps we could have the new draft tomorrow morning. Is that acceptable?

Mrs. M.A.A. HARMON (Brazilian Red Cross)

Let me start by saying that the American continent is not involved, since there were three candidates for three seats. But I would remind the plenary that our dear friend, Alexandre Hay, wrote a letter to every National Society concerning the future of the Commission. He then had draft guidelines distributed to the National Societies, and asked for observations and comments. After that, Mr. Hay, who was Chairman of the Committee, asked every one of the National Societies if they wished to be members of the Peace Commission; there was a deadline for replying, which I do not remember. Once all the proposals had been received, Mr. Hay, together with the National Societies, established the guidelines in consultation with the Commission. Then the Commission had the hard task of ensuring fair geographical representation, of rotating the member Societies after a certain period and adding new members. On pages 2 and 3 of the report, we have "Commentaries about larger participation of National Societies". They also talk of having the longer-serving members retire after a second mandate. So we seem to be discussing something which has been studied in the Committee, which in fact established the guidelines followed by the Working Group.

Dr. A.A. EL SHERIF (Libyan Red Crescent)

I suggest that the list of members of the Commission be prepared by the Chairman of the Commission, in consultation with the President and the two Vice-Presidents of the Council of Delegates, taking into consideration fair geographical distribution.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Is this proposal acceptable to the Council?

Applause

Thank you very much, the proposal is carried. After consultations, the Chairman of the Commission will submit a proposal to you. Now we proceed to item 11.

ITEM 11 ON THE AGENDA: REGULATIONS ON THE USE OF THE EMBLEM

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I do not intend to have a break, as we wish to finish at six o'clock, in time for the reception so kindly offered by the ICRC and the Federation.

Mrs. Liselotte KRAUS-GURNY (ICRC)

I have the honour to present to the Council of Delegates the revised version of the Regulations on the use of the emblem by the National Societies. Let us first recall the fundamental importance of the emblem to our Movement. Though not constituting in itself a shield against the effects of war, the emblem embodies the protection afforded by international humanitarian law. It is the concrete and visible manifestation of the rules of humanitarian behaviour on the battlefield. In addition to this protective role, the emblem is used to indicate that a person or an object has a link with a Red Cross or Red Crescent institution. Since it was first adopted, the emblem has had great success. Few symbols are as instantly recognizable around the world as the red cross or the red crescent. As we all know, the use of the emblem raises several questions. One, the subject of our discussion today, is how National Societies may use the emblem. The Regulations submitted here refer only to use of the currently authorized emblems, and not at all to the form of the emblems. There is now constant and widespread misuse of the emblem, weakening its significance and its effectiveness in war. The need to regulate the use of the emblem and to repress its misuse has been a constant preoccupation of our Movement. The main rules relating to the use of the emblem of the red cross or the red crescent are contained in the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the First Convention in particular. In conformity with Article 54 of that Convention, many countries have made these rules part of their national legislation, primarily in order to be able to repress any misuse of the emblem. The 1977 Additional Protocols also contain some provisions on the emblem and extend somewhat the circle of its legitimate users. Concerning the use of the emblem by National Societies and their members, the Regulations on the use of the emblem by National Societies, adopted in 1965 by the XX International Conference of the Red Cross in Vienna, contain detailed rules. However, recognizing that the Regulations need to be adapted and could be improved in a number of respects, the XXIV International Conference of the Red Cross, held in Manila in 1981, requested the ICRC, in Resolution XII, to prepare a draft revision of the Regulations for the next International Conference, in cooperation with the League and the National Societies. However, this item had to be deleted from the agenda of the XXV International Conference, held in Geneva in 1986, for lack of time. Between 1981 and 1989 the ICRC consulted National Societies on several occasions, both by circulars and at meetings convened especially to discuss the question of these Regulations. In its Resolution 6, the 1987 Council of Delegates, held in Rio de Janeiro, accepted the new Regulations and recommended that the National Societies observe them provisionally. Since

1987, the ICRC, at the request of several National Societies, and eventually at the request of the Council of Delegates of 1989, Resolution 6, has held further consultations on the more limited but important question of the use of the emblem for fund-raising purposes. Following these consultations, the ICRC drew up a new version of Articles 23 and 24 of the draft Regulations. One purpose of the revision was to allow National Societies to diversify and expand their sources of income without prejudice to the respect due to the emblem and to the name of the red cross or red crescent. The revised text of Articles 23 and 24 takes equal account of two key concerns that are not easily compatible. The first is to enable National Societies to meet their financial requirements through fund-raising campaigns which frequently involve the use of the emblem. The second, equally important point of concern is to prevent excessive display of the red cross or red crescent emblem outside its traditional uses, so as not to diminish its protective value. Not all National Societies agree on this, some being more restrictive than others regarding the use of the emblem. The revised Regulations try to reconcile these two approaches and represent a compromise on which we sincerely hope that consensus can be reached. As the custodian of international humanitarian law, the International Committee of the Red Cross has insisted that the Regulations comply with that law. It considers that the proposed extended use of the emblem is about as far as the Movement can go while remaining within the framework of the Geneva Conventions subject to approval of the proposed Regulations by the States party to the Geneva Conventions.

The deferment of the XXVI International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent means that we are unable to have these Regulations adopted in the manner originally intended. Since National Societies need to receive Regulations adapted to current requirements without delay, we suggest the following procedure. Once the Regulations have been adopted by the Council of Delegates, they and the corresponding resolutions will be sent to all States party to the Geneva Conventions, with a statement confirming the Movement's adoption of the text and encouraging governments to endorse the Regulations and where necessary to authorize their National Society to observe them. This course of action will meet the needs both of those National Societies which are free to implement the new Regulations immediately and also of those National Societies which must be authorized by their governments before implementing the Regulations. The new Regulations recommend that the National Societies comply with them in accordance with their national legislation at the earliest possible date. The ICRC intends to present a report on the implementation of the new Regulations to the next Council of Delegates. Until then, the International Committee is happy to examine, in consultation with the Federation, all questions relating to the interpretation and implementation of the Regulations on the use of the emblem, and such consultations may well include seeking the views of National Societies.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

A draft resolution has been submitted on the use of the emblem by National Societies. Its adoption includes acceptance of the Regulations. Are there any speakers on this subject?

Mr. George WEBER (Canadian Red Cross)

I have four points to make on this item.

First, the Canadian Red Cross Society welcomes the revised Regulations on the use of the emblem, and thanks the ICRC for the extensive work that they put into this issue. As the original version was unable to be approved by the 1986 International Conference of the Red Cross for various reasons, the interval until this Council of Delegates has provided sufficient opportunity to amend the Regulations, to deal with present-day realities and, we hope, to handle future contingencies. Our Society considers the proper use of the emblem, both for the protective and indicatory aspects, to be a fundamental issue for the Movement. This was emphasized yesterday by Baron Kraijenhoff in his acceptance of the Henry Dunant Medal. We in Canada take considerable legal and other steps to ensure that there is no abuse, and we encourage others to do likewise in the long-term interest of the victims of conflicts and disasters worldwide.

Second, the Canadian Red Cross Society participated in the various working groups which produced the version of the Regulations which is before us today. We assure our fellow delegates that the discussions and negotiations to find acceptable solutions were long and hard; and of course this led to compromises being accepted by all concerned. Our Society did not get all the changes it wanted, but neither did others. A delicate balance had to be found between those who wanted to use the indicatory aspects of the emblem more actively for fund-raising, mainly corporate sponsorship, while others felt that this might lead to abuses, which would affect the protective aspect of the emblem. We believe that the final text is the best compromise that could be found.

Third, our Society considers the commentary to be an essential part of the proposed Regulations since there was as much discussion, negotiation and compromise on the final wording of the commentary as there was on the Regulations themselves, in fact in some cases, particularly in relation to Article 23, there was even more.

Fourth, given the long hard road that these Regulations and commentary have travelled, the Canadian Red Cross Society supports and will approve by consensus the document presented and the draft resolution proposed. However, should any substantive changes be proposed by others, we would like the opportunity to speak again about amendments we wish to propose. We hope, nevertheless, that the Regulations and draft resolution will be approved without change.

Bangladesh Red Crescent

The Bangladesh delegation strongly supports the revised version of the Regulations on the use of the emblem, and thanks the ICRC for the very extensive work over the last ten years to prepare these Regulations. As our colleague from the ICRC has stated, concern about correct use and the prevention of misuse of the emblem has been a main preoccupation of the Movement. Consequently, I suggest a small amendment to paragraph 4 of the draft resolution. In line 3 of paragraph 4, I propose that after the word "emblem" the following words should be inserted "particularly to prevent its misuse", the resolution then to continue.

Countess of LIMERICK (British Red Cross)

The British Red Cross very much welcomes the proposed revised Regulations, which are badly needed and which reflect extensive consultation within the Movement, aligning the 1965 Regulations and the 1987 revision with current needs without diminishing the emblem's protective value. We note that the proposed Regulations give as much flexibility as possible within the necessary framework of international humanitarian law, and that National Societies can make more restrictive rules should they wish. While the Regulations offer a sound basis for consensus within the Movement, one way of easing any fears that may exist and of ensuring that the Regulations are applied as uniformly as possible would be to provide for consultation between representatives of National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation Secretariat on the interpretation of the new Regulations and of guidance on emblem matters generally. National Society representatives have first-hand experience of the difficulties faced by Societies concerning the use of the emblem, so that consultation with National Societies will improve the capacity of the Movement to deal with increasing trans-frontier publicity and fund-raising and with the growing misuse or abuse of the emblem, and with other related issues. Such consultation might lead to the establishment of a formal or informal mechanism for interpretation and guidance, though we do not formally propose this. The course of action proposed in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the draft resolution offers a way forward, in the light of the deferment of the International Conference and of differing national legislation and practices regarding use of the emblem by National Societies. Referring to misuse, we endorse operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, inviting National Societies to assist their governments in combating misuse. We note with regret that in recent relief operations, a few National Societies have helped non-Red Cross or non-Red Crescent organizations to use the emblem without proper authorization; this should be stopped. We therefore ask the Council of Delegates to give the Regulations, as now proposed, their full support. We also ask the ICRC and the Federation, in consultation with all components of the Movement, to make proposals to ensure more uniform interpretation and application of these new emblem Regulations.

Mr. Jean BAKEKOLO (Congoles Red Cross)

At almost every session of the Council of Delegates we come back to the question of the emblem: this shows its importance. The protective sign for our humanitarian worldwide action is sometimes misused; in African countries, quite often, the health services use it, although WHO has special signs to be used by health services. So our Movement should take action with WHO, so that Member States of the world organization avoid misuse of the emblem.

Mrs. M.A.A. HARMON (Brazilian Red Cross)

I would like to praise the group that worked on the Regulations for the emblem, a vital matter for our Movement. The Canadian Red Cross has told us that it is a compromise: I answer that we can live with it, since on page 7, paragraph 5, and page 15, paragraph 3, it is clearly stated that National Societies can have stricter rules. In my country, someone who must have known a lot about our Movement in the future had a law passed by Congress in 1910 which makes it a criminal offence to use the red cross, or any kind of cross, any kind of design or drawing similar to it or likely to be confused with it. Persistent offenders go to jail. We have found, through the years, that one letter from us, simply saying "You are obviously not aware that there is such a law", is sufficient to remove the red cross from dolls, toys, or anything else. This law even prevents the Brazilian Red Cross from having a freer design, since this would be against the law protecting the emblem of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement. We do not use logos because, again, they cannot be used commercially. All we are allowed to do is to print, in very small letters, "We thank such and such a company for their support": but there will be no logo -Coca Cola, IBM or whatever. Anyone supporting us knows that there can be no logo, simply the name of the company in small letters. We went so far as to ask for a copyright. One thing we welcome is what the Regulations say about territory. Very often we have commercial enterprises writing, phoning or calling on us, saying "such a National Society has allowed us to produce this publication with the red cross, and if you wish we can have it translated and sold in Brazil". Our answer is "This is our territory. If anything is sold here, we would sell it and we would profit by it." So I say to George Weber that I can live with the compromise because of pages 7 and 15.

Ambassador R. PAOLINI (Italian Red Cross)

We would also like to express our satisfaction with the revised rules. There is one appeal to the ICRC, to submit the rules and the resolution to the States party to the Geneva Conventions, and another appeal to the National Societies to obey the new Regulations. I must stress that the Italian Red Cross has to implement the new Regulations as quickly as possible. However, we have already contacted the government urging it to ensure that the use of the emblem in Italy be respected, since the law on the matter refers to the first Statutes of the Italian Red Cross, and is thus obsolete. We have done this because some national and international

companies have been agitating to use the emblem or something similar, a proposal which could not be accepted by the government, on its own behalf or on behalf of the National Society. So, with good will, this action we have taken with our Health Ministry should, we hope, bring the desired result.

Dr. A.A. EL SHERIF (Libyan Red Crescent)

The ICRC should be thanked sincerely for revising the Regulations on the use of the emblem, since there have been many difficult problems regarding this issue, particularly in relation to the indicative and protective character of the emblem, something not very well understood in many parts of the world. I also thank the ICRC for the well-balanced draft resolution. I would like to make a minor change in paragraph 2, the last line. This states "where necessary, to authorize". This means that States need to authorize their National Societies to use the emblem or to observe these Regulations. This sentence might imply that we are giving governments the right to dictate to the National Societies where and when to observe these Regulations, or not to do so. The Regulations are to be observed at all times. So I suggest that the second paragraph should end, "Resolutions to the States party to the Geneva Conventions, encouraging them to endorse the Regulations". The responsibility of the National Societies to observe the Regulations is already mentioned in the third paragraph, and there is no reason to mix things, States dictating to National Societies when or not to observe the Regulations. We would have the States, on their own, in paragraph 2, and the National Societies in paragraph 3.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Has Mrs. Kraus-Gurny any comments or reactions?

Mrs. L. KRAUS-GURNY (ICRC)

First, an explanation to the last speaker: the fact that certain National Societies have to be authorized to observe these Regulations has nothing to do with the Movement. It is a question of national laws which are applicable in national circumstances, and of course the Societies have to respect national laws. That is all. I am very glad that this new proposal has received such a positive response. You are all aware how difficult it was to find a proper balance and you have proved to be sensitive to this. I welcome the response and see that consensus on this compromise appears likely. Everybody also seems keen to be more restrictive in protecting our emblem, and this is important. We all are aware how important it is to protect the emblem. In this context, the proposal made earlier by the distinguished representatives of Bangladesh, to add in paragraph 4 of the resolution, "in particular to prevent its misuse", could, I think, be accepted by all of us.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

May I move that we adopt the resolution by consensus?

Applause

Mrs. Georgina DUFOIX (French Red Cross)

We do not have the resolution jointly produced by the Italian and French Red Cross, for submission to the Council of Delegates. Tomorrow I would like to propose adoption of a resolution expressing the feelings of the Council concerning the fratricidal war being waged about two hundred kilometres from Budapest. This is in line with the humanitarian spirit of the ICRC and of international humanitarian law. I would, therefore, be grateful if tomorrow morning this resolution could be included in our agenda.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

We are indeed sensitive to these events and it is an excellent idea of the French delegate to express our solidarity with the victims.

Fourth session

Saturday, 30 November 1991

9 a.m.

BUDAPEST APPEAL:

PEACE IN PEOPLE'S HEARTS

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

As decided yesterday, we begin today's meeting of the Council of Delegates with the subject of the situation of the victims of conflict in Yugoslavia. I call on the Chairman of the International Relations Commission of the Red Cross of Yugoslavia, Professor Manojlo Budisavljevic.

Prof. Manojlo BUDISAVLJEVIC (Red Cross of Yugoslavia)

As a member of the Yugoslavian Red Cross delegation, I wish to thank the Hungarian Red Cross for having organized and created excellent conditions for this international event of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, here in Budapest. We wish to inform the participants of the Council of Delegates about our activities and the problems of functioning of our Society in the circumstances of an armed conflict which is still, unfortunately, going on in our country. Because of this conflict, we have enormous needs and requirements, and these demands have intensified the activities of the Red Cross in favour of all victims of these tragic events. Since May, several thousands of civilians, mainly, women, children and old people, have been leaving the regions in which their homes are threatened by the conflict. On 20 November the numbers had reached several thousands, 60% of them women and 40% children under fourteen. Our people have demonstrated their solidarity: from the very beginning, they have received displaced persons in their homes and contributed money. But the work of the volunteers cannot meet the needs of the victims. The number of displaced persons grows constantly, and the possibility of their returning home is minimal. The need for international assistance is obvious. Cooperation with the ICRC in all fields, because of its special role, has become ever closer. Since the month of June, ICRC representatives have been present in some of the cities of the country, and are on the spot in crisis regions, visiting prisoners or acting as intermediaries, conveying messages from separated families to the refugees and those who are still free. They are also assessing our needs with respect to food and medicines. The representatives of the ICRC and of the Red Cross of Yugoslavia have worked out a relief plan giving priority to the most threatened, most affected categories of the population. We have launched an appeal for relief, hoping for some help from several National Societies. We have also approached some National Societies directly, informing them about the situation and the needs, and describing the activities of our Red

Cross in cooperation with ICRC. A total of 7,600,000 Swiss francs has been given to us, in the form of food, medical supplies and teaching aids, by the Austrian, Danish and Netherlands Red Cross Societies and by the Italian government. An important quantity of blankets has been sent by the Finnish and the British Red Cross Societies. Supplies of medicines are being sent by the Polish and Danish Red Cross Societies, and by the French government and the ICRC. This important assistance has great value for us, since the number of displaced persons is ever increasing. The assistance has been obtained thanks to the contributions in money of the Australian, Austrian, Canadian, Danish, Finnish, German, Luxembourg, Norwegian, Swedish and United States governments, and of the National Societies of Australia, Austria, Canada, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Monaco, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. So you see that a great number of governments and Societies have responded to the appeal launched by the International Committee. In November, a new appeal was launched by the ICRC in view of the growing number of displaced and wounded persons and to meet the most basic needs. We should receive, by the end of the year, 8,850,000 Swiss francs from governments and National Societies. In addition to the governments and National Societies I have already mentioned, Belgium, Czechoslovakia and the European Community have dispatched important relief supplies. To ensure better coordination, the distribution of assistance is facilitated by the presence of representatives of the ICRC, of certain National Societies and of the Red Cross of Yugoslavia. This help is of great value to us and, despite the difficulties, our population takes an active part in the relief operations. It also shows that people from the Red Cross in other regions of the world are not indifferent to the sufferings and violence experienced by our country, and we are very grateful for that. In an armed conflict, it is very important to ensure the mobility of the Red Cross teams, communications, safe transport, assured humanitarian assistance, in particular for isolated areas. These objective difficulties make it essential to assess the genuine needs. Unfortunately, the emblem of the red cross is often threatened. Security measures are not always taken. The help of the Red Cross is needed to despatch relief supplies to all the areas in which there are victims. It is a complex operation, and adequate knowledge of the situation on the spot is extremely important. We have to know the number of victims and their needs. The media can play a positive role, but also a negative one, and they greatly influence potential donors. For this reason, objective information supplied by the ICRC and by the National Societies is vital. We seek to coordinate the work and try to help all victims, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross. We must properly assess the needs, and the relief supplies should correspond to the number and needs of the victims. The stocks, the equipment, the means of communications should help us, so that volunteers and all those on the spot are able to work efficiently in this emergency.

There are many problems, since the situation is complex, reflecting the complicated political situation in which we have to operate. But even in those difficult circumstances, our Society is working and thus has been able to win the confidence of the population. In fact its prestige has been enhanced. We are able to do a lot in spite of our modest condition. The Slovenian and the Croatian Red Cross Societies have declared that they wish to become independent and be separated from the Red Cross of Yugoslavia. This is a unilateral decision, and we

will have to find some solution at national level. We think that, inside the Red Cross, we should respect the statutory and legal provisions of the Movement. Yet in spite of all the difficulties, we strive to maintain the necessary contacts in order to accomplish the humanitarian task of helping all the victims. The President of the Yugoslav Republic, in the statement he made in The Hague on 5 November 1991 on the initiative of the International Committee of the Red Cross, expressed support for the humanitarian actions of the Red Cross. The same statement was made at the meeting of Red Cross representatives of Yugoslavia and all the Republics held on 15 November at ICRC headquarters. This meeting, arranged on the initiative of the ICRC, was also attended by representatives of the Yugoslav Republic, of Croatia and of the Yugoslav army, with the aim of seeking solutions to the many humanitarian problems. All this encourages us. We hope that Red Cross activities will be pursued in all regions of the country. The international solidarity and assistance we are receiving in those difficult moments are of extreme importance for us. We warmly thank all the donors and we also salute all the efforts being made at international level to find lasting solutions to the armed conflict. This would contribute to a favourable climate for establishing peace in our country. Unfortunately, the consequences of the current situation will not be quickly eliminated, and will require intensive activity and the presence of the Red Cross. I wish to thank again all those who show interest in solving humanitarian problems, in conjunction with the existing problems of Yugoslavia.

Mr. C. SOMMARUGA (President of the ICRC)

I shall now read a statement issued on 15 November, at ICRC headquarters in Geneva, subsequent to a meeting chaired by the ICRC and attended by representatives of the League. I quote:

"Deeply distressed by the current conflict in Yugoslavia we, the leaders of the Red Cross of Yugoslavia, the Red Cross of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Red Cross of Croatia, the Red Cross of Macedonia, the Red Cross of Montenegro, the Red Cross of Serbia and the Red Cross of Slovenia, wish to issue the following statement. Amidst the fighting that has caused so many deaths and injuries, and this having such direct effects on the civilian population, especially families, we cannot remain silent. Together we affirm our members' and volunteers' commitment to assisting the victims in conformity with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, in particular, the Principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence, and our hope that this commitment will foster mutual understanding and contribute to lasting peace. We draw attention to and support the statement made by the Presidents of the six republics at The Hague Conference, on 5 November 1991, whereby they undertook to respect international humanitarian law and solemnly reminded all fighting units of their obligation to observe the following basic principles: the wounded and sick must be helped and protected in all circumstances; all arrested persons, in particular combatants who have surrendered, must be treated humanely; all detaining authorities must guarantee the protection of prisoners; the civilian population and civilian property must not be attacked; the Red Cross emblem must be respected; it may be used only to designate medical units and establishments and their staff and vehicles; all Red

Cross personnel and medical personnel assisting civilians and persons *hors de combat* must be allowed the necessary freedom of movement to perform their tasks. Finally, we wish to thank the National Societies and governments, here present, for the support received in our humanitarian work. We are aware that the Red Cross and Red Crescent are active in many other areas of tension around the world and trust that the delegations present will make this Conference a success for the entire Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement". Unquote.

This statement was drafted for presentation to the International Conference. Another meeting was held and a statement released in Geneva at ICRC headquarters on 27 November. I quote:

"At the invitation of the International Committee of the Red Cross, plenipotentiary representatives of the Yugoslav Federal Executive Council, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Serbia and the Federal Army met in Geneva, on 26 and 27 November 1991, to find solutions to the various matters of humanitarian concern arising from the conflict in Yugoslavia. The meeting gave substance to the declaration of respect for international humanitarian law made by the presidents of the six republics in The Hague on 5 November. All those taking part said that they were willing to separate humanitarian matters from political issues. They declared that they would implement the provisions of the 1949 Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I that provide protection for the wounded and sick, civilians and prisoners, and govern the conduct of hostilities. The participants adopted the following recommendations: to set up a joint commission to trace missing persons; to establish a procedure for transmitting allegations of violations of international humanitarian law; to do more to spread knowledge of the rules of international humanitarian law among all combatants; and to promote respect for the Red Cross emblem. They acknowledged the importance of setting up protected zones under ICRC supervision and of allowing humanitarian aid consignments free passage. It was agreed that the participants would attend a future meeting held under ICRC auspices in Geneva, on 20 December 1991". Unquote.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

With reference to this important declaration, a draft resolution has been submitted and circulated; its title is "The Budapest Appeal: peace in people's hearts".

Mrs. G. DUFOIX (French Red Cross)

We are very moved, and we are hopeful when presenting this statement to our friends who are fighting today. President Sommaruga has described the efforts made by the ICRC to find, together with our friends, a position that makes it possible to proceed towards peace. There are battles taking place a few hundred kilometres from Budapest, and we propose this statement to reaffirm and reiterate our support for the humanitarian action taking place, also to reaffirm and reiterate, on behalf of the Red Cross which we represent and of this fantastic movement of solidarity, how difficult it is in our world to bear in mind that true peace is not

merely the absence of war, but peace in our hearts. If there is hate, it is very difficult to establish lasting peace. In any of our countries -I am thinking of my own country and of all the others- when there are difficulties of understanding, it is hard to establish solidarity and fraternity, and conflicts abound. We must therefore reaffirm solidarity through our humanitarian Movement, in particular through our member organizations, by appealing to public opinion and fostering the conditions for a mutual understanding. We are approaching the XXI century, which will be dominated by communications: radio, television and computerized data. We know the impact that these media have on people's minds. We think it important to issue a modest statement reminding all authorities in the world that peace in people's hearts is essential for the creation of solidarity and fraternity, which must take their place in history. That is why, with the Italian Red Cross, we have drafted this resolution to be addressed to the Red Cross Societies and the government of the world.

Ambassador R. PAOLINI (Italian Red Cross)

In proposing this resolution jointly with the French Red Cross, we fully support the statement made by the Red Cross of Yugoslavia and we share completely the ideas expressed by the President. The Italian delegation is closely following events in Yugoslavia, through the Committee, and not only because of our geographical proximity to the country but also because of the humanitarian feelings deeply rooted in our Society. We were in Dubrovnik, in San Marco hospital, and we are aware of our responsibility to bring relief to another Red Cross Society in such painful moments. We wish to insist that the Council of Delegates, if it approves this resolution, should strengthen its humanitarian work and relief operations. We hope very much that peace will soon return to Yugoslavia.

Prof. Frits KALSHOVEN (The Netherlands Red Cross)

This draft resolution appeals for peace in people's hearts, which is the essential requirement for Red Cross work. We express our gratitude to the International Committee of the Red Cross for its unceasing efforts, even in the tragic, confusing and turbulent conditions in Yugoslavia, to reaffirm the message of humanitarian law. We congratulate it on the results ultimately obtained. Having said that, we permit ourselves two minor remarks. We learn from the draft resolution that on the 27th of this month, a declaration was made in Geneva. Would it have been absolutely impossible for us to have that text of that declaration, perhaps even on the 27th? It is of course very good that we now have at least a resolution on it for the purposes of discussion, but even now we do not have the text of that declaration. International communications within the Movement could possibly be improved. That is one aspect. Another thing: we learnt from the statement by the President of the ICRC that the declaration refers to Protocol I. That is quite interesting, because that Protocol is applicable to international armed conflicts. It is in itself an interesting suggestion that this is an international armed conflict. There is more: we also heard that the members of the group that met on

27 November agreed on a fact-finding method for alleged violations. For international armed conflicts, a formal commission has been set up under Article 90 of Additional Protocol I of 1977. Yugoslavia has not accepted the competence of that Commission, but that does not prevent it from asking for the intervention of the Commission. Even other States, for instance Austria, could have made such a request. I note this only to indicate the urgency of bringing the International Fact-Finding Commission, which was elected on 3 June last, to active life. It still has to hold its first formal meeting, and I take this opportunity to urge the Swiss Government, through the records of this meeting, to speed up the procedure to activate this Commission. Even in the Yugoslavian situation is an internal armed conflict, the Commission might perhaps give a hand.

Ambassador J. PESMAZOGLOU (Hellenic Red Cross)

It is natural that the Hellenic Red Cross and the Greek government have closely followed developments in Yugoslavia. Greece and Yugoslavia have traditional ties which have proved beneficial to both countries for long years. We immediately supplied humanitarian assistance to Yugoslavia, and will continue to do so as long as necessary. We support the draft resolution presented by the French and the Italian Red Cross Societies, and, as the President of the French Red Cross has advocated, we support it from the heart. We also commend the ICRC initiative and the initiative of its President to support the Red Cross of Yugoslavia. We congratulate them for it and fully support it. We believe that the Council and the whole Movement will closely follow all developments in Yugoslavia, from the humanitarian viewpoint, not from the political viewpoint.

Dr. D. VENEDICTOV (Alliance)

I fully support the draft resolution submitted by the Red Cross Societies of France and Italy and supported by other speakers. I am impressed by the declaration made by President Sommaruga as well as by the information about the statement of the Red Cross of Yugoslavia, which has been recently made. This draft resolution is very important, and I fully support it. On the other hand, there are a number of other conflicts going on throughout the world, internationally and nationally, and we have just completed the successful Campaign for War Victims. For instance, even in my country there are areas of internal unrest, with fighting between various peoples and even republics. Therefore I suggest another resolution, a very short one, first of all summarizing the Campaign for War Victims, because I do not see any special resolution for that, then repeating this appeal for peace in people's hearts in all conflicts throughout the world. It might be a simple and useful appeal to everyone engaged in battles, conflicts, fighting all over the world. The Secretariat could make this draft resolution very simple. It should be short, and it will carry on from the initiative begun by the French and Italian Red Cross Societies.

Dr. A.A. EL SHERIF (Libyan Red Crescent)

We support wholeheartedly the draft resolution as formulated by the French and Italian Red Cross Societies, simply because it reflects the concern of the Movement regarding the unfortunate events taking place and demonstrates the solidarity of the Yugoslav Red Cross institutions working together to provide assistance for the victims and to create all possible chances for productive dialogue. It is clear from the statement made by the President of the ICRC that the Movement is deeply committed to bringing assistance to the victims in Yugoslavia and at the same time to fostering every opportunity for mutual understanding and peace.

Mr. R. SZTUHLIK (Chairman)

Is there anyone who still wishes to speak on this subject? No? Then I will close the debate on this, as we still have many other subjects to cover.

Mr. C. SOMMARUGA (President of the ICRC)

I have listened with great interest to the many comments on this issue, particularly those referring to the two statements I read. The comments on the statement of 27 November that are really important will be taken up by the ICRC at the next meeting of the parties concerned, on 20 December, in Geneva.

To the delegations that asked to receive the statement of 27 November, which I just read out, I would say that it was sent to all National Societies on 27 November and that it is also available here, at our press desk in the Conference hall, in French and in English.

Mr. R. SZTUHLIK (Chairman)

From the speeches that we have heard it appears that there is wide agreement with the content of the message. There have been a few remarks concerning technical procedures, and additional proposals concerning other conflicts in the world. Further proposals may be made if the Council so wishes. But since I feel that there was no real opposition to its content, I ask whether you adopt by consensus the Budapest Appeal.

Applause

Now we continue with item 18.1 on the agenda.

Mr. Y. SANDOZ (ICRC)

On a point of order, the resolution has not yet been distributed. I think that we should wait for the text of the resolution before taking that point, if you agree.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I withdraw my proposal. We go back to the original order of the agenda, and continue with item 12: "Information Policy of the Movement", to be presented by Mrs. Michèle Mercier and Mr. Raymond Hall.

ITEM 12 ON THE AGENDA:

INFORMATION POLICY OF THE
MOVEMENT

Mrs. Michèle MERCIER (ICRC)

At the last meeting of the Council of Delegates, held in Geneva in 1989, the League and the International Committee of the Red Cross presented a report on the Information Policy of the Movement which had been commissioned by the Council two years earlier, in 1987. Based on the work of the international communications group, made up of communication specialists from the ICRC, the Federation and National Societies, that report aimed to lay systematic and durable foundations for a coherent communication strategy to promote public awareness of the Movement as a whole.

Mr. Raymond HALL (Federation)

The Council of Delegates approved the global communications approach outlined in the 1989 report. In so doing, it provided us with an official basis for building a cohesive information strategy for the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. The promotion of an unified public image for the vast international network of organizations, volunteers and programmes that make up our Movement is a major challenge. Nevertheless, in modern intercontinental communications and heightened competition for media and public attention, it is a challenge that we must meet if we hope to maintain a competitive profile and continue to attract the resources and attention we require to carry out our humanitarian work. If we fail to project a coherent global image, we risk, at best, a serious diminution of our impact and, at worst, confusion and decline.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

While much remains to be achieved, significant progress has been made in the last two years in putting the Movement's Information Policy and the related Identity Programme into practice. As requested in the resolution adopted in 1989, we have prepared this report on achievements to date. We would now like give you a brief introduction to this document.

Mr. R. HALL (Federation)

As foreseen in the 1989 resolution, the ICRC and the Federation set up a twin working group: the Public Support Group, commonly know as the PSG, to promote the implementation of the various aspects of the Information Policy. The PSG met on four occasions. It brought together communications and fund-raising specialists from eight National Societies, the Federation, and the ICRC. Its work and

recommendations have played a major role in advancing us to the point we have reached today. We wish to express here our warm appreciation for the constructive contributions made by our counterparts in that group.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

One of the major contributions of the Public Support Group is a handbook, just off the press and being officially launched today, the "Guide for Red Cross and Red Crescent Communicators". This spells out clearly for communicators in the Movement the aims of our common Information Policy, and gives practical guidance on projecting our common identity through a range of communications techniques.

The American Red Cross undertook the actual drafting of the handbook, in close consultation with the PSG, and we are deeply grateful for their valuable help. The Guide presents, in easily accessible form, the many diverse components of the Information Policy, in such a way that they can be applied at various levels of sophistication and with varying levels of resources.

Mr. R. HALL (Federation)

In the Guide, you will find the Identity Programme highlighted. You will find guidance on the use of our emblems, the red cross and the red crescent, also practical help in drafting communications such as press releases, in dealing with the media, photography, advertising and a variety of other fields. It is not a theoretical work, although it explains the aims of our policy. Above all, it is a tool for use by those communicating the Red Cross/Red Crescent image anywhere in the world. This Guide, we are convinced, is a major step forward.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

But it is now that the really hard work begins. Obviously, the Guide is not an end in itself, its success will depend on the commitment of National Societies to implementing it. Used properly, it will be a powerful vehicle for conveying our identity. We urge National Societies to consider it their property: take advantage of its loose-leaf format to add material specific to your own situation and needs. Give us your comments and criticisms to ensure that the Guide becomes the cornerstone of a dynamic and evolving strategy rather than a book-end or another piece of material. We ask you to give us your suggestions as to how the Guide can be improved and its implementation promoted.

Mr. R. HALL (Federation)

Please remember that the Guide needs more than moral support. Financial resources are needed to produce and distribute French, Spanish, Arabic and other language editions. Funds are required to promote the proper introduction of the Guide to National Society communicators. We hope that you will help and that donor Societies will be able to include in their budgets for next year a provision for promotion of the Guide and, more generally, of the Identity Programme as a whole.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

Here we have a specific model to propose, based on experience earlier in the year. At the invitation of the Kenyan Red Cross Society and with funding from the National Societies of Austria, Germany and the United States, the first Communicators' Workshop was held in Nairobi in September. Thirteen National Societies from English-speaking Africa participated. The event revolved around the Movement's Identity Programme and introduced, experimentally, the Communicator's Guide through a series of practical sessions. The workshop was well received and, although it was a pilot event, we feel that it made an important contribution to promotion of the Identity Programme in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Mr. R. HALL (Federation)

We would like to build on this experience, to plan and organize similar workshops in other parts of the world. These should be scheduled to coincide with publication of the Communicator's Guide in different languages. This brings us again to the question of resources and the need for donors.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

Obviously, the theoretical guidance of the Information Policy, the handsome tool of the Communicator's Guide and practical training in regional workshops are not in themselves enough to give us a united voice. For that, we need a recognized messenger.

Mr. R. HALL (Federation)

Over the past two years, the Federation and the ICRC have invested considerable effort in promoting the Red Cross/Red Crescent Magazine as the publication of the Movement as a whole. Initially a League publication, the magazine is now published by the two Geneva institutions under the supervision of a joint editorial board. For the present year, the ICRC has raised the level of its financial contribution to cover half of the Magazine's production costs. Overall circulation

of the English, French and Spanish editions has risen to over 60,000 copies for each of the three issues produced per year.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

With the exception of a generous contribution from the Spanish Red Cross, the Movement as a whole has done little so far to support the Magazine, either financially or by taking responsibility for distribution nationally, despite generally favourable reactions from readers. As a result, the publication's potential as a true voice of the Movement has not been fully realized and its long-term future cannot be guaranteed.

Mr. R. HALL (Federation)

We urge National Societies to be more active in funding and distributing the Magazine, so as to enhance its influence and to safeguard its future. Increased commitment from National Societies would ensure better quality, greater frequency and wider distribution, three important aims, if we want to be sure that our common Information Policy will survive and flourish.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

Closely linked to the Information Policy of the Movement and related image-building activities have been the Council of Delegates' plans for two major events, the Campaign for the protection of victims of war and the 1992 Universal Exposition in Seville. These events, featured separately on your agenda, disseminate our humanitarian message to an exceptionally wide audience and provide a prominent platform for World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day activities.

Mr. R. HALL (Federation)

In view of the volume and complexity of the work involved in coordinating major special events, the ICRC and the Federation decided to establish the International Promotion Bureau, the IPB, which began work in April 1990, with a mandate running through the end of the Seville Exposition in late 1992. You have already heard reports on the achievements of the Campaign for the Victims of War, coordinated by the IPB, and of its many lessons for the future. While international campaigns on this scale cannot be organized regularly they contain useful pointers for successful implementation of our Information Policy.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

We would like to highlight here the opportunities for using World Red Cross/Red Crescent Day to transmit our message to an almost limitless public. Activities organized by National Societies around the world in connection with 8 May 1991 demonstrated the tremendous capacity for action that exists within the Movement, given proper coordination and advance planning. The possibility of using this day as a launching-pad for our united message worldwide must be recognized and fully exploited. To do this, we need to prepare well in advance and to concentrate our efforts around an agreed theme.

Mr. R. HALL (Federation)

The Public Support Group has recommended not only that annual themes should be determined a minimum of three years in advance, but also that each period of three years should have a general theme. This would facilitate planning and enhance the results.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

As you know, the theme for 1992 is "Preventing disasters". Every National Society has received World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day materials highlighting the slogan "United against disasters". It is suggested that the overall theme for the following three years, from 1993 to 1995 inclusive, should be: "Dignity for all", with the annual sub-themes: "Respecting human life" (1993), "Respecting others" (1994), and "Respecting our planet" (1995). We have deliberately tried to keep these themes very general, so that each National Society can adapt them or even sub-title them to fit its own particular needs and programmes. We hope that they will meet with the approval of the Council of Delegates, and that a planning progress can be started to enable us to give the greatest effect to each theme.

Mr. R. HALL (Federation)

Launching the Information Policy and associated project in the field of special events has brought many beneficial results, in the promotion of the Identity Programme, the production of the Communicator's Guide and associated training efforts, the promotion of Red Cross/Red Crescent Magazine, and the organization of World Red Cross/Red Crescent Day. While interesting and even exciting ideas have been put into effect, many of them are still very precarious, through lack of financial resources or full commitment on the part of all members of the Movement. The next two years must therefore be a period of consolidation and of further exploration of areas hitherto unfamiliar, notably that of international sponsorship.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

The future will depend largely on the willingness of those National Societies which command substantial resources to support more actively the formation of a single image and the improvement of the techniques necessary for our success in the increasingly competitive world of communications. National Societies, however, are not merely donors; and not only donors have a role to play. The first essential is commitment to building a simple image and articulating a simple humanitarian message.

Mr. R. HALL (Federation)

The second essential is coordination. This presupposes a source of expertise, such as that provided by the Public Support Group, to advise on information programmes and sponsorship internationally. Such a group must be given terms of reference and a composition enabling it to provide appropriate support for implementation of our Information Policy worldwide. We hope that we can count on National Societies to help us constitute a group of this kind to continue the valuable work of the PSG.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

Given these two key elements of commitment and coordination, the Movement can meet the challenge of building a public image and of voicing a powerful and coherent humanitarian message.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

You have received a draft resolution, CD/12/Res.1, "Information Policy of the Movement". The floor is open. Since many delegates will be leaving this afternoon, I ask you to limit your comments to 3 minutes, if possible.

Mrs. M.A.A. HARMON (Brazilian Red Cross)

My country has the third largest TV network in the world, and we learned early that anything that the Brazilian Red Cross or that anybody else tries to do needs the aid of the media. And to get help from the media it is not enough to have the credibility of the symbol: you must also have the press kits and all the promotional material. I praise the efforts of our group, I recognize the importance of their work and the high quality of everything presented by them. I would like to make two comments. One, is that we have experts back home who will say whether the

slogans are appropriate or not for translation into each of our languages. I find it difficult to decide, today, on a slogan for the Brazilian Red Cross three years ahead. We must have a slogan for all National Societies. The other thing that, I am afraid, shocked me, is that we go from talking about a dispute 250 kilometres from here, we talk about resolutions on famine and on child-soldiers, then suddenly we have talk of high-class material. I was reminded of Mrs. Magnuson's remark yesterday, that when you have a project like that, you should first find the funding. What choice do we have? Are we going to apply our money in one direction? Are we going to get funds from another direction? It is extremely important to involve the media, to have promotional material, it is important to have that group. I wonder perhaps if, within the Movement, we could have promotional material that was not so expensive and, at the same time, if we could postpone choosing the slogans until our people back home have had a chance to advise us. Just from looking at them, I know that the first one would be very difficult to translate into Portuguese; does it work if you translate it into Hindi or Chinese? We used to be given a slogan in the Executive Council and we generally had some time to think about it. We wholly support the group and its work, which is of high quality, but we agree with Mrs. Magnuson that we must have funds before we embark on something which requires money.

Mr. Jon TURPIN (Canadian Red Cross)

We much appreciate the joint operation between the ICRC and the Federation in the International Promotion Bureau. We like to see those two bodies cooperating in this way. It concerns us that the IPB mandate expires at the end of 1992 and that it is not quite clear in the report or in the resolution whether the IPB then disappears. We hope that the IPB will continue.

The draft resolution, paragraph 2, lists three annual sub-themes, for 1993, 1994 and 1995. We agree with the 1993 one, "Respecting human life". We have slight difficulty with 1994, "Respecting others", because we do not quite know what that means. The first one is respecting humans; is the second one "Respecting pussy cats"? We would hope not. Concerning the third one, for 1995, I should point out that we have serious political problems within our country. The slogan implies that we should become environmental activists. Though we may wish to do this on a personal basis, we in Canada do not feel that this is a suitable role for the Red Cross. Protection of the environment is a major political issue in our country and we cannot become involved in it without becoming involved in the politics. So we stay clear of it, and I would like it confirmed that the sub-theme, "Respecting our planet", does not mean that our Movement is going into the environmental business, like "Greenpeace".

Dr. M. MOKETE (Lesotho Red Cross)

Our delegation praises the work done by the group that has come up with the Information Policy of the Movement. They have certainly done a very good job, and the way ahead has been well prepared. The training so far provided has been very useful and the information package for use by the Societies will certainly be helpful. We have no problem with the themes proposed. After all, it has been said that the themes can be adopted and then adapted to a given situation. Whatever the language that translates the given sub-themes, we feel that there is leeway for adapting them. If there should be any difficulties, at least for the years after 1993, modifications can always be made. Our delegation wholeheartedly supports the draft resolution.

H.R.H. Princess Margriet (Netherlands Red Cross)

I would like to add to the comments by the Canadian Red Cross. We also have problems with the sub-themes, because that for 1993, "Respecting human life", could have other connotations which might cause confusion and would not, in my view, be a really Red Cross matter. Could not we just leave it as "Dignity for all", and scratch the sub-themes?

Dr. Abdel Rahman AL-AWAZI (Kuwait Red Crescent)

I wish to thank the group for the excellent preparation of this item. The guidelines that we have is something we can well use and we hope that we can translate it into other working languages. I would like to reiterate what the Canadian Red Cross said: the topics are so close, I think we should know that it is not easy to interpret these things into working methodology; and repeating the same thing year after year might confuse people. The first one is excellent, and in fact includes the others. The other two should be completely changed. We should have a really challenging yearly theme that will move people. If themes are repeated, we are going to lose the purpose of the whole Movement that we wish to celebrate.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

An amendment has been purposed by the Netherlands Red Cross. Would the authors of the draft resolution accept that proposal, that is, to delete the part of paragraph 2 beginning with: "to divide this overall theme" and ending "Respecting our planet"? What is the reaction of the authors of the draft?

Mr. R. HALL (Federation)

The members of the Public Support Group considered it quite important to decide on themes in advance. We could plan individual annual themes as well as the overall theme. There is clearly difficulty in getting complete agreement on any annual theme if we want to maintain a variety of themes. We would like, if possible, to try and maintain the individual annual themes, bearing in mind that they can be adapted. I would like to point out that the titles in question are not slogans, but overall themes. The slogans for each year would be worked out in consultation with public relations experts, bearing in mind their translation into various languages. We think it would be advantageous to try and agree on annual themes rather than just the overall theme.

Mrs. M. MERCIER (ICRC)

The presentation of this resolution followed the advice of the professional people in the Public Support Group, which was to offer both flexibility and proper planning in the organization of public events linked to World Red Cross/Red Crescent Day. That was the case for the three-year period which was adopted two years ago and why we present these themes now. If the wording -and we can understand that there are differences among National Societies around the world- if the wording causes difficulties, then we can envisage accepting the Netherlands Red Cross Society's amendment, to delete the detailed proposals for 1993, 1994 and 1995. But I would point out to the National Societies that this would not necessarily solve the problem, since any new themes proposed might give rise to the same reaction. We have to choose between flexibility and dropping the themes that we have proposed today.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I feel that there is serious concern on the part of a few National Societies as to the rigidity of the topics suggested, not the principle of having such topics, to be selected or even suggested later. May I take your comments as a show of flexibility, in the sense that individual topics will arise, but that for the Council at present it is enough to decide on the overall theme, "Dignity for all"? Do you agree with the draft in this sense?

Mr. Markku NISKALA (Finnish Red Cross)

In view of the comments from different National Societies, could we add a few words to point 1/2, so that it would read as follows: "to divide this overall theme into annual sub-themes as appropriate for each National Society". But then we should leave the three themes as they stand.

Mr. P. STENBÄCK (Federation)

To answer a question from the Canadian Red Cross Society, concerning the future of the International Promotion Bureau (IPB): as plans stand at the moment (they are being discussed between the Committee and the Federation), the IPB will cease to exist by the end of 1992, when the Universal Exhibition in Seville is over. However, the Federation, as I expressed in the League General Assembly, feels that there is a need to create a better international profile through campaigns of the kind which we have been discussing. There is a need to cross borders, as I said, by campaigning and fund-raising. Unless we conserve the knowledge we have gained, and learn from it, unless we become truly international in this international age, then our image, and with it our Movement, will suffer. We have excellent basic elements to build on, and we should not fail to make full use of them. I invite all National Societies to cooperate, also to put pressure on the Geneva institutions in these matters. There are fears of misuse of the mandate, and of damaging the existing fund-raising structure. But we must be courageous and venture further along the lines through the International Promotion Bureau. It will be a great pity if we lose the impetus built up over the last two years.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I would like to ask whether, with the amendment proposed by the Finnish Red Cross, which I will read out, we can find a solution. If not, I will ask the group to draft a final text.

Mr. P. KELLER (ICRC)

I would like to refer to the remarks made by the Secretary General of the Federation. The ICRC also feels that the Bureau referred to should close at the end of 1992, as envisaged. If anything new is proposed, then of course we should be very careful that the funding is properly organized.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Having heard all the comments, I propose that the Federation, the ICRC, the Brazilian Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross and the Finnish Red Cross prepare a final text which we could adopt by consensus. In this way we could gain some time: perhaps in a short time we can have the text and accept it. If you approve of this procedure, we can proceed to the next point on the agenda.

ITEM 13 ON THE AGENDA:

PARTICIPATION BY THE MOVEMENT IN
THE 1992 UNIVERSAL EXHIBITION IN
SEVILLE

Mrs. Carmen MESTRE (Spanish Red Cross)

I would like to remind all our colleagues from the International Movement that the decision to participate in the Universal Exhibition in Seville was taken by the Council of Delegates in Geneva in October 1989. To give you a general idea of this Universal Exhibition, it will include participation by more than 100 countries, 21 international organizations, practically all of them related to the United Nations, and all the regions of Spain. From the moment that this decision was taken, it was considered that the best solution would be for the President of the National Society of Spain to be head of the Red Cross pavilion. This meant that my predecessor as President of the Spanish Red Cross was the first Commissioner of the "Expo". His term of office came to an end at the Council of Delegates in October 1990. At that time, the Presidents of the ICRC and of the International Federation asked me to continue with the work as Commissioner of the International Red Cross pavilion. This meant a new type of work, based first of all on the need to reduce as much as possible the construction costs and the operating budget for the pavilion. A project had already been adopted and work had begun with a proposed budget far below any realistic figure. Under "Offers for construction of pavilion", on page 4 of the document, you will see that the companies' budgets were between 7 and 8.5 million dollars. Naturally, we chose companies that would carry out the construction for a lower budget, but we found that this was not enough. We had to revise the project, and we came up with 4.5 million dollars, as you can see on page 5 of the report. This is the total estimate for construction. At the same time, the contents of the pavilion were put to tender, that is, what would be inside the pavilion, what aspects of the International Movement would be represented. Early in 1991 tenders were sought, and the company that presented the lowest tender was accepted, with a limit on quality, because we wanted our project to interest all the visitors to the Expo. At present construction is well advanced and we will have a pavilion 3,000 square metres in area, on 3 floors. It will be white and red in colour, part completely closed in and part in the open air.

(Slides)

This is the model of our pavilion. Here are the entrance and the side. You enter from where there is a ramp. There are the two parts that I have mentioned, one in the open air, and a closed part at the back of the pavilion.

Here is the back of the pavilion, completely covered, and containing two ramps where visitors will see exhibits relating to the main aims of the Red Cross.

I would like to tell you about the inside of the pavilion. In the closed part of the building, where the visitors enter, they hear human heartbeats over the loudspeakers, so they understand that many people are waiting for them, welcoming them. They then proceed to the hall, about 25 at a time, and go through the hall in darkness: this is to make them feel the difficulties of the work of the Red Cross. After the first ramp, they will see a big screen continuously showing natural disasters, pictures of volcanos erupting, floods, etc., reflected in large mirrors. At the same time, they will hear the sounds relevant to the images as they turn around, they will see explosions and hear the sound of bombing, while on the ceiling armed conflicts would be projected. They will also be shown harrowing and striking pictures to move them, photographs of victims. In the next hall they will see the refugees that have to leave their homes and their countries. The refugees will appear to be walking towards the visitors, almost to be able to reach out to them from the pictures. From this first section, which is in semi-darkness, visitors will go to a second, well-lighted hall, displaying illuminated symbols of our Movement, together with information on the National Societies and the people who give protection and assistance under the signs of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent. The first half of the tour focuses on two fundamental aspects, thinking and action: thinking related to the ideals and Fundamental Principles of our Movement, presented in the three working languages, and, at the same time, the Movement's activities. When the visitors move on, they will find information on the National Societies that are members of the International Movement. Here I would remind you that you have received a letter from President Sommaruga and Dr. Villarroel, asking National Societies to provide information on their characteristic activities, for display on the various panels in the pavilion. Finally, they will be able to use personal computers to discover specific details on activities of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. This information will be supplied by National Societies. Visitors can leave their names and addresses if they wish to be contacted by the National Societies of their countries, to become volunteers. A number of hostesses will explain to visitors any aspect of the exhibit they find specially interesting.

Imagine that you are not a member of our Movement. You arrive at the Expo and find a large number of pavilions, so you are not going to stay long in the Red Cross pavilion. How can we make sure that everybody wants to visit the Red Cross pavilion? This is in your hands: you took the decision to participate in the Expo, now it is up to us all to ensure that our presence should be really effective. For this, we rely on volunteers. It is not necessary for visitors to Seville or to the Expo site to go to our pavilion in order to know about the Red Cross Movement: they will meet volunteers, in the streets and in the Expo, who will explain the Movement and thus provide encouragement to visit our pavilion. Please, National Societies, send us some volunteers!

Joanna MacLean is coordinating the volunteer programme: please contact her. The volunteers should be an image of what we would like our Movement to be; they should be young people, not more than 25 years of age, with some experience of work within the Movement (a minimum of one year). They must have a knowledge of first aid, also assisting the public, and speak Spanish and another world

language, English or another language, but a knowledge of at least two languages. We want to present a very favourable image of the Movement and the pavilion. The image, as reflected in the different races, languages and origin of our volunteers, will be diverse and dynamic, also professional and international. Only if the programme of volunteers functions well can the optimum image of our Movement be conveyed. We have places where the volunteers can stay during the Expo, with free accommodation and a daily allowance. We ask National Societies to finance their travel costs only. Perhaps National Societies of the Third World could be helped to pay the travel costs of their volunteers. About 165 international volunteers should have their travel financed by the National Societies, 90 volunteers could receive some assistance towards their travel, and for about 20 other volunteers we would like to receive contributions from National Societies. I request your help and support. Joanna MacLean has spoken to about 70 National Societies, of which 66 have shown interest in being represented in the pavilion: about 15 National Societies from the Americas, 9 from the Middle East and North Africa, 14 from Asia and the Pacific Region, 10 from Africa and 18 from Europe. We shall continue talks with these National Societies so as to secure as many as possible. What we need now is the support that the International Movement has urged, so this project can go ahead. Here I would like to mention the excellent work done by Michèle Mercier and Raymond Hall, by the International Promotion Bureau, and by Mario Fetz, from the ICRC, who has helped us with the financing aspects of the pavilion. The Spanish Red Cross has taken the risk of underwriting this pavilion, but I trust that it will not have to pay for it, since our funds should go first and foremost to helping the victims. Various measures have been taken so that in November 1992, when the Expo is over, there will hopefully be no financial problems. I thank Joanna MacLean, who is in charge of the volunteer programme (I ask you to contact her). The visit of the ICRC President and the President of the Federation to Madrid, for talks with the Spanish Government, has had beneficial repercussions on the organization of the work, and I would like to express my gratitude to them. The sale of the pavilion after the Expo is over will help us to finance its costs.

Mr. C. SOMMARUGA (President of the ICRC)

After the visit I made to Madrid last week with President Villarroel, I would like to reaffirm my admiration for and confidence in the President of the Spanish Red Cross, Mrs. Carmen Mestre, for her wholehearted commitment to the success of this event, which is of major importance for the Movement, our participation in the World Exhibition in Seville. Four points seem to me to be crucial.

1. **Funding:** The funding of our pavilion has been left open by the different Council of Delegates meetings that have dealt with the question. Enormous efforts have been made by the Spanish Red Cross to find the necessary funding through sponsorship, involving both the Spanish Government and the Andalusian Government, but this is not enough, it does not guarantee the full financing of the project. A single contribution of 400,000 Swiss francs has been made by the Spanish Red Cross, but this is not enough. All

the National Societies must think over what they can do and how they can contribute to financing the project.

2. **Content:** You have heard a lot about the content of this pavilion. Things appear to be going fairly well, and we should thank the Spanish Red Cross for some creative ideas. The International Promotion Bureau and Mr. Maurice Graber will be assisting Mrs. Mestre until the exhibition opens.
3. **Volunteers:** I would like to emphasize the volunteer programme. Each National Society should commit itself to providing volunteers. The documentation distributed is comprehensive, and the opportunity should be seized by the National Societies to enable these young volunteers to be present.
4. **World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day:** Next year in particular, 8 May 1992, World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day, will be a very special occasion for the whole Movement. From Seville, a message could go out to the world. Here in Budapest, we have had to cancel our International Conference, and at this moment governments and the international community are asking "What does this Movement mean?" We should seize the opportunity of the Expo in Seville to proclaim our Movement's message of humanity.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I am opening discussion on the report by the President of the Spanish Red Cross. There is no resolution to be adopted on the subject, we will just exchange information on the best way to prepare for the Seville Exhibition, which provides a great challenge for the Movement.

Applause

Mrs. C. MESTRE (Spanish Red Cross)

As a Spaniard, I will be glad to receive all the visitors in Spain. I worry about not being able to organize the pavilion well enough, and I hope you will all understand and help us.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I am sure that we will be delighted to enjoy your hospitality there.

ITEM 14 ON THE AGENDA:

DISSEMINATION

14.1 Study on Respect for and Dissemination of the Fundamental Principles

Mr. P. KELLER (ICRC)

The Fundamental Principles together form a code of ethics defining the specific nature and identity of our Movement. Regarding the postponement of the XXVI International Conference: while it is up to the States to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law, implementation of the Fundamental Principles is primarily the duty of each component and each member of the Movement. As for the States parties to the Geneva Conventions, they have the obligation to respect at all times the commitment of the ICRC, the Federation and the National Societies to these Principles: that obligation was accepted at the 1986 International Red Cross Conference, when the Movement's Statutes were adopted. This undertaking is particularly important at a time when some governments are becoming increasingly involved in providing humanitarian assistance, with the help of their National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies, to victims in countries affected by conflicts or disturbances. All our efforts must therefore focus on promoting sound understanding and application of the Fundamental Principles in the Movement's work. The study on the subject, launched at the initiative of our host, the Hungarian Red Cross, aims to define more clearly the meaning and ideals of the Principles so as to facilitate their practical implementation. The study in no way calls into question the present wording of the Principles, as laid down in the Movement's Statutes, it simply seeks to bring about greater compliance with them. The document entitled "Respect for and dissemination of the Fundamental Principles: second intermediary report on the ongoing study" gives the results of a survey carried out among the National Societies by the ICRC in conjunction with the Federation, in order to benefit from their experience in implementing the Principles. Replies to the questionnaire make clear that, although some of the Fundamental Principles require further interpretation, real difficulties arise in their implementation. The summary section of the report contains a review of replies.

As Chairman of the Working Group on respect for and dissemination of the Fundamental Principles, I assure you that we are particularly concerned by the seriousness of the problems encountered by some National Societies, subjected to pressure that undermines their independence. Such pressures include, for instance, the appointment of government officials to leading posts such as that of Secretary General, amendments to the Society Statutes in order to exercise greater control, the granting of subsidies earmarked for activities chosen by the State without the National Societies having any say in how such activities are carried out, or the use of the Red Cross or the Red Crescent for the purposes of foreign policy. It is time for our Movement to face up to this reality. It must support these National Societies in their quest for independence, so that they will be able to comply with

the code of ethics we call the Fundamental Principles. This is the only way to ensure that the humanitarian message is properly understood and that our humanitarian mission is fulfilled in accordance with these Principles.

The Working Group therefore submits a draft resolution, included at the end of the report and constituting an important part of it. If adopted, it will provide the National Societies, the ICRC and the Federation with a sound basis for resisting any pressure that may prevent full compliance with the Fundamental Principles, and make it possible to continue consultation and to submit a report to the next Council of Delegates meeting.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

The draft resolution CD/14.1/Res.1 is entitled "Respect for and dissemination of the Fundamental Principles". The debate is open.

Mrs. Izabela GUTFETER (Polish Red Cross)

The Polish Red Cross is very satisfied with the document on "Respect for and dissemination of the Fundamental Principles" and I congratulate the Working Group that prepared the report -it has done its job well. Dissemination of the Fundamental Principles is a vital and urgent question for the National Societies. The Principles form a valuable instrument of education for our members in their practical work; they provide a code of ethics for attaining our goals, especially with young people. Unfortunately, we live in a very politicised world. That is why we must be more sensitive to the values represented by our Movement. There is also the proliferation of aid organizations, sometimes short-lived, and not always guaranteeing impartial and purely humanitarian action in favour of victims. We must enable all members of our Movement to achieve better understanding of our principles, and we must convey a more accurate image to the media, the public and governments. The report contains many interesting ideas on this subject. Work on the question should continue. We approve the draft resolution on the subject and we hope that all other delegates will agree.

Countess of LIMERICK (British Red Cross)

We warmly welcome the report, which contains a number of very useful proposals for better application of the Fundamental Principles. They are great unifying factors for the Movement, and are particularly important in this period of great changes. Recent world events demand an updated commentary, to help with interpretation and implementation. Therefore we support the resolution, particularly point 5. The study should continue, and National Societies that have not yet answered the questionnaire should be re-invited to do so, to enable us to produce an updated commentary on interpretation and implementation of the Principles, to complement

Jean Pictet's commentary. The British Red Cross took part in the survey, which it found very useful, particularly recently, when there has been conflict in the world, and also in adopting a policy in our own Society. We thank all those involved, and urge adoption of the resolution.

Major A. HUG (Bangladesh Red Crescent)

The Bangladesh delegation thanks the ICRC for the extensive process of consultation with the National Societies and for preparing this detailed report, describing the problems and difficulties faced by some National Societies in implementing the Fundamental Principles, particularly the principles of neutrality and independence. The report faithfully reflects the consensus of the working group when it says that National Societies often find themselves unable to cope in situations when respect for the Principles is jeopardized because of external pressures or ignorance of some important aspect. We fully support the draft resolution and endorse the proposal that further study on this very important issue should be continued. One small suggestion on the draft resolution, which encourages the ICRC, in cooperation with the International Federation, to ensure respect for and implementation of the Principles. But without the support of governments it is impracticable to ensure proper implementation of the resolution. I therefore suggest that in paragraph 3, in the operative part of the resolution, the words "and government" should be inserted after "National Society". The resolution would then read: "encourages the ICRC, in cooperation with the International Federation, to continue the consultation by holding extensive talks with National Society and government officials", and further as it appears in the draft.

Ambassador R. PAOLINI (Italian Red Cross)

The study we are discussing is certainly important, especially for those engaged in activities for disseminating the Fundamental Principles and international humanitarian law. The Italian Red Cross organizes seminars all over the country at provincial, regional and national levels; even at international level, we host seminars on the Fundamental Principles. This fine report probably contains all that we need for these seminars, and its use is mainly a matter of interpretation. The results of the study are extremely important.

General R.C. ESPINO (Philippine Red Cross)

My delegation supports the proposed resolution, with the following observations. We fully agree with the suggestion of the Bangladesh delegation that we should include governments when it comes to dissemination. Red Cross personnel know what the Principles of the Movement are, but this knowledge is obviously not shared by the governments who are signatories to the Geneva Conventions.

Moreover, no government should appoint the Secretary General: this act should be neutral. Government officials may serve voluntarily on boards, but the Secretary General should be a Red Cross professional.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

As I have no more speakers on my list, I ask Mr. Pierre Keller to reply, especially on the proposal of the Bangladesh Red Crescent.

Mr. P. KELLER (ICRC)

I thank the delegates for their comments, and particularly the suggestion by the delegation of Bangladesh. I would point out that it is the Movement which is bound by the Principles, which are the ethical basis for our work. Governments of course undertake to allow the components of the Movement to observe and apply the Principles, but they are not themselves bound to apply them. Clearly it would be advantageous for the Movement to disseminate the Principles as much as possible with governmental bodies and authorities, but I hesitate to include formally in our resolution the notion that we should consult with governments. We must disseminate the Principles to governmental authorities among others; I do not think that we should include governments in the work we do within the Movement itself.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I move that the draft resolution concerning the commitment of the whole Movement itself to the Fundamental Principles, in the original text, be carried unanimously.

Applause

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

Mr. P. KELLER (ICRC)

I present the report drafted by the ICRC and the Federation for the XXVI International Conference, which we are examining as a report to the Council of Delegates. The document reviews the many dissemination activities of the ICRC, the Federation, and, especially, the National Societies. We urge you to read it carefully. Humanitarian activities in armed conflicts should always be carried out in a context where the basic rules of international humanitarian law and the obligations they create are known, where the beneficiaries are aware of who is

bringing them help and why, and in accordance with what code of ethics. It can never be said often enough: if international humanitarian law is to be respected, it must be widely known. If operations conducted by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are to be supported and accepted, they must be properly understood. Countless activities intended to spread knowledge of international humanitarian law and the principles and work of the Movement have been undertaken in every continent over the last fifteen years. Today, there is real awareness within the Movement of the importance of this work. As for the States, they are gradually coming to realize how essential dissemination is. Despite this progress, international humanitarian law is still not sufficiently well known. The events in Yugoslavia and in the Gulf, to name only two recent cases, have demonstrated both the continued relevance of humanitarian law and the combatants' lack of familiarity with its provisions. Civilians, too, are frequently unaware of the rights to which they are entitled and the obligations by which they are bound. Only too often, it takes tragic events to make journalists and the general public aware of the ultimate purpose of humanitarian law. Red Cross and Red Crescent activities are sometimes misunderstood or, even worse, the emblem is abused. On the basis of their experience over the past fifteen years and an evaluation of the three successive programmes of action for dissemination adopted since 1977, the ICRC and the Federation invite you to adopt the Guidelines for the 90s. These Guidelines provide common ground for all those involved in dissemination. They propose some global priorities for the coming decade, while maintaining the necessary degree of flexibility to ensure that this humanitarian message is tailored to each cultural context and to the resources available. Given the significance and the magnitude of the challenges still before us, we must redouble our efforts to promote and support the work of disseminating international humanitarian law and the principles, ideals and activities of the Movement. It is in this spirit that the ICRC and the Federation submit a draft resolution recalling, in particular, the basic objectives of dissemination and endorsing the Guidelines for the 90s.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

The draft resolution is CD/14.2/Res.1, "Dissemination of international humanitarian law and of the principles and ideals of the Movement".

Mrs. Joan COCKBURN (New Zealand Red Cross)

The New Zealand Red Cross Society agrees that it is critical to spread knowledge of international humanitarian law and the Fundamental Principles of the Movement. Without knowledge we cannot expect that this law and these Principles would be applied: humanitarian values would be threatened and violated. We therefore strongly support action to improve that knowledge, and the proposed Guidelines will prove of great assistance. Ten years ago, a dissemination advisory committee was established by the action of the New Zealand government and of the Society. It includes members from three government departments (finance, education and

external relations), health professionals and university lawyers and philosophers. It provides support for dissemination work in five areas. One is the armed forces, where the Society participates in financing training exercises. Second comes the training of National Society disseminators and delegates, generally with the valuable help of the ICRC and the International Federation. Third are schools, with the Society's assistance in the preparation of excellent teaching materials, which draw up guidelines. Fourth are the universities, mainly the faculties of law, but there is a growing realization that the teachers of philosophy, medicine and nursing can also make good use of the materials. Fifth comes the public, as in the Victims of War Campaign, though specific phenomena, such as the experiences of nurses and doctors during missions abroad, and especially the Gulf war, attract greater attention and, often, scepticism. The Guidelines represent good practical advice and support for our efforts: we support the draft resolution.

Dr. G. RUEDA MONTAÑA (Colombian Red Cross)

The basic reason for non-application of international humanitarian law is ignorance. The Colombian Red Cross has worked to disseminate the Fundamental Principles and has seen clearly the results of this work. Education and the dissemination of international humanitarian law and the Fundamental Principles of our Movement is the best way to achieve peace. The new Colombian constitution contains an article clearly stating the importance of international humanitarian law. For the Colombian Red Cross Society at this historic moment, the highest priority is the dissemination of these norms. To this end, and with the support of the ICRC and the Spanish Red Cross, we wish to create an international institute of humanitarian law, to train disseminators on a large scale. The major universities in the country have been contacted on this subject and are eager to make the teaching of international humanitarian law a part of their curricula, especially in their legal faculties. We have also received support from the government and especially from the Ministry of Defence. You all know that dissemination in the armed forces is of basic importance. We hope to sign an agreement with the Ministry of Defence to make sure that international humanitarian law is disseminated in the armed forces. This subject is absolutely vital to the work of our international Movement, and I ask the delegates to approve the draft resolution.

Dr. A.R. AL-AWAZI (Kuwait Red Crescent)

I wish to comment on the report on this very vital and interesting part of our Movement, one governing the whole of human relationships. How much do we, as Societies, do to disseminate these laws? Maybe we have tried in schools, sometimes we even go to the military; but it is only when you see these laws actually being broken in conflict that you care. We wonder what can be done, if there is anything that will make this world more humane. We must make sure that during conflicts, specifically where military action is involved and where occupation occurs, these laws are really observed. Unfortunately, when we try to apply these laws, those concerned, like the ICRC, are not allowed to play any part. Kuwait has

suffered terrible violations of these laws during the invasion and occupation. It may be wondered whether these laws are real: when needed they are not there. Under occupation, at a check-point, you never know whether you are going to be killed or survive, when it is a risk even to drive an ambulance to a hospital, when you see sick people deprived of all care, when the law of the jungle prevails, when a single soldier can dispose of your life, and when execution becomes the only sentence no matter how trivial the crime, then you wonder whether we have done enough to disseminate these laws. We still have a long way to go, despite all we have heard. A much more active method of dissemination is needed. Every Society should have a timetable, and dissemination should be on the curriculum of every school, because if we do not indoctrinate people in these principles and these laws, we cannot ever expect them to be implemented. Therefore while supporting the resolution, I would like to introduce an amendment to paragraph 3 of the preamble. After "stressing once again that responsibility", I propose that we add "noting with regret the violation of these laws in many instances and particularly in cases of armed conflicts", and then the paragraph would continue. The reason for this resolution, we know, is because these laws are no longer being applied. I hope that the Council accepts my amendment and that the new phrase will be added to the preamble.

Ambassador R. PAOLINI (Italian Red Cross)

First of all, thanks are due to Mr. Keller for the interesting report he has just presented. The Italian Red Cross reaffirms its concern for international humanitarian law. We are extremely interested in disseminating the rules of international humanitarian law. I agree with what the delegate from Kuwait has pointed out. Dissemination is often carried out by those studying international humanitarian law. But do we teach the standards, the norms of behaviour, which are violated daily? The more international human rights are violated, the more we need to improve our dissemination activities. For our future work, the resolution is very good and should be supported by the Council of Delegates. This is why I addressed the National Societies under point 3 specifically, but also the States, under point 2.

Czechoslovak Red Cross

On behalf of the Czechoslovak Red Cross I would like to join in the general expression of gratitude to the Hungarian Red Cross for all the hard work they have put into making our meetings successful and pleasant. I would like to stress the importance of this resolution on dissemination of international humanitarian law and of the principles and ideals of our Movement, particularly because the Czechoslovak Red Cross is one of the Societies that was unable fully to develop dissemination activities in the past. We find these new Guidelines for the 90s a very useful and necessary tool in our present situation. Since the changes in 1989, we have made substantial progress in disseminating international humanitarian law, especially within the armed forces. This has been achieved through the initiative of the Czechoslovak Red Cross, with extensive support from the ICRC. We are

now organizing a series of lectures and courses for our own members, for our staff and especially for our young people. For this also, we are receiving a lot of help from the ICRC, for which we are very grateful. One interesting project of our National Society was a course on international and national issues of the Red Cross; this was organized by the mayors of towns in Slovakia. About 140 people attended this event, an important one for the Czechoslovak Red Cross, since in communicating our message and our mission to the right local authorities, we were also able to obtain support for our day-to-day work. As to the future, we hope to succeed in establishing an interministerial committee and an intersectorial committee, to include the Czechoslovak Red Cross, in order to promote the dissemination of international humanitarian law and the principles and ideals of the Movement. The Guidelines will prove very useful, and we strongly support the resolution.

Mr. M. GOOD (Irish Red Cross)

Recently, the Irish Red Cross organized an international humanitarian law seminar, in conjunction with the Northern Ireland branch of the British Red Cross. I would like to acknowledge the assistance we received from the British Red Cross and from the International Committee and the Federation. This may be of interest to other, smaller National Societies who may not have the resources to organize such an event. This method of cooperation shows that the resources exist to publicize our message, particularly to our national governments and to the military and legal professions.

Mr. P. KELLER (ICRC)

The suggestion made by the Kuwaiti delegation would be quite acceptable to us. In fact, we consider it a good idea. Without giving specific wording here, we could say something like: "deploring that international humanitarian law is not universally applied in armed conflicts". We would like to review the exact draft; but the point is a good one and we concur with it.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

May I then take it that the Kuwaiti amendment is accepted and that the exact wording is only a question of drafting? In that case, I move acceptance of the draft resolution with the amendment proposed by the Kuwaiti Red Crescent, by acclamation.

Applause

ITEM 15 ON THE AGENDA:

THE MOVEMENT AND REFUGEES

Mr. P. STENBÄCK (Federation)

Ulrike von Buchwald of the Refugees Department of the International Federation will introduce this subject. I would like, at the beginning, to stress that the draft resolution and the associated work has been done in good cooperation with the International Committee and that we also consulted the UNHCR, since the resolution was originally prepared for the International Conference. Thus, the proposal before you has the agreement of the Office of the High Commissioner. We would have presented it, on behalf of the Movement, to the International Conference; now, we present it to the Council of Delegates.

Mrs. Ulrike von BUCHWALD (Federation)

I have the honour to make this introduction, not only on behalf of the Federation, but also of the ICRC, with which we prepared the report initially intended for the XXVI International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and which we are now examining as a report to the Council of Delegates. The refugee problem is a matter that concerns us all. Here in Hungary, at this very moment, we are witnessing the plight of refugees arriving from Yugoslavia. They are being received with great generosity and competence by the Hungarian authorities and the National Red Cross Society. Today, there are some 17 million refugees the world over, twice as many as ten years ago, when the XXIV International Conference, in Manila, adopted the resolution on International Red Cross aid to refugees. The plight of refugees is the major problem facing the international community today, and a considerable challenge to our Movement as a whole. Since the Red Cross was created, its humanitarian mission has been to come to the aid of the victims of armed conflict and, by the same token, of refugees and displaced persons. The Movement's role in assisting refugees, displaced persons and returnees was clearly defined for the first time in Manila in 1981. The statement of policy accompanying the resolution adopted on that occasion states in its first paragraph that the Red Cross should, at all time, be ready to assist and to protect refugees, displaced persons and returnees. We may recall that the mandate of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is to protect refugees and seek lasting solutions to this problem. The ICRC's mandate, under international humanitarian law, is to protect and assist refugees who are victims of armed conflicts. It is the outbreak of an armed conflict, whether international or non-international, which creates the conditions for application of the instruments of international humanitarian law, namely, the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols of 1977. In this context, the term refugee should be taken in its widest sense: it is of no importance whether the refugees to be protected have crossed a border because of well-founded fears of persecution or by reason of armed conflict, or whether they have moved from one part of their own country to another. Pursuant to the statement of policy accompanying the Manila resolution,

the role of the Federation and the National Societies is to provide assistance to refugees, asylum-seekers, returnees and displaced persons. Since refugee situations are often long-lasting, such assistance should be adjusted from emergency relief to long-term care and support, and activities designed to enhance self-reliance. Special attention should be given to the psychological problems arising among the most vulnerable groups. The ICRC, the National Societies and the Federation have come to the aid of millions of refugees, displaced persons, asylum-seekers and returnees in Africa, Latin America, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Special efforts have been made to enhance training and information within the Movement, through seminars and through publications and manuals. The nature and scale of the refugee problem have changed radically over the last few years. The Movement and the international community are now faced with new challenges requiring an immediate response. These are some of the questions which must be addressed:

- How can we ensure an effective and rapid response to the massive influx of refugees and come to the aid of the most vulnerable among them?
- How can the asylum crisis in host countries be solved?
- What solutions are there to long-standing refugee problems in circumstances where voluntary repatriation, self-sufficiency or resettlement in third countries cannot be guaranteed?
- How can we make a significant contribution towards preventing mass movements of refugees in the future?

The International Federation and the ICRC therefore propose for adoption a new resolution on the Movement and refugees. This requests the Movement to pursue its efforts with a view to meeting the new requirements and securing the support of governments. Although the resolution is a modest one, it should help us to meet the immense challenge presented by millions of refugees whose plight we cannot ignore.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Thank you for the introductory report on behalf of the International Federation. The resolution is CD/15/DD/1, Council of Delegates draft resolution, "The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and refugees". The debate is open.

Prof. André DELAUDE (French Red Cross)

First, on behalf of Ambassador de Rose and myself, I wish to express thanks for the extremely gratifying welcome extended to the Yugoslavian refugees who have come to Hungary. We must demonstrate our attachment to Yugoslavia in this way. Second, we doubt whether the disputes over the border within Yugoslavia can be

resolved in a short time. Therefore, our assembly, which is the supreme body within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, should pay tribute to the Hungarian State and to its Red Cross Society for their benevolence to refugees since 1945, especially to Yugoslavian refugees, whose numbers are growing every day. There are about 30,000 Yugoslavs in Hungary at present, most of them families; 9,000 families have been received up till now. In the past few days, however, 5,000 more refugees have reached Hungarian territory, and since we assembled here in Budapest 400 persons have arrived, all in a single day. The most important new element is that, since last Wednesday, 238 wounded persons were amongst the refugees crossing the border to Hungary and now being treated in the Kaposvar hospitals. It is no easy task to respond to this emergency. The situation is critical, and we bring this to the notice of the Council of Delegates because we are convinced that the representatives of National Societies present here would also wish to contribute to the efforts being made by Hungary and to prove our solidarity at this time.

Mrs. Martine MEIJER (Netherlands Red Cross)

The Netherlands Red Cross Society is glad to see this item included in the agenda of the Council of Delegates, and warmly supports the resolution on the Movement and refugees. Of all the activities of the Movement, on behalf of refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons and returnees, we would like to stress one in particular: voluntary repatriation or resettlement. Voluntary repatriation is generally accepted as one of the durable solutions to the problem of refugees, often the best for the people concerned. It is meant in the first place for situations where large groups of people flee into a neighbouring country and await a solution in refugee camps. Our Movement is already engaged in those situations, active in providing humane treatment and in helping people to return. We wish to draw your attention to the asylum-seekers in many Western countries. Increasingly, people flee to our countries for many reasons, varying from persecution to war and famine; they apply for asylum and have to go through often lengthy procedures. However, the majority of asylum-seekers in the Netherlands cannot be accepted as refugees as defined by the 1951 Refugee Convention, and are eventually asked to leave. This is where, we believe, we have a role to play, with our network of National Societies. The Netherlands Red Cross took the lead in planning for the establishment of the "Third World school" in our country. Asylum-seekers are offered the opportunity to learn new skills with which they will be able to earn their livelihood, whether in our country or in a country of resettlement. By doing this, the Netherlands Red Cross hopes to give asylum-seekers a more meaningful existence while awaiting a decision on their case and to contribute to their integration, in the Netherlands or elsewhere. If and when these people return to their country and reintegrate, with the help of the National Society of that country, the newly acquired skills may well benefit the development of their community. Thus the Movement also addresses one of the root causes of people fleeing their homes, which is underdevelopment. The Netherlands Red Cross discussed its plans with our government and with the German Red Cross. We take this opportunity to invite other Societies, in neighbouring countries and in countries to which asylum-

seekers may be able to return, also the International Federation, to cooperate further in developing these activities. We would stress that in executing this task we must adhere to our Fundamental Principles, and make it very clear from the outset to governments, the public and the beneficiaries of these programmes that we work for resettlement and return on a voluntary basis, as mentioned in the resolution, that we do not engage in helping people to return to their homes as an instrument of governments, but independently, and exclusively for the benefit of the victims of persecution, conflicts and other disasters.

Mr. Peter NOBEL (Swedish Red Cross)

I have recently taken up responsibilities as Secretary General. The Swedish Red Cross also warmly welcomes this proposed resolution. For many years, it has been working with refugees and refugee youth in our country. We run refugee reception centres and we actively advocate the rights and causes of safety seekers, to take two examples. As long as the international community is incapable of preventing the widespread use of torture and other cruel violations of human rights, we will have tens and hundreds of thousands of refugees of the category covered by the 1951 Geneva Convention. But, as already mentioned by Mrs. Buchwald and by my friend from the Netherlands, we have to see the refugee issue in a very much wider perspective. We have heard during this meeting of other reasons why people run away to save their lives. I refer, for example, to the dramatic figures concerning the irresponsible spread and distribution of weapons all over the world, given in the impressive address by the President of the Standing Commission, Dr. Abu-Goura. We have also seen a film whose striking images make clear the sufferings of those exposed to the weapons which pass mainly from rich countries to the poorest countries. As long as the arms trade continues, there will be millions of safety-seekers. As long as the gap between the rich countries and the poor countries, and between rich people and poor people in all countries, continues to widen, there will continue to be, because of lack of responsibility, millions seeking a livelihood. Until ethnic conflicts can be mediated and settled, until racism and xenophobia are eradicated, there will always be millions of people fleeing for their lives. Now there is, not least in Western Europe, much ignorance about refugee law, about refugee issues, about the causes of the refugee situation. There is much confusion and much misunderstanding, both among the politicians and in the public mind. There is also a very harmful polarization of the debate, which fosters racism and xenophobia and consequently violence. This draft resolution is a great support for our work in our respective countries, sending as it does an important message to governments. I also hope that work on refugee issues will be firmly encouraged within the ICRC and the Federation. It reflects great credit on the drafters that this resolution is so well worded. A final comment, apropos the reference to politicians as crocodiles: not all politicians are crocodiles, I know a number who are more like beavers -and beavers, as we all know, are hard working, constructive animals.

Ambassador J. PESMAZOGLOU (Hellenic Red Cross)

The report on the Movement and refugees presents a very complex problem, the tragedy of our century. It is a tragedy affecting most regions of the world, of catastrophic dimensions we are powerless to check. We must envisage all the means at our disposal, even if we have to make individual sacrifices. We fully agree with the draft resolution and we think its wording is satisfactory. I would merely point out that it is limited with respect to time. We have this problem today, but it cannot be solved tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow. So the resolution will have to be up-dated from time to time in the light of the scale and development of this tragic problem.

Mr. Stephen DAVEY (Federation)

I would like to do two things. One is to draw attention to a problem of translation of the resolution in the French text, the other is to give some information on the planned response to the growing numbers of refugees crossing in the last few days. On the first point, in the French text of the resolution, the last paragraph on the first page, which is completed at the top of the second page, should be deleted and replaced by a text which I will now read: *"reconnaissant que les déplacements de population prennent aujourd'hui de nouvelles formes dues principalement à des difficultés économiques et sociales entraînant fréquemment malnutrition et famine graves qui sont souvent associées à l'instabilité politique, et reconnaissant que les personnes concernées, sans remplir les critères internationaux pour l'obtention du statut de réfugié, ont néanmoins besoin d'une aide humanitaire"*. A second correction concerns the second paragraph on page 2, beginning *"notant les tâches accomplies par les diverses composantes..."* This phrase remains, but the two lines following should be deleted so that the text reads: *"notant les tâches accomplies par les diverses composantes du Mouvement international de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge en faveur des réfugiés, etc."*

Referring to the second point that I indicated, in response to the concern, that I think we all have, at the present increase in the number of refugees in Hungary, we may recall that the Federation, at the request of the Hungarian Red Cross, Mr. Chairman, has already appealed for assistance; and we have together begun a programme of assistance to the refugees who have already arrived, in cooperation with the Government of Hungary and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. We have been informed of a considerable increase in the number of refugees, some 15,000 recent arrivals, bringing the total registered by the Red Cross to some 32,000, the estimated total number now being around 60,000. Further immediate action is required and we, together with representatives of the Hungarian Red Cross, have forwarded urgent requests this weekend to National Societies with which we have already had contacts; with others we are making arrangements for further relief supplies, for medical supplies and for a medical and a surgical team. This is the immediate action we anticipate next week, following further discussions to relaunch the appeal already been made to accommodate the increased numbers of persons arriving in Hungary.

Mr. Arnulv TORBJORNSEN (Norwegian Red Cross)

The Norwegian Red Cross would like to express full satisfaction with the report "The Movement and refugees", drawn up by the International Federation and the ICRC, particularly part 3, called "Challenge of the future". We fully support the draft resolution presented and we welcome in particular the explanatory notes. These should give a solid basis to all components of the Movement for action with regard to refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons, returnees and those who have left their original countries. Our Society has been involved in receiving asylum-seekers arriving in Norway since 1986. As an auxiliary to our government, we undertook this task on the basis of our Movement's seven Principles. The Red Cross gives asylum-seekers protection for as long as they are without permits, during the period when their application for asylum is being handled by the authorities. We congratulate the Secretary General of the Federation for having sent, some weeks ago, a circular letter to National Societies encouraging us to become more involved in the work for refugees and asylum-seekers, based on our Principle of humanity, to protect life and health and to ensure fundamental respect for each individual. It is our hope that our unique Movement will take more humanitarian action in our respective countries as well as worldwide, acting as a watchdog to protect human dignity and human rights.

Mr. Symphorian Daniel LIWIMBI (Malawi Red Cross)

I thank the presenter of this resolution for eloquently and briefly giving us the gist of the matter. Like my counterpart from Sweden, I am the new Secretary General of my National Society, the Malawi Red Cross. As mentioned earlier, in the General Assembly, Malawi is to date hosting 980,000 refugees from a neighbouring country, Mozambique, and hostilities in Mozambique continue. Each month we receive three thousand refugees and this guarantees us approximately one million refugees as of the end of January 1992. The refugee programme in Malawi is the largest project of its kind in that part of Africa. We do not know the solution to the problem, but the Malawi Red Cross knows that we have to continue to assist without despairing. The Malawi Red Cross has the responsibility of distributing food and non-food items to the refugees, and we also distribute food to other persons displaced internally due to natural disasters. At the end of 1991, we shall have distributed, in all, about 160,000 metric tons of food and 5,000 metric tons of non-food items to refugees and other nationals. The Movement's input, from the Federation and from donor National Societies, for the whole year is 6.7 million. We would have been very happy if the International Conference had been held because we could have thanked the governments, the agencies, notably the UNHCR and the WFP, for all their endeavours and for the input which they have given us to date. We are very sad that we will need more assistance in 1992 than registered hitherto. The Red Cross family must not tire of this noble duty. The Malawi Red Cross alone cannot manage this huge operation. Let me also mention to the Council of Delegates that the presence of such a great number of refugees has drastically affected our environment: land pressure in a country of 11,000 square

kilometres, with eight million people of its own, trees disappearing for fire-wood and construction of huts for the refugees, etc., etc. The population stands at eight Malawians to one refugee. That is a very difficult situation. We pray that the trend will not escalate. One district alone has more refugees than Malawians, four refugees to one Malawian. We are working hard day and night with the Federation's staff on this problem. We are very grateful for all the assistance given to us by all the other National Societies, the International Federation, and the ICRC, which is operating the huge tracing project in the refugee camps. We look forward to continuing the assistance: as they say, "A friend in need is a friend indeed". The Malawi Red Cross supports the resolution.

Dr. M.Y. HAMID (Sudan Red Crescent)

I fully support this draft resolution and ask the Council to support it. We in Sudan, as you know, with eight neighbouring countries, have been plagued with refugees. They do not come in tens or hundreds: a few months ago, we witnessed an army of 250,000, a full army, the 2nd army of the former regime in Ethiopia, coming within one week to our country. In one camp, I visited 5,000 officers, waiting in the sun, looking for a cigarette, a cup of tea or a meal. It was very hard for us, because we were the first in the field. We asked for help from the world community, but for one month nobody could believe that in one week we had a quarter of a million refugees. It would be good if you could add to this resolution a point recommending that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, in countries where there is a mass influx of refugees, should have direct support, either from the Federation or from other Societies, so that the refugees could be cared for urgently.

Mr. William ETEKI MBOUMOUA (Cameroon Red Cross)

I share the views of those who have expressed appreciation of the report. It is well done, and it is difficult to do better in respect of this problem, which is so widespread. But when we read the draft resolution, we have the feeling that it is a statement of intent, which speaks about problems which crop up at the level of certain countries and certain cases. Like that of the previous speaker, my country also experiences a permanent flow of refugees from the neighbouring countries, because each time there is a fight for power, there is an influx of refugees. Our National Society does its utmost to receive its brothers, and now we have set up a centre and that is all we can manage. For this effort made by our Society, we feel that we have no other partner than the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. We do not benefit from the solidarity of the Federation or that of the ICRC. For the credibility of our Movement, it would be desirable for the Movement to give us some assistance in these problems.

Dr. A.R. AL-AWAZI (Kuwait Red Crescent)

I commend the excellent report presented on the plight of refugees and also the draft resolution regarding these very important and difficult issues. I take this opportunity to thank all those people, all those Societies who kindly received displaced Kuwaitis during the conflict. A great deal of solidarity was shown at that time of fight and flight, within the limited resources of the Societies and the countries that received us. Our thanks are due to all those who were so kind to us, specifically those in the Gulf, in Egypt and in Syria. They received hundreds of thousands of Kuwaiti people and others during the conflict. If you are a refugee, a displaced person, you look forward to some kind of light coming to you, a comfort, maybe a cup of tea, maybe something to eat, but most of all you need some recognition of your humanity. We have refugees right in front of us, here, in this country. Could the President of the Hungarian Red Cross, with the President of the Federation and the President of the ICRC, visit the places where the refugees are, to let them know that we are here, to give them at least moral support? I would suggest that we ask you, on behalf of the Council of Delegates, to visit them and at least show them some solicitude and support, to exemplify the humanitarian nature of this Movement.

Mr. José Mauricio CARCAMO BATISTA (El Salvador Red Cross)

The draft resolution is very well written. I would just like to make two observations concerning the Spanish version. On the second page, point (g), "to continue and further strengthen cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international organizations, etc.". This gives the impression that the basis of cooperation so far has been very weak. If this is the intention, then we should say that we have to set up a very effective mutual base for cooperation, because the basis should not be weak, but very solid and effective from the first, so as to leave no doubt whether the bases are effective. The second point, first page, (h), number (i) "to permit the Movement to assist those who are deprived of any other suitable protection or assistance". Other is not necessary: I think "instead of other" should be omitted, we should perhaps leave private.

Dr. Mamdouh GABR (Egypt Red Crescent)

I have two small remarks. One is general: the Committee's recommendations, good as they may be, are too ambitious for many National Societies to follow, and in this respect, on page 2, item (g) it is suggested "to continue and further strengthen cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees...". I feel that if this item says "to improve coordination and strengthen cooperation on refugees with the United Nations Organization, as well as with other institutions and governments, then the "other" will follow. This will be much more practical in implementing these ambitious proposals.

The other comment relates to the fact that we are dealing here not only with refugees but also with asylum-seekers, displaced persons and returnees. For example, as you heard from the Sudanese delegate and from the Cameroonian delegate, asylum seekers or displaced persons may be far more numerous than classical refugees and, as we found after the Gulf war, returnees may amount to a huge number (one million in Egypt). Most of the paragraphs mention all groups, except (d), which is related to the psychological problems: this refers only to refugees. Is it possible to add the other groups?

Mr. Unal SOMUNCU (Turkish Red Crescent)

In the course of history, Turkey has always provided asylum to people fleeing from persecution and for other reasons, purely on humanitarian grounds. To give an example, next year, the quinqucentenary of the exodus of Jews to Turkey, will be celebrated. As many of you know, Turkey is exposed to natural disasters. However, during the last decade, she was faced with another sort of emergency, waves of thousands, tens of thousands, of asylum-seekers and refugees from neighbouring countries; and Turkey has provided refuge or asylum to these people, purely on humanitarian grounds. I would remind you that, although Turkey is a party to the United Nations Convention of 1951 on the Status of Refugees, it opted for the Europe clause. Therefore, it is under no treaty obligation to admit refugees from outside Europe, or to grant refugee status to non-Europeans. Despite that, during the last decade we have received a great number of people from non-European countries. Being the auxiliary of the public authorities, with known duties and responsibilities, the Turkish Red Crescent has always been involved in providing temporary shelter, emergency food, initial medical care, etc., to refugees. The last colossal emergency of that sort was in relation to the Gulf crisis. We still have thousands of refugees in the country, protected in temporary settlements, with the active involvement of the Turkish Red Crescent. With fresh memories of this recent case, therefore, we fully support the draft resolution on the subject and we welcome the slight change of attitude in the call to the Movement to attack the root causes of this important humanitarian problem. The Under-Secretary General for Operations of the Federation has referred to the most recent cases of refugees. It is indeed depressing to observe that there are more than 70 million refugees in the world. (These figures are provided by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). It is good to rush to their aid, to provide emergency help, but this is not a long-term solution. Therefore we welcome the new policy line, hopefully to be adopted by this august body, within the framework of the new draft resolution.

Mr. S. DAVEY (Federation)

With reference to the comments made by the different speakers, I suggest possible modifications to the wording of the sub-paragraphs, which would reflect the intentions of the speakers and allow us to approve the resolution. With regard to page 2 of the resolution, the paragraph beginning: "requests" sub-paragraph (d).

The point was made that, in that paragraph, the reference was only to "refugees". That point could be accommodated by adding, in the second line, after the word "refugees", the following phrase: "and asylum-seekers, displaced persons and returnees". To be consistent, we could then, in the third line of that same sub-paragraph (d), delete the word "refugee". It would then be understood that "children" referred to refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons and returnees.

The second comment is with regard to sub-paragraph (g), the issue of cooperation with the High Commissioner for Refugees. In operational terms, this is of the greatest importance, and I suggest that the present phrasing, speaking of "strengthening cooperation", is adequate. There are, at times, reasons why one or other of the components of the Movement may prefer not to use the word "coordination". I would like to have the comment of the ICRC on that matter; if they are happy with "coordination", there is certainly no problem for us.

Thirdly, Dr. Mamoun of the Sudanese Red Crescent referred to the need for direct action by the Movement in cases where there was a need for a very rapid response to a refugee influx. This is covered by sub-paragraph (h), sub-sub-paragraph (i), which reads "to permit the Movement to assist those who are deprived of any other suitable protection or assistance". One speaker has suggested that the word "other" could be deleted, and that might slightly reinforce the sense of that sub-paragraph, so I suggest that we delete the word "other", in sub-sub-paragraph (i) of sub-paragraph (h).

Mr. René KOSIRNIK (ICRC)

The majority of the contributions can be approved most cordially. We were very glad to hear the statements and the appeal to solidarity with the refugees. This is a necessary contribution we should make. As to the remarks relating to the draft resolution and the amendments proposed, the ICRC can accept the amendment put forward by the International Federation. The support of the Movement is a permanent task, our prime responsibility, and it is necessary also to provide assistance: this is quite obvious. With reference to the comment on cooperation, in paragraph (g) of the resolution, I would point out that this draft was prepared in conjunction with our colleagues from the International Federation. The cooperation between these two bodies is very satisfactory, and we try to adapt it to every changing situation. Naturally, we rely on cooperation with all organizations, private, governmental, non-governmental, etc. So the wording is general, in order to be applicable to any situation that may arise. I feel that the wording should be retained as it is.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Two amendments to the original text of the draft have been outlined by Mr. Davey, Under-Secretary General of the Federation: one to paragraph (d), a more detailed explanation, the addition to "refugees" of the words "asylum-seekers, displaced persons and returnees"; the other is to paragraph (h), sub-paragraph (i), where the word "other" is to be deleted. Do you accept by acclamation this draft resolution, with the amendments mentioned?

Applause

The resolution is adopted unanimously.

Fifth session

Saturday, 30 November 1991

2 p.m.

ITEM 16 ON THE AGENDA: WOMEN IN RED CROSS/RED CRESCENT
DEVELOPMENT

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

The subject will be introduced by Mr. Stenbäck, Secretary General of the International Federation.

Mr. P. STENBÄCK (Federation)

At its 7th General Assembly, in 1989, the League adopted decision 33 entitled "Women in Red Cross/Red Crescent Development" and endorsed the plan of action concerning the role of women in the Movement. The follow-up activities to this decision are reported on in a document which includes an annex on the situation of women at the ICRC. The plan of action for women has the following main objectives:

1. To ensure that all traditional activities benefit also women and children.
2. To promote special programmes for women, particularly in health, training and education and income generation.
3. To facilitate greater involvement of women at decision-making levels.

The report on this item contains a number of recommendations in relation to these objectives. Personnel policies for increasing the number of women in senior and management positions within the International Federation as well as the number of women delegates were put in place in 1990. However, their full implementation will require greater cooperation and assistance from the National Societies, who will have to put forward more women candidates. Similar methods have been adopted or are being considered by many National Societies and the International Committee. I would like to take this opportunity to further encourage all components of the Movement to make it easier for women to attain decision-making positions at both policy and programme levels. At its General Assembly the International Federation endorsed a decision on "Women in Red Cross/Red Crescent Development" and agreed to submit it to the Council of Delegates. In view of the significance attached, by the Federation, to women in development, it was considered important that the Council affirm its commitment in this key

area. The draft resolution submitted for your consideration focuses on the difficult role of women in disaster and conflict situations and contains several specific recommendations on priority needs in the areas of health, family planning, safe water supply, literacy, training and income generation. These practical recommendations are aimed at improving the health and social economic situations of women, who along with their children form the largest vulnerable group. I hope, therefore, on behalf of the Federation, that on the basis of both humanitarian and development principles, the Council will come out in favour of the draft resolution, which focuses on the more urgent needs of one of the Movement's major target groups.

Mrs. L. KRAUS-GURNY (ICRC)

Mr. Chairman, the representative of the ICRC had the opportunity to state our view on the important matter of "Women in Red Cross and Red Crescent Development" two days ago, at the General Assembly of the Federation. We gave various examples of the very close and active attention the ICRC pays to these urgent issues. This is why I wish to stress here that the ICRC shares the deep concern and the views of the Federation on this matter and whole-heartedly supports its resolution.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

You now have draft resolution CD/16/Res.1, "Women in Red Cross/Red Crescent Development", before you. Does any delegation wish to speak on it?

Mr. J. TURPIN (Canadian Red Cross)

Women constitute at least 50% of the global population, but more important in our line of work, they make up the majority of people gathered in refugee camps. There are many more women than men in the groups defined as vulnerable or poor. It would seem natural for us to do our utmost to meet their needs and also to allow them to have considerable input into our policy and programme structure. The Canadian Red Cross welcomes the measures taken by the Federation to improve the general situation of women. The Plan of Action adopted by the League General Assembly in 1989 is an encouraging step forward towards a realistic appreciation of women in the Red Cross/Red Crescent, as participants, as decision-makers and as beneficiaries of our services. I therefore sincerely hope that this Council of Delegates will give its full support to the draft resolution. Its adoption will consolidate the Movement's commitment to women and prove that we stand united in the pursuit of general quality and effective assistance to those most in need.

Mrs. J. COCKBURN (New Zealand Red Cross)

New Zealand supports this resolution, but would like to suggest two changes in the actual wording. The first concerns the development programmes, where the first paragraph reads: "consider women as a major target group". This does not seem strong enough, and we therefore suggest the paragraph start with "recognize women" instead of "consider women". For "target" group, we suggest "beneficiary" group. In view of my statement during the General Assembly about the literacy rate of women, we see paragraph five as being of greater importance and suggest it be inserted as paragraph three.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Are there any other comments? If that is not the case, then I submit these proposed changes for your approval. The second suggestion does not, I think, necessitate a change in the French text, which already reads "*les principales bénéficiaires*". If the English word "recognize" is adopted, some people with drafting skills can decide which French word will correspond. With these two small modifications, I submit to you the draft resolution. Do you agree and accept it unanimously?

Applause

ITEM 15 ON THE AGENDA:

THE MOVEMENT AND REFUGEES
(continued)

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Before going on to item 17 of the agenda, I would like to come back to a point which came up earlier. While we were discussing the problem of refugees, the Kuwaiti Red Crescent asked whether the Presidents would make a visit to camps here in Hungary. I can now tell you that I will visit the camps with the President of the ICRC on Tuesday. This is not, of course, my first visit. I can also inform you that Mr. Stenbäck visited the refugee camps when he was in Hungary a few weeks ago.

10.3 Report of the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace on its activities since the 1989 Council of Delegates and proposals for the future (continued)

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

The other matter I would like to raise is the Libyan Red Crescent suggestion, made yesterday, that the Chairman of the Council, the Vice-Chairmen and the acting Chairman of the Peace Commission present a proposal to solve the problem of the Commission's composition. These discussions have taken place and I now have the honour to submit to you the proposal, which I hope you will accept by consensus. Two major considerations were taken into account. First, 23 National Societies expressed their interest in writing to be part of the Commission, so it will not, of course, be very easy to ensure fair geographical distribution.

Secondly, during the debate several speakers pointed out that it would be very important to have more Societies participate and raised the question of the best means of ensuring this. The first proposal is: to increase the number of members from 14 to 16, and to introduce a system of membership renewal every two years instead of every four years. Only four of the 16 members would be renewed, however, which would mean some stability because members could serve two four-year terms when the whole system functions. If one quarter of the Commission is renewed every two years, stability and expertise would be guaranteed while at the same time more Societies would have the opportunity to participate. I will read out the names of the National Societies which would be members of the Commission if you accept this first proposal: Australian Red Cross, Brazilian Red Cross, Colombian Red Cross, Egyptian Red Crescent, Ethiopian Red Cross, French Red Cross, Hellenic Red Cross, Hungarian Red Cross, the Republic

of Korea Red Cross, Red Cross of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Malaysian Red Crescent, Nigerian Red Cross, Paraguayan Red Cross, Sudanese Red Crescent, Swedish Red Cross, Tunisian Red Crescent. Do you approve?

Applause

Thank you, then the proposal is carried.

The second proposal is that the Council elect the Chairman of the Commission. In agreement with all four people in the group, the proposal is that the Chairman of the Peace Commission be Mr. Maurice Aubert, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Do you approve?

Applause

Thank you very much.

Mr. M. AUBERT (ICRC)

I am taken completely by surprise, but I thank you for your confidence in me and I will try to prove worthy of the example set by my predecessor as Chairman, my friend Alexandre Hay. I feel sure that with the support of the representatives of all these Societies we will succeed in our endeavour to promote more humanity and greater respect for our principles, which is the way to peace.

Ambassador J. PESMAZOGLU (Hellenic Red Cross)

In the name of the Hellenic Red Cross, I thank you for this honour and I assure you that the Hellenic Red Cross will do its utmost to live up to your choice. Also, I am specially glad to have Mr. Aubert as Chairman, in succession to the eminent personality Mr. Alexandre Hay.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

With these decisions, which modify the original draft resolution CD/10.3, do you accept the draft resolution CD/10.3 on the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace?

Applause

The draft resolution is carried unanimously.

ITEM 17 ON THE AGENDA:

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE
HENRY DUNANT INSTITUTE

We now proceed to item 17 on the agenda, which is the report on the Henry Dunant Institute. The Institute has long been a very important centre for study and initiative. I remember when I needed some deeper thinking on the Red Cross, I received good support and cooperation from the Henry Dunant Institute. We all remember its founder, Mr. Boissier.

Mr. Hubert BUCHER (Swiss Red Cross)

[President of the Council of the
Henry Dunant Institute]

Our Movement was founded through action for action. This has permitted it to become an authority in matters of assistance, aiding countless victims of strife and disaster in its over 125 years of existence. Thus, you will agree with me that it took a certain amount of courage on the part of those who decided over 25 years ago to found the Henry Dunant Institute. Why courage? Because believe me, in the midst of such suffering, seeing all of you working day by day to alleviate it, it takes courage to stand back and not take direct action to help, perhaps to save. Following in the footsteps of Pierre Boissier and Jean Pictet, a small number of men and women have chosen to work quietly, almost anonymously, in furthering the aims of the Movement. Since 1965, this laborious, sometimes thankless task has consisted in reflecting and teaching, stepping aside from the action in order to understand it better, to continuously improve it, to give you the tools you need to act. The Institute's work involves energy and tenacity, but it is given all too little recognition and often misunderstood. This despite the fact that over 600 leaders from the various National Societies have passed through the Institute to learn about the international mechanisms of our Movement. It is also through the Institute's efforts that over 150 heads of national penitentiary administrations around the world have learned or rediscovered that every prisoner has dignity and rights that must be respected. Many seminars have taken place within the framework of research that is as varied as it is important: AIDS and human rights, professionalism and voluntarism, the things we give, traditional ways of helping each other, the Red Cross and its use, to name but a few topics. Over 50 publications have appeared, including many authoritative research texts which have found their way into the most prestigious libraries. Over 40 working papers have been produced in the last four years alone. The Institute continues to work on the following major themes:

1. Development and the Movement
2. Human Rights and protection of the individual
3. Armed conflicts and violence

4. Protection of the victims of disasters

Through research, training and publication, it has accomplished much within the framework of these four priorities. The Institute, with its accumulated experience and expertise, has become an essential reference tool for the National Societies, the Movement's research centres, and the non-governmental organizations and universities interested in such questions. To reach this privileged position, the Institute, with the support of the ICRC, the Federation and the Swiss Red Cross, has developed a specialized approach based on the Fundamental Principles shared by the entire Movement. This approach is dynamic and innovative. It involves stepping back far enough from the action to maintain independence and objectivity without moving so far away that research becomes a theoretical exercise out of touch with the reality of the Movement. All this has been made possible by your support. It is the more than 100 National Societies representing all the regions of the world and languages of the Movement which have built the Institute, either through direct contributions or by providing research for various projects. However, this activity will have to increase, just as the needs of the Movement are increasing in the current world context. The upheaval seen around the world in the very recent past has made it necessary for us to constantly increase our efforts and vigilance. The reality is that the whole of the Movement faces increased burdens in adapting our structures, our actions and our image to the changing needs of the final decade of the century. The fact that we are here, today, is in itself a proof that we want the ideals behind the Movement to be more than an abstract context. We all agree that we should concentrate on prevention as the best means of combating the problems we see. However, a National Society which barely has the means to deal with day-to-day burdens will have difficulty acting before these problems reach such a level that outside intervention is required. The Institute is one of the resources which can be used to deal with such situations, allowing each National Society to realize its full potential. With it, the National Societies have access to a permanent meeting place, an instrument to share and benefit from respective experiences and explore new avenues of action to increase their effectiveness. What I am asking you today is to act in accordance with our ideas. The Movement can not attain the universality to which it aspires unless each National Society has access to the resources it needs to accomplish its goals. Support the Henry Dunant Institute. Help us to help you.

Applause

Mrs. Gudrun GÖRANSSON (Swedish Red Cross)

Jean Pictet's book about the Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent starts with the Japanese saying which reads: "knowledge without acting is useless, but acting without knowledge will be disastrous". The Henry Dunant Institute is in a way a child in the Red Cross family, and even at the age of 25 I think we treat it like that in that we are not properly appreciative of its capacity, and all the benefits we can draw from the research, the training and the seminars it provides. In the beautiful and in many ways inspiring booklet we have got from the Institute, we

have an interesting enumeration of what this Institute can do and has done to make our Movement more capable. But the booklet also contains some reflections about a feeling of ingratitude, lack of recognition and sometimes misunderstanding. I think this very frank way of presenting the Institute is useful. It is quite clear that we, in our Societies, sometimes complain that more could be done by the Institute, but on the other hand, we are not willing to support the Institute, because we are often a little bit afraid of giving our money to theoretical work. Of course, we do need a great deal of enthusiasm and dedication to be able to perform Red Cross and Red Crescent activities, but that is not enough. Acting without knowledge will be disastrous. We also need research, studies, training seminars and evaluation of what we have performed to be able to help the victims and all the vulnerable persons in our world, in the right way. Dr. Robert Chambers wrote in his report about the Federation's work in the Sahel that the victims often suffered from incompetence. The Swedish Red Cross is of the opinion that the Henry Dunant Institute, by its work of all kinds, can both save the victims from our incompetence and, just by increasing our knowledge, make us all more committed and enthusiastic. On the days when our emotions are spent, and we all know that such days come sometimes, it is necessary to have enough knowledge to continue with our activities. The Swedish Red Cross is interested in supporting the Henry Dunant Institute very strongly, in various ways, and we do hope that other Societies will do so, too. With its help, we can become more competent and act more efficiently, a necessity if we really wish to keep and strengthen our original role and our image in the future, in an increasingly complicated world.

Mr. Anthony GYEDU-ADOMAKO (Ghana Red Cross)

The Ghana Red Cross Society commends the Henry Dunant Institute for the work it has done over the years and particularly for the work it is doing to help strengthen the National Societies. We thank the Henry Dunant Institute for offering a fellowship to one of our staff members to participate in a study on youth involvement. This study is helping our Society to rejuvenate the youth section. We are looking forward to further participating in the studies of the Henry Dunant Institute and we are confident that through their studies and their cooperation with us, we shall go a long way towards strengthening our National Society.

Dr. G. RUEDA MONTAÑA (Colombian Red Cross)

What I was going to say has already been said, very eloquently.

Dr. Andreas MARTINIS (Hellenic Red Cross)

The Hellenic Red Cross is quite new in the arena of the activities of the Henry Dunant Institute. Nevertheless, we created the Institute of Henry Dunant in March 1990. During the first 20 months of the Institute's life, we have been very active. For instance, we have conducted seminars on humanitarian law in

collaboration with the universities, the armed forces, the ICRC in Geneva and the Hellenic Red Cross International Relations Directory. I can assure you that it was an extremely successful seminar, especially thanks to the presence of the ICRC President, Mr. Sommaruga. We are preparing for March a new Balkan seminar on war surgery, in collaboration again with the ICRC, the Greek schools of medicine, the nursing directorate and the International Relations Directory. We hope to continue in this way.

Dr. B. HOVE (Zimbabwe Red Cross)

On behalf of my Red Cross Society, I would like to be associated with the other Societies that have spoken before me in support of the Institute. The aim and object of the Institute is to make available to the member institutions ways and means of carrying out studies, research and training on issues in all areas of Red Cross activity, and to contribute to the strengthening of the Red Cross overall. I have no hesitation in commending the good work of the Henry Dunant Institute, which is now 25 years old. Just two days ago, we were all moved when the Henry Dunant Medals were awarded to the deserving recipients because, I believe, the Medal carries the name of the founder of our Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. I feel that the Institute should be respected. I have noticed with regret that on page 5 of the Institute's Report, it is recorded that some Societies failed to respond to the Institute's appeal for information. This failure to cooperate will affect the operations of the Institute, especially as concerns data collection. The Institute should be fully utilized and supported by our National Societies, the work it is doing requires much more support from beneficiaries and donors. My own Red Cross Society will collaborate and support the Institute.

Dr. Heinrich TREICHL (Austrian Red Cross)

For the Austrian Red Cross, the Henry Dunant Institute has become an important partner in motivating and training our staff and volunteers in the past years. I would like to stress here that phases of action have to be followed by phases of evaluation. We are very thankful to the Henry Dunant Institute for two youth studies, one on the future of youth and out-of-school groups, the other on the future of youth in schools. For us, the Henry Dunant Institute is the natural partner for this kind of study, which should also involve other National Societies so as not to focus on the views of one National Society alone.

Dr. M. MOKETE (Lesotho Red Cross)

We also are very happy that the Henry Dunant Institute is 25 years old. We support the Institution and appreciate the work that it is doing. We are happy that this child of the ICRC, the Federation and the Swiss Red Cross has become an equal amongst equals, as we gathered from one of the resolutions discussed yesterday. Our Movement is now over 125 years old, and we are happy that as it

grows older and broader, some children are being born within it. Similarly, in the southern part of Africa, we had a Southern African programme which brought happiness to Southern African because it certainly enriched the Movement. Many wish to copy that programme, so that they can have similar programmes, thereby enhancing the image of the Movement. Within the same set up, the IDOSARCS came into being two years ago. It is an institute for the development of Southern African Red Cross Societies and does more or less the same work, not on a competitive but definitely on a collaborative, albeit regional basis. We certainly support this effort and would like the whole Movement to support all the efforts made to enhance the International Movement.

Dr. A.A. EL SHERIF (Libyan Red Crescent)

We have noted with great interest the report on the Henry Dunant Institute, which includes activities, publications, training and consultation on the future. We note with satisfaction the contribution of the Institute in disseminating knowledge of our Movement and upgrading the performance of the volunteers and staff of our National Societies. The Libyan Red Crescent has benefitted greatly from the Institute and its expertise on several occasions. We have debated the future of our Movement and we believe that studies and in-depth research on the Movement and its components are required at this stage. We believe that the Henry Dunant Institute will provide the expertise and the materials required for our Movement to meet the challenges of the future and to upgrade its performance by becoming more aware of the changes taking place in the world.

Dr. H.R. GONZÁLEZ MARTÍNEZ (Paraguayan Red Cross)

The report on the Henry Dunant Institute should definitely encourage us to pursue this kind of work. We all know that learning about the philosophy of our Movement is essential. I think it would also be worthwhile to follow up on the work done by National Society staff who attended its courses, so as to benefit from their efforts -that is, wherever a National Society plays an important role and can help the Institute. The development of the Institute's activities and its plans for the next four years are extremely interesting. Our National Society therefore strongly urges the Henry Dunant Institute to pursue its efforts.

Prof. F. KALSHOVEN (Netherlands Red Cross)

We join all those who have expressed satisfaction with the report on the Institute, and wish to add our admiration for the output of the Institute with the extremely limited means it has. Our colleague from Lesotho underlined that the Red Cross is 125 years old and the Institute only 25. As an academic institution, the Henry Dunant Institute is, of course, extremely young. I stress the academic aspect of the Institute, but that is of course only one aspect. I have been looking at the programmes for the next three years, one for the year 1992, then 1993, then

1994. Each year has a different theme. That is fine, but in an academic institution, you would also hope to see the possibility of somewhat longer term planning. The Swedish Red Cross has emphasized the need for research on the Red Cross world through the Institute. We wish to emphasize and support the idea of long-term research at the Institute, according to plans to be drawn up and supported in both personnel and funds when necessary, by all of us, by the Movement. We do realize that, for those who are already engaged in research in this field, it may be difficult to cede ground to the Henry Dunant Institute, but let us take the Institute more seriously than it perhaps is at the moment, so it can turn its attention somewhat from short-term to long-term projects as well.

Mr. W. ETEKI MBOUMOUA (Cameroon Red Cross)

I, too, would like to praise the Henry Dunant Institute for the role it plays in training, dissemination of international humanitarian law, research and popularization. Staffs of the National Societies change and grow, and their functions and missions vary more and more, becoming ever more complex. So the staff must be more seasoned, more technically expert and more professional. Since not all Societies are able to organize such training themselves, the role of the Henry Dunant Institute is vital. Having taken part in one of the courses organized by the Institute, I can testify that those who complete them are capable of providing something extra in the way of knowledge of the mission, ideals and activities of the Red Cross Movement. As I attended one of these courses, I take the liberty of suggesting that their organization might be improved in a number of ways.

I think it would be desirable if the selection of candidates were based on a more or less equivalent level of qualifications, since people at different levels should not attend the same course. I would also prefer it if the courses included more practical work, actual cases, and if the lectures, which may be called academic, could be reduced as far as possible, or at least be given only at the end of practical exercises. Finally, it would be desirable if the instructors or technicians asked to give the courses were also of a certain level of competence. Concerning the dissemination of international humanitarian law, I helped to organize a seminar in my country in 1985. So I can say what great interest the subject aroused among university students, army officers and, in general, among young people. I am pleased that another seminar is to be held next year. Having listened to the General Secretary of the Ghana Red Cross, I gather that studies relating to youth have been organized for the benefit of Ghana, and I believe that, since youth is a particularly delicate and important commodity in our countries, the Institute should make more extensive plans to work with other African National Societies. In conclusion, in view of the achievements of the Institute, it should be supported and encouraged to make its services more readily available to National Societies, in order to improve their human resources and their functioning.

Mrs. Catherine THUPAYAGALE (Botswana Red Cross)

Botswana also would like to identify itself with the recommendations and report of the Henry Dunant Institute. We have in the past enjoyed working closely with the Institute. The Institute helped us when we were new to the Movement to understand what the Red Cross is all about. We also had the opportunity to work with the Henry Dunant Institute on traditional ways of helping each other, because sometimes when we talk of the Red Cross in a country like mine, the concept sounds very foreign, but by looking at our traditions and coupling them with what has happened in the Red Cross, we find a common ground. I give you our pledge that we will continue to work very closely with the Henry Dunant Institute.

Mrs. C. MESTRE (Spanish Red Cross)

The Spanish Red Cross is extremely grateful to the Henry Dunant Institute for all the work it has done. The Institute is an indispensable means of consolidating National Societies and the Movement as a whole. There are two areas of activity which we would like to see developed: first, the exchange of experience between National Societies, which, if done through the Institute, should prove more fruitful and constructive, and second, research on the long-term future of our Movement. The Spanish Red Cross is prepared to provide financial support for whatever projects might be considered appropriate.

Mr. A. McLEAN (Australian Red Cross)

Mr. Bucher made reference to previous studies and publications of the Henry Dunant Institute. Other speakers have done likewise in supporting Mr. Bucher's call for future support. The Australian Red Cross encourages all National Societies to make better use of the materials and information produced by the Institute in the past. They should not be confined to national headquarters but should receive the widest possible dissemination throughout our National Societies.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

With this, we have come to the end of the list of speakers, and I ask Mr. Bucher, Chairman of the Council of the Institute, to make a short reply.

Mr. H. BUCHER (Swiss Red Cross)

In the name of the Committee and of the staff of the Henry Dunant Institute, I thank you warmly for all the support you have expressed for the Institute. The three organizations -the ICRC, the International Federation and the Swiss Red Cross- will take into account your comments, your suggestions and your criticisms, and will give serious thought to the future of the Henry Dunant Institute, in order

to strengthen and improve its activities, to make its work of training, but also its research aspect, even more effective, for the benefit of the whole Movement and of those whom the Movement exists to serve. Thank you very much for your support.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I move that the report on the activities of the Henry Dunant Institute be adopted by acclamation.

Applause

ITEM 12 ON THE AGENDA:

INFORMATION POLICY OF THE
MOVEMENT (continued)

Before going on to the next item on the agenda, I would like to come back to draft resolution DC/12/Res.1, on the Information Policy of the Movement. We had asked for a new draft of paragraph 2, in respect of the yearly themes for World Red Cross days. In order to make the decision easier for you, I will read only those parts where changes have been made. Paragraph 2 originally said: "decides, with regard to World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day: -to choose, for the three-year period from 1993 to 1995, the overall theme of «dignity for all», and continues: "... to divide this overall theme into annual sub-themes: 1993: respecting human life; 1994: respecting others; 1995: respecting our planet". The modified text, starting from "to divide this overall theme..." reads: "under this overall theme, to focus on three annual sub-themes to be adapted or sub-titled as appropriate by National Societies: 1993: the vulnerable; 1994: our children's future; 1995: respect for women". Do you accept this modified version of the draft resolution?

Applause

Thank you, this draft resolution is then carried unanimously.

ITEM 18 ON THE AGENDA:

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

18.1 Famine and the right to assistance

Mr. R. JÄCKLI (ICRC)

I am in fact covering two resolutions in one presentation. One is the "Protection of the civilian population against famine in situation of armed conflict", which is a report and a resolution drawn up by the ICRC. The other is "Humanitarian assistance in situations of armed conflict", which has three co-sponsors -the French and the Norwegian Red Cross, together with the ICRC- and is supported by the Red Cross Societies of Germany, Benin, Hungary, Italy, Philippine and Yugoslavia. This morning brought to our minds how topical this particular theme is. I do not have to remind you of Yugoslavia and the refugee situation there. Supplying the civilian population in situations of armed conflict has in recent years become one of the major problems in the implementation of international humanitarian law. Two documents prepared by the ICRC present possible answers to the question of how to improve matters. These answers are derived from the experience acquired by those practising humanitarian assistance and from consideration of existing legal instruments. As you may observe, they do not contradict each other, quite the contrary. The advice of the practitioner is to be found in the document entitled "Protection of the civilian population against famine in situations of armed conflict", prepared for the XXVI International Conference and presented to the Council of Delegates with reference number CI/4.2/2. This document contains the conclusions of a group of people experienced in humanitarian assistance who met in Annecy, France, in March 1991. It is a slim report which you have in front of you. I urge you to disseminate it and to study it. I pay tribute to the man who is behind it, Dr. Rémi Russbach. What is the testimony of the practitioners of humanitarian aid, in other words, of the persons actively involved? It shows that lack of respect for international humanitarian law by parties to the conflict, especially in relation to the protection of civilians against the effect of hostilities, leads to the disruption of food supplies, the impoverishment of the civilian population, the emergence of a situation in which humanitarian assistance becomes essential and even at times, as if the picture were not gloomy enough, to obstacles being placed in the way of this assistance. Famine which entails threats to health and human dignity is an intolerable occurrence in the light of the letter and the spirit of international humanitarian law. Indeed, if there is a single principle upholding this legal structure, it is that civilians must not be involved in the hostilities. Obviously, the best would be for there to be no war, since the resulting destruction and disruption of social and economic life raises the risk of famine which mere respect for humanitarian law cannot entirely eliminate. For this reason, provision must be made for humanitarian assistance. Yet this, too, must be regulated in a way appropriate to the interest of the victims. In fact, activities which were not in keeping with the principles of impartiality and non-discrimination, as defined by the International Red Cross and

Red Crescent Movement, would not only fail to relieve the victims' sufferings, they would increase the injustice of the situation and could not be described as humanitarian. The authors of the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols were well aware of this, since they made this criterion a condition of their consent to an assistance operation. In the same way, the authorities which permit the dispatch of relief supplies or the undertaking of relief work should secure a guarantee that the adverse party will not use the goods for purposes other than those for which they were intended. The provisions defining the right to humanitarian assistance, which are presented in the document prepared for the XXVI International Conference and submitted to the Council of Delegates with the reference CI/4.2/1, give due consideration to the necessities and constraints applying to humanitarian assistance in times of armed conflict.

The constraints are not always political in nature. War includes blockade or siege, armed forces controlling isolated groups of people, the destruction of channels of communication, a shortage of energy supplies, in short a collection of very concrete difficulties which humanitarian assistance can overcome, but only if it is exceptionally effective. Impartiality, non-discrimination, control and efficiency are therefore the key words defining any humanitarian operation in conformity with international humanitarian law and capable of meeting its general objectives. For this to happen, however, the support of the international community is essential, as is cooperation with the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Finally, there must be coordination between the ICRC and the international and non-governmental organizations pursuing similar objectives. Two draft resolutions are therefore submitted for your approval. The first, CD/18.1/Res.2, aims to improve the protection of the civilian population against famine in situations of armed conflict. The second, CD/18.1/Res.1, recalls the principles that should guide all operations to bring humanitarian assistance to the victims of armed conflict.

Prof. F. KALSHOVEN (Netherlands Red Cross)

In principal, the Netherlands Red Cross are, of course, strong supporters of the text before us. We do, however, have some problems with certain aspects of both resolutions and I offer them to you, for your consideration. First of all, in resolution 1, the fourth preambular paragraph reads: "stressing that a relief action" etc. "does not constitute interference". This is an attempt to copy an article from Additional Protocol I, but leaves out the crucial words "an offer of". A relief action, once it is being carried out, either is being done with permission and therefore by definition is not an interference, or is not done by permission, and is in fact an interference. The offer of a relief action in itself does not constitute an interference. That has been specified in Additional Protocol I. I propose that the words "an offer of" be added to that paragraph. For the rest, that resolution is totally acceptable to the Netherlands Red Cross Society. For resolution 2, I have some difficulty with the third preambular paragraph, but that is just a matter of correcting the printed text: "noting that, in general, the most severe outbreaks of famine are due not to a lack of local natural resources, but to from the disruption etc.". "From" should perhaps be deleted. Then the last preambular paragraph:

"stressing that respect for the rules of international etc.", that ends with the words "that in many cases the application of the rules specified before would suffice to prevent or reduce the risk of famine". When this clause is taken out of context, it suggests too strongly that the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols could reduce all famine. I suggest that the words "as a result of an armed conflict" be added after famine, to make the text clear.

The operative paragraphs start with a long reminder to the authorities concerned and the armed forces under their command of the seriousness of the obligation to comply with the rules of international humanitarian law. When you look at those texts you realize that they are taken mainly from Protocol II, and then even in abbreviated form, whereas in Protocol I they have been drafted in some considerable detail to safeguard military interests. I do not exactly see how you could easily solve the problem. There is one very easy solution, that is to delete the whole paragraph. Were this the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, I am afraid that would have been the result, because very many governments would flatly oppose this reminder of their general obligations under existing humanitarian law. As we are not in that Conference, but in a Council of Delegates, I would simply suggest a sort of mitigation of the text so that the suggestion that these are strict obligations under existing humanitarian law is somewhat softened. I leave it to you to find a correct wording for that.

Mr. Roys ODDBJORN (Norwegian Red Cross)

The great concern to us has been that both the ICRC and our National Society, in many cases and without any obvious reason, have been prevented by the belligerents from providing humanitarian assistance to the civilian population in armed conflicts. This constitutes a serious breach of international humanitarian law. The ICRC report on protection of the civilian population and persons *hors de combat* not only clarifies the right to give humanitarian assistance to the civilian population in armed conflicts, it also makes it clear that the civilian population has a right to receive humanitarian assistance. The report also underlines that such humanitarian assistance does not constitute interference in the internal affairs of a State. ICRC resolution CD/18.1/Res.1, which we have on our tables, underlines this very important principle together with other important principles related to humanitarian assistance to civilian victims of armed conflicts. The Norwegian Red Cross therefore strongly supports this resolution. We also hope that the resolution, if adopted by the Council, will be circulated to the States party to the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, thereby underlining the seriousness of a situation which is of the greatest concern to our Movement. The Norwegian Red Cross also supports resolution 2 under this item.

German Red Cross

Our support of this draft resolution -and I am referring to the draft resolution on humanitarian assistance- is based on three elements: State practice, an evaluation of legal arguments and hope. In the last few years we have witnessed several incidents concerning humanitarian assistance operations. Though States and humanitarian organizations have increased their efforts to alleviate the suffering of the civilian population, parties to an armed conflict have prevented, hindered or obstructed humanitarian assistance operations, both in international and non-international armed conflicts. Moreover, transports the sole purpose of which was to provide the civilian population with necessary food were attacked, halted or in some cases even destroyed. Contributing to the urgent needs to express ourselves on the question of humanitarian assistance is the ongoing debate within international organizations on the governmental level and in non-governmental organizations about the future of humanitarian assistance operations. This discussion is the result of the willingness of States and international organizations to intensify their humanitarian assistance efforts. But it cannot be denied that the public discussion is in many respects a confusing one. The methods and means to choose in the future are unclear. In particular, some governments challenge the validity of the framework for humanitarian assistance operations. The draft resolution reflects this State practice by pointing out the basic framework of humanitarian assistance. In this respect, it implies a clear reaffirmation that neither the offer to provide humanitarian assistance nor the operation itself, if conducted within the framework of international humanitarian law, is an interference in the internal affairs of States. That is the understanding which is not expressed explicitly in the text, but which is its underlying meaning. But it should also be mentioned that the draft resolution with its wording is a convincing obstacle to all attempts to mix up the concept of humanitarian assistance with the concept of humanitarian intervention. It should be underlined that the reaffirmation of the rules included in the operative paragraph does not allow for derogations from the general principles for humanitarian assistance. Within the framework of international humanitarian law, there are no exceptions imaginable for States or international organizations to allow, facilitate and protect humanitarian assistance operations. But there is also no excuse for the Movement to be passive in cases in which humanitarian assistance operations are needed. Finally, our support is based on hope. The world community cannot live in the long run with a situation contrary to elementary considerations of humanity which, as the International Court of Justice pointed out in 1949, are valid in peace and war. For children, it makes no difference whether the lack of basic food is caused by a drought, the destruction of infrastructure in an international armed conflict or the denial of access to a part of the civilian population in a civil war. For the victims, there is no difference between peace and war. Our hope is that the world community recognizes that there is only one possible way to perceive the humanitarian needs of children, women and the civilian population as such. With no exception, humanitarian assistance should be initiated, allowed and protected. The draft resolution could help to realize our hope.

Dr. D. VENEDICTOV (Alliance)

I would like to clarify one point. We are discussing now two draft resolutions under point 18.1. I have a question. Are we going to have another draft resolution or another discussion on point 18.3, because we have a few comments to make on both. Are we going to resume the discussion on point 18.3 separately?

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

That point has not yet been introduced, so we shall take it up separately.

Dr. D. VENEDICTOV (Alliance)

Thank you very much for that explanation. Then, in this case, I will limit myself to one point about resolution number 1, in relation to 18.1. As I have said before, I believe this is a very important resolution which deals with armed conflicts, and I will try to induce its authors to accept two small amendments. Since we are talking here not only about past but also about present and unfortunately perhaps future conflicts, I think it should be possible to add two points.

1. To note the results of the Worldwide Campaign to protect the victims of war and our deep concern for the suffering of civilian victims of ongoing international and non-international conflicts. I believe we have been impressed by this Campaign, so that when we talk about humanitarian assistance, we could note that our own Campaign has been successful.
2. I think we could add to this resolution, maybe in the considerate or in the operative parts, an appeal from our Movement to all participants of ongoing military conflicts throughout the world to stop the hostilities as soon as possible. I especially like the expression from the previously adopted French and Italian draft resolution about the Peace of Hearts, which is needed in order to ensure lasting fraternity and solidarity, extending over time and history and establishing without delay conditions conducive to dialogue in public opinion as the prerequisite for mutual understanding.

I think that if we add those two points (reference to our own Campaign, and an appeal to stop all conflicts), this resolution will be slightly stronger.

Dr. Ameer K. ABDUL-HAMID (Iraqi Red Crescent)

The Iraqi Red Crescent Society would like to emphasize that our Society totally supports the draft resolution on "Protection of the civilian population against famine in situations of armed conflict", in particular paragraph 1, which reads "regarding the prohibition on starvation of civilians as a method of combat". As you know, starvation has been used as a method of combat against the Iraqis. We

have worked on a declaration regarding the alleviation of the suffering of the Iraqi people, and the Iraqi Red Crescent would be more than grateful if the other sister Societies would join us in signing this declaration, which we call the Budapest Declaration.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

May I ask Mr. Jäckli to make some comments on the contributions.

Mr. R. JÄCKLI (ICRC)

Mr. Chairman, would you please give the floor to my colleague René Kosirnik.

Mr. R. KOSIRNIK (ICRC)

I will try to comment on and reply to the remarks and questions. First of all, I note and accept some proposed amendments to the English text of Resolution 2, concerning famine. In fact, we have also noticed that in the third preambular paragraph there is a typing error: in the second line, "to from disruption" should read "to disruption". That was a typing error that made the text somewhat difficult to understand. On the proposal made by the representative of the Netherlands Red Cross, to add to the last preambular paragraph the phrase "as a result of armed conflict", we have no objection. In the last operative paragraph of the same resolution, the last line of paragraph 3 includes the words "suffice to avert or contain famine". We think that "limit famine" would be more appropriate. Regarding the comment by the Netherlands Red Cross delegate, I have some difficulty in following his argument concerning the proposed amendments to the first operative paragraph. Nevertheless, I would like to point out that in this type of resolution, which reflects the law and whose content to some degree sets standards, it is impossible to give details of everything. In any case, there are two aspects: the general aspect, and a hortatory element, an encouragement to do something, or to do better if possible. We adopted this wording bearing in mind, on the one hand, the reality of existing law and its terms as exactly as possible and, on the other hand, the humanitarian aim of the resolution.

I now turn to the resolution on humanitarian assistance. I share the view of the German Red Cross representative who supports this resolution that in answer to the question whether or not an offer of assistance constitutes interference in humanitarian affairs, the interpretation of humanitarian law allows us to say that, when a population is faced with starvation, neither the offer nor the humanitarian activity as such constitutes interference. At least, that is the interpretation that we would like, the humanitarian interpretation, which we believe is widely shared. Finally, with regard to the suggestions made by the Soviet Red Cross, I feel that, while I have no substantial objection, this resolution is not the best place to insert them. We have two resolutions with specific themes, one referring to war and

famine, a theme I would like to emphasize, which is new and which should be a useful tool in the hands of all of us in our attempts to improve our response to the tragedies caused by privation during armed conflicts. The resolution, therefore, focuses on that subject. The second resolution, on the right to assistance, is likewise specifically directed, to the way in which the law provides the possibility of access to victims and the best way to operate, in a very succinct text. So I do not see how we can include these paragraphs, although I have no basic objection to them. I would like to thank very much those who support these resolutions. I think that they should enable us to do a little better in assisting victims who appeal to us for help. We feel that these resolutions, with some others already examined, should be sent to the governments, and we think that it would be most desirable if the Council of Delegates, at the end of this meeting, invited the ICRC, or where appropriate the ICRC and the Federation, to forward to the governments the resolutions adopted during this meeting.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Now I would like to ask whether, after the explanations given by Mr. Kosirnik and with the amendments accepted, you can adopt these resolutions, or whether you wish to reopen the debate.

Mrs. G. DUFOIX (French Red Cross)

Forgive me, I did not want to reopen the debate. I simply wanted to give my support to the resolution on humanitarian assistance, to say that in the present state of international humanitarian assistance, now being re-defined in many places in the world, it seems important to avoid confusion. I believe the resolution enables us to do this. First, there is the victims' right to receive assistance, a right that appears obvious, but that is still important to remember. Then there is the right of NGOs to provide assistance, and the duty of governments to give assistance. Those three concepts could be said to form the backbone of our operations. I feel that it is also very important for the people in our countries to have a better knowledge of humanitarian law, which has at times been a subject understood exclusively by very limited groups of specialists. In all these cases, I am speaking of France. At a time when conflicts are reported by the media to a far greater extent than ever before and when everybody is aware of the wars being waged worldwide, I feel it is very important for everyone to have a knowledge of humanitarian law and the rules that nations have adopted both for peace and for war. Naturally, I support the resolution.

Ambassador Omran EL SHAFIE (Egyptian Red Crescent)

I am sorry to come a little bit late, but I would like to improve the third preambular paragraph of resolution 2. I hope that the author accepts our minor amendment. The third preambular paragraph says: "noting that, in general, the most severe

outbreaks of famine are due not to a lack of local natural resources...". We believe "lack of local natural resources" could also cause famine and our correction goes in this direction. In general, the most severe outbreaks of famine are due not only to a lack of local natural resources, but also to disruption, etc.

Prof. F. KALSHOVEN (Netherlands Red Cross)

To come back to the comment made by Mr. Kosirnik, I would suggest that the first operative paragraph of resolution 2 read as follows: "reminds the authorities concerned and the armed forces under their command of the following humanitarian principles", the list of prohibitions to follow.

Mr. R. KOSIRNIK (ICRC)

We can accept this suggestion concerning the introductory paragraph of operative paragraph 1.

Dr. D. VENEDICTOV (Alliance)

I apologize for taking the floor once again, but I regret that the ICRC does not find it acceptable to put some emotion into this draft resolution, especially since they say that they agree in substance. I understand that we are pressed for time, but we are discussing a number of very serious items and if we adopt resolutions, we should at least be able to work and negotiate a few points. We have accepted a very emotional and very just resolution in relation to one ongoing conflict, in Yugoslavia, and I think this is perfectly correct. But we have finished the Campaign on the victims of war and there are a number of other ongoing conflicts in the world. We are discussing the technical aspects of what we should do on this or that occasion, but we do not appeal with the same emotional force on behalf of the Movement to the participants in all other conflicts to stop the hostilities. Let us not be too technical or political, but also humanitarian. I am ready to support the draft resolution as it now stands if you accept the idea that we adopt a short additional resolution or decision, for instance, to note the results of the Campaign, which gave us a lot of information about human suffering throughout the world during military conflicts, and to appeal, as the Council of Delegates, to all belligerents for greater mutual understanding, to bring peace to hearts and to stop the hostilities as soon as possible. It is not clear to me why we appeal in one conflict and neglect all the others. If it is acceptable to the ICRC and if you, Mr. Chairman, agree, I have no difficulties in supporting the draft as it is now.

Mr. C. SOMMARUGA (President of the ICRC)

I very much agree with what Dr. Venedictov just said. The draft resolutions we have discussed refer directly to international humanitarian law. But he is perfectly right when he appeals to us to adopt a resolution or a decision along the lines of what was done this morning for a specific case and to do it, as we should, in full impartiality, for all victims, in a separate text. The ICRC agrees and offers to help the delegation of the Alliance of the Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to draft this text, that we could adopt before the end of the Council.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

My proposal would be then to draft such a version, which will meet with broad approval and will depend also on whether the two resolutions can cover the matter or whether another one will have to be added. The representatives of the Netherlands and German Red Cross, the Alliance and the ICRC will propose final versions of these two texts with the necessary modifications.

Mr. R. JÄCKLI (ICRC)

The most important point which we found a little bit difficult to accommodate has been solved by Mr. Sommaruga. I believe we have explained the other points in our discussions. Unless those who raised the points originally feel that we have not given adequate explanations, I would like to leave the resolution as amended by René Kosirnik before the Council for approval.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Is this then acceptable to you with the point which was developed by Mr. Sommaruga and with the modifications which were accepted by the ICRC?

Applause

Dr. D. VENEDICTOV (Alliance)

I was just going to say that this is acceptable if we formulate an appeal in respect of other conflicts. I support the draft resolution as it stands.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Draft resolutions 18.1/Res.1 and 18.1/Res.2, on humanitarian assistance in cases of armed conflicts and on protection of the civilian population against famine in situations of armed conflicts, have been carried unanimously. I would now like to move on to draft resolution CD/18.1/Res.3, which was submitted by a group of Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies. I now ask which co-author would like to introduce it.

Ambassador François de ROSE (French Red Cross)

The French Red Cross presents Resolution 18.1/Res.3, with the support of all the National Societies mentioned, plus the Czechoslovak Red Cross, which asked to join us. This resolution refers to the fact that we have not had the International Conference. We have all been extremely grateful to the Standing Commission and to its Chairman, Mr. Abu-Goura, for the efforts they have made to get us out of the difficult situation in which we, or rather the organization of the Conference found itself. We thank the Standing Commission for expressing its regret at the failure of its efforts.

The cause of this failure, as we know, was the introduction into matters relating to the life of the Red Cross of considerations and preoccupations of a political nature which are foreign to our ideals and our principles. Political concerns are perfectly legitimate, they form the life of nations. I myself have served political interests and, I hope also, the interests of good relations between nations throughout my professional life. But since I joined the Red Cross my thoughts on the problem of peace have acquired a new dimension, associated with the importance of international humanitarian law, the very law of which the International Conference is indeed one of the essential promoters. This Conference is unique in being the only institution, the only body, in which the greatest humanitarian organization in the world, that is, the International Movement of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, meets on an equal footing with the States party to the Geneva Conventions. It is precisely because this Conference has such a singular honour and singular importance that we regret that it is not taking place this year in Budapest. Hence the resolution that we propose has a dual purpose. The first is to recall, and to remind the governments, that our Movement must not be embroiled in political matters or divergences. The second is to underline an essential feature that distinguishes the work of the Red Cross Movement from the actions of governments, and that is related to the notion of neutrality. States are neutral when they wish to abstain from something. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement remains neutral in order to act. That is a tremendous difference. In this connection, I would point out that the English translation of the phrase that we consider essential to our draft resolution is not correct. It should read: "pointing out that whereas States are neutral in order to abstain, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is neutral in order to act". Once this has been corrected, I think that our resolution will prove a great source of strength for our negotiators when they resume, as they will, talks and negotiations on reconvening

the XXVI Conference. If, as we hope, this text is approved by all components of the Movement, it will prove a considerable asset to our negotiators in keeping discussions and preparatory arrangements on the right lines, with respect for our principles, which the governments recognize. Having said that, and in the hope that the Conference can be held in the near future, I believe that in adopting this resolution we will indicate the importance that we attach to the continuation, by the International Conference, of the process of development and further study of international humanitarian law.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Thank you for presenting this resolution. Do you accept this draft resolution?

Applause

Mr. Y. SANDOZ (ICRC)

I fully support the initiative of the French Red Cross and congratulate Mr. de Rose, whose initials are at the bottom of the page, for what he has done in such a short time. The resolution is an accurate reflection of our discussions following the postponement of the Conference. However, I would like to make two comments. One is a very slight change in the sentence -which is an elegant one- "pointing out that whereas States are neutral in order to abstain, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is neutral in order to act". The statement that the Red Cross and the Red Crescent are neutral in order to act is remarkable and satisfactory. I hesitate, however, about the first part of the sentence, since it gives the idea that States are neutral. In reality, the majority of States do not claim to be neutral. So, although attractive, the wording contradicts somewhat the true state of the world. Few States claim to be neutral, and I therefore propose the following slight amendment: "pointing out that the Red Cross and the Red Crescent are neutral in order to act", which is a fine phrase that I think should be kept. The second point I wished to mention is that, although I completely approve of the last paragraph, we should not, in spite of everything, the postponement of the Conference and the trauma of Budapest, give the impression now that we feel resentment against all the States. It is true that a problem has not been solved. We cannot hold all the States responsible. Many States made thorough preparations for the Conference and were certainly quite as disappointed as we were that it did not take place. I say this without proposing any modification of the last paragraph of the resolution, but it seems to me that we should be aware of this. We have no reason to accuse the whole community of States, even though we must remind them, as Mr. de Rose does so well, of how important it is that they preserve our neutrality. That is what I wished to say. But the ICRC, I think, completely supports the action taken by Mr. de Rose and congratulates the French Red Cross on this appropriate draft.

Mr. Ousmane DIAGNE (Senegalese Red Cross)

I believe that I have grasped the spirit underlying this text, but I would like to make two basic comments. The second, indeed, has already been touched on by the previous speaker. The third paragraph, as it stands, could give the impression that international humanitarian law had not yet been drafted. The French reads "*considérant qu'ainsi a été retardé le processus d'élaboration du droit international humanitaire*". Yet the law does indeed exist. We are talking about strengthening it. So I propose that the word "*élaboration*" in the French text be replaced by "*renforcement*".

The sixth paragraph has already been mentioned. I must say that we should not censure anyone, as some people have been doing since yesterday. We are two entities: one formed by the components of the Movement, the other formed by the States. States act for political reasons, that is their right; let us leave them to it. What has happened will happen again, as some have stated. We should not be censorious. I think that this whole paragraph should be deleted, since it makes us seem to be apportioning blame, and we should after all show respect to the States, all the more since, as someone has said, the majority also regret what has happened. We must avoid harsh judgements. We must make sure that when the States read the resolutions resulting from our meeting they do not receive the impression that we have been over-censorious of them. It is rather as if the States were to ask us to see things from their point of view. We have two different viewpoints. They work on the political level, we do humanitarian work. I propose that this paragraph be completely deleted or that we accept the amendment proposed by the previous speaker. I have other remarks on the form of the resolution, but I will not pursue the matter. We can doubtless tidy up the text when it has been adopted.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I now have on my list France, Brazil, Algeria, Zimbabwe, the USSR and Egypt. If you agree, the list of speakers is now closed.

Ambassador F. de ROSE (French Red Cross)

I willingly accept the first amendment proposed by the representative from Senegal, that is, to have the third paragraph read "*considérant qu'ainsi a été retardé le processus de renforcement du droit international humanitaire*". On the other hand, I am completely opposed to the entire deletion of the sixth paragraph. In order to take into account what was said by the ICRC representative, I propose to reword this paragraph as follows: "pointing out that when States say that they are neutral, it is in order to abstain, whereas the Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is neutral in order to act". It is true that not all States are neutral; some always are, but some are not. We would have to say "when States say that they are neutral, or decide on neutrality". I have no preference about the

wording, but I am totally opposed to the deletion of this paragraph, which I regard as absolutely essential and perhaps the key to the whole resolution that I have the honour to propose.

Mrs. M.A.A. HARMON (Brazilian Red Cross)

With great regret a decision was taken to postpone an International Conference. This was approved by the National Societies, by the components of the Movement. What we have here now is a resolution which would be the proof, in writing, of what we have done and what we have approved. I am in complete agreement with this resolution, which was submitted by the French Red Cross and which other Red Cross Societies have co-sponsored. I would like to speak now, if Dr. Abu-Goura will allow me, as a member of the Standing Commission, to say that at no point were we against the governments when the decision was taken. On the contrary, we live with our governments and they have to be political, because they have to conduct the affairs of State. Also, I am sure that there are many people in this plenary who were once politicians, are politicians or perhaps one day will be politicians. The Brazilian Red Cross thoroughly endorses the draft resolution. If there is time we would even like to co-sponsor it. I agree with Mr. de Rose on the two amendments but not the deletion of the last paragraph.

Dr. Said AYACHI (Algerian Red Crescent)

I think I would agree with our friend, the President of the Senegalese Red Cross, about replacing the words "*processus d'élaboration*" by "*renforcement*". In fact, we are in the process of updating and reinforcing the law. On the other hand, in response to the concerns of the ICRC representative, I think that a form of wording can be found, midway between his own proposal and that of Mr. de Rose, for the sixth paragraph of the resolution presented to us, which might be worded thus: "pointing out that while the States are free to abstain, the Red Cross and the Red Crescent are neutral in order to act".

Dr. D. VENEDICTOV (Alliance)

I fully support this draft resolution and the French explanations. I thought maybe it would be wise for the people to meet and to make small amendments, if necessary. There is complete agreement, and it is necessary only to clarify some points.

Ambassador O. EL SHAFIE (Egyptian Red Crescent)

I would like to thank the French Red Cross Society very much. We have no difficulty with this draft. Our remarks only concern one or two points. There is an indication that this draft, as this assembly knows, lays the blame in certain

quarters. This is really our concern. This resolution should be less concerned with blaming somebody. In an earlier intervention we said that perhaps a little bit more effort could have brought this XXVI Conference into session. We should not forget that we are addressing the governments and certainly we need the governments to apply the Geneva Conventions and all humanitarian laws. I think our Red Crescent Society may be a little bit more sensitive when addressing governments. This is our difficulty. I think a group of people should sit down together again and look into this text and see what kind of common language we can use so that the draft can be adopted.

Mr. C. SOMMARUGA (President of the ICRC)

I have followed the debate with the greatest interest, and I would like to congratulate all those who grasp this opportunity to give the proper impetus in our deliberations towards the possibility of resuming dialogue with the governments in a forum such as the International Conference, in order to accomplish something absolutely fundamental: to reinforce, to develop, to make more profound and universal this immense treasure that is international humanitarian law, the very foundation of our existence as the Red Cross and Red Crescent. I do not believe that anyone here in this hall wishes to voice a sort of general condemnation regarding the governments, who are, naturally, responsible for their decisions. As I see it, the message of this last paragraph of the draft resolution presented by the French Red Cross and other National Societies is to remind governments of the necessity for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to be able to observe its own Fundamental Principles. These Principles have been accepted by the governments themselves in our Statutes. In Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Movement's Statutes there is an expression which basically covers perfectly what we are doing if we adopt this draft resolution. It reads: "the States shall at all times respect the adherence of all components of the Movement to the Fundamental Principles". This is what the French Red Cross and the other Societies want to ensure, and I request you to approve this last paragraph of the draft resolution, as it stands.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

There are therefore two proposed amendments, namely, to replace the word "*élaboration*" by "*renforcement*", and to reword the paragraph beginning "pointing out", taking into account the situation of States with regard to neutrality. Since I consider that we are dealing here with a matter of drafting, I ask: can you approve this draft resolution with the two amendments and in view of President Sommaruga's explanation?

Applause

The draft resolution CD/18.1/Res.3 is approved by acclamation.

18.2 Child-soldiers

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

We now turn to item 18.2 of the agenda, Child soldiers. I believe that Mr. Skarstedt, of the Swedish Red Cross, will present the item.

Mr. C.I. SKARSTEDT (Swedish Red Cross)

I refer to draft resolution CD/18.2/Res.1, on child-soldiers, proposed by the Icelandic Red Cross and the Swedish Red Cross and co-sponsored by the Brazilian Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross, the French Red Cross, the Japanese Red Cross, the Jordan Red Crescent, the Mozambique Red Cross, the Sudanese Red Crescent and the International Committee of the Red Cross. There are at present at least 200,000 child soldiers throughout the world.

They are used as both government troops and in armed non-governmental entities. Some of them are teenagers, others are not more than 7 or 9 years old. Many children are drafted or forced to take part in hostilities, others join because they have lost their family and have no other means of satisfying their basic needs for food, clothing and shelter. The age limit for recruitment into armed forces or groups and participation in hostilities was discussed during the Diplomatic Conference which led to the adoption of the Additional Protocols and by the drafting committee for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The limit was set as 15 years in the Additional Protocols, and no improvement was made in the Child Convention despite great efforts by governments and non-governmental agencies to raise the age limit to 18. International law is, however, now defined not only through new international laws or standards, but also through doctrine and practice. After the Child Convention was adopted, it was suggested that the States unilaterally declare an age limit of 18 for recruitment into armed forces and participation in hostilities. This was also suggested in a letter of 26 March 1990 sent by the ICRC and the League, now the Federation, to all National Societies. Other efforts to analyze the issue of child soldiers have also been made. One example is from this year. The Swedish Red Cross arranged a conference in late spring on Children of War. The purpose of this conference was to analyze the consequences of using children as soldiers and to find ways to prevent that use. I recommend that you read this report. It is very short and succinct.

I will now comment on some important elements of the draft resolution, in particular the operative paragraphs. In paragraph 1, there is an appeal to all parties to armed conflicts strictly to observe the rules of international humanitarian law affording special protection to children. It is a sad fact that the existing age limit of 15 is not respected. There is therefore an urgent need to improve the protection of children under the age of 15.

Concerning paragraph 2, why an age limit of 18? I will try to give some brief answers. We need one set of rules, one definition of a child. The age limit of 18 is used in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child without any exceptions for children in armed conflicts. It has already been incorporated in the domestic laws of many countries, for example, Sri Lanka, Mozambique and Guatemala. Many members of the drafting committee of the Child Convention were in favour of an increased age limit. The age when a person acquires the maturity of an adult varies according to culture, the individual and the situation, but 18 is an age when most persons are mature enough. Everyone is harmed by participating in war. Children are more vulnerable. Therefore they should not participate. A uniform age limit is therefore desirable. The 18 year limit is accepted in many parts of the world. The wording of the resolution can lead to and be used for a change in the interpretation of standards.

Operative paragraph 3 is intended to underline the specific importance of preventing children from voluntarily joining the armed forces or armed groups. Children join voluntarily for mainly two reasons: they have nowhere else to turn for food or shelter, the army is perhaps the only home they have. The children are needed and fulfil a role. Many children are politically aware, they are not passive. They want to participate in the struggle for their country and the future. But from Red Crescent and Red Cross experiences, we know that many young people join our Movement to be able to help change the situation of the country. We can offer alternatives to violence, for example, various first-aid activities, medical activities and assistance to children and older people.

I turn to paragraph 4. What is the use of the study mentioned in paragraph 4? The study will show the full scope of the problem, which is not at present documented. The study will keep the question on the international agenda since the Henry Dunant Institute will approach the governments and others for information. The Institute should also publish articles along the way. The study will, when presented, give publicity to the situation of child soldiers. What should the study cover? It should include every country in the world and deal with recruitment and participation, international undertakings, domestic laws and regulations, the present situation in each country, as concerns both governmental and non-governmental entities. The study could conclude with a general recommendation to reduce and possibly eliminate the use of the children as soldiers. The study will be financed by the governments and, if needed, by organizations within our Movement. Some major sponsors have already indicated their support. It is, however, important that the funds come from many sources, so that the responsibility is not only with a few countries. Let me conclude by saying the following: children are the future, not child soldiers. The Icelandic and Swedish Red Cross Societies as well as the many co-sponsors strongly wish and sincerely hope that our draft resolution on child soldiers will, in the spirit of humanity, be adopted in its entirety by this Council of Delegates.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Does any delegation still wish to speak on the draft resolution?

Dr. G. RUEDA MONTAÑA (Colombian Red Cross)

The Colombian Red Cross fully endorses the draft resolution, because this is a problem it knows well. It has seen for itself how children involved in military operations suffer permanent psychological trauma and how, when hostilities are over, they turn into murderers, acting in a totally abnormal way. Prevention is the only way to deal with this problem. I therefore not only endorse the spirit of the draft resolution but also consider the study to be carried out by the Institute as absolutely essential. The Colombian Red Cross Society is ready to help finance the study as far as its modest resources permit.

Dr. E. GUTIÉRREZ SÁNCHEZ (Federation)

Little needs to be added to the outstanding arguments put forward by the speaker who presented this draft resolution, but perhaps I might offer a few personal comments. First of all, the draft resolution conveys a profound sense of human solidarity. A few years ago, a group of mainly European National Societies worked on the subject of child soldiers: I recall that the Swedish Red Cross, in particular its Youth Section, launched a project to raise awareness among National Societies and collected signatures to try and draw attention to the problem. Many Latin American National Societies took an active part in this project.

I should also like to comment on two paragraphs of the draft resolution. Firstly, in so-called Third World or developing countries countless children and young people have no jobs, no opportunities for education and are sometimes compelled to enlist. I am convinced that our Movement is sufficiently strong, has sufficient prestige and can therefore exert sufficient pressure to put an end to such practices. Secondly, studies carried out by specialists among refugee populations have shown that children who have been involved in armed conflicts, and especially those who have taken an active part in hostilities, are marked for life by the psychological trauma they have endured. It is sad to see that the large department stores are still selling more toys that teach children how to wage war than toys that could show them how to behave in a humane way. I therefore strongly support this draft resolution and urge all delegates here today to inform the relevant authorities in their respective countries of our position in respect of the problem of child soldiers.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I then propose that we adopt the draft resolution by acclamation.

Applause

Mr. R. JÄCKLI (ICRC)

Forty-eight hours ago, pictures of suffering children were in the Conference hall and, moved by that, we now can but support this resolution. In the last 50 years it has been particularly civilians, and amongst them particularly children, who have suffered in conflicts. Yet children are protected by international humanitarian law, which accords them a broad measure of protection. No fewer than 25 articles in the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols afford special protection to children in hostilities. The ICRC, through its various activities, in particular visits to children in prison, assistance programmes and continued reminders to belligerents of the prohibition to recruit children under 15 years of age, makes sure the issue is not forgotten. We can but support the draft resolution. Let me add that the measures to ensure that children's basic needs are met call for further investigation, particularly since the basic needs of children are far greater than the basic needs of other people. Finally, in respect of other efforts to be undertaken, the ICRC is convinced that it is above all by taking preventive action, by making the rules of international humanitarian law as widely known as possible, that genuine respect for the rights of children can be secured. The ICRC will continue to appeal to the governments of States party to the Geneva Conventions to do everything in their power to at least ensure respect for the rules of humanitarian law that already exist for the special protection of children.

Mr. R. SZTUHLIK (Chairman)

Thank you very much for your contribution, which has underlined the broad support in the hall for this resolution. I think we can confirm that the resolution is adopted by acclamation. With your permission, we will go on to point 18.3 of the agenda.

Applause

18.3 Information from the ICRC concerning ongoing work on the implementation and development of international humanitarian law

Mr. Y. SANDOZ (ICRC)

Time is passing, but I would nevertheless like to review, as quickly as possible, the major points that we were hoping to put forward to the States in the field of international humanitarian law. First of all, obviously, we ought to have had a very specific debate on the application of international humanitarian law in the world, after the overview given by our President. This periodic dialogue is one of the main reasons justifying the International Conference. Consequently, we bitterly regret the lost opportunity of Budapest.

Regarding the promotion of international humanitarian law, the ICRC still considers that the emphasis should be on consolidating existing law. Many initiatives in the legislative field -often generous ones- tend to forget the existence of current provisions. This is especially true of the right to assistance, which has been presented separately. What should be done is to promote existing instruments and, first and foremost, the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions. A number of National Societies have played a decisive role with their governments. We appreciate this, and we encourage those whose government is not yet party to the Protocols to urge it to accede to them. For its part, the ICRC will continue its efforts to promote them.

Humanitarian law includes a less well-known Convention which specifies by a series of prohibitions the principles recalled in Protocol I of 1977. I refer to the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, which contains a Protocol relating to mines. This Convention and its attached Protocols are valuable adjuncts to the principles recalled in Protocol I of 1977 concerning the use of certain weapons. However, for lack of adequate promotion, the 1980 Convention has been ratified by only about 30 States. The horror of the thousands of civilians, especially children, killed or maimed by mines should incite us to bring this Convention out of its oblivion.

The ICRC intends to commit itself actively to this, and will also offer its services to organize the preliminary conference necessary to prepare the revision or development of this Convention. We greatly hope for support from National Societies in urging their governments to accede to this important Convention.

A significant stage between expression by a government of the political will to apply the Geneva Conventions and the actual application of these Conventions is the adoption of national measures for their implementation, such as laws on respect for the emblem or arrangements for international humanitarian law to be taught as part of the instruction given to the armed forces. A pressing request to do this is systematically made to States that have ratified the Protocols. There again, the National Societies can play an active part. The ICRC continually collects details of all these national measures, a most arduous task, if only because of linguistic problems. It has noted, in fact, that dialogue based on such measures permits a factual approach to the problems and, consequently, some progress in the effective application of humanitarian norms. Unfortunately, international humanitarian law is usually mentioned only in connection with violations thereof. So it is important to stress that in many cases humanitarian norms are applied and that the ICRC is able to perform its duties. Violations do exist, however, and they cannot be ignored, for each violation is one too many. What can be done to stop them? Apart from the measures advocated already, apart from the dissemination of international humanitarian law, which remains essential and which we have already discussed, the ICRC intends to take action in various ways. One of them is to bring together experts, including government experts, to study how far the States can go in fulfilling their collective obligation to ensure that international humanitarian law is applied in all circumstances. The problems associated with misuse of the emblem, especially the abusive employment of the emblem or its

imitation by other humanitarian organizations -some of which, incidentally, do excellent work- prompted us, after sometimes heated discussions with these organizations, to plan a meeting at which they, together with certain National Societies involved, the ICRC and the government experts, would examine simultaneously the question of protection of the members of these organizations in conflicts and the misuse of the emblem. Let us hope that this approach -which is intended to be constructive and not antagonistic- will enable us to work towards solving the problem, which quite justifiably worries many National Societies and the ICRC. In addition, we must follow with sympathetic attention the work to be accomplished by the recently created International Fact-Finding Commission, an eminent member of which is present among us today. If this Commission is to have its proper weight, it is, once again, important for National Societies to urge their governments to accept the competence of the Commission as binding.

Should international humanitarian law be developed or made more precise? The emphasis to be placed today on existing provisions must obviously not serve as a pretext for refusing to re-examine the content of existing instruments and to consider their possible development. In this context, the ICRC will very shortly convene a meeting of government experts on environment and war, to examine existing provisions in the light of the grave damage caused to the environment during recent conflicts, particularly the Gulf war. How can the standards set for environmental protection be enforced during armed conflicts? Should these standards be extended? These are questions that we must answer.

Another matter which we feel it is vital to submit to governments is that of the rules concerning the conduct of hostilities in non-international conflicts. How can a government permit itself to use against its own population means of warfare that it refrains from using against the troops of a foreign country? The horrific nature of many internal conflicts illustrates the need to restate the essential rules to be observed during such conflicts. What we have to do is to examine how to transmit to governments this important message, which was contained in the report prepared for the Conference.

The law on war at sea undeniably requires thorough re-examination in the light of modern technology. A series of meetings of experts has been arranged under the auspices of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo. These meetings, in which ICRC experts and government experts come together, should continue next year. A final report will then be sent to the governments asking what follow-up they intend to give to the work accomplished. I spoke earlier of the ICRC's intention to promote the 1980 Conventional Weapons Convention, with a view also to contributing to the obligation imposed on the States to investigate whether new weapons are lawful. The ICRC has held several meetings to study a weapon that it is now possible to produce, but that very fortunately has not yet been used. It is a weapon the effect of which is to blind those against whom it is directed. All aspects of the question -technical, legal, medical, psychological, social- have been examined in depth by specialists who are among the world's best, and have been the subject of four reports and a summary report which we had planned to present to the Conference, again, with the intention of studying

with the governments how these reports should be followed up. In any case, the supposition that blinding may be used as a method of war is clearly inadmissible to the ICRC. We cannot tolerate the idea of huge numbers of young people being blinded for life. We must hope, therefore, that for once we can prevent an evil, and not merely concern ourselves with curing it.

Finally, the technical methods of identifying persons and goods protected by the Geneva Conventions, particularly medical transports, have to be constantly adapted to technological advances. For this reason the ICRC called a meeting of government experts, in conformity with the procedure laid down in Annex I of Protocol I. The experts adopted by consensus the modifications to be made to this Annex. The depositary government will now have to submit these proposals for adoption by the governments.

So you see that we have many reasons for talking with the governments. We have tried to sum up in a few minutes the subjects that we intended to present to them. We therefore have many reasons to regret the lost opportunity of Budapest. Now we have to consider how to regain that opportunity. For you must understand and share our conviction of what lies behind the rules, the papers and the documents: victims have been helped, suffering mitigated or avoided; there are governments more aware of their obligations, troops better instructed in their duty to spare civilians, convoys of wounded better identified, children saved from mines, soldiers spared the terrible mutilation of blinding. That is what lies behind our endeavours, this is what we work for and why we believe in what we do.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Thank you, Mr. Sandoz, for your analysis. Would anyone like to add a few words?

Mr. Mohammed ALSHARAN (Kuwait Red Crescent)

On behalf of Dr. Abdel Rahman AL-AWAZI, the head of our delegation, who had to leave because of travel arrangements. I would like to thank the ICRC for its efforts to uphold humanitarian law. The efforts of the ICRC since the liberation of Kuwait have been remarkable, but unfortunately, during the occupation of Kuwait, and maybe for the first time in history, the ICRC was prevented from doing its job and safeguarding humanitarian principles. We believe the ICRC should be given a stronger role in the future, so that it can perform its humanitarian tasks. We very much thank the ICRC for all its work with us in Kuwait. Despite all its excellent efforts there, more than 2,000 Kuwaitis are still missing in Iraq. We would like the ICRC to intensify its efforts to resolve this humanitarian issue. We also appeal to all National Societies to put pressure on their governments to this end. The missing Kuwaitis in Iraq is a serious humanitarian issue. We hope that the ICRC can play a major role in closing this last sad chapter of the tragedy in the Gulf.

Dr. D. VENEDICTOV (Alliance)

I want to express deep appreciation for the information given by the ICRC on its extensive work to develop and especially to promote implementation of international humanitarian law. We all know that conflicts are very painful, and how difficult it is, as the previous speaker has said, to turn the final page. May I ask your permission for Dr. Ousichenko, the President of Ukrainian Red Cross, to say a few words on a very painful point?

Dr. Ivan OUSICHENKO (Ukrainian Red Cross)

The Ukrainian people would like to draw your attention to the tragic fate of Soviet soldiers who are presently being held by the Afghan armed opposition. We call on you to help solve this most pressing humanitarian problem. Almost three years after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, hundreds of prisoners of war are still deprived of the opportunity to return home. The Afghan opposition has formally acknowledged that it holds prisoners of war, but the lists of those prisoners have not yet been published. The prisoner-of-war problem has been the subject of constant attention by the Ukrainian public and parliament, since there are dozens of Ukrainians among the captured Soviet soldiers. The Ukraine has actively participated in the development of and is an active party to all international agreements on international humanitarian law as applied to armed conflicts, including the Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war of 12 August 1949 and the Additional Protocols of 8 June 1977. Guided by the basic provisions of those documents, we attach the utmost significance to the task of the practical implementation of the principles and norms that could provide proper international legal protection for prisoners of war. The reason for our anxiety and concern is that until recently they failed to ensure implementation of the provisions of the Third Geneva Convention on prisoners of war, particularly Article 118 stipulating that prisoners of war ought to be liberated and repatriated immediately after the end of hostilities. In this situation, we hope to cooperate with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the National Societies of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia and all those countries where prisoners of war might be held, and with those who may have any information about them. No less important is the task of finding the graves of those prisoners of war who died and ensuring that those graves are properly tended. In this connection, we ask you to support our suggestion of forming a Special Working Commission in which all the parties concerned can participate to locate the graves of all those missing in action, to establish two-way contact with families and relatives, to provide them with the necessary humanitarian aid and finally, to free the victims from captivity. The Special Working Commission should be given the opportunity to organize consultations, check-ups and meetings of prisoners of war with their families and relatives. The Commission could include representatives of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies concerned, and neutral observers could also take part. To solve this problem as quickly as possible, we are ready to start negotiations with anyone concerned immediately. The repatriation of the prisoners of war would not only confirm the adherence of the Red Cross Movement to the ideals of

humanism and charity, it would also promote international humanitarian law as an effective instrument for protecting war victims. If all of us, working together, could find a solution to the humanitarian problem of repatriating all those who became prisoners of war in the Afghan conflict, it would be a practical result and a true success of our International Campaign for the protection of war victims.

Dr. I. ALNOURI (Iraqi Red Crescent)

I would like to join my colleague from the Kuwaiti Red Crescent in emphasizing that it is very important to give the ICRC the opportunity to ensure compliance with the Fundamental Principles and the rules of international humanitarian law. I would like to request that the ICRC be given the chance to protect the Arab nationals detained in Kuwaiti jails. According to the latest report of Human Rights Watch, an American organization, on respect for human rights in Kuwait since the liberation, in the prisons under complete military control most of the detainees (over 5,000 in one centre alone) were held in extremely crowded cells and suffered severe shortages of water, medical care and food, the result being numerous deaths. A relief official who visited military facilities in late March and early April said detainees were dying rapidly. I think it is very important that we develop new criteria to put the ICRC in a better position to monitor the humanitarian situation. This report also stated that the government has not yet given the ICRC full access to places of detention such as the State security prisons and those run by the National Guard, to name but a few. Regarding the missing Kuwaitis, I think negotiations have now started in Baghdad between the ICRC, the Arab League and the Iraqi authorities on this issue and, according to my information, the majority of the so-called "Kuwaiti missing", some of whom are in Iraq, are asking to return to Kuwait, but the Kuwaiti authorities refuse. There is also the problem of the Bedun, some of whom fought against the Iraqis; they are being prevented from returning to the country they defended during the Gulf crisis. I would like to appeal to the ICRC and to the Federation to protect all the rights of the Bedun, the majority of whom are now in Iraq. They are asking for their belongings, all of which are in Kuwait, and they are asking to return to Kuwait.

Mr. R. SZTUHLIK (Chairman)

We have come to the end of the list of speakers. I would like to ask the ICRC to comment.

Mr. Y. SANDOZ (ICRC)

It was planned that our President would present to the International Conference an overview of current humanitarian problems in the world. Obviously, we cannot do this here in this meeting: it would require a whole day of discussions. We are nevertheless very pleased with the comments that have been made, since everyone, basically, has called for greater respect for international humanitarian

law. We are aware of the problems raised. There are probably fifteen, twenty or thirty other delegations that could have described the serious problems encountered during conflicts. There are no conflicts that do not give rise to grave humanitarian problems, we must realize that. For that reason I am grateful to the speakers who, without of course outlining all the problems, have described a few specific situations. This short debate seems to indicate everyone is determined further to improve the application of international humanitarian law, to support the ICRC and all those who are attempting to relieve the suffering of victims of armed conflicts. I would appeal very specially to National Societies to request their governments to respect the law and to enable the ICRC to accomplish its mission. This is how I understand the debate that has now been launched, not so much on the details given of specific cases, but in the form of an appeal and encouragement for increased respect for international humanitarian law. With these words I will close. Thank you all for your support. We all need support, which is in fact the very essence of our Movement.

Mr. M. AUBERT (ICRC)

Briefly, after this discussion, after what Mr. Sandoz has said, after what we have heard about the violations of international humanitarian law, I would like to stress the importance of the 1980 UN Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons. First, there is the Protocol relating to non-detectable fragments, prohibiting the use of any weapon of which the fragments are invisible to X rays; booby-traps are also banned. Unfortunately, there have been conflicts in which use has been made of objects that appear harmless but in fact contain explosives, or traps attached to a protective sign such as the red cross or the red crescent, or else mines, as Mr. Sandoz mentioned. The Protocol prohibits their use against civilians, but that is somewhat limited. In fact, it ought to be possible to require that the location of each mine be recorded. There is, finally, the Protocol forbidding or restricting the use of incendiary weapons. This provision is somewhat limited, since it bans the use of such weapons only against civilians. The Protocols of the 1980 Convention therefore really constitute only a first step towards limiting these weapons. For example, as the Chinese delegation pointed out at the time, there is no legal restriction on the use of incendiary weapons against combatants. The mines that cause so many deaths and injuries, often many years after hostilities have ceased, should be subject to regulations which, if they are to be effective, must be accepted by a large number of States. In its declaration on signing this Convention, France reserved the possibility of requesting, at a later Conference, a method for supervising observance of this agreement. Unfortunately, as Mr. Sandoz has said, the 1980 Convention is binding on only about thirty States. Moreover, there is a clause stating that, ten years after its entry into force, each Contracting State may request the UN Secretary-General to convene another conference, at which the Protocols could be supplemented and others covering different weapons drawn up. In conclusion, it is highly desirable that National Societies whose governments are not yet party to this Convention request them to ratify it or accede to it. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of countries already bound by the Convention should examine with their

governments the possibility of requesting another conference. The 1980 Convention and its Protocols are in fact the shield protecting civilians and combatants against weapons causing unnecessary suffering and which have indiscriminate effects. Let us hope that they will one day be accepted by all the States.

ITEM 10 ON THE AGENDA:

THE FUTURE OF THE MOVEMENT

10.2 Report on the Yverdon meeting (continued)

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Before moving on to item 19 on the agenda, I suggest we come back to items 10 and 10.2, where the draft resolution on the Study Group on the future of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was adopted by consensus, but with the reservation that some drafting work was still to be done. Before informing you on that, I give the floor to President Sommaruga.

Mr. C. SOMMARUGA (President of the ICRC)

The ICRC enthusiastically endorses the revised text of resolution 2 relative to item 10.2 on the agenda, and congratulates the authors. I take it for granted that the members of the Standing Commission will also be receiving the reports mentioned in the last paragraph, because of the specific statutory competences of the Commission. Furthermore, I also understand that, in order to remain in conformity with our Statutes, this Group will be functioning up to the next Council of Delegates and that its mandate could then be renewed. Having said this, I would like to withdraw the ICRC's draft resolution CD/10.2/Res.1, a text that, as you have seen, was intended to find a relation between the Study Group which has been proposed and the parallel process. I think that both are very useful but they are different in size and form. Finally, I understand that this Council has heard, I had the impression with interest, the report made by Mr. Pierre Keller, member of the ICRC, and that it has welcomed the initiative taken by the President, Vice-Presidents, the Secretary General and the representatives of the National Societies members of the International Federation's Executive Board, on the one hand, and the President, Vice-Presidents and members of the Assembly and the Executive Board of the ICRC, on the other, to meet in Yverdon at the end of August in order to strengthen the cohesion and image of the Movement, and that the Council has noted with satisfaction that the process initiated by the Yverdon meeting will continue. I think that we could simply introduce my statement in the minutes of this meeting, so that there is a reference to the Yverdon process.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Thank you very much, President Sommaruga. This gives me, I think, the authority to conclude that the consensus reached yesterday on this proposal stands and is confirmed.

Applause

Mr. S. DAVEY (Federation)

I certainly don't want to propose any changes to the resolution at this stage. I would simply like to say that we very much agree with President Sommaruga's idea that a record be made of the Council's appreciation of the Yverdon process. Secondly, and this may not be the most popular comment of the afternoon, I have to point out that the Council has adopted this resolution in good spirit. I think other resolutions have been adopted in good spirit. We have been told, however, with regard to the victims of war campaign, that after the decision was made there were problems in raising the money. I do hope very much that there will be a very strong commitment from National Societies in the Council towards supporting the implementation of the study.

ITEM 19 ON THE AGENDA:

COORDINATION AND CONDUCT OF
EMERGENCY RELIEF OPERATIONS

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I ask the International Federation to introduce the subject.

Mr. P. STENBÄCK (Federation)

We heard in the General Assembly about the increasing number of people and organizations willing to act in support of the victims of disaster; I will therefore not repeat those things. Today, the spectacular disaster soon becomes international property with the almost instant media coverage that is possible. People see the suffering and quite rightly feel compassion and concern for their fellow human beings. Governments, reacting to their own sense of concern, look for mechanisms to demonstrate the nation's feelings, organizations through which to channel resources, and operations to mount which will provide effective relief and demonstrate compassion. The net result has been a great increase in the resources flowing in after disaster strikes. Some of these resources come through long-established agencies like our Federation, others through spontaneously created organizations responding to particular disasters or target groups. Either way we end up with a plethora of voluntary agencies on the ground, variously skilled and equipped, all trying to do the maximum good in the minimum time. If we are not careful, we start getting in each other's way, duplicating each other's work, and in the worst scenario, letting competition for the media highground cloud our judgement about the needs of the victims. To help bring some order to this theme, the General Assembly proposed that National Societies help facilitate NGO relief coordination. It is a role to be offered and implemented where effective National Societies and governments wish to accept such a mandate. It is a role based on information sharing and brokerage rather than control and direction. It may not be a very glamorous task, but it is one which we are uniquely placed to assist with and one we are willing to take on. The Federation therefore wishes to take the initiative to help facilitate non-governmental organization relief coordination. By providing suitably trained and equipped delegates we aim to assist the host National Society with four tasks:

1. pre-disaster preparedness assistance to aid them in preparing for a possible coordination role, including the provision of training and communications equipment where appropriate;
2. assistance in disasters to carry out timely assessments of needs and formulate effective relief action plans;

3. the provision of specifically allocated and suitably equipped international personnel in times of disaster to assist National Societies in the critical work of gathering, analyzing and sharing information pertinent to the disaster, within the corresponding NGO community, with a view to providing a common basis of understanding from which cooperation and coordination can grow;
4. finally, assistance to National Societies to develop the potential to act as a facilitator between the NGO community and the host government, if so requested.

All this will require the investment of Federation resources not just at the time of the disaster but also before. National Societies will need to prepare to take on such a role and to do some of the ground work for it, particularly with regard to the last two points I have mentioned. If the Federation is to be effective in this task, it must be timely in its application. The need for clear, unbiased and consistent information is felt from the very beginning of a relief operation. The Federation must be able to make its services available to National Societies in countries affected by disaster within hours rather than days of the disaster striking. Of course, the Federation does not claim to stand alone in improving relief coordination. In some countries, it will be more appropriate for indigenous NGOs to take the lead, but where a National Society is asked to assist, we are now committed and should be committed to backing that assistance with human and financial resources. May I therefore submit to the Council of Delegates, on behalf of the International Federation, the resolution entitled "Coordination of non-governmental disaster relief in time of peace". Another resolution has also been submitted, by the General Assembly of the International Federation, called "Harnessing international humanitarian assistance for disaster reduction", but this resolution will be introduced on behalf of the Federation by the British Red Cross.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I suggest that we take up the draft resolutions one after the other. We have three altogether on this subject. The first one referred to is CD/19/Res.1, "Coordination of non-governmental disaster relief in time of peace". Would anyone like to speak on it?

Major Ali Hassan QUORESHI (Bangladesh Red Crescent)

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society has been a major beneficiary of the International Federation's disaster relief operations for the past several years. Bangladesh is extremely disaster prone and will have to face the whims of nature in the future as well.

Guided by the humanitarian principles and aided by electronic media coverage, more and more national and international organizations are entering the field of

disaster relief. Even those organizations traditionally oriented towards development work are quickly adapting their functions to engage in disaster relief activities. While the non-governmental organizations provide valuable resources in a disaster situation, lack of coordination of their activities may jeopardize the whole operation and give rise to confusion. This makes the need for coordination of non-governmental disaster relief extremely important. Coordination is necessary not only for the exchange of information about resources and activities, but also for appropriate distribution of resources, according to the relative needs and priorities of the victims, and also to avoid duplication of efforts. There is no denying the fact that proper and meaningful coordination of non-governmental disaster relief is a prerequisite for appropriate, efficient and cost-effective disaster response and disaster relief activities. Undoubtedly, the National Societies of the stricken countries have a moral obligation to see that coordination is ensured. I am glad that the Federation has taken the initiative to propose draft resolution CD/19/Res.1 on this important subject. I thank the Secretary General, Mr. Stenbäck, for the goodwill and spirit expressed while introducing the subject and the draft resolution. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society is in full agreement with the draft resolution's preamble and the four operative paragraphs. We fully support the proposal to set up a National Disaster Relief Committee in each country, to have National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies participate in such Committees, along with other relevant NGOs, to have National Societies facilitate coordination or assist other NGOs to do so, and to give the Federation the role of assisting the National Societies in fulfilling this task. With these words I wholeheartedly endorse the draft resolution and hope that this august Council of Delegates will adopt it unanimously.

Mr. R. JÄCKLI (ICRC)

The subject of international disaster relief coordination, although a peacetime issue here, cannot leave the ICRC indifferent. As you know, the difficulties described both here and in the documents are similar in relief programmes carried out in times of conflict. We thank the Federation for having consulted us closely for this report. I say this because we nonetheless have a couple of points, too.

Firstly, this resolution cannot and should not serve as a model for conflict situations. It is well known that non-governmental organizations apply a very wide variety of intervention criteria which are frequently influenced by religious and/or political objectives. You will certainly agree with me that in time of conflict it is impossible to coordinate the work of such organizations, which do not adhere to the principles of impartiality and neutrality, in particular in time of civil war.

National Societies offering their coordination services to the respective governments should therefore clearly indicate to them that the offer shall be valid only for relief activities conducted in time of peace.

The second point is that such coordination of non-governmental organizations by National Societies, including the support activities of the Federation, should never

lead to working relationships which would include giving facilities to non-governmental organizations such as the use of our emblems, to mention just one example. It seems logical, as a last point in this context, that operating National Societies should perhaps take into consideration the difficulties experienced by participating Societies on a national level with some of the non-governmental organizations.

Dr. M.Y. HAMID (Sudanese Red Crescent)

I must congratulate the International Federation on this well prepared and well written draft resolution. I urge the Council to adopt it unanimously. We are a disaster-prone country aided by a confusion of non-governmental organizations. We don't know where they come from or who they represent, and see different new names every day. The confusion and duplication and waste of efforts really reduce our effectiveness. I feel we must have such a role in a Disaster Relief Committee and in coordination, and as a National Society we should be taking the lead in relief efforts and we should be consulted. I ask the Council to adopt this resolution without any changes.

Mr. P. NOBEL (Swedish Red Cross)

The Swedish Red Cross supports this resolution with enthusiasm. I just want to make two brief remarks.

1. I think it should be clearly understood that this resolution covers not only victims of natural disasters but also refugees and displaced persons. This can be seen from the paragraph on the top of the second page.
2. I think we could develop within our National Societies and in cooperation with each other, a form of cooperation which has to be monitored by the Federation, a sort of stand-by system where we can reach a certain degree of specialization. Some associations are good at something and others are good at other things. Sometimes it is a waste, but we should all have a high degree of preparedness for all sorts of situations.

Mr. J.W. RÖMER (German Red Cross)

It is our understanding that this resolution is an attempt to harmonize two of the resolutions proposed by the Disaster Relief Commission a couple of days ago and we do not have any further comments at this time. The German delegation would like to come out fully in support of this excellent draft resolution.

Mr. Alhaji Shehu MUSA (Nigerian Red Cross)

The Nigerian Red Cross delegation commends the Federation for its presentation of CD/19/Res.1. I wish to state that the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has fully satisfied requests one and two under the third paragraph of page 2 of the resolution. Firstly, the government of the Federal Republic, on the basis of its experiences during the 1967-1971 civil war, has established by legislation the National Emergency Relief Agency at the federal level, and has also created State Emergency Relief Committees. The Nigerian Red Cross Society is legally a member of the Agency and of the Committees. As a matter of fact, the Nigerian Red Cross Society was fully involved in drafting the legislation which led to the promulgation of the law which created both the Agency and the State Committees. Furthermore, recently the Nigerian Red Cross Society served as the conduit through which many other non-governmental organizations in Nigeria channelled their gifts and other services for the refugees from Liberia now temporarily resettled in our country. My delegation wishes to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of clothing sent to us by the Swedish Red Cross. We fully support the draft resolution submitted by the Federation to this august gathering.

Dr. A.K. ABDUL-HAMID (Iraqi Red Crescent)

I would like to express the full support of the Iraqi Red Crescent for the draft resolution entitled "Coordination of non-governmental disaster relief in time of peace". Actually I have two brief comments. As concerns the reference to the Principles and Rules for Disaster Relief, which have been published in the four languages of the Federation, I would like to see a paragraph added to the resolution asking all the National Societies to stick to these Principles and Rules. I ask this because we in the Iraqi Red Crescent Society are still suffering from the lack of coordination even with some other Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, in the operational field in Iraq. As you know, the Iraqi Red Crescent is the only national counterpart for all the non-governmental organizations working in Iraq on relief operations. During March and April, when there was an American army presence in the north, we appreciated the steps taken by the American Red Cross, which sent its Vice-President, Mr. Richard Stevens, to Baghdad to ask for permission to be present in the north with the American army. At the same time, teams from other National Societies were in the same area without even informing the Iraqi Red Crescent Society. According to my information, we are negotiating now with the Federation because some National Societies are in contact with Iraqi organizations and political leaders in the north of Iraq, in order to conduct relief activities, without even informing the Iraqi Red Crescent Society. I think it is very important to stick to these Principles and Rules. Some National Societies, when we discussed these Principles with them, said that the Federation's Principles and Rules were not those of the National Societies.

The second remark I have concerns the second page, namely the second point of the third paragraph: "urges that National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies should be represented upon such committees along with other relevant national NGOs". I would like to say that the National Societies should have the leading role in such committees.

General R.C. ESPINO (Philippine Red Cross)

The Philippine Society chaired the last trouble-free and peaceful International Conference, in Manila. We are pleased about this draft resolution because it embodies exactly what we are doing in the Philippines. We have a National Disaster Coordinating Council. It is a government body and we are a member of it. We are the only NGO that sits on the National Disaster Coordinating Council. We are also happy about the assistance we get from foreign sources, from the ICRC, the Federation, and all countries. We manifested our gratitude in our own modest way yesterday. We are particularly grateful to the Danish Red Cross and the Japanese Red Cross for the assistance they have given us by way of vehicles, storehouses -to store our supplies for disasters- and communications. I have some doubts about the penultimate paragraph of the resolution: "suitably equipped international personnel in times of disaster". In the Philippines, we are not unhappy about any of the donor Societies coming after the operation to audit what we have done, because we are very open about what happens to the money donated to us. I feel a little bad about this, but we can live with it. Again, I would like to congratulate the drafters of this resolution, which is very appropriate for disaster-prone countries.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

May I ask Mr. Stenbäck if he would like to say a few words.

Mr. P. STENBÄCK (Federation)

I would like to reply to Mr. R. Jäckli, representing the International Committee. I would say only, as a comment on his comment, that certainly these Rules cannot and are not intended to be applied in conflict situations. But I feel, nevertheless, that the same problems arise in conflicts, and we wonder whether it would not be interesting to develop an International Committee Model, because we cannot close our eyes to the lack of coordination in conflict situations, too. To Mr. Nobel, the Secretary General of the Swedish Red Cross, yes, refugees and displaced persons are certainly a part of this resolution, a part of the mandate of our International Federation and, in many cases, a part of a disaster situation. Dr. Hamid from Iraq urges the National Societies to stick to the Principles and Rules for Disaster Relief. I am very strongly of the same opinion, but would like to refer to page 2 in the English text: point 3 reads, "recommends that National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, in cooperation with the Federation and abiding by the Principles

and Rules for Disaster Relief." I think the point is covered. Perhaps the wording could be stronger. We feel that we have to remind the National Societies that before proposing a coordination model to others, you must have your own house in order. If we cannot coordinate our own operations, inside the Red Cross and Red Crescent family, how can we then go to others and say that we have a coordination model for them? That is quite clear. As there are no proposals for changes to this resolution, I can be happy with the comments which were made.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

May I move, then, that the Council adopts this draft resolution by acclamation.

Applause

Then we take up draft resolution CD/19/Res.2, which, as Mr. Stenbäck mentioned, comes from the Federation's General Assembly and was authored by the British Red Cross, which will introduce it.

Mr. David WYATT (British Red Cross)

We have before us today a number of important and, I think, complementary resolutions about giving assistance to victims. Our intention in introducing this text was to draw attention to the growing pressure put on the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement not just by the increase in the number and scale of disasters but by the growing demands of the world's conscience, which repeatedly stresses that something must be done. We are concerned that something should not be, as we say in English, "the reinvention of the wheel". The Red Cross and Red Crescent is already there, able and willing to make its contribution -which is a major contribution- not only by providing short-term emergency help to victims of disaster but also to work on disaster preparedness and prevention. I listened carefully to what Mr. Jäckli of the International Committee of the Red Cross said, and I would like to say that the last operative paragraph of CD/19/Res.2, which speaks about the viability of the Federation as an operational partner for major donors, was not intended to imply in any sense that operational partner equals agent for, and was therefore not intended to imply any lack of an intention to maintain the independence of the Movement. I conclude by commending the resolution to the Council of Delegates.

Mr. R. JÄCKLI (ICRC)

The ICRC certainly shares the preoccupations outlined both in the presentation and in the document. We particularly share the view that existing international relief structures should be strengthened rather than inventing time and again new

arrangements and organizations which would only further complicate the coordination of humanitarian relief work. One of those new arrangements consists of the desire of some major governments and multilateral donors to become themselves either directly operational in the field or at least conclude some kind of partnership or association with existing relief agencies. Fully realizing and appreciating that such a semi-operational association or partnership could give increased visibility to governments or multilateral donors, the components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement should be extremely cautious when entering into such new forms of collaboration. These arrangements can bring about a rapid loss in our independence, and may not necessarily be in conformity with our Fundamental Principles of impartiality and neutrality. Coming back, Mr. Wyatt, to the last operative paragraph about the operational partners, I still wonder whether it could not be misunderstood, at least, I did when you read it. I wonder whether you could not have the last paragraph modified in such a way so as to remove all ambiguity whatsoever in regard to suggested links between donors and the Movement.

Ambassador O. EL SHAFIE (Egyptian Red Crescent)

Of course, we completely support the resolution presented by the British Red Cross. I don't know if the English words "disaster response" cover "disaster preparedness" as well, because the resolution stresses the reinforcement of preparedness, whereas the last recommendation calls on the Federation to continue to increase its competence in disaster response only. My suggestion is to put in "disaster preparedness and response".

Mr. D. WYATT (British Red Cross)

We happily accept the suggestion in the second line of the last operative paragraph: "disaster preparedness and response". If it would help the ICRC, I would happily add to the very end, "multilateral donor institutions while fully maintaining its independence". If the ICRC agrees, I would propose that amendment.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Then, as the amendments are accepted, may I move that we adopt the resolution by acclamation?

Applause

Thank you. We then take up draft resolution CD/19/Res.3, submitted and authored by the French Red Cross. I would like to ask the French Red Cross to introduce it.

Mrs. G. DUFOIX (French Red Cross)

This draft resolution, in fact, comes very aptly after the British proposal. It was drawn up in the context of an effort of reorganization, better coordination and acceptance of the principles of professional ethics in operations undertaken during natural disasters. As the British delegation has stated, when natural disasters occur, we often have numerous groups taking action, and we feel that it is important for our Movement to take the initiative in studying how to start working out a code of conduct for use in natural disasters. I see very well how difficult this is and how hard it will be to draw up such a code. But if we take the initiative in this, we will also be able to provide the framework, and in so doing we will be able to give to this code of conduct the principles which are those of the Movement, and to propose a structure for the numerous associations now being created in the world, especially in France. They always act in response to an impulse of generosity but are sometimes over-zealous. What we are proposing is an initiative by the Movement to begin drafting a code of conduct applicable in natural disasters.

Mr. S. DAVEY (Federation)

I would like to thank the French Red Cross very much for the initiative taken. I think it is a problem of which we are all aware, and we would certainly agree with the analysis. With regard to the proposal to establish a code of conduct, we believe this would be valuable but I think we must recognize that it would be difficult to do. We would certainly be glad, however, to respond to the draft resolution by trying to draw up a code, and I believe that the existing structure of the LICROSS Volag's Steering Committee would provide a useful mechanism through which to do so. I would just like to make two proposals with regard to the wording of the resolution. The first is in operative paragraph 1, where for consistency's sake "League" should be replaced by "International Federation". The second is in operative paragraph 2, where again the reference should be to the International Federation. The substantive point, though, is that I think the word "together" in the phrase "together with the main relief organizations" should perhaps be replaced by "after consultation with". My proposal is therefore to delete "together" and insert "after consultation", because I think only the International Federation and not other relief organizations can properly report the outcome of a study to the Council of Delegates.

Mrs. M.A.A. HARMON (Brazilian Red Cross)

We support this resolution, especially when you remember that it also talks about the new international humanitarian order and the recent events where we had a lot of governments and other institutions doing humanitarian work without the guidelines and the Fundamental Principles. I would like to remind the Plenary that

last month in New York 186 leaders from all over the world met to organize something which is called the "Green Planet", which they defined as the organization that would do Red Cross work in the XXI century. I think this resolution touches on a very serious aspect of our Movement and we support it.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

May I just go back to what Mr. Davey said? The French text contains no reference to what you wanted to modify in operative paragraph 2. You suggested that "together with the main relief organizations" should be "after consultation", but that entire section is missing from the French text, so I think we should ask the authors, the French Red Cross, which version they really submitted.

Ambassador F. de ROSE (French Red Cross)

The English translation does not in fact tally with the French original.

Having said that, I think that Mr. Davey's proposal is completely acceptable to us, and we thank him for having made it.

Mr. Y. SANDOZ (ICRC)

I have no objection to this resolution, on the contrary, it is opportune. Time is short, but I must make one comment from a lawyer's point of view. The resolution refers to a UN resolution. Now, all day long we have spoken a great deal about our independence. I merely indicate that this is the first time we have mentioned a UN Resolution.

In previous meetings of the Council of Delegates, we have never referred to UN Resolutions. For this reason, the present mention is a delicate matter, as it would be a precedent in which we base our work on resolutions of the United Nations. If the French delegation has no objection, I would prefer, therefore, that the reference to UN resolutions be deleted.

Ambassador F. de ROSE (French Red Cross)

Obviously, at this late hour, we are not going to enter into what might prove to be a protracted debate on this kind of problem. Given the circumstances, we accept Mr. Sandoz's proposal.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Do you accept this draft resolution by consensus, with the amendments proposed by the Federation and the ICRC?

Applause

ITEM 20 ON THE AGENDA:

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION FOR THE
FINANCING OF THE ICRC

Dr. G. RUEDA MONTAÑA (Colombian Red Cross)

As Chairman of the Commission for the Financing of the ICRC, I now propose to introduce the Commission's report. This is the last time I shall be doing this in my present capacity, because after eight years of hard and dedicated work I feel I deserve a break.

Since time is running short and you all have the report before you, I shall merely say a few words about the Commission's working methods and objectives. Just as a reminder, the Commission for the Financing of the ICRC has been in existence since 1948. It was set up by the XVII International Conference of the Red Cross in Stockholm and was initially composed of eight members. Four years ago, membership was brought to 12. The Commission is empowered to submit to the Council of Delegates names of National Societies as possible candidates and to request their appointment as members of the Commission. Its overall mandate has not changed and consists chiefly in seeking the best way to secure contributions and increase funding for ICRC activities.

The Commission's working methods have evolved over the years. The Commission does not only urge National Societies to contribute to ICRC activities, it also acts as an intermediary, for example in requesting governments to increase the amount and frequency of their financial contributions to ICRC operations.

Commission members have also agreed to approach various bodies, for example regional organizations such as the Organization of American States or the Council of Europe, to inform them about the ICRC's work and try to secure financial support from their respective member countries.

The Commission's mandate also includes examining the income, expenditure and budgets of the International Committee of the Red Cross. The ICRC has very openly submitted all the necessary details so that the Commission can work more easily and more objectively and in turn clearly inform the National Societies about the ICRC's financial position.

There are a few more points I wish to emphasize, the first being that National Society contributions are made on a voluntary basis, in other words there is no obligation other than a moral responsibility to share in the financing of ICRC operations. And although contributions are purely voluntary, both the amounts paid and the number of contributing National Societies have grown steadily over the years.

The Commission sets the rate of National Society contributions to the financing of the ICRC. That rate is expressed as a percentage of ICRC expenditure under the

previous year's headquarters budget. The Commission then takes the percentage assigned to each National Society in the Federation's scale of contributions and on that basis calculates the overall amount requested from every National Society. Once again, National Societies are not required to pay but are asked to try and contribute as far as their financial resources permit. The rate for next year has been set at 7% of the budget. At present -as was the case last year- contributions have amounted to approximately 3.7% of the budget, that is about 50% of the sums requested.

I would like to thank the National Societies for their generous contributions and for the considerable efforts many of them are making -despite their modest financial means- to support ICRC activities. I must thank the governments, too, for their valuable contributions.

Perhaps I should explain that the ICRC's budget is divided into two distinct parts: the headquarters budget, on the one hand, provides for the daily management of the institution: the field budget, on the other, covers ICRC operations in the field. Our support is exclusively intended to finance the headquarters budget, the field budget being funded by special contributions.

As far as the Commission's future is concerned, my view is that it should continue working along the lines I have just described. I sincerely hope that the National Societies appointed as members will have a sound knowledge of financial and administrative matters, so that the Commission may continue improving its services. I would also like to stress that its members must be prepared to undertake assignments with a view to seeking new forms of income and that as far as possible any person who has undertaken such an assignment should see it through over the next four years.

May I suggest that we now go on to discuss draft resolution CD/20 on the Financing of the ICRC? The resolution expresses thanks for all the contributions received. It appoints as members of the Commission the National Societies of Australia, Costa Rica, Finland, Libya and Sierra Leone and renews the mandates of the National Societies of Algeria, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Japan and Mauritania. It also proposes renewing the Commission's mandate for four years.

Mr. Yunhe TAN (Chinese Red Cross)

I will be very brief. As a member of the Commission for the Financing of the ICRC, the Chinese Red Cross would like to repeat its appeal to all National Societies to give support to the ICRC. We are aware that some Societies are at a difficult juncture owing to the devaluation of their national currency, but there are other types of aid; and we point out that any contribution, of whatever nature, expresses first of all our wish to strengthen understanding and cooperation among the different components of our Movement. Financially strong National Societies are asked to contribute more to the ICRC, according to their ability, and we propose

a combined effort by all of us to approach governments, companies, enterprises and other organizations capable of providing new income for the humanitarian activities of the ICRC.

Mr. M. AUBERT (ICRC)

In the name of the ICRC, I most warmly thank all the National Societies that contribute to our financing, and in particular those who belong to this Commission. We know of no Red Cross or Red Crescent Society with too much money: every National Society contribution to the ICRC involves some sacrifice. Yet the National Societies wish to contribute to show their interest, to provide encouragement and to constitute a link with us. As Dr. Rueda Montaña said, this is extremely useful for us, since, over and above the financial backing, it expresses moral support for our operations. The work of the Societies belonging to this Commission enables the ICRC to disseminate information on its activities, it opens doors with governments and, finally, it gives these Societies the opportunity, either nationally or among the Societies in their region, to spread information on our activities. I would like to end by expressing heartfelt thanks to our Chairman, Dr. Rueda Montaña, who has given unstintingly of himself for many years to motivate this Commission. His approach has always been friendly but firm, and the ICRC is grateful to him for all his hard work in making the Commission successful.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Do you approve the draft resolution?

Applause

Thank you.

ITEM 21 ON THE AGENDA:

REPORT OF THE JOINT ICRC/FEDERATION
COMMISSION FOR NATIONAL SOCIETY
STATUTES

Mrs. L. KRAUS-GURNY (ICRC)

On behalf of the President of the Joint ICRC/Federation Commission on National Society Statutes, I have pleasure in presenting to you today the report on its activities since the 1986 International Conference of the Red Cross. As you know, the Commission's mandate derives from Resolution VI of the XXII International Conference and Resolution XX of the XXIV International Conference. The Commission, which regularly brings together ICRC and Federation staff in an excellent atmosphere of cooperation, has held 28 meetings since the 1986 Conference. All its decisions are taken by consensus. The cases dealt with by the Commission fall into the following three categories:

- procedures for recognition and admission of new National Societies,
- amendments to National Society Statutes,
- problems in the running of National Societies.

The Commission has considered 68 cases in the past five years. Of these, 26 were related to emerging National Societies, 32 to Statute amendments and 10 to various difficulties encountered by National Societies. During the period under review, the Commission had pleasure in recommending the following 13 National Societies for recognition by the ICRC and admission to the Federation: the Red Crescent Society of the United Arab Emirates, the Red Cross Society of Guinea-Bissau, the Red Cross Society of Surinam, the Red Cross Society of Guinea, the Angolan Red Cross, the Red Cross Society of Saint Lucia, the Red Crescent Society of Djibouti, the Red Cross Society of Grenada, the Dominica Red Cross Society, the Red Cross of Chad, the Mozambique Red Cross Society, the Saint Vincent and Grenadines Red Cross, and the Solomon Islands Red Cross.

We should also like to draw your attention to the fact that the Red Cross of Lithuania and the Red Cross of Latvia have now been fully reintegrated into the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The ICRC confirmed on 7 November 1991 the recognition previously granted to the Lithuanian Red Cross on 28 August 1923, and it confirmed on 20 November 1991 that previously granted to the Latvian Red Cross on 10 January 1923. There are at present 15 Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies already set up or being set up which do not yet meet all the conditions for recognition.

Turning now to the statute amendments submitted during the period under review, most of them were in conformity with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and were approved by the Commission. The most frequent

recommendation made by the Commission to National Societies was to emphasize in their statutes the voluntary nature of the Society, in particular by making provision for active members to take part in the decision-making process and to be adequately represented on governing bodies. The National Societies generally heeded the Commission's recommendations concerning observation of the Fundamental Principles and the conditions for recognition. With few exceptions, they incorporated the Commission's suggestions into the final version of their statutes. National Societies that informed the Commission of statute amendments only after the latter had been adopted were urged to take the Commission's comments into account during the next revision of their statutes. Although its mandate does not cover every aspect of National Society work, the Commission sometimes makes suggestions relating to a Society's general activities when examining its statutes. These suggestions are based on both the ICRC's and the Federation's own statutes and on the Statutes of the Movement, supplemented by the provisions of the ICRC/Federation agreement of 20 October 1989. The problems faced by a National Society may stem from either internal disagreements or outside interference, in particular pressure exerted by the government. In such cases, the Commission adopts the most appropriate means, such as correspondence, discussions or an *ad hoc* mission, to maintain or restore the Society's integrity and ensure that it is able to pursue its activities in conformity with the conditions for recognition and the Fundamental Principles. The Commission remains at the disposal of any National Society seeking support or advice in resolving internal problems or overcoming temporary difficulties. By carrying out, to the best of its ability, the mandate conferred on it by the XXII and XXIV International Conferences, the Commission is confident that it contributes to harmonious development within the Movement and promotes compliance with the Fundamental Principles. To fulfil this role, it relies on the National Societies to inform it regularly and in good time of any statute amendments under consideration and to take due account of its recommendations.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

You have before you draft resolution CD/21/Res.1, "Report of the Joint ICRC/Federation Commission on National Society Statutes". May I ask if any delegation would like to take the floor on this subject?

Applause

Can you accept that the draft is carried unanimously?

Applause

Thank you.

Mr. M. GOOD (Irish Red Cross)

Could I enquire if it is within the Commission's brief to actually review statutes already in place for which, perhaps, requests have not been received. In other words, do they review statutes on an on-going basis, apart from receiving a request from National Societies, and do they make recommendations.

Mr. Jean-Luc BLONDEL (ICRC)

The Commission can act at any time, when the statutes have been drafted or before they are drafted. It has done so recently on numerous occasions. Obviously, it prefers to give an opinion before the statutes are finally adopted by a National Society.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Does that answer your question?

Mr. M. GOOD (Irish Red Cross)

I am afraid not. The question was: does the Commission review the statutes that are already in place on an on-going basis, for example, even though the National Society has no plans for amendments?

Mr. J.-L. BLONDEL (ICRC)

The Federation and the ICRC recently sent a circular to all the National Societies asking them to send the latest text of their statutes. We are not completely sure that we have the most recent versions, and once we have received them we will write to each National Society as required, making suggestions concerning existing statutes, in the hope that when the statutes are next revised these recommendations will be taken into consideration.

Mr. M. GOOD (Irish Red Cross)

Is that a yes or no answer?

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I would suggest that we go on to the next point on the agenda.

ITEM 22 ON THE AGENDA:

MISCELLANEOUS

22.1 Empress Shôken Fund

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

The first topic under miscellaneous is the Empress Shôken Fund. We have a draft resolution on this topic, CD/22/Res.1. The report on the Empress Shôken Fund will be presented by Mr. Aubert from the ICRC.

Mr. M. AUBERT (ICRC)

In view of the importance of the Empress Shôken Fund, I would have liked to present a fuller report. However, as it is so late, I will be very brief. You have received a full and very well written report, and we have also distributed the booklet on the Fund, which has been brought up to date. I would like nevertheless to thank my colleagues on the Joint Commission for the work accomplished in a particularly collegial atmosphere. I also thank Mr. Tischhauser, whose diverse functions mean that he holds the post, not of secretary, but of Secretary General. In the name of the members of the Commission, I must express gratitude to the Japanese Imperial Family, the Japanese Government and, of course, the Japanese Red Cross. Thanks to their generosity, we are able to distribute sums that are now in the region of half a million Swiss francs per year. Yet the Empress Shôken Fund is not an automatic money distributor. Indeed, the choice among the numerous requests from National Societies is made in accordance with strict criteria: the justification for each request is verified very carefully, and a report is made on the use of the equipment donated by the Fund. This is why administrative expenses must be raised to not more than 12% of the income on the capital. The members of the Commission consider this proposal to be essential, since you must have a guarantee that the Fund is properly managed, as the Empress Shôken wished. The Joint Commission therefore asks you to be good enough to approve the resolution requesting the ICRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to submit the present amendment of the Regulations to the States party to the Geneva Conventions.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

You have the draft resolution in front of you. Is it approved?

Applause

22.2 Florence Nightingale Medal

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Still under "Miscellaneous", the next item is the revision of the Regulations for the Florence Nightingale Medal.

Mrs. L. KRAUS-GURNY (ICRC)

I am happy to take the floor again for something which I take very much to heart. In 1907, the Hungarian Red Cross, which is our host today, proposed the creation of the Florence Nightingale Foundation to strike a medal intended to honour nurses or nurses aids who had performed their tasks with exceptional devotion. After consultation with the Movement and the adoption of a set of regulations, the first Florence Nightingale Medals were finally awarded in 1920. Since then, 1,040 medals have been awarded to candidates put forward by a total of 76 National Societies. The experience accumulated in recent years and many requests from National Societies have led the International Committee of the Red Cross to propose amendments to the current regulations on the following two points of Article 2: to introduce the possibility of awarding the medal to male nurses or male nurses aids as well, and to take into account new fields of activity for awarding the medal.

The first amendment proposed is important. The current regulations do not in fact allow the Florence Nightingale Medal to be awarded to male nurses or volunteer male nurses aids of a National Society. However, in most countries, the profession is exercised by men as well. The ICRC proposes that this inequality be removed from the regulations so as to allow men and women of the same profession, subject to the same criteria, to be awarded this major distinction.

The second amendment, which is less revolutionary, is also intended to take account of the evolution of the profession, particularly in the domain of public health. It is no longer appropriate today to look for exceptional acts only in situations of war or natural disaster. Consideration should also be given to exemplary services or a pioneer spirit in the areas of prevention, public health or nursing care training.

These changes, which have been requested many times by a number of National Societies, will not, however, modify in any way the spirit of the regulations or the desire of the ICRC to see the Florence Nightingale Medal remain an exceptional distinction. The Council of Delegates is invited to consider the relevance of the proposed changes. The deferment of the XXVI International Conference will not permit us to have these regulations adopted in the manner originally intended, but once adopted by the Council of Delegates, the regulations will be sent to all States

party to the Geneva Conventions with a statement confirming the Movement's endorsement of the text. If the States have raised no objections within a period of six months, the regulations will be deemed to have been definitively adopted.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Does anybody have a comment on the draft resolution concerning the Florence Nightingale Medal?

Applause

I conclude that the resolution is carried unanimously.

22.3 Protection of Victims of War

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Now, still under "Miscellaneous", we have to come back to one more draft resolution before we reach the end of our session. You will remember that, under item 18 (the protection of war victims) there was a proposal from the Alliance, endorsed by the International Committee of the Red Cross, concerning the draft resolution on the protection of victims of war. You have received this draft resolution, I assume, and I therefore ask you if you have any comments on it. Can you accept it unanimously?

Applause

Thank you. I conclude that this resolution is carried unanimously.

ITEM 23 ON THE AGENDA:

PLACE AND DATE OF THE NEXT COUNCIL
OF DELEGATES

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

We have now come to item 23 on the agenda, the place and date of the next Council of Delegates.

I would only like to say that according to our rules, the next Council of Delegates should take place in 1993 immediately following the next session of the General Assembly of our International Federation. The floor is given to the delegation of the USSR.

ITEM 22 ON THE AGENDA: MISCELLANEOUS (CONTINUED) AND
FINAL SPEECHES

Dr. D. VENEDICTOV (Alliance)

I am sorry to interrupt you, but under "Miscellaneous", could I ask your permission to let Mr. Tskitishvili from the Red Cross of Georgia, say a few words.

Mr. Otari TSKITISHVILI (Alliance)

In April and June of this year, western Georgia was devastated by powerful earthquakes with a big loss of lives. Two thousand people were left homeless. The Red Cross of Georgia lost no time in mounting a relief operation. We received aid from the National Societies of the Ukraine, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Moldova and the Executive Committee of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR, as well as from the National Societies of Italy, Turkey, Austria, Holland, Poland, Israel and Luxembourg, who took our problems close to heart. We extend our deep gratitude for their assistance. On behalf of the Red Cross of Georgia, I would also like to thank for its cooperation the International Federation, whose delegates continue to give assistance to our Society. I would also like to thank all of you for giving me, a representative of the Red Cross of Georgia, this opportunity to address the Council. We hope to cooperate with you in the future.

Applause

Ambassador J. PEZMAZOGLOU (Hellenic Red Cross)

I would merely like to make the following suggestion: we are coming to the end of our deliberations, and we have spent two days hard at work. My suggestion, which has the agreement of some delegations, is this: I believe, we believe, that the meeting of the Council of Delegates should last for two days, the same as the Assembly.

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

Thank you very much for this proposal for the future. Before coming to the end of this session of the Council of Delegates, I would like to give the floor to President Sommaruga.

Mr. C. SOMMARUGA (President of the ICRC)

I am, as I hope you are, too, a happy man. At the start of the Council I was disappointed because of the situation we were in due to the postponement of the Conference. But I told you then that our Movement was full of life and that it would, during this Council, study what was the work of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent in a human society in a state of political and economic upheaval. I also added that non-compliance with the norms intended to prevent or alleviate the distress of human beings suffering from violence was so frequent that disquiet on the subject was almost commonplace. I asked you to convey to the governments and the international community resolute messages, even though the governments were not here with us.

We have done this, and we have decided that appropriate resolutions will be sent to the governments. I also believe that we have demonstrated something else, namely, the solidarity that we here feel towards all those who suffer, all those victims who are so close and yet so far. We have done this by implementing the Fundamental Principles of humanity, impartiality and universality. I believe that the spirit of this meeting in Budapest corresponds with what I tried to say also about the relations among us within the Movement at the end of the Yverdon meeting, about which there has been much talk, with four key words which I will repeat: information, communication, no competition between us, and mutual confidence within the Movement.

It is thanks to you, Mr. Chairman, that this meeting has been a success. You knew how to direct us, flexibly and efficiently, with the help of your whole National Society: your contribution has been vital to our success. You have led us, generously, to the end of our deliberations, after dealing with all the items on a heavy agenda. You have also succeeded -and that is most unusual, something I did not manage when I was Chairman of the two previous meetings of the Council of Delegates- in keeping a large number of delegates in the hall up to the end. Very few are missing, and I congratulate you particularly for that. Your Deputy Chairman had a very pleasant task; he was able to rest quietly, knowing that everything was well managed in your hands. In the name of the International Committee of the Red Cross, but I think also in the name of many, if not all of us in this hall, I would simply like to thank you very much, and I will try to say it in your language: "*Kesene*".

Applause

Mr. P. STENBÄCK (Federation)

In the name of the International Federation, I would like to join in the thanks for arranging this Council of Delegates, here in Hungary, immediately after the General Assembly of the Federation. I am also happy to be able to state that the good spirit which prevailed already during the General Assembly has continued and all the major proposals of the both institutions have been, in most cases, absolutely

unanimously adopted by this Council of Delegates. We might be, of course, a little bit confused because this was a very special Council of Delegates. A special meeting in that our agenda was somewhat burdened by decisions which should have been taken by the International Conference. But I nevertheless think that these decisions have the same moral weight which they would have had if adopted together with the government delegations. On behalf of the International Federation, I should like to commit ourselves to implementing those decisions as strongly as they would have been implemented if they had been decided by even a greater body. We have an obligation to take the decisions of the Council of Delegates seriously and to work together for their implementation. We can now call these decisions the policy of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and that adds something to their import. On behalf of the delegation of the International Federation, I am also happy to say that we, during the first time in the Council of Delegates I use the new name of our Federation, and I would also like that in the minutes we should correct all those including perhaps myself, who made a small mistake during the discussions.

I would also like to join you, all of you, in thanking the Hungarian Red Cross for an excellent performance, a performance which should preferably have been stretched over the next week during an International Conference. We have already, in the General Assembly of the Federation, extended our regrets for the inconvenience which we have caused you. Nevertheless, thank you very much for your excellent organization in a situation where the Hungarian Red Cross is working very hard to assist, together with the Federation, the refugees which have increased tremendously in number during the last few days from the conflict in Yugoslavia. Thank you once more. We look forward to meeting again in two years, perhaps under more successful circumstances.

Applause

Mr. R. SZTUCHLIK (Chairman)

I would like to thank President Sommaruga and Secretary General Stenbäck for their kind words and to say again how honoured I was to have been elected Chairman for this Council. I know it was a unique decision as tradition has been different, and I know the importance traditions have in our Movement. Many of these traditions help keep our Movement always on the same basis of our Principles, although, of course, there are some traditions which are there by habit and may not necessarily contribute much to that. From the Hungarian Red Cross experience now, I would say that the work of our Council has proved that the Red Cross family can tackle all the major humanitarian problems which it has chosen to resolve. Maybe our friends from Greece are right when they say that we may need more time to discuss matters of substance which are of interest to our Movement and of course to see in what ways other topics can then be discussed with the governments. Of course, we are disappointed because we were prepared for something and that something has not happened, but it is also quite clear that

we can have different appreciations on approach. I think we are all on the same wavelength when it comes to the importance of keeping the Red Cross free of any political events and influences which would jeopardize its ability to act in accordance with its own Principles. I think we can say that we have been 100% successful.

I would like to thank all those who helped me conduct the business of the Council and obtain the results we have. I am particularly pleased that all the decisions, all the resolutions were adopted by consensus, that there was a joint effort for that and that we could really respect this very valuable tradition of our Council of Delegates.

I would like to say thanks to the Vice-Presidents, who helped me with their advice, and also to the Secretaries, who had any time, when I was not very sure which documents we were about to discuss, helped me to find them.

I would also like to pay a special tribute to all the collaborators not only of the Hungarian Red Cross, but also of our International Federation and the ICRC who, has a joint team, worked for the success of these meetings, and also to other collaborators from the Congress Centre and other partners who did their best.

Finally, my thanks go to the interpreters who allowed us to conduct our business in such a way that we could really understand each other and come to terms with the topics which we had to discuss.

I thank you very much for having accepted our invitation to come to Budapest. I hope that you do not regret having come here and that there can be other opportunities for us to meet here.

Applause

I declare the session of the Council of Delegates closed.

Applause

Resolutions of the Council of Delegates

1

Study Group on the future of the Movement

The Council of Delegates,

taking into account dramatic changes which have created a new world environment,

aware of the problems relating to the application of humanitarian law as encountered in recent armed conflicts,

realizing the increasing pressures on the respective components of the Movement to provide protection and assistance to victims of armed conflicts, strife and disasters,

noting the growing number of participants in the field of international humanitarian assistance and the problems associated with the coordination of disaster relief operations,

recognizing that the Movement must adapt itself to these changing world realities while maintaining and operating in accordance with the Fundamental Principles,

1. *decides* in accordance with Article 14, paragraph 7, of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to establish a Study Group on the future of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement;
2. *defines* the terms of reference of such a Study Group as follows:

I. Role

The Study Group's role is to advise on and recommend to the Council of Delegates a strategy for the Movement in response to emerging trends and evolving humanitarian issues.

II. Duties and responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Study Group shall be:

1. To review, study, research and discuss current and future trends and issues in the humanitarian field with a view to achieving common positions on matters of concern to all components of the Movement.

2. To study governing and operating structures of the Movement and to suggest appropriate courses of action which will enable the Movement to carry out its humanitarian mandate with the utmost effectiveness and cohesion.

III. Composition

The Study Group shall be composed of five members from National Societies appointed in their personal capacity by the President of the Federation, two members from the Federation and two members from the ICRC.

IV. Working methods

The work of the Study Group shall be supported by a Secretariat. The Study Group shall submit for approval by the Federation and the ICRC the type of Secretariat and the budget it will require for its activities.

The Study Group shall meet at least twice a year, or as required. Its decisions shall be taken by consensus.

The Study Group may seek advice and expertise within and outside the Movement in formulating its recommendations.

The Study Group shall produce a report to the next Council of Delegates.

Furthermore, the Study Group shall report to the Federation's Executive Council and the Assembly of the ICRC every six months in order for these two bodies to take appropriate action within the process of Yverdon (Switzerland).

2

Appeal to the governments

The Council of Delegates,

expressing the views of the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement meeting in Budapest,

concerned by the Movement's inability to hold the 26th International Conference, which was to have brought together the Movement's various components and the governments of States party to the Geneva Conventions,

considering that, as a result, the development of international humanitarian law, to which the Movement makes an essential contribution, has been set back,

aware that this state of affairs was brought about by the introduction of political issues and concerns that do not come within its purview and which are foreign to the ideals, principles and activities of the Movement,

anxious to maintain the independence of National Societies and other components of the Movement by not involving them in issues which are not within their competence,

pointing out that whereas neutrality enables States to abstain, it allows the Red Cross and Red Crescent to act,

requests governments and other political entities to make sure that their future relations with Red Cross and Red Crescent bodies do not jeopardize the latter's compliance with the principles of impartiality and neutrality, with a view to enabling the 26th International Conference to meet as soon as possible in order to advance and develop international humanitarian law.

3

Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace

Role, tasks, working methods, composition

The Council of Delegates,

having taken note of the report of the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace and its annexes, which describe the Commission's activities since the 1989 meeting of the Council of Delegates in Geneva,

wishing to discharge its mandate under the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to give an opinion or, where necessary, take decisions on all matters concerning the Movement which may be referred to it by the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the National Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross or the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies,

1. *decides* to maintain the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace as a subsidiary body within the meaning of Article 14, paragraph 7, of the Movement's Statutes;
2. *defines* its terms of reference as follows:

I. Role

The Commission's role is to promote the implementation, by all the components of the Movement, of the Programme of Action of the Red Cross and Red Crescent as a factor of peace and the Fundamental Guidelines for the contribution of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to true peace in the world. According to this mandate, the Commission contributes to the Movement's efforts to achieve lasting peace, which the latter understands as a dynamic process of cooperation among all States and peoples, founded on

respect for freedom, independence, national sovereignty, equality and human rights, and on a fair and equitable distribution of resources to meet the needs of peoples. The Movement contributes to this process by its humanitarian work and the dissemination of its ideals.

II. Tasks

The tasks of the Commission shall be the following:

- a) to follow up on the recommendations of the Council of Delegates and carry out preparatory work for the Council in the following specific areas:
 - dissemination and promotion of respect for international humanitarian law and the principles and ideals of the Movement;
 - the Movement's role in promoting respect for human rights and the rights of refugees and minorities, and in situations not covered by international humanitarian law;
 - humanitarian mobilization for the respect of the fundamental rights of the individual, particularly as regards the prohibition of torture, discrimination, summary executions and hostage-taking, and for the respect of the specific rights of women and children;
 - specific Red Cross and Red Crescent action to foster greater understanding between different cultures, ethnic, social and cultural groups;
- b) to fulfil any other task assigned to it by the Council of Delegates which falls within the Commission's mandate. The Commission may submit proposals to the Council of Delegates on studies to be undertaken.

III. Working methods

The Commission may ask one or more of its members to conduct special studies on its behalf. Likewise National Societies which are not members of the Commission may be invited to contribute to such studies. The Commission may also ask for contributions from experts outside the Movement and may hear them during its meetings.

As a rule, the Commission shall meet twice a year, normally on the occasion of statutory meetings. Its decisions shall be taken by consensus.

The Commission shall report to the Council of Delegates.

IV. Composition

The Commission shall be composed of sixteen National Societies and, as

permanent members, the Federation, the ICRC and the Henry Dunant Institute.

The National Societies shall be elected for four-year terms in accordance with Article 14, paragraph 7, of the Movement's Statutes.

National Societies shall be selected with due regard to fair geographical distribution.

The Council of Delegates elects the Commission's Chairman.

The Commission shall appoint a Vice-Chairman.

4

Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace

Membership and Chairman

I. Membership

In addition to the permanent members, that is, the Federation, the ICRC and the Henry Dunant Institute,

the Council of Delegates,

having regard to the interest expressed by individual National Societies and to the principle of fair geographical representation and the need for a mixture of experienced and new members of the Commission,

elects the following 16 National Societies as members:

Australian Red Cross

Brazilian Red Cross

Colombian Red Cross

Egyptian Red Crescent

Ethiopian Red Cross

French Red Cross

Hellenic Red Cross

Hungarian Red Cross

The Republic of Korea Red Cross

Red Cross of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Malaysian Red Crescent

Nigerian Red Cross

Paraguayan Red Cross

Sudanese Red Crescent

Swedish Red Cross

Tunisian Red Crescent

In order to ensure the continued injection of new contributions, the Council of Delegates *approves* a rotational system whereby every two years four long-standing members would be replaced by four new National Societies (at least one from each region).

II. Chairman

The Council of Delegates *elects*

Mr. Maurice Aubert as the Chairman of the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace.

5

Use of the emblem by National Societies

The Council of Delegates,

aware that respect for the emblem of the red cross or the red crescent is of vital importance for the protection of the victims of armed conflict and those who care for them,

convinced that clear and widespread knowledge of the uses authorized under the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 is a prerequisite for respect for the emblem,

recalling that the First Geneva Convention places an obligation on States to take the necessary measures to prevent and suppress misuse of the emblem at all times,

recalling that the 24th International Conference of the Red Cross (Manila, 1981) requested the ICRC to prepare a draft revision of the *Regulations on the use of the emblem of the red cross, red crescent and red lion and sun by National Societies* (Resolution XII),

recalling Resolution 6 of the 1987 Council of Delegates and Resolution 6 of the 1989 Council of Delegates,

noting that the drafts prepared by the ICRC in consultation with the National Societies and the Federation Secretariat have been examined in detail within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement,

aware of the need to have, as soon as possible, Regulations replacing the 1965 Regulations,

1. *adopts* the *Regulations on the use of the emblem of the red cross or the red crescent by the National Societies*, contained in the report on the subject submitted by the International Committee of the Red Cross;
2. *invites* the ICRC to submit these Regulations and this Resolution to the States party to the Geneva Conventions, encouraging them to endorse the

- Regulations and, where necessary, to authorize their National Societies to observe them;
3. *recommends* that National Societies, in the light of the deferment of the 26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, comply with the new Regulations, in accordance with national legislation, at the earliest possible date;
 4. *invites* National Societies to assist their governments in meeting their obligations under the Geneva Conventions with regard to the emblem, in particular to prevent its misuse, and to support the activities of the ICRC in that respect;
 5. *invites* the ICRC, in cooperation with the Federation, to examine any questions submitted to it with regard to compliance with and interpretation of the Regulations on the use of the emblem and to report to the next Council of Delegates.

6

Information policy of the Movement

The Council of Delegates,

having taken note of the ICRC/Federation report on implementation of the Information Policy of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, submitted to it pursuant to the request by the 1989 Council of Delegates (Resolution 4),

1. *notes* with satisfaction that the main objectives set for the ICRC, the Federation and the National Societies as regards global communication have been achieved:
 - the *Communicator's Guide*, intended to assist implementation of the Movement's Identity Programme,
 - the regional training seminar for information officers of English-speaking National Societies in East Africa, held in Kenya, to introduce the Communicator's Guide as a permanent working tool,
 - development of *Red Cross/Red Crescent* as the Movement's magazine;
2. *decides*, with regard to World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day:
 - to choose, for the three-year period from 1993 to 1995, the overall theme of "dignity for all",
 - under this overall theme, to focus on three annual sub-themes to be adapted as appropriate by National Societies:
 - 1993: "the vulnerable"
 - 1994: "our children's future"
 - 1995: "respect for women"

3. *supports* the ICRC and the Federation in their intention to find the resources necessary to continue publishing *Red Cross/Red Crescent*, and *invites* National Societies to demonstrate their interest in the Movement's magazine in a more tangible way, especially as regards its financing and distribution;
4. *encourages* the Movement's communication experts to strengthen existing professional links in order to improve the Movement's performance in terms of public information;
5. *takes note* of the continuation of a professional group of communication experts from the ICRC, the Federation and the National Societies, such as the Public Support Group, sufficiently flexible in composition to handle the various information programmes regularly carried out within the Movement;
6. *invites* the ICRC and the Federation to continue harmonizing their efforts in everything relating to the conduct of information programmes of interest to the Movement, both regionally and internationally, so as to highlight more effectively the humanitarian work being carried out throughout the world.

7

Respect for and dissemination of the Fundamental Principles

The Council of Delegates,

convinced that respect for the Fundamental Principles by all the components of the Movement and dissemination of knowledge of those Principles among the National Societies and the general public are of vital importance,

concerned by violations of the Principles, resulting either from lack of understanding of their purpose and meaning, or from outside pressure on National Societies,

noting that National Societies often find themselves unable to cope with such situations,

noting with satisfaction the activities undertaken by the ICRC and the Federation to make the Principles more widely known, and in particular the adoption of their dissemination policy,

1. *takes note* of the ICRC's second interim report relative to the study on respect for and dissemination of the Fundamental Principles, drawn up in cooperation with the Federation;
2. *expresses* its appreciation of the contribution by National Societies which took part in the consultation arranged by the ICRC;

3. *encourages* the ICRC, in cooperation with the Federation, to continue the consultation by holding extensive talks with National Society officials, organizing regional or international seminars on the subject, or by any other means it deems appropriate;
4. *asks* the ICRC, in cooperation with the Federation, to support the National Societies' efforts in implementing the Principles and to help them in particular to counter any pressure to which they may be subjected;
5. *requests* the ICRC, in cooperation with the Federation, to continue the ongoing study with a view to setting out, in an updated commentary, the Movement's common interpretation of the Principles;
6. *invites* the ICRC, in cooperation with the Federation, to report to the next Council of Delegates.

8

Dissemination of international humanitarian law and of the principles and ideals of the Movement

The Council of Delegates,

having taken note of the joint ICRC/Federation report on the many dissemination activities carried out since 1977 by the National Societies, the ICRC, the Federation and the Henry Dunant Institute, and on the implementation of the recommendations contained in Resolution IV of the 25th Conference,

stressing once again that responsibility for the dissemination and teaching of international humanitarian law lies mainly with the States, by virtue of the obligations set out in the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their two Additional Protocols of 1977,

deploring the fact that there are still too many violations of international humanitarian law,

recalling that the dissemination of international humanitarian law and of the principles and ideals of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is one of the Movement's permanent activities and aims to:

- limit the suffering caused by armed conflicts and other situations of violence,
 - make certain that humanitarian work may proceed safely, by ensuring that the emblems of the red cross and red crescent are respected,
 - strengthen the image of the Movement, and
 - contribute to promoting a spirit of peace,
1. *adopts* the *Guidelines for the '90s* and *recommends* that they be circulated as widely as possible;

2. *urges* the States fully to discharge their treaty obligations so that international humanitarian law may be known, understood and respected at all times;
3. *reiterates* the recommendation that National Societies appoint and train dissemination experts, and cooperate with their countries's authorities, particularly within the framework of joint dissemination committees;
4. *invites* the ICRC, in cooperation with the Federation, to maintain and if possible increase its support for dissemination activities and national and regional dissemination programmes.

9

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and refugees

The Council of Delegates,

recalling Resolution XXI of the 24th International Conference of the Red Cross, the accompanying statement of policy on Red Cross aid to refugees and Resolution XVII of the 25th International Conference on the Movement and refugees,

concerned that the number of refugees, asylum-seekers and persons displaced within their own countries has continued to grow steadily,

aware that many long-standing refugee situations are still awaiting solutions, and that continued dependence by large numbers of refugees on the support and protection of host countries may progressively increase their vulnerability,

recognizing that a large number of these persons suffer from psychological problems and that the most vulnerable, in particular refugee children, may be exposed to high risks and severe deprivation having a lasting effect on their lives,

taking note that violations of human rights, armed conflict and violations of international humanitarian law are amongst the main causes of population movements,

noting with concern that the majority of refugees find asylum in low-income countries in which they share scarce resources with the local population, thereby aggravating conditions of poverty and instability,

recalling the primary function of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to ensure international protection and material assistance to refugees, persons displaced outside their countries of origin and returnees, and to seek durable solutions,

recognizing that new forms of movements of persons, due principally to economic and social hardship, frequently leading to severe malnutrition and famine conditions, and often associated with political instability, have emerged, and that these persons, while not fulfilling the international criteria for refugee status, are in need of humanitarian support,

noting the tasks carried out by the various components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on behalf of refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons and returnees, and the efforts made to provide information and training within the Movement in order to keep pace with these growing tasks,

requests the various components of the Movement, in accordance with their respective mandates:

- a) to act vigorously in favour of refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons and returnees,
- b) to pursue their efforts in disseminating international humanitarian law, human rights law, of which refugee law is part, and the Fundamental Principles of the Movement in order to enhance protection and humane treatment of refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons and returnees,
- c) to cooperate actively in supporting activities designed to enhance refugees' self-reliance in camps and on their safe return to their home countries,
- d) to focus attention on the psychological problems encountered by most refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons and returnees and on the care needed for the most vulnerable among them, giving due support to children through activities such as community-based health services and assistance in psychological and social readjustment,
- e) to enhance training and information, including exchanges of experiences, of its members and representatives in this field,
- f) to draw the attention of host communities to the problems of humanitarian concern encountered by refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons, and to fight xenophobia and racial discrimination,
- g) to continue and further strengthen cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international organizations acting in favour of refugees, asylum-seekers, displaced persons and returnees,
- h) to actively seek the support of governments with a view:
 - i) to permit the Movement to assist those who are deprived of any suitable protection or assistance,
 - ii) to address first and foremost the causes of people fleeing their homes, and to promote peace and respect for human rights and to intensify cooperation in socio-economic development, particularly among low-income countries,

- iii) to ensure that, in all circumstances, refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons receive humane treatment and decent material conditions,
- iv) in the search for durable solutions, to see that the voluntary character of repatriation and the safety of returning refugees in their countries of origin are fully ensured,
- v) to support the development of refugee hosting areas in the event of mass influxes of refugees, so as to avert any deterioration in living conditions and ensure the security of the refugee and local population,
- vi) to ensure that a decision to deny asylum is taken only within the framework of fair and proper procedures and that the principle of return in safety and dignity of rejected asylum-seekers is reaffirmed and, if assistance is given by National Societies, to respect their adherence to the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.

10

Women in Red Cross/Red Crescent development

The Council of Delegates,

recalling Decision 33 of the VIIth Session of the League General Assembly in 1989, and the endorsement of the Plan of Action on Women in Red Cross/Red Crescent Development,

increasingly concerned about the vulnerability of women and children in situations of deprivation, including disasters,

aware of the often weak economic, social and legal position of women, aggravated by the current adverse socio-economic conditions,

concerned about the continued use of harmful traditional practices threatening the lives of women,

recognizing that the hard life endured by women in the countryside and urban slums is not only a question of basic injustice, but also an impediment to economic and social development,

urges all National Society and Federation representatives responsible for the implementation of development programmes to:

- recognize women as a major beneficiary group for Red Cross/Red Crescent development programmes,
- ensure that the role of women in situations of disaster is being taken into account adequately,
- ensure that literacy and other training schemes for women are linked to their daily concerns and aimed at improving their lives,

- put emphasis on community-based primary health care, including child spacing, family planning and clean water supply, in order to meet some of the most urgent needs of women and children,
- review the ongoing health activities, particularly first-aid training, to ensure that they cater to the needs of the most vulnerable,
- promote income-generating activities for women, and ensure that such projects are economically viable and become independent of subsidies from the National Societies,
- embark upon labour-saving development projects for women, giving high priority to water and fuel supply, child care, agriculture and food processing.

11

Protection of victims of war

The Council of Delegates,

having taken note of the report on the World Campaign for the Protection of Victims of War,

realizing the importance of making the general public and governments aware of the tragic plight of war victims, in particular the ever-increasing number of civilian victims, and of reminding the parties to armed conflicts of their obligation to respect international humanitarian law,

1. *appreciates* the worldwide effort made in carrying out the World Campaign for the Protection of Victims of War;
2. *expresses* the wish that the components of the Movement continue their efforts in behalf of war victims at the national and regional levels;
3. *encourages* governments and the ICRC, in cooperation with the Federation and the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to take advantage of the impetus given by this campaign to intensify efforts to promote better understanding and knowledge of the situation of war victims and of international humanitarian law;
4. *appeals* to the States and all belligerents to respect international humanitarian law;
5. *calls on* all the parties involved in armed conflicts to establish without delay conditions conducive to dialogue in order to put an end to violence and ongoing hostilities.

12

Humanitarian assistance in situations of armed conflict

The Council of Delegates,

deeply concerned by the suffering of civilian victims of international and non-international armed conflicts and by the scale of ensuing needs,

recalling that the principle of humanity and the rules of international humanitarian law recognize the victims' right to receive protection and assistance in all circumstances,

recalling also that States affected by an armed conflict have the primary responsibility for assisting victims,

stressing that a relief action which is neutral, humanitarian and impartial in character does not constitute interference in the internal affairs of States,

pointing out that respect for the rules of international humanitarian law, in particular those protecting the civilian population against the effects of hostilities, contributes to alleviate the need for food and medical relief,

noting that the destruction of existing infrastructures and the existence of zones of military operations put specific constraints on the transport and distribution of humanitarian aid during armed conflict,

stressing the urgency of the needs and the necessity of gaining access rapidly to the victims in the areas affected by armed conflict,

urges therefore all the parties to an armed conflict and, where applicable, any High Contracting Party:

- a) to respect and ensure respect for the rules of international humanitarian law protecting the civilian population against the effects of hostilities and, in particular, those that prohibit the use of starvation of civilians as a method of combat;
- b) to allow free passage of medicines and medical equipment, foodstuffs, clothing and other supplies essential to the survival of the civilian population of another Contracting Party, even if the latter is its adversary, it being understood that they are entitled to ensure that the consignments are not diverted from their destination;
- c) to agree to and cooperate in relief actions which are exclusively humanitarian, impartial and non-discriminatory in character, within the meaning of the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement;

urges the States to support the work of the ICRC and other humanitarian organizations that are in a position to conduct humanitarian assistance operations for victims of armed conflict in a neutral and impartial manner;

invites the ICRC to pursue its efforts to ensure that the rules of international humanitarian law protecting civilians are implemented, in particular the latter's right to receive supplies essential to their survival, in cooperation with

National Societies and in conjunction with all intergovernmental agencies and non-governmental organizations concerned.

13

Protection of the civilian population against famine in situations of armed conflict

The Council of Delegates,

having taken note with interest of the report submitted by the ICRC on aid to famine victims during armed conflicts,

deeply concerned by the frequency, extent and duration of famines that have occurred in such situations in recent years,

noting that, in general, the most severe outbreaks of famine are not due to a lack of local natural resources, but to the disruption or deliberate destruction of normal means of production, acquisition and distribution of basic food-stuffs,

noting further that famine tends to become endemic when population movements and the destruction of vital resources are associated with military operations,

stressing that respect for the rules of international humanitarian law, as codified or expanded in Articles 23 and 59 to 61 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, and Articles 54 and 70 of Additional Protocol I, and Articles 14, 17 and 18 of Additional Protocol II, would in many cases suffice to prevent or reduce the risk of famine as a result of an armed conflict,

1. *reminds* the authorities concerned and the armed forces under their command of their obligation to apply international humanitarian law, in particular the following humanitarian principles:

- the prohibition on starvation of civilians as a method of combat,
- the prohibition on attacking, destroying, removing or rendering useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population,
- the prohibition on displacing civilians unless their security or imperative military reasons so demand and, should such displacements have to be carried out, the stipulation that all possible measures be taken to ensure that the civilians are received under satisfactory conditions of shelter, hygiene, health, safety and nutrition,
- the obligation to allow humanitarian and impartial relief operations for the civilian population when supplies essential for its survival are lacking;

2. *urges* the Parties to armed conflicts to maintain conditions enabling civilians to provide for their needs, in particular by refraining from taking

any measures destined to deprive them of their sources of food or of access to their crops;

3. *invites* governments, with the support of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, to spread knowledge of and ensure respect for the principles and rules of international humanitarian law which, if applied in situations of armed conflict, suffice to avert or limit famine.

14

Child soldiers

The Council of Delegates,

recalling that children suffer particular hardship during armed conflicts and that international humanitarian law in general, and the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols in particular, afford them special attention and protection,

recalling that international humanitarian law, as expressed in Protocol I, Article 77, and Protocol II, Article 4, sets at fifteen the minimum age for the participation of children in hostilities, and stipulates that in recruiting persons between the ages of fifteen and eighteen priority is to be given to those who are oldest,

recalling Resolution IX entitled "Protection of children in armed conflicts" and Resolution XX entitled "Assistance to children in emergency situations" of the 25th International Conference of the Red Cross,

mindful of Article 38 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child concerning children in situations of armed conflict,

welcoming the provision of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which requires respect for the rules of international humanitarian law specially protecting children,

having taken note of the report of the Conference on Children of War held in Stockholm from 31 May to 2 June 1991,

deeply concerned that in many areas of the world children continue to take part in hostilities and are recruited into armed forces, and that some governments and armed non-governmental entities encourage and sometimes compel children to take part in hostilities,

deploring the fact that many child soldiers have been killed or seriously injured and that others languish as prisoners of war,

concerned that children in areas affected by armed conflict may be induced to participate in hostilities for lack of alternative means of satisfying their basic needs of food, clothing and shelter,

also concerned that persons under the age of eighteen years may not be sufficiently mature to understand the consequences of their actions, and to comply with international humanitarian law,

recognizing that children who have been caught up in armed conflicts, and particularly those who have participated in hostilities, are often mentally, morally and physically marked for life,

deeming it necessary to take steps to afford children better protection during armed conflicts and to put an end to their participation in hostilities,

1. *appeals* to all Parties to armed conflicts strictly to observe the rules of international humanitarian law affording special protection to children;
2. *invites* States and other parties to armed conflicts to strengthen the protection of children in armed conflicts through unilateral declarations or bilateral or regional instruments setting at eighteen the minimum age for participation in hostilities;
3. *invites* National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to do everything possible to protect children during armed conflicts, particularly by ensuring that their basic needs are met and by organizing peaceable and educational activities for them;
4. *requests* the Henry Dunant Institute to undertake a study, subject to financing, on the recruitment and participation of children as soldiers in armed conflicts, and on measures to reduce and eventually eliminate such recruitment and participation;
5. *decides* to re-examine, at the Council of Delegates in 1993, on the basis of the aforementioned study, the situation of children in armed conflicts.

15

Coordination of non-governmental disaster relief in time of peace

The Council of Delegates,

noting with satisfaction the growing governmental and non-governmental humanitarian response to international disaster relief operations,

aware of the responsibility of the recognized relief agencies to promote information, cooperation and coordination in case of international disaster relief operations,

referring to the *Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief* adopted by the 21st International Conference of the Red Cross in Istanbul (1969), amended by the 22nd International Conference in Teheran (1973), by the 23rd International Conference Bucharest (1977), by the 24th International Conference in Manila (1981), and by the 25th International Conference in Geneva (1986),

stressing the function of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to act as the permanent body of liaison, coordination and information exchange between the National Societies, in accordance with the *Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief*,

recalling Resolution No. VII adopted at the 22nd International Conference in Teheran (1973) requesting the Federation, the ICRC and National Societies to maintain and further strengthen their association with UNDRO with a view to effecting closer cooperation and coordination in the field of relief assistance in cases of disaster, including also other specialized UN agencies,

recognizing the commitment of the Federation to supporting the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990-1999),

recognizing that governments of countries prone to natural disasters are increasingly acknowledging the important roles played by national and international voluntary relief agencies in times of disaster and are further strengthening their mechanisms for effectively utilizing international NGO relief,

recognizing the need for disaster-prone countries to have in place a disaster preparedness plan which includes a policy on the role of international NGOs offering assistance in times of disaster, in order to avoid confusion, duplication and waste of effort which would reduce the effectiveness of assistance to disaster victims,

recognizing that disaster preparedness covers both natural and man-made disasters, including movements of refugees and displaced persons,

taking note of the growing number of NGOs involved in disaster relief and the variety of skills they bring to the disaster area, which can be of importance in increasing the benefits accruing to disaster victims, if well coordinated with national relief efforts,

recognizing the well-founded and increasing demands of donor governments and other donor institutions for improved effectiveness in disaster relief through better coordination, and the need to present a coherent picture of international humanitarian action to world public opinion,

1. *appeals* to all governments of disaster-prone countries to take steps, as a disaster preparedness measure, to ensure the establishment of National Disaster Relief Committees to provide overall coordination in times of disaster;
2. *urges* that National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies should be represented on such committees along with other relevant national NGOs;
3. *recommends* that National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, in cooperation with the Federation and abiding by the *Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief*, take steps to facilitate the coordination of NGO efforts in disaster relief or to assist other appropriate national NGOs in so doing;

4. *urges* the Federation to take steps to assist National Societies in fulfilling this role. These should include, *inter alia*:
- pre-disaster preparedness assistance to National Societies to aid them in preparing for a possible coordination role, including the provision of training and communications equipment where appropriate,
 - assistance to National Societies in times of disaster to carry out timely needs assessments and formulate effective relief action plans,
 - the provision of specifically allocated and suitably equipped international personnel, in times of disaster, to assist National Societies in the critical work of gathering, analyzing and sharing information pertinent to the disaster, within the responding NGO community, with a view to providing a common basis of understanding from which cooperation and coordination can grow,
 - assistance to National Societies, in times of disaster, to develop the potential to act as a facilitator between the NGO community and the host government, if so requested.

16

Harnessing international humanitarian assistance for disaster reduction

The Council of Delegates,

notes the growing international awareness of the increasing scale of disasters and the detrimental effect they have on attaining sustainable development targets of disaster-prone countries and communities;

notes the increasing willingness of multinational and national bodies to take action in support of foreign disaster relief;

notes the growing phenomenon of short-lived NGOs created in response to particular disaster events, which on occasion act as channels for donor government funding;

notes in particular the present discussions in, *inter alia*, the UN, EC and the Council of Europe on strengthening their respective disaster relief responses;

notes with regret that in the above discussions the emphasis is placed upon high-profile short-term relief measures with consequential reduction in the resources available for the vital work of disaster preparedness and prevention;

appeals to governments and multilateral bodies to re-examine the existing arrangements for delivering relief with a view to making these structures function effectively rather than creating new, possibly short-lived, fractionated arrangements;

appeals to governments to demonstrate a clear commitment to funding and carrying out disaster preparedness programmes aimed at reducing people's vulnerability to disasters and increasing agencies' ability to respond to disasters;

affirms the willingness and capacity of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to act in disaster preparedness, relief and rehabilitation across all major disaster-prone countries;

calls upon the Federation to continue to increase its competence in disaster response, thus increasing its viability as an operational partner for major government and multilateral donor institutions while keeping its independence.

17

Humanitarian assistance in situations of natural and technological disasters

The need for a code of conduct

The Council of Delegates,

concerned for the respect for the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, proclaimed by the 20th Conference and revised by the 25th Conference,

aware of the essential role of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in international humanitarian activities and related codification,

1. *asks* the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, in consultation with the main relief organizations, to set up a group of experts to study the possibility of elaborating a Code of Conduct relative to humanitarian aid in situations of natural and technological disasters;
2. *requests* the Federation, after consultation with the main relief organizations, to report on the outcome of that study to the next Council of Delegates.

18

Financing of the ICRC

The Council of Delegates,

having taken note of the report submitted by the Commission for the Financing of the International Committee of the Red Cross,

having noted that a stable number of National Societies make regular contributions to the ICRC's headquarters budget,

having noted with satisfaction the increase in the number of staff seconded by National Societies to take part in the ICRC's field operations, and the increase in the overall amount of contributions made by National Societies and governments to the ICRC's field budgets,

1. *thanks* National Societies and governments which, by making contributions in cash, kind or services, provide essential support to the ICRC;
2. *thanks* the Commission for the Financing of the ICRC for its work;
3. *decides* to renew the mandate of the Commission for the Financing of the ICRC for four years;
4. *appoints* the National Societies of the following countries to be members of the Commission:
Australia, Costa Rica, Finland, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Sierra Leone,
and renews the mandate of National Societies of the following countries:
Algeria, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Japan and Mauritania;
5. *sets* as the objective for the Commission to increase by 10 per cent at least the number of National Societies that contribute to the budgets of the ICRC;
6. *urges* all National Societies to contribute to the activities of the ICRC and to support the ICRC's appeals to their respective governments.

19

Report of the joint ICRC/Federation Commission on National Society Statutes

The Council of Delegates,

recalling Resolution VI of the 22nd International Conference and Resolution XX of the 24th International Conference,

stressing the importance of the mandate conferred on the Joint ICRC/Federation Commission on National Society Statutes to ensure respect for the Fundamental Principles within the Movement,

approves the report submitted by the Joint ICRC/Federation Commission on National Society Statutes and *invites* the ICRC and the Federation to continue their work in this respect;

requests National Societies to submit the draft texts of their new or amended statutes to the ICRC and the Federation before their final adoption, and to follow up the recommendations made by the Joint Commission;

stresses the need for the Federation and the ICRC to have on file the current statutes of all National Societies which are members of the Movement;

calls on governments to respect at all times the commitment of all the Movement's components to observe the Fundamental Principles.

20

Empress Shôken Fund

The Council of Delegates,

having taken cognizance of the report of the Joint Commission of the Empress Shôken Fund,

1. *thanks* the Joint Commission for its management of the Empress Shôken Fund and *approves* all the provisions made by it;
2. *requests* the Joint Commission to transmit this report to the Imperial Family of Japan through the intermediary of the Japanese Red Cross Society;
3. *approves* the proposed amendment of Article 9 of the Regulations, which now reads as follows:
"A sum which shall not exceed twelve per cent of the annual interest on the capital shall be set aside to cover the cost of administering the Fund and of assisting the National Societies concerned in the realization of their projects";
4. *invites* the ICRC and the Federation to submit this amendment to the States Party to the Geneva Conventions;
5. *decides* that, if within six months of the text being submitted to them, the States raise no objection, the amended Regulations will be deemed to have been definitively adopted.

21

Revision of the Regulations for the Florence Nightingale Medal

The Council of Delegates,

having taken cognizance of the report of the International Committee of the Red Cross,

wishing to preserve the exceptional nature of the award of the Florence Nightingale Medal,

1. *approves* the revised text of Article 2 of the Regulations;
2. *invites* the ICRC to submit this amendment to the States Party to the Geneva Conventions;

3. *decides* that, if within six months of the text being submitted to them, the States raise no objection, the amended Regulations will be deemed to have been definitively adopted.

22

Budapest Appeal: peace in people's hearts

The Council of Delegates,

profoundly concerned by the fratricidal battles a few hundred kilometres south of Budapest,

aware of its responsibility, as the supreme body of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, in fostering harmony and understanding among peoples and fellow men,

having taken note of and deeply moved by the important declaration made by the Red Cross of Yugoslavia, the Red Cross of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Red Cross of Croatia, the Red Cross of Macedonia, the Red Cross of Montenegro, the Red Cross of Serbia and the Red Cross of Slovenia, and the agreement reached under ICRC auspices in Geneva on 27 November 1991 by the representatives of the various parties on matters of humanitarian concern arising from the conflict,

decides to give its full support to the activities of the Societies having endorsed that declaration;

expresses its determination to pursue the humanitarian work currently being carried out by the Movement;

considers that, once the fighting is over, there must be peace in people's hearts before lasting solidarity and peaceful coexistence can be achieved;

consequently *calls on* all the Authorities and Organizations concerned to act without delay so as to create the conditions for dialogue at all levels of public opinion as the prerequisite for mutual understanding.

23

Place and date of the next Council of Delegates

The Council of Delegates,

decides that its next meeting will be held in 1993 at the same place and on the same date as the General Assembly of the Federation.
