

bility must be clearly defined; and adaptation of national legal systems and of directives to military commands with a view to averting breaches of the new law.

Some two hundred specialists from over thirty States on all continents took part in the 9th Congress, such as senior officers (judge advocates and combatants), professors of law, civil servants, etc. The ICRC was also represented.

As customary, the International Society of Penal Military Law and Law of War will be publishing the proceedings of the 9th Congress.

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### **Inter-American Seminar in Costa Rica**

An Inter-American Seminar on State Security, Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, organized jointly by the ICRC and the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights, met at San José de Costa Rica from 27 September to 1 October 1982. More than one hundred people from academic, military or political circles from some twenty-five countries, or members of inter-American human rights organizations and of the ICRC, took part in the seven working sessions.

The following subjects were discussed at the seminar: legal and material conditions of detention; guerrilla warfare; terrorism; basic human guarantees; mechanisms to enforce law and the dissemination of law. The aim of the seminar was to provoke serious discussion on the relationship between the demands of State security, human rights and international humanitarian law, and each subject had to be examined and discussed with regard to the requirements of these three factors.

Despite the diversity of nationalities, professions and political allegiances of the participants, the meeting was very successful: politicization, which is too often observed in meetings at this level, was nearly always avoided, which meant that the atmosphere was very conducive to dialogue. Although delicate subjects had been introduced, such as guerrilla warfare and terrorism, references to specifically Latin American problems were absent from the majority of interventions, thus deliberately leaving room for constructive discussion on such contentious subjects.

The ICRC's presence probably had a lot to do with the success of the seminar: its candour, its scrupulous respect for a neutral attitude, its interventions always linked to its humanitarian activities first of all showed the deep meaning of its activity and its *raison d'être*, and then the way to a fruitful discussion.

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