

# Twenty-fifth International Conference of the Red Cross

**Geneva, 23-31 October 1986**

*The Twenty-fifth International Conference of the Red Cross was held in Geneva from 23 to 31 October 1986. It was attended by delegations from 137 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and 113 States party to the Geneva Conventions, as well as by many observers from National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the process of formation and from governmental and non-governmental organizations.*

*The International Conference was preceded, as from 14 October, by various Red Cross meetings, including the Executive Council and General Assembly of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and, on 22 October, the Council of Delegates.*

## OPENING CEREMONY

At the opening ceremony on 23 October, *Mr. Kurt Bolliger, President of the Swiss Red Cross*, which was hosting the Conference, gave a welcoming address to the delegates. He recalled that 85 years ago, in 1901, Henry Dunant had received the first Nobel Peace Prize for his humanitarian action. "It behoves us, particularly during this 'International Year of Peace', to do our utmost to show ourselves worthy of this heritage—not by making mere solemn appeals, nor by interceding in high-level politics, but through specific, daily humanitarian action which demands neither gratitude nor publicity", declared Mr. Bolliger.

*Professor Jean Pictet, former Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross*, and a key personality in several diplomatic conferences which have furthered the development of humanitarian law, gave a formal reading of the seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross—Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality. These Principles guide all the activities of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.