UNESCO AND THE TEACHING OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

At its last session, the Unesco General Conference unanimously adopted a resolution permitting the ICRC to obtain Unesco's support in its work connected with the dissemination and teaching of international humanitarian law. Here is the full text of the resolution:

The General Conference,

Considering the promotion of peace to be the primary objective of Unesco,

Convinced that the generalized dissemination and teaching of the principles of international humanitarian law are an urgent necessity and constitute an important contribution to the promotion of peace,

Aware of the particular importance of such activities among young people, owing to their educational character,

Noting that the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, for the Protection of the Victims of Armed Conflicts, and the Hague Convention of 14 May 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, make it incumbent on States to disseminate the provisions of those Conventions as widely as possible in time of peace as in time of war,

Taking note of the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and more especially resolutions 2852 (XXVI) of 20 December 1971, 3032 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972 and 3102 (XXVIII) of 12 December 1973,
Recalling the resolutions relating to the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions adopted by successive International Conferences of the Red Cross, and especially resolution XII adopted by the Twenty-Second International Conference of the Red Cross, held at Teheran in November 1973, which calls for the organization of seminars for training specialists in international humanitarian law,

Invites governments to intensify their efforts to ensure that the entire population is familiar with the principles of international humanitarian law, and to provide special instruction concerning the humanitarian conventions in universities and establishments of higher education, the medical profession and para-medical bodies, etc.;

Invites the Director-General
to prepare, in close collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the specialist institutes, a programme designed to intensify teaching and research in international humanitarian law. Such a programme might include in particular the following elements:

an investigation of the present state of teaching in international humanitarian law throughout the world,

a meeting of experts on these matters,

the organization of training courses, particularly at the regional level, designed for teachers of international humanitarian law, with a view to promoting its wider dissemination,

to include this programme in the Draft Programme and Budget for 1977-1978 and in the Outline Medium-Term Plan for 1977-1982.