

M I S C E L L A N E O U S

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE IN SUPPORT OF THE PEOPLES OF ZIMBABWE AND NAMIBIA

The United Nations Conference in support of the peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia was held from 16 to 21 May at Maputo, capital of Mozambique. The ICRC delegate general for Africa, Mr. Frank Schmidt, and Mr. Michel Veuthey, ICRC deputy delegate to international organizations, attended the conference as observers. It was an opportunity to make contact and have useful talks with the representatives, present in Maputo, of various governments and with those of a number of United Nations specialized agencies, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations and liberation movements.

They assured their interlocutors of the ICRC's determination to step up its assistance to the victims of the conflicts in southern Africa—civilians, prisoners, wounded and sick—and reminded them of the need for all parties to these conflicts to observe certain fundamental humanitarian rules.

Symposium on Torture

On 5 and 6 May 1977 an international symposium on torture was held at the Henry Dunant Institute, Geneva.

Among the twenty persons who took part were representatives of the United Nations (Human Rights Division) and of various non-governmental bodies (Amnesty International, Arab Lawyers Association, ICRC, International Commission of Jurists, World Council of Churches, World Jewish Congress, Society of Friends, SODEPAX, etc.). Four permanent missions (Canada, Ghana, Italy, USA) sent observers to the symposium.

The themes discussed were: expansion of the role of non-governmental bodies and of their co-operation; governments' role in combating torture; multilateral or model convention prohibiting torture; expansion of role of inter-governmental bodies; and possibility of setting up an advisory group.

The main practical result of the views exchanged during the two days of the symposium was the decision to set up a liaison group between non-governmental bodies to co-ordinate action against torture.

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TERRITORIAL ASYLUM¹

The United Nations Conference on Territorial Asylum was held in Geneva from 10 January to 4 February 1977, with delegations from 92 countries participating. It did not complete its work and recommended the General Assembly consider at its 32nd session the question of convening at an appropriate time a further session of the Conference.

By the end of the Conference on 4 February 1977, only five articles had been adopted by the Commission of the Whole; and of these, only one, article 1 (Grant of asylum) had been fully considered by the Drafting Committee. The remaining four articles, initially adopted by the Committee of the Whole and referred to the Drafting Committee were:

Article II defining the persons in respect of whom the Convention is to apply;

Two articles, one defining standards of conduct of asylees in countries of asylum, and the other extending the benefits of the Convention to family members of an asylee;

Article III (*non-refoulement* and non-rejection at the frontier).

¹ Extract from the bulletin of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, No. 1, February 1977.