

Alexandre Hay, who will retire after more than ten years at the head of the ICRC.

Mr. Sommaruga's admission to the ICRC Assembly brings to 21 the number of members of the supreme policy-making body of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga previously held a prominent post in the Federal Administration of Switzerland, that of State Secretary at the Office of External Economic Affairs.

Round Table of Experts in War Surgery

The ICRC thought that it would be useful to set down its unrivalled experience of war surgery in a manual on the subject which could be used in the training of surgeons from the ICRC itself and from National Societies who go on medical missions.

To this end, Dr. R. Russbach, Dr. D. Dufour and Ms E. Nyffenegger, all of the ICRC Medical Division, held a meeting in Geneva from 11 to 14 September 1986 with five of the leading experts in war surgery today: Brigadier Owen Smith, professor at Cambridge (Great Britain), the Surgeon-in-chief of the Swedish army, Rear Admiral B. Zetterström, Dr. J. Salmela from the Finnish Red Cross, Dr. S. Kroman Jensen from the Danish Red Cross and Dr. F. Stenning, from Australia.

Over these four days, the experts established the broad outlines of the manual, which must cater for the ICRC's specific requirements. They then stated in detail what must go into the separate chapters, exchanged views on the surgical treatment of war casualties, and then indicated certain subjects which the ICRC might examine in greater depth, such as the treatment of infected wounds, which is the major problem in situations where the wounded cannot be rapidly evacuated.

These experts generally agreed with the ICRC's present surgical policy, and they will meet again in July 1987 to finalize the draft of the manual which is intended for use by surgeons and nurses from National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the ICRC and medical personnel from other humanitarian agencies.