TEXTS:

Statutes of the International Red Cross
adopted by the XIIIth International Red Cross
Conference, The Hague, 1928
(Abridged reference: S.)

International Conference Rules of Internal Procedure
adopted by the XIVth International Red Cross Conference,
Brussels, 1930.
(Abridged reference: R.)
PART I.

*****

COMMISSION AND BOARDS

collaborating with the Conference
or sitting at the same time as that body:

The Standing Commission
The Board of Delegates
The Board of Governors

A. The Standing Commission

(a) Composition

"A Standing Commission shall be hereby constituted; it shall be composed of:

(1) Five members appointed by the International Conference and holding office until the close of the following Conference. A member unable to attend the meetings may appoint a substitute from amongst the members of his own national Society.

(2) Two representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

(3) Two representatives of the League of Red Cross Societies."

(S., Article X, para.1)

(b) Election

"The members of the Standing Commission shall be elected by the Members of the Conference, who will vote for several members out of a list.

The five candidates having obtained an absolute majority of votes shall be deemed to have been elected.

Should more than five candidates obtain an absolute majority, the five having obtained the largest number of votes shall be deemed to have been elected."
Should less than five candidates obtain an absolute majority at the first ballot, a second and, if necessary, a third ballot shall be taken under similar conditions for the purpose of filling any posts still remaining vacant.

At the third ballot only a relative majority shall be required.

If the application of the rules laid down in the foregoing paragraphs should result in more than five persons being elected, the person who shall act as a member of the Commission shall be designated by drawing lots."

(R., Article 22)

(a) Quorum

"The quorum of the Commission shall be five."

(S., Article X, para. 2)

(d) Bureau

"The Commission shall elect a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman for the period extending from one Conference to another."

(S., Article X, para. 3)

(e) Rules of Procedure

"The Commission shall establish its own Rules of Procedure."

(R., Article 24)

(f) Headquarters

"The Commission shall have its headquarters in Geneva. In certain agreed cases, where exceptional circumstances shall so demand, the Standing Commission may meet in an alternative place selected by the Chairman and approved by a majority of members."

(S., Article X, paras. 4 and 5)

(g) Convocation

"The Commission shall meet regularly, when convoked by its Chairman, or at the request of three of its members."

(S., Article X, para. 6)
B. The Board of Delegates

(a) Composition

"The Board of Delegates shall be composed of the Delegates of the national Societies recognised by the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the delegates of the League of Red Cross Societies".

(S., Article 4, para. 2)

(b) Members and Votes

"The national Societies may not be represented by more than three delegates on the Board of Delegates; and each Society shall have only one vote, notwithstanding the number of its representatives; the same shall also apply to the International Committee of the Red Cross and to the League of Red Cross Societies."

(R., Article 18)

(c) Chairmanship

"The opening meeting of the Board of Delegates, when it meets within the general programme of the International Conference, shall be presided over by the President of the Society or institution instructed to convene the Conference on the day preceding or the day of the opening of the Conference.

The Board shall elect its Chairman (Statutes, Article IV, para. 2); it shall also nominate a Vice-Chairman from among its members, and two Secretaries."

(R., Article 19, paras. 1 and 2)

(d) Agenda

"The Chairman shall draw up the Agenda of the Board, in conformity with Article IV of the Statutes." (1)

(R., Article 19, para. 2)

(e) Delegates' Names

"The names of the Delegates designated shall be communicated before the opening of the Conference to the Society or institution instructed to convene it."

(R., Article 18, para. 2)

(1) Cf. below, Part II, Chapter II, letter B, para. 2.
C. The Board of Governors

(a) Composition

"Each Society shall appoint a representative, entitled a governor, to the Board of Governors."

(Articles of Association of the League - Article 6)

(b) Organisation

"The Board of Governors shall be organised in accordance with the Articles of Association of the League".

(S., Article IV, para. 3)

D. Relations between these Bodies and with the Conference

(a) General Relations

"Meetings of the International Red Cross Conference shall involve, within the general programme of the Conference, the holding of meetings of the Board of Delegates and of the Board of Governors".

(S., Article IV, para. 1)

(b) Relations with respect to their Members

"The national Societies shall be free to choose their representatives to the International Conference, the Board of Delegates, and the Board of Governors, with the limitation that the capacity as Delegate of a Society at meetings of the Board of Delegates or of the Board of Governors, be coupled with membership of the delegation of the said Society to the International Conference. The representative of a Society at a meeting of the Board of Governors may also be the delegate of the said Society to the Board of Delegates."

(S., Article V)

(c) Relations with respect to their Chairmen

"The Presidency of the Conference, the Chairmanship of the Board of Delegates and that of the Board of Governors shall, as a general rule, be filled by three different persons."

(S., Article 4, para. 4)
PART II

THE CONFERENCE

Section I

General Principles

A. Definition

"The supreme governing body of the International Red Cross shall be the International Conference."

(S., Article I, para. 1)

B. General Organisation

1. Composition

"The International Conference shall be composed of delegations of all national Red Cross Societies, of delegates of the Powers parties to the Geneva Conventions, and of delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross, together with delegates of the League of Red Cross Societies."

(S., Article 1, para. 1)

2. Members

Members entitled to vote

"The following shall be members of the Conference entitled to take part in all discussions and to vote:

(a) The delegates of national Red Cross Societies, officially recognised as such by the International Committee of the Red Cross;

(b) The Delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross and those of the League of Red Cross Societies;

(c) The Delegates of countries parties to the Geneva Conventions of 1864, 1906 or 1929.

(R., Article 1, para. 1)
Advisory Members

"The following shall also be members of the Conference, but only in an advisory capacity, unless the Conference shall expressly decide otherwise: those persons and representatives of organizations specifically invited by the Conference, by the Standing Commission, or by the Society or institution instructed to convene the Conference.

The decision referred to in the preceding paragraph shall be valid only for the duration of the session."

(R., Article 2)

C. Functions

1. General functions

"The Conference shall maintain its existing functions and shall be further charged with ensuring unity in the work of the national Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies."

(S., Article I, para. 2)

"The Conference shall have power to take decisions."

(S., Article II, para. 1)

2. Special functions

Conflicting opinions

"Special or regional conferences may only deal with questions of a special or regional character and may take no decisions on matters already decided by an International Conference or reserved by the Conference for the Agenda of a subsequent International Conference. In the event of a conflict of opinion on this point, the International Conference shall pronounce thereon, after hearing the opinion of the Standing Commission provided for in Article X."

(S., Article VI, para. 1)

"Subject to final decision by the International Conference, the Standing Commission shall arbitrate in any difference of opinion which may arise as to the interpretation and application of the present Statutes,
and in any question which may be submitted to it by the International Committee of the Red Cross or by the League of Red Cross Societies, in connection with differences that may arise between them."

(S., Article X, para. 7)

Rules of procedure

"The International Conference shall establish its Rules of Procedure within the framework of the present Statutes, by a two-thirds majority and after hearing the views of the Board of Delegates and the Board of Governors."

(S., Article XI, para. 1)

Statutes

"The Conference may, by following the same procedure, amend the present Statutes. Any proposal for the revision of the Statutes must, however, be placed on the Agenda and notice must be given to the national Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies at least six months in advance of the meeting."

(S., Article XI, para. 2)

3. Exclusive functions

"The following shall be exclusively within the competence of the Conference:

(a) The interpretation and revision of the Statutes of the International Red Cross;

(b) The drafting, interpretation, or revision of the Conference Rules of Procedure;

(c) The final settlement of conflicts of opinion referred to in Article X of the Statutes;

(d) The Allocation of mandates to the International Committee of the Red Cross and to the League of Red Cross Societies;

(e) Proposals relating to the Geneva Conventions and to other International Conventions concerning the Red Cross."

(R., Article 8)
4. Limitation of functions

"The Conference shall have power to take decisions. It may not, however, modify the Statutes either of the International Committee of the Red Cross or of the League of Red Cross Societies. In the same way, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies shall take no decisions contrary to the Statutes of the International Red Cross or to the resolutions of the Conference, nor any decision contrary to the agreements concluded between them and approved by the Conference."

(S., Article II, para. 1)

Section II

Preparatory Procedure

A. Meeting and convocation of the International Conference

"The Conference shall meet every four years or, if circumstances warrant, at intervals of two years. It shall be convoked by the Central Committee of a national Society, or by the International Committee of the Red Cross, or by the League of Red Cross Societies, in fulfillment of a mandate given to this effect by the previous Conference, or by the Standing Commission. As a general rule, satisfaction shall be given, so far as possible, to the invitation which national Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross, or the League of Red Cross Societies may wish to extend to the Conference."

(S., Article 3)

"If the meeting-place of the Conference has not been determined by the preceding Conference, it shall be decided by the Standing Commission. The Standing Commission shall have power, when exceptional circumstances so require, to advance or postpone the date of convocation of an International Conference."

(S., Article X, para. 9)

"The convocation shall be addressed to the Governments and to the Red Cross Societies and institutions at least six months in advance of the date fixed for the opening of the Conference."

(R., Article 3)
B. Preparation of the Agenda

1. Rôle of the Standing Commission

"The Commission shall be instructed to prepare the Agenda of the next International Conference in co-operation with the Red Cross Society of the country acting as host to the Conference, or, as circumstances require, with the International Committee of the Red Cross or with the League of Red Cross Societies, with the exception of the items already settled by the preceding Conference. The national Red Cross Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies shall recommend to the Standing Commission the addition to the Agenda of questions which may appear to call for discussion."

(S., Article X, para. 8)

"The programme and the Agenda of the Conference shall be drawn up provisionally by the Standing Commission (Statutes, Article X)."

(R., Article 4)

2. Rôle of the Board of Delegates

"The functions of the Board of Delegates shall be

(b) To determine the order in which the various questions and proposals submitted to the Conference shall be brought up for discussion."

(S., Article IV, para. 5 (b) )

C. Reports

"The reports drawn up in support of the items on the Agenda shall be received by the Society or institution instructed to convocate the Conference at least thirty days before its opening date, unless the Standing Commission shall otherwise decide,"

(R., Article 5)

D. Provisional designation of the Conference Bureau

"The functions of the Board of Delegates shall be:

(a) To determine, prior to the opening of the
Conference, the method of election and the number of members of the Conference Bureau, and to elect the Chairman, Vice-Chairmen and Secretaries. These nominations shall be subject to ratification by the Conference."

(S., Article IV, para. 5 (a))

Section III

Conference Procedure

A. Election of the Bureau and designation of Commissions

"The Conference shall elect its President."

(S., Article II, para. 3)

"At its opening meeting the Conference shall elect its President and Vice-Presidents, on the proposal of the Board of Delegates.

The Conference Bureau shall be composed of the President, the Vice-Presidents and the Secretary-General, should one be nominated. (Statutes, Article IV).

The Conference may appoint Commissions to which it may refer any questions it considers desirable; the Commissions shall themselves designate their Chairmen and Reporters."

(R., Article 6)

B. Agenda

"Questions not appearing on the Agenda may be added thereto by the Bureau if they are submitted on the previous day to the President, and are signed by five members of the Conference belonging to different countries. The Bureau shall settle the Agenda for each meeting, following the order of subject-matter laid down in advance by the Board of Delegates."

(R., Article 11, para. 2)
C. Languages

"The official language of the Conference shall be French, speeches made in another language shall be summarised in French by the good offices of the delegation to which the speaker belongs, if necessary with the assistance of the general Secretariat."

(R., Article 14)

D. Resolutions

(a) Decisions

"The Conference shall have the power to take decisions."

(S., Article II, para. 1)

"The Conference may take decisions within the limits of the Statutes of the International Red Cross."

(R., Article 7, para. 1)

(b) Resolutions and Recommendations

"It may pass resolutions and recommendations."

(R., Article 7, para. 2)

E. Discussions

(a) Right to speak

"When the discussion on any question shall have been declared open, the President shall first call upon the Reporter designated by the Conference or by the Committee concerned then upon speakers who have given in advance to the Bureau in advance, and finally on other delegates.

"The Reporter shall be entitled to speak again, should he so desire, before the closing of the discussion."

(R., Article 9)

(b) Points of Order

"If in the course of a discussion a Delegate should rise to a point of order, the discussion shall be interrupted and the point of order shall be decided by the President or, if necessary, by the Conference."

(R., Article 10)
(c) Motions and amendments

"Proposals, motions and amendments (except those relating to points of order) shall be communicated in writing in advance to the Bureau, and shall be distributed by it to the delegates before the discussion takes place, unless the Conference shall expressly decide otherwise."
(R., Article 11, para 1)

(d) Speeches

"The remarks of a speaker on any question shall be limited to a quarter of an hour, unless the Conference shall expressly decide otherwise."
(R., Article 12)

(e) Closure

"The discussion on each question shall be closed when no other person desires to speak or when a motion proposing the closure, supported by five different delegations shall have been adopted by the Conference."
(R., Article 13)

F. Voting

(a) Right to vote and Majority

1. Number of votes

"Each national Society and each Government shall be entitled to one vote; this shall also apply to the International Committee and to the League."
(R., Article 15, para. 1)

2. Simple majority

"Resolutions shall be passed by a majority vote in accordance with the terms of the preceding paragraph."
(R., Article 15, para. 2)

3. Special majority

"The International Conference shall establish its Rules of Procedure within the framework of the present Statutes, by a two-thirds majority and after hearing the views of the Board of Delegates and the Board of Governors."

"The remarks of a speaker on any question shall be limited to a quarter of an hour, unless the Conference shall expressly decide otherwise."
"The Conference may, by following the same procedure, amend the present Statutes. Any proposal for the revision of the Statutes must, however, be placed on the Agenda and notice must be given to the national Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies at least six months in advance of the meeting."

(S., Article XI, paras. 1 and 2)

4. Calculation of the majority

"Declarations of abstention shall be mentioned in the Minutes, but shall not be taken into consideration for the purpose of calculating the majority.

The majority shall be constituted by one-half plus one of all the votes cast for or against a proposal."

(R., Article 15, paras. 3 and 4)

(b) Method of voting

1. Show of hands

"As a general rule, voting shall be by a show of hands."

(R., Article 16, para. 1)

2. Roll Call

"Nevertheless, a vote by roll call shall be compulsory if it is requested by the delegation of a national Society or that of a Government.

In such cases, a roll call shall be made first of the national Societies, then of the Governments represented at the Conference, and lastly of the International Committee and of the League."

(R., Article 16, paras. 2 and 3)

3. Secret ballot

"When five delegations shall so request, voting shall take place by secret ballot."

(R., Article 16, para. 4)

4. Counting of votes

"When the result of the voting shall be announced, account shall only be taken of the total number of votes cast, for or against the proposal upon which the vote has been taken."

(R., Article 16, para. 5)
G. Minutes

"The Minutes of each sitting shall be submitted for the approval of the Conference at the following sitting. The final Minutes shall be published later by the Society or institution having convoked the Conference; and shall be communicated by it to the Governments and to the Red Cross Societies and institutions.

(R., Article 17)

Section IV

The Board of Delegates and the Board of Governors during and after the Conference

A. Board of Delegates

"The functions of the Board of Delegates shall be:

..........

..........

(c) To pronounce upon and, if circumstances warrant, to decide such questions and proposals as may be referred to it by the Standing Commission or by the Conference."

(S., Article IV, para. 5 (c)

B. Board of Governors

"The functions of the Board of Governors, in addition to those pertaining to it as an organ of the League of Red Cross Societies, shall be as follows:

To pronounce upon and, if circumstances warrant, to decide such questions and proposals as may be referred to it by the Standing Commission or by the Conference."

(S., Article IV, paras. 6 and 7)

"The Board of Governors, which shall continue to be regulated by the Articles of Association and Bye-Laws of the League of Red Cross Societies, shall if necessary, during the period of the Conference, decide upon questions referred to it by that body.

(R., Article 21)
Meeting of the Standing Commission
at the end of the Conference

"Following the election of the members of the
Standing Commission, those present at the Conference shall
meet immediately in order to designate the member who
shall convoke the first meeting of the Commission.

Geneva, February 1948
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## The Conference

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