

DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE

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

As announced in our February issue, the second session of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts opened at the International Conference Centre, Geneva, on 3 February 1975. The Conference, which is chaired by Mr. Pierre Graber, President of the Swiss Confederation, is merely the continuance of the first session, held in Geneva from 20 February to 29 March 1974, which was also chaired by Mr. Graber. At the opening of the twenty-third plenary meeting, after greeting the delegates, the Chairman said that the task awaiting the Conference was arduous indeed. The hopes which the international community had placed in the Conference's work must not be disappointed, he said, and he emphasized the unanimous desire of the Conference Bureau for decisive progress.

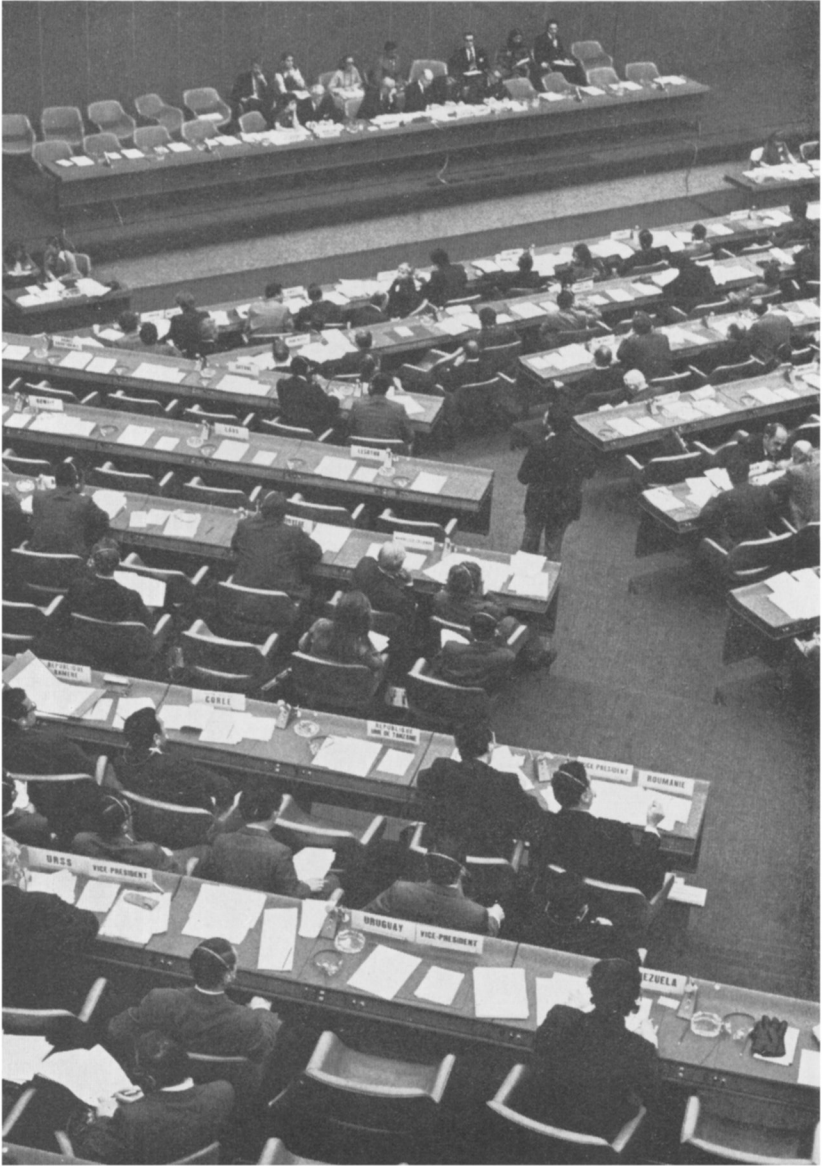
After five plenary meetings, the Conference has resumed its committee work. *Committee I*, chaired by Ambassador E. Hambro (Norway), deals with the general provisions of international humanitarian law and particularly with the scrutiny of their application. *Committee II*, chaired by Professor S. E. Nahlik (Poland), is concerned with the protection of the wounded, the sick and the shipwrecked; the study of the articles covering the protection of civilian medical units, civilian medical and religious personnel, and means of transport, particularly aeromedical transport. *Committee III*, chaired by Professor H. Sultan (Arab Republic of Egypt), deals with the protection of the civilian population against the effects of hostilities.

The ad hoc Committee presided over by Ambassador D. Garces (Colombia) deals with weapons which may cause unnecessary suffering or have indiscriminate effects. It resumed work on 12 February, on the basis of the report of last autumn's Conference of Government Experts held at Lucerne, under ICRC auspices.

At the end of March, as the *Review* goes to press, the four committees have already covered a large part of their programme. We shall revert to the proceedings of the Conference and, for the benefit of our readers, summarize the results of the second session, which will close on 18 April.

It can, however, already be stated that a third session is to be held next year. It will continue the work carried out by the present session, thanks to which it is hoped that the two draft Protocols submitted to the government representatives by the ICRC will be given their definitive form.

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LAW APPLICABLE IN ARMED CONFLICTS



Geneva, February/April 1975: Second Session.

Photo J.-J. Kurz/ICRC



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