

Resolutions of the XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross

I

Wearing of identity discs

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

considering that, in several situations of armed conflict, the identification of members of the armed forces killed on the battle-field is made extremely difficult for lack of identification documents,

recalling that Articles 16 and 17 of the First Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 provide for identity discs to be worn by members of the armed forces to facilitate their identification in case they are killed and the communication of their deaths to the Power on which they depend,

1. *urges* the Parties to an armed conflict to take all necessary steps to provide the members of their armed forces with identity discs and to ensure that the discs are worn during service,

2. *recommends* that the Parties to an armed conflict should see that these discs give all the indications required for a precise identification of members of the armed forces such as full name, date and place of birth, religion, serial number and blood group; that every disc be double and composed of two separable parts, each bearing the same indications; and that the inscriptions be engraved on a substance as resistant as possible to the destructive action of chemical and physical agents, especially to fire and heat,

3. *reminds* the Parties to an armed conflict that one half of each disc must, in case of death, be detached and sent back to the Power on which

the member of the armed forces depended, the other half remaining on the body,

4. *notes* that the International Committee of the Red Cross is prepared to provide models to States asking for them.

II

Forced or involuntary disappearances

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

alarmed at the phenomenon of forced or involuntary disappearances, perpetrated, connived at or consented to by governments,

deeply moved by the great suffering such disappearances cause not only to the missing persons themselves and their families but also to society,

considering that such disappearances imply violations of fundamental human rights such as the right to life, freedom and personal safety, the right not to be submitted to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, the right not to be arbitrarily arrested or detained, and the right to a just and public trial,

pointing out that families have a right to be informed of the whereabouts, health and welfare of their members, a right which is laid down in various resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly,

commending the efforts of the ICRC, the Working group established by the UN Commission on Human Rights to investigate the phenomenon of forced or involuntary disappearances and various impartial humanitarian organizations for the benefit of missing persons and their families,

1. *condemns* any action resulting in forced or involuntary disappearances, conducted or perpetrated by governments or with their connivance or consent,

2. *recommends* that the ICRC take any appropriate action which might reveal the fate of missing persons or bring their families relief and urges that the ICRC Central Tracing Agency and any other impartial humani-

tarian organization be granted the facilities necessary to take effective action in this matter,

3. *urges* governments to endeavour to prevent forced or involuntary disappearances and to undertake and complete thorough inquiries into every case of disappearance occurring in their territory,

4. *urges* governments to co-operate with humanitarian organizations, and with the relevant bodies of the United Nations and of intergovernmental organizations, in particular those which investigate forced or involuntary disappearances, with a view to putting an end to that phenomenon.

III

Application of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

having considered the reports of the ICRC on its activities from 1973 to 1980 and from 1 January to 30 June 1981,

recalling and confirming Resolutions X of 1969, III of 1973 and X of 1977 of the previous International Conferences of the Red Cross,

deeply concerned about the continued refusal of the occupying power to acknowledge the applicability and comply with the totality of its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war,

deeply disturbed by the policies contrary to article 49 paragraph 6 of the Fourth Geneva Convention affecting the Arab population in the occupied territories in the Middle East,

conscious of the fact that the Parties to the Geneva Conventions have undertaken, not only to respect, but also to ensure respect for the Conventions in all circumstances,

1. *expresses* once more its deep concern for the situation of the Arab civilian population of the occupied territories in the Middle East,

2. *reaffirms* the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the occupied territories in the Middle East,
3. *requests* the authorities concerned to fulfill their humanitarian obligations by facilitating the return of people to their homes and their reintegration into their communities,
4. *calls upon* the occupying power to acknowledge and comply with its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention, and to this effect cease forthwith all policies and practices in violation of any article of this Convention,
5. *affirms* that the settlements in the occupied territories are incompatible with articles 27 and 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention,
6. *expresses* its appreciation to the ICRC and its delegates in the Middle East for their continuous efforts in that region.

IV

Humanitarian activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross for the benefit of victims of armed conflicts

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

noting the persistence of international or non-international armed conflicts in which the ICRC is partially or totally unable to fulfill its humanitarian tasks in situations covered by the Geneva Conventions,

deploring in particular the fact that the ICRC is refused access to the captured combatants and detained civilians in the armed conflicts of Western Sahara, Ogaden and later on Afghanistan,

urges all parties concerned to enable the International Committee of the Red Cross to protect and assist persons captured, detained, wounded or sick and civilians affected by these conflicts.

V

Anti-piracy efforts

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

profoundly concerned that persons seeking asylum continue to be attacked by pirates at sea,

emphasizing the urgency of further steps to combat this heinous crime against humanity,

1. *calls* on States Parties to the International Convention on the High Seas (Geneva, 1958) to discharge to the full their obligations under that Convention,
2. *urges* all States, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the ICRC, as well as concerned governmental international organizations to co-operate to the fullest extent possible in measures designed to assist regional and other efforts in eradicating piracy on the high seas and in territorial waters.

VI

Respect for international humanitarian law and for humanitarian principles and support for the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

deeply concerned by the Report on the Activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross,

noting that in several armed conflicts fundamental provisions of the Geneva Conventions are violated and that these grave violations have often the consequence of impeding the International Committee of the Red Cross in the discharge of its activities pursuant to international law applicable in armed conflicts—international, internal or mixed,

observing further that the International Committee of the Red Cross is not always able to discharge its humanitarian activities in internal disturbances and tensions,

alarmed by such violations of the rules of the law of nations and of humanitarian principles, and likewise by the development of violence and contempt for human rights in the world,

recalling that, pursuant to the Geneva Conventions, the States have the obligation not only to respect but to ensure respect for these Conventions,

makes a solemn appeal that the rules of international humanitarian law and the universally recognized humanitarian principles be safeguarded at all times and in all circumstances and that the International Committee of the Red Cross be granted all the facilities necessary to discharge the humanitarian mandate confided to it by the international community.

VII

The Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

recalling Resolution III adopted by the XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross and Resolution 2 adopted by the Council of Delegates in 1979,

having examined the ICRC Report on signatures, ratifications and accessions to the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949,

confirming the interest which the International Conference has always had in the reaffirmation and development of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts,

1. *notes* the fact that 18 States are Parties to Protocol I and 16 to Protocol II,

2. *reaffirms* its will to do everything in its power so that the two Additional Protocols should be as universally accepted as the Geneva Conventions,

3. *invites* the States which have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the two Additional Protocols,

4. *invites* the ICRC, within its statutory mandate and in co-operation with the National Societies, to pursue its efforts to promote knowledge and universal acceptance of the two Additional Protocols.

VIII

Identification of medical transport

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

considering that:

— the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), pursuant to Resolution 17 of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts (CDDH), is working out amendments to the annexes 2, 7, 10 and 11 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, and is continuing the study of specifications with a view to making the identification of medical aircraft easier,

— the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) has acted upon the CDDH Resolution 18 by inserting in the International Code of Signals a chapter entitled “Identification of Medical Transport in Armed Conflicts”,

— the World Administrative Radio Conference (WARC 79) has acted upon the CDDH Resolution 19 by inserting in the Radio Regulations a section entitled “Medical Transports”,

— the WARC 79 also acted upon the Resolution IX of the XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross by adopting Resolution 10 on emergency radiocommunications,

noting that pursuant to article 21 of the Second Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 special protection shall be granted to ships and craft assisting the wounded, the sick and the shipwrecked,

referring further to the pertinent provisions of Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions, relating to the protection to be granted to medical ships, craft and aircraft,

believing that any improvement in the system of identification of all ships, craft and aircraft, particularly those of neutral or other States not Parties to the conflict, used to assist the wounded, the sick and the shipwrecked, will improve the special protection to be granted to ships, craft and aircraft in such circumstances,

noting in this context that the WARC 79 adopted Resolution 11 with annex relating to the use of radiocommunications for ensuring the safety of any ship and aircraft of neutral and other States not Parties to an armed conflict,

1. *notes with satisfaction* that Governments and their national telecommunication administrations and the specialized international organizations, by responding to CDDH Resolutions 17, 18 and 19, have contributed to the improvement of the safety and rapidity of medical evacuations,
2. *welcomes the fact* that the Radio Regulations are taking Red Cross radio communications into consideration,
3. *urges* Governments to do their utmost to ensure the formulation in appropriate international conferences or by a relevant international organization such as the WARC and IMCO, of rules and procedures for the better identification of ships, craft and aircraft of neutral States and of other States not Parties to an armed conflict when these ships, craft and aircraft assist the wounded, the sick and the shipwrecked,
4. *invites* Governments to see also in peacetime to the necessary co-ordination between civilian and military telecommunication services on the one hand and medical services on land, at sea and in the air, on the other hand, and to make available as far as possible to medical personnel, modern communication and identification systems providing optimum safety conditions for the evacuation of the wounded, the sick and the shipwrecked especially in time of armed conflict.

IX

Conventional weapons

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

recalling the general principle of the protection of the civilian population against the effects of hostilities, the principle of international law that the right of the Parties to an armed conflict to choose methods or means of warfare is not unlimited, and the principle that prohibits the employment in armed conflicts of weapons, projectiles and material and methods of warfare of a nature to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering,

recalling the deliberations on the use of certain conventional weapons by an *ad hoc* Committee of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, Geneva (1974-1977), and, amongst others, the Conferences of Government experts held at Lucerne (1974) and Lugano (1976) under the auspices of the ICRC,

recalling also Resolution 22 of the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts,

1. *notes with satisfaction* the adoption by a United Nations Conference, on 10 October 1980, of a Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects and of its annexed Protocols, and the adoption by this Conference, at its 1979 session, of a Resolution on small-calibre weapon systems,
2. *invites* States to become Parties to the Convention and its annexed Protocols as soon as possible, to apply them and examine the possibility of strengthening or developing them further,
3. *appeals* to Governments, in conformity with the above Resolution, to exercise the utmost care in the development of small-calibre weapon systems, so as to avoid an unnecessary escalation in the injurious effects caused by such systems,

4. *invites* the ICRC to follow these matters and to keep the International Conference of the Red Cross informed.

X

Dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law and of the Red Cross principles and ideals

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

having with satisfaction taken cognizance of the work accomplished by the ICRC, the League, the National Societies and the Henry Dunant Institute for the implementation of Resolution VII of the XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross, including the drawing up of a Programme of Action of the Red Cross with respect to dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law and of the principles and ideals of the Red Cross,

mindful that, pursuant to articles 47, 48, 127 and 144 of, respectively, the First, Second, Third and Fourth 1949 Geneva Conventions and to article 83 of the 1977 Protocol I and article 19 of the 1977 Protocol II, the States Parties have undertaken a commitment to disseminate knowledge of these treaties as widely as possible, an obligation of which, moreover, they were reminded by Resolution 21 on the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts adopted by the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts,

1. *urges* the Governments of States Parties to the Geneva Conventions and, as the case may be, to the 1977 Protocols, to fulfill entirely their obligation to disseminate knowledge of international humanitarian law among their armed forces, ministries, academic circles, schools, medical professions and general public, in particular by encouraging the establishment of joint committees representing the appropriate ministries and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to develop such activities,
2. *notes* the special responsibilities of National Societies to assist their Governments in this work and invites National Societies, in co-operation

with the ICRC, the League and with the assistance of the Henry Dunant Institute, to train national officials to be responsible for dissemination, and to co-operate also with their authorities, especially on the joint committee on dissemination,

3. *asks* the ICRC and the League, each within its own sphere, to help National Societies to draw up and implement national and regional dissemination programmes,

4. *requests* the ICRC and the League to report jointly to the next meeting of the Council of Delegates and to the XXVth International Conference of the Red Cross on international, regional and national dissemination action, and on the follow up of the present resolution.

XI

International courses on the law of war

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

considering the unanimous desire of the nations of the world to fully implement the provisions of the Geneva Conventions and other rules of international law applicable to armed conflicts,

considering that there might be a great number of members of armed forces who may not be familiar with or even know the said Conventions and other rules,

recognizing that there is urgent need to conduct a continuing legal education on the Geneva Conventions, law of war and other rules of international law applicable to armed conflicts of international or non-international character in order to:

— attain a uniform interpretation and application of the said Conventions and other rules,

— familiarize members of armed forces with the provisions thereof, and to make them fully understand and appreciate the concept and philosophy behind this international humanitarian law, particularly legal officers who interpret these rules and unit commanders who are themselves the implementors of said rules and who are really the ones

directly involved in actual combat and in actual contact with civilians in areas of combat operations,

1. *recommends*, therefore, that the ICRC conduct, and/or sponsor the conduct of, international courses on said Conventions and other rules, annually or as often as possible, and request States to send legal officers and commanders of their armed forces to attend these courses,

2. *recommends* further that the ICRC urge all Governments to require their armed forces to continuously conduct the same courses in their service schools with the graduates of the international courses as instructors to attain a universal standard of instruction.

XII

Revision of the regulations on the use of the emblem

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

recalling the adoption by the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross, meeting in Vienna in 1965, of the “Regulations on the use of the emblem of the red cross, red crescent and red lion and sun by National Societies” (Resolution XXXII),

noting that, since 1965, experience has shown that the Regulations could be improved in a certain number of points,

noting that the adoption, in 1977, of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 requires an adaptation of these Regulations for the National Societies of States which have become Parties to the Protocols,

1. *requests* the ICRC to prepare a draft revision of these Regulations for the next International Conference, in co-operation with the League and the National Societies and after having consulted signaling system experts, and having previously submitted this draft to the next Council of Delegates,

2. *notes* that pending such revision of the Regulations, the *status quo* will be maintained.

XIII

Disarmament, weapons of mass destruction and respect for non-combatants

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

emphasizing that the vocation of the International Red Cross, in conformity with its fundamental principle of humanity, is to prevent and alleviate human suffering in all circumstances, to protect life and health, to ensure respect for the human being and to promote mutual understanding, friendship, co-operation and lasting peace amongst all peoples,

recalling Resolutions XXIV, 18, XVIII, XXVIII, XIV and XII, adopted respectively by the Seventeenth, Eighteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth, Twenty-first and Twenty-third International Conferences of the Red Cross,

reaffirming the duty of the Parties to an armed conflict to renounce the use of methods or means of warfare that do not make any distinction between combatants and non-combatants,

drawing attention to the fact that the Red Cross has constantly shown particular concern about the use and the existence of weapons of mass destruction, which cause damage without discrimination,

convinced that the Red Cross shall encourage all the efforts leading to disarmament, but aware that some means of achieving disarmament are subject to political controversies, taking part in which is prohibited by its principle of neutrality,

1. *urges* Parties to armed conflicts not to use methods and means of warfare that cannot be directed against specific military targets and whose effects cannot be limited,

2. *fully endorses* the appeal launched by the ICRC to Governments participating in the First Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament, requesting them in particular to do their utmost to establish the atmosphere of confidence and security that would allow the deadlock, in which mankind is, to be broken and an agreement on disarmament to be reached above particular interests.

XIV

Torture

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

noting that torture is condemned and forbidden by international humanitarian law, international instruments relating to human rights and the general principles of international law,

noting that despite such prohibition torture is practised to an alarming extent in many countries,

1. *urges* the Governments of all States and the international organizations concerned to make greater efforts to ensure universal respect for these prohibitions,
2. *requests* the United Nations Organization to expedite the adoption of an international convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and including provision for the effective supervision and enforcement of its application,
3. *appeals* to National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as well as to the League to enhance public awareness of and support for the struggle against torture and to support all efforts, in particular those of the International Committee of the Red Cross, designed to prevent and eliminate torture.

XV

Assistance to victims of torture

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

recalling Resolution XIV on torture adopted by the XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross in which all forms of torture were condemned, Governments and appropriate international organizations were urged to do their utmost to eliminate such practices, and the Red Cross organizations were invited to co-operate in the realization of this objective,

disturbed by the fact that acts of torture still take place in various parts of the world,

deeply concerned over the plight of victims of torture,

recognizing the need to provide assistance to the victims of torture in a purely humanitarian spirit,

1. *welcomes* current efforts within the United Nations to establish a Voluntary Fund for the victims of torture, enabling the fund, through established channels of humanitarian assistance, to extend humanitarian, legal and financial aid to individuals whose fundamental rights have been severely violated as a result of torture and to relatives of such victims,

2. *urges* Governments to consider responding favourably to requests for contributions to such a fund.

XVI

Promoting Red Cross : Joint efforts of the ICRC and the League

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

having examined the document entitled “Concept of the International Red Cross and Audio-Visual Centre of the International Red Cross”,

1. *expresses* satisfaction at the effective follow-up given to Resolution XX of the XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross on “Promoting the Image of the Red Cross worldwide”,

2. *approves* the orientation suggested by the ICRC and the League for the use of the concept of the International Red Cross, taking into account the Statutes and specific nature of each of its component bodies,

3. *adopts* their joint proposal to insert, in each of their publications and communications to the media, a boxed note mentioning that they belong to the International Red Cross and giving a short description of their respective functions, with a view to making them more easily understood by the public at large,

4. *invites* the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to follow the recommendations of the ICRC and the League to insert similar boxes in their own publications and communications to the media,
5. *encourages* the ICRC and the League to continue their joint efforts to make known to the public at large the nature and scope of the Red Cross activities at international level, and to support the National Societies in their information programmes,
6. *considers* that the Audio-Visual Centre of the International Red Cross — jointly administered by the ICRC and the League — is an important means by which the Red Cross movement can attain its objectives relating to information and dissemination.

XVII

Financing of the ICRC by Governments

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

noting the specific mandates entrusted to the International Committee of the Red Cross by the Geneva Conventions of 1949, their 1977 Protocols, and the Statutes of the International Red Cross relating to armed conflicts and similar situations,

recognizing the need for adequate financial support for ICRC activities carried out in fulfilment of these mandates, in particular for those activities which the ICRC alone is capable of discharging, especially in the field of protection,

recalling the resolution adopted by the 1949 Diplomatic Conference requesting Governments to provide the ICRC with regular financial support,

recalling also the resolutions adopted by previous International Conferences on the financing of the ICRC,

1. *appeals* to all Governments to provide the ICRC, through sufficient regular annual and special contributions, with the means required to carry out its humanitarian tasks,

2. *recommends* that Governments include in their budgets provision for regular financial support for the humanitarian assistance activities carried out by the ICRC in aid of victims of armed conflicts or similar situations,

3. *decides* to renew the mandate of the Commission for the Financing of the ICRC, the members of which shall be the National Societies of Algeria, Colombia, Denmark, Germany (Fed. Rep.), Honduras, Japan, Malaysia, Mauritania and Romania.

XVIII

Financing of the ICRC by National Societies

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

having taken note of the report submitted by the Commission for the Financing of the ICRC,

noting the continual increase in the ICRC's tasks and the financial burden arising therefrom,

drawing attention to the resolutions adopted by numerous previous International Conferences,

stressing that by virtue of the principle of solidarity binding the members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, National Societies should help the ICRC to achieve its humanitarian objectives,

1. *encourages* the National Societies to support the ICRC in its negotiations with their Governments,

2. *expresses* the wish that the National Societies will do their utmost so that their total voluntary contributions should reach 10% of the ICRC's ordinary account expenditure for the preceding year. The share of each National Society in these contributions should be equal to the percentage assigned to that Society in the League's scale of contributions,

3. *proposes* that the said amount of 10% be re-examined at each meeting of the Council of Delegates.

XIX

The role of voluntary service in the Red Cross

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

recognizing that voluntary service is a fundamental principle and an essential characteristic of the world Red Cross movement,

considering that the rapid development of contemporary society and its socio-economic implications generate new needs,

noting the diversification of Red Cross activities and the part taken by a large number of volunteers in the life of their communities, bringing assistance to people in need of aid,

bearing in mind the necessity for continuity in the provision of voluntary service, where applicable in close co-operation with public bodies,

expressing its gratitude to the Henry Dunant Institute and to the League for their excellent and constructive report,

endorsing Recommendation 4 of the Third Regional Conference of European National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, held in Budapest in May 1981,

1. *recommends the National Societies :*

- (a) to proceed to re-examine their activities in order to cause a larger number of volunteers to take part in determining, organizing and carrying out their tasks;
- (b) to provide opportunities to volunteers in co-operating, when appropriate, with the authorities and private organizations in planning health and social welfare programmes to cover the needs of the population, and in implementing plans made;
- (c) to associate volunteers more closely with the development of health and social welfare activities in their own country, and to give them such tasks as will rouse their sense of responsibility and maintain their interest;

- (d) to offer youth real opportunities for training and participation, as volunteers, in all their National Societies activities including management and decision-making;
- (e) to encourage dissemination within and outside the Red Cross of the objectives and means of using voluntary services; and to pay more attention to recruiting, selecting and training methods;
- (f) to make sure that volunteers admitted to National Societies are fully informed on the ideals and fundamental principles of the Red Cross and are ready to serve them with the loyalty and devotion to duty that are the hallmark of their work for human solidarity;

2. *recommends the League of Red Cross Societies*, within the limits of its plan and budget:

- (a) to disseminate the experience acquired in the field of voluntary service, facilitate the setting up and strengthening of links between National Societies, and support them in developing such activities as require the participation of volunteers; and on the basis of information received to see that guidelines on voluntary service are published;
- (b) to invite inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations to recognize the actual and potential value of Red Cross volunteers in humanitarian activities, support them and help them within the limits of their ability to carry out their mission;

3. *recommends Governments*:

- (a) to support the National Societies' efforts to extend the scope of voluntary services and increase their efficiency;

4. *recommends the Henry Dunant Institute*:

- (a) to work in close co-operation with the League and the ICRC for more effective adaptation of voluntary service to the actual needs of society by means of studies and seminars on voluntary service in all its forms;
- (b) to submit its study to the next International Conference.

XX

Joint Commission for National Society statutes

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

having taken cognizance of the report of the Joint Commission set up by the ICRC and the League to examine National Society statutes,

acknowledging the co-operation established between the two international Red Cross institutions to watch over the application and constant observance of the rules governing the recognition of new National Societies and their admission to the League,

recalling Resolution VI of the XXIIInd International Conference of the Red Cross,

1. *requests* the National Societies to continue their collaboration with the Joint Commission, by regularly communicating to the League and the ICRC the amendments which they plan to introduce in their statutes, and by adapting them to the Joint Commission's recommendations,
2. *expresses the wish* that, in respect of recognition of new Societies by the ICRC and their admission to the League, the Joint Commission continue its works in co-operation with the League Development Programme, within the framework of the Strategy for Development of National Societies in the 80's,
3. *approves* the report and thanks the Joint Commission for its work.

XXI

International Red Cross aid to refugees

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

recalling Resolution I of the XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross which stated that the fundamental mission of the Red Cross includes the provision, without discrimination as to race, nation-

ality, religious beliefs or political opinions, of protection and assistance to those who need it, in the event of armed conflict and other disasters,

conscious of the large number of refugees, returnees and displaced persons and the extent of human misery caused by the displacement of populations in many parts of the world,

recalling the primary responsibilities of the Governments of countries of asylum for the care of refugees on their territories, while bearing in mind the obligation of the international community to share equitably the burden of refugee protection, assistance and resettlement, in accordance with accepted principles of international solidarity and co-operation,

recalling that in accordance with their auxiliary role in the humanitarian services of their Governments and with the relief principles of the International Red Cross, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies should take immediate actions to alleviate suffering of victims of calamities, including emergency aid to refugees, returnees and displaced persons,

recalling the primary function of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the field of international protection and material assistance to refugees, persons displaced outside their country of origin and returnees, as laid down by its Statutes, the United Nations Conventions and Protocol relating to the status of refugees and relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly,

considering that the ICRC and the League have respective functions in co-ordinating international Red Cross assistance to these victims, especially when they do not fall under the competence of the Office of the UNHCR,

1. *approves* the policy of the Red Cross in this field as set out in the statement annexed,

2. *pledges* the unremitting support and the collaboration of the Red Cross with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in their respective activities in favour of refugees and displaced persons, within the framework of this policy.

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AID TO REFUGEES STATEMENT OF POLICY

1. The Red Cross should at all times be ready to assist and to protect refugees, displaced persons and returnees, when such victims are considered as protected persons under the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, or when they are considered as refugees under article 73 of the 1977 Protocol I additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, or in conformity with the Statutes of the International Red Cross, especially when they cannot, in fact, benefit from any other protection or assistance, as in some cases of internally displaced persons.
2. The services offered by a National Society to refugees should conform to those offered to victims of natural disasters, as indicated in the Principles and Rules for Red Cross Disaster Relief. These services should be of an auxiliary character and undertaken in agreement with the authorities. They should be in strict accordance with Red Cross fundamental principles.
3. Assistance from the Red Cross should at all times take due account of the comparable needs of the local population in the areas in which refugees, displaced persons and returnees are accommodated. Since Red Cross relief programmes are essentially of an emergency character, they should be phased out as soon as other organizations are in a position to provide the aid required.
4. All National Society actions for the benefit of refugees and displaced persons should be immediately reported to the League and/or the ICRC.
5. It is the responsibility of each National Society to inform the League and/or ICRC of any negotiations likely to lead to a formal agreement between the Society and the UNHCR. The League and/or ICRC should be associated with the Society in the negotiations and concur with the terms of agreement.
6. Societies, when possible, should use their influence to encourage their Governments to accept refugees for resettlement as well as to participate as appropriate by assisting with welfare programmes in the resettlement process in close co-operation and co-ordination with their Governments.
7. The ICRC, League and National Societies should co-operate to the maximum possible extent with UNHCR and all other institutions and organizations (governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental) working in the field of refugee relief.
8. As a neutral and independent humanitarian institution, the ICRC offers its services whenever refugees and displaced persons are in need of the specific protection which the ICRC may afford them.

9. The Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC is also always ready in co-operation with National Societies to act in aid of refugees and displaced persons, for instance by facilitating the reuniting of dispersed families, by organizing the exchange of family news and by tracing missing persons. When necessary, it offers its co-operation to the UNHCR, as well as its technical assistance to National Societies to enable them to set up and develop their own tracing and mailing services.
10. The international institutions of the Red Cross will have regular consultations with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on matters of common interest and, whenever considered useful, will co-ordinate their humanitarian assistance in favour of refugees and displaced persons in order to ensure complementarity between their actions.

XXII

Co-operation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies with Governments in the field of primary health care

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

taking into account the importance of promoting health and well-being of the population as a necessary condition for social progress and safeguarding peace in the world,

recalling Resolutions XV and XVII of the XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross, defining the role and main forms of medico-social activities of National Societies in the framework of the Red Cross humanitarian mission,

recalling the readiness of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to co-operate with their respective Governments—which was confirmed by Recommendation 1 of the Second Session of the General Assembly of the League—in promoting health and well-being by providing primary health care in line with the principles and tasks of the Red Cross,

noting the necessity of further developing community services of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in order to meet the needs of the population taking into account local socio-economic conditions,

sharing the position of the WHO, that the main social task of Governments and health bodies in the coming decades should be the attainment by all people of such a level of health which would allow them to lead a socially and economically productive life,

stressing the importance of primary health care as the main factor of achieving the goal “health for all by the year 2000”,

1. *recommends* the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to consider the development of primary health care a main task in the field of medico-social activities, paying special attention to those elements and directions of these activities which meet their national needs,

2. *recommends* the National Societies to broaden as far as possible interregional and intraregional co-operation in setting up and improving community services through the exchange of experiences, personnel and information,

3. *requests* the League Secretariat to ensure elaboration of regional strategies and programmes for developing primary health care as an integral part of the strategy for the development of National Societies,

4. *invites* all Governments to take into account in formulating their countries health strategies the potentials of their National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies and assist them in a practical way in the preparation and implementation of primary health care programmes.

XXIII

Involvement of volunteers in Red Cross community services

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

having taken note of Recommendation 7 of the first session of the League General Assembly in 1979,

recalling Resolutions XV and XVII of the XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross defining the Red Cross role in medico-social activities of National Societies,

1. *stresses* the importance of the role of the volunteer in all Red Cross activities,

2. *urges* National Societies and the League to provide every facility for basic orientation, training and supervision of volunteers, to involve volunteers and users of services to actively participate in the planning and management of services, and to ensure that professionals and volunteers work in a complementary manner,

3. *invites* Governments to give every possible support in enabling National Societies to utilize volunteers to the greatest benefit of the community.

XXIV

Integrated approach to community services

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

taking note of the Report on the Integration of Red Cross Activities in Community Services as a follow up to Resolutions XV and XVII of the XXIIIrd International Conference,

stressing the importance of close co-operation between Governments and National Societies in order to implement national development plans,

noting with satisfaction the awareness of the need for intersectoral collaboration in order to meet the needs of the community,

recommends that all efforts be made both within the National Societies and the League Secretariat to further implement an intersectoral approach to their work notably through joint projects and joint seminars.

XXV

Development of National Societies in the context of national development plans

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

having taken note of the League General Assembly's deliberations and decisions regarding the "Strategy for the Development of National Societies",

sharing the concern of the General Assembly about the need for a realistic Red Cross development strategy,

being aware that the strengthening of the organizational and operational capacity of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the developing countries is a prerequisite to their primary health care, preparedness for situations of natural disasters and of armed conflicts including relief as well as participation in other service programmes for their communities and concurring with the other views expressed by the General Assembly,

recognizing the need for co-operation between the League, the ICRC, the National Societies, the Governments and other organizations, both governmental and non-governmental,

invites Governments and other organizations to co-operate with the Red Cross movement by supporting its efforts to develop self-reliant and capable National Societies in all countries.

XXVI

The role of medical personnel in the preparation and execution of Red Cross emergency medical actions

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

aware of the great number of armed conflicts and natural disasters in which the National Societies, the ICRC and the League must provide emergency medical assistance,

desiring the experience acquired by the Red Cross to be fully used in the better preparation of medical personnel and material,

mindful of the Red Cross need to obtain for that purpose the services of experienced members of the health professions for the analysis of needs and for the planning, co-ordination, conduct and appraisal of emergency medical actions,

bearing in mind Resolution XVII of the XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross recommending that the skills and know-

ledge of professionals be mobilised in the planning and implementation of all humanitarian activities,

1. *recommends* the ICRC and the League to improve the instruction material to be made available to National Societies and to help the National Societies to train personnel for national and international emergency medical actions,

2. *urges* the National Societies to follow the guidelines issued by the ICRC and/or the League when making medical personnel and material available to those two organizations,

3. *recommends* each National Society wishing to participate in ICRC and League emergency medical actions to use for their preparation members of the health professions having the necessary experience of emergency medical action, who could also assess the work of returning teams and process their reports,

4. *recommends* also each National Society undertaking a medical action in a country where neither the ICRC nor the League is operating to follow the rules and principles evolved by the International Red Cross and to entrust the planning and conduct of the action to experienced members of the health professions,

5. *requests* all National Societies to participate in Red Cross national and international development programmes for emergency medical action.

XXVII

International year of disabled persons

The XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

considering that in its Resolution A/31/123 of 16 December 1976 the General Assembly of the United Nations decided to proclaim the year 1981 the “International Year of Disabled Persons”,

noting with satisfaction that the same Resolution stresses the importance, to the success of the said Year, of active participation by non-governmental organizations at the national and international levels,

convinced that all the objectives proposed under the motto of this year “full integration and participation” are compatible with Red Cross activities and correspond to its humanitarian desire to promote health and well-being,

remembering the interest taken by the Red Cross movement, in cooperation with the disabled and their organizations, in education and training of disabled, making them self-reliant by using their own resources in the daily life,

noting the results obtained by the ICRC in helping the most disadvantaged disabled persons by the use of knowledge and technology appropriate to local conditions and by making use of the participation of the disabled themselves in the projects,

1. *invites* National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the League and the ICRC to pursue and develop the co-operation with the disabled,
2. *expresses* the hope that Governments will intensify their efforts to support National Societies, the League and the ICRC in their activities in aid of the disabled,
3. *recommends* that a special fund to be jointly administered by the ICRC and the League be formed for the benefit of the disabled and to promote the implementation of durable projects to aid disabled persons.