

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE RED CROSS

**Conference of Red Cross Experts on the
Reaffirmation and Development of International
Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts**

GENEVA, 17 DECEMBER 1971

*Circular No. 485
to the Central Committees of National Red Cross,
Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

The International Committee of the Red Cross had the honour of providing you, by Circular 483 of September 1971, with a report on the work of the Conference of Government Experts on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts which was held in Geneva from 24 May to 12 June 1971. The same Circular informed you of the second session of that Conference which would be open to all States expressly party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, and that,

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in order to closely associate National Societies with this work, the International Committee had decided to invite representatives of those societies to attend as observers.

The International Committee had occasion, at the meeting of the Council of Delegates convened in Mexico City on 8 October 1971, to report to you on its work and on its projects for 1972. Among other matters it considered the possibility of holding a further meeting of Red Cross experts before the Conference of Government Experts. The vast majority of the National Societies present approved the idea.

The International Committee takes pleasure in informing you that the Austrian Red Cross has very obligingly offered to host such a conference in Vienna, and that the offer has been gratefully accepted.

The International Committee therefore invites your Society to be represented by one or more experts at the Conference which it is convening in Vienna from 20 to 24 March 1972, in close co-operation with the Austrian Red Cross.

In accordance with the usual practice, travel and subsistence costs will be borne by the delegations.

To help the Austrian Red Cross and the ICRC prepare the conference under the best possible conditions, we should be most grateful if you would send your reply to the International Committee as soon as possible, by 31 January 1972 at the latest. We would ask you, if possible, to state the number of experts who are to attend. Once the International Committee has been able to convey this information to the Austrian Red Cross, the latter will send the participating Societies technical particulars regarding the organisation of the meeting and the stay in Vienna.

The principal aim of the meeting, after the results of the first session of the Conference of Government Experts have been noted, will be to ensure a wide exchange of views on the draft texts prepared by the International Committee for the second session. The exchange of views may include some of the provisions in the documents that are of specific interest to National Societies.

The above-mentioned draft texts will be dispatched to all States invited to send experts to the second session and will naturally

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also be sent to you, to enable you to study them before the Vienna Conference. We shall in due time send a provisional agenda to the National Societies participating in the Vienna meeting, and shall welcome any suggestions they may wish to make in this context.

The conclusions of the meeting will be conveyed to the second session of the Conference of Government Experts scheduled to open in Geneva on 3 May 1972.

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE RED CROSS

Marcel A. Naville

President
