

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

NEW STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

As announced in our previous issue, the International Committee, on 21 June 1973, adopted new statutes, the text of which we give below.

Article 1. — International Committee of the Red Cross

1. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), founded in Geneva in 1863 and formally recognized in the Geneva Conventions and by International Conferences of the Red Cross, shall be an independent organization having its own Statutes.
2. It shall be a constituent part of the International Red Cross.¹

Article 2 — Legal Status

As an association governed by Articles 60 and following of the Swiss Civil Code, the ICRC shall have legal personality.

Article 3 — Headquarters and Emblem

The headquarters of the ICRC shall be in Geneva.

Its emblem shall be a red cross on a white ground. Its motto shall be *Inter arma caritas*.

¹ The International Red Cross comprises the National Red Cross Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies. The term "National Red Cross Societies" includes the Red Crescent Societies and the Red Lion and Sun Society.

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Article 4. — Role

1. The special role of the ICRC shall be:
 - (a) to maintain the fundamental principles of the Red Cross as proclaimed by the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross;
 - (b) to recognize any newly established or reconstituted National Red Cross Society which fulfils the conditions for recognition in force, and to notify other National Societies of such recognition;
 - (c) to undertake the tasks incumbent on it under the Geneva Conventions, to work for the faithful application of these Conventions and to take cognizance of any complaints regarding alleged breaches of the humanitarian Conventions;
 - (d) to take action in its capacity as a neutral institution, especially in case of war, civil war or internal strife; to endeavour to ensure at all times that the military and civilian victims of such conflicts and of their direct results receive protection and assistance, and to serve, in humanitarian matters, as an intermediary between the parties;
 - (e) to ensure the operation of the Central Information Agencies provided for in the Geneva Conventions;
 - (f) to contribute, in view of such conflicts, to the preparation and development of medical personnel and medical equipment, in co-operation with the Red Cross organizations, the medical services of the armed forces, and other competent authorities;
 - (g) to work for the continual improvement of humanitarian international law and for the better understanding and diffusion of the Geneva Conventions and to prepare for their possible extension;
 - (h) to accept the mandates entrusted to it by the International Conferences of the Red Cross.
2. The ICRC may also take any humanitarian initiative which comes within its role as a specifically neutral and independent institution and consider any question requiring examination by such an institution.

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Article 5. — Relations with other Red Cross Institutions

1. The ICRC shall maintain close relations with the National Red Cross Societies and such representatives as they may accredit to it, and also with the League of Red Cross Societies. It shall co-operate with the latter in matters which concern the activities of both organizations.
2. Contact between the ICRC and the League shall be ensured by a meeting at least once a month of representatives of the two organizations. Such contact may furthermore be assured by a representative of the ICRC accredited to the League and a representative of the League accredited to the ICRC.

Article 6. — Membership of the ICRC

1. The ICRC shall co-opt its members from among Swiss citizens. It shall comprise fifteen to twenty-five members.
2. The rights and duties of members of the ICRC shall be laid down in internal regulations.
3. Members of the ICRC shall be subject to re-election every four years. They may be re-elected for two terms of four years. As an exception, they may be re-elected for further terms of four years by a three-fourths majority of ICRC members.
4. The ICRC may elect honorary members.

Article 7. — Assembly

1. The supreme policy-making body of the ICRC shall be the Assembly, which shall be of a collegial character. It shall lay down principles and general policy and supervise all ICRC activities.
2. The Assembly shall be composed of members of the ICRC. Its President and its two Vice-Presidents shall be President and Vice-Presidents of the ICRC.

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Article 8. — Executive Board

1. The Executive Board, a collegial body, shall be responsible for the general conduct of affairs. It shall exercise direct supervision over the administration of the ICRC.
2. The Executive Board shall comprise not more than seven members who may or may not be members of the ICRC.
3. The Assembly shall elect the members, President and Vice-President of the Executive Board.

Article 9. — Directorate

1. The Directorate shall be responsible for management in accordance with the Executive Board's general directives.
2. The Directorate shall be composed of the Directors of three Departments, namely:
 - (a) the Operations Department;
 - (b) the Department of Principles and Law;
 - (c) the Administrative Department.
3. The administrative organization shall be laid down in regulations.

Article 10. — Financial commitments

All documents involving commitments on the part of the ICRC towards third parties must bear the signature of two persons duly authorized for the purpose by the Committee. Nevertheless, as an exceptional measure, it may give one of its members or delegates power to involve the ICRC in a financial commitment by his signature alone.

Article 11. — Assets and financial verification

1. The principal assets of the ICRC shall be the contributions of National Red Cross Societies and of Governments, such gifts and bequests as it may receive and its income from securities.

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2. These assets, and such private funds as it may have at its disposal, shall alone, to the exclusion of any personal or collective liability of its members, guarantee commitments entered into by the ICRC. The utilization of the assets and funds shall be subject to independent financial verification.

3. Even in case of dissolution, members shall have no personal right to the assets of the ICRC, which shall be used solely for humanitarian purposes.

Article 12. — Rules of Procedure

The Assembly shall provide for the implementation of the present Statutes, *inter alia*, by establishing internal regulations.

Article 13. — Revision

1. The Assembly may revise the present Statutes at any time. Revision shall be the subject of discussion at two different meetings, on the agendas of which it shall be an item.

2. Amendment of the Statutes must be accepted, in the final voting, by two-thirds of the members present at a meeting attended by at least half the members of the ICRC.

Article 14. — Coming into force

The present Statutes shall replace the Statutes of the International Committee of the Red Cross of 25 September 1952 and shall take effect as from 1 July 1973.



Third Meeting of Heads of Information and Public Relations Services of Red Cross,
Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun Societies.

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Photos Jean Zbinden/Geneva

The opening ceremony at the Fifth International Festival of Red Cross and Health Films.





Monrovia: The Liberian Red Cross gives army officers a course based mainly on the ICRC's booklet the « Soldier's Manual ».

Tegucigalpa: The Honduran Red Cross has combined a hygiene programme with its milk distribution scheme.

