

## DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE

### ON THE REAFFIRMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW APPLICABLE IN ARMED CONFLICTS

On 20 February 1974, the Diplomatic Conference convened by the Swiss Government opened in Geneva. It was attended by the plenipotentiaries of 118 States parties to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and members of the United Nations, and by representatives of numerous international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The Conference examined the two draft Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions which the ICRC had prepared with the assistance of experts from countries all over the world, for the purpose of supplementing international humanitarian law in view of the development of conflicts. Since armed conflicts, unhappily, break out from time to time and the forms and techniques of warfare develop, it has become necessary to adapt the Geneva Conventions to present-day circumstances.

On 29 March 1974, the Conference ended the first phase of its work, and its President, Mr. Graber, announced that a second session would take place in 1975. In its May 1974 issue, *International Review* published a brief account of the deliberations in the plenary sessions and the three Committees that had been set up.

The Conference had also constituted an "ad hoc Committee on Conventional Weapons" which approved the convening of a conference of government experts to study in depth the question of prohibition or restriction of the use of certain conventional weapons which may cause unnecessary suffering or have indiscriminate effects. This conference was held at Lucerne last autumn, and two articles on its scope and

results appeared in the October 1974 and January 1975 issues of *International Review*.

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On 3 February 1975, the second session of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts opened at the Geneva International Conference Centre and is expected to last until 18 April 1975. The deliberations were resumed at the point where they had been suspended at the end of the first session.

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