

Preparation of the 4th session of the Diplomatic Conference

From 3 to 20 January 1977, a group of experts, convened by the Secretary-General of the Diplomatic Conference, met to prepare—in the various languages—the texts of the articles already adopted by the Conference Committees.

The ICRC was, of course, also represented, in the person of Mr. Claude Pilloud, who was in permanent attendance, while the Head of the Legal Division and some of its staff joined in the discussion of certain specific articles.

The preparation of the work had been undertaken in September 1976 by the Conference Secretariat with the help of ICRC experts.

Drafting the same texts in four different languages—English, French, Spanish and Russian—is no easy matter. Furthermore, the fact that the work of the Diplomatic Conference is being shared between three Committees, working independently of each other, does not facilitate the standardization of the terminology used in the various texts adopted.

The Secretary-General of the Conference will send the results of the work done by this group to all States participating in the Diplomatic Conference and these documents will provide the basis for the work of the Drafting Committee which is to meet in Geneva from 17 March to 7 April 1977. The Drafting Committee consists of 15 members, but any delegation may participate in its work and comment on points of particular interest to it.

The Director of the ICRC Department of Principles and Law, Mr. J. Moreillon, left Geneva on 27 January 1977 with Mr. Veuthey, on a two-week mission to Africa which took them to Algiers, Lagos, Lusaka, Nairobi, Addis Ababa and Cairo.

Mrs. D. Bujard, Head of the Legal Division, and Mr. Surbeck went on a mission to Moscow from 7 to 12 February. Both missions entailed preparatory consultations for the 4th session of the Diplomatic Conference, during which the two draft Additional Protocols should be adopted.
