

BOOKS AND REVIEWS

THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS HANDBOOK

The ICRC and the League, in collaboration with the Henry Dunant Institute, are currently preparing the twelfth edition of the International Red Cross Handbook. The French text¹ was published in February 1983; the English and Spanish versions are expected for the end of this year. The handbook may subsequently be published in Arabic.

Since 1889, when it was first published, the International Red Cross Handbook has been both a compilation of the principles and rules that have directed the activities of the Red Cross since its foundation and a practical guide for those interested in the life of the Red Cross.

It contains the texts which direct the life and work of the Red Cross in peacetime, namely the statutes and rules of procedure for the organization and operation of the institutions which constitute the Red Cross movement—the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Red Cross Societies and the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies—the Conventions and international treaties that govern the mission of the Red Cross in time of conflict and, finally, the main resolutions adopted by the statutory bodies of the Red Cross.

When originally published by the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Handbook took the form of a twenty-two-page pamphlet. Increasing considerably in size with each of its many successive issues, the most recent re-editions of the Handbook date back to 1951, 1953 and 1971. It took the name *International Red Cross Handbook* in 1930, as a joint publication of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies.

Great care has been given to the presentation of the new edition and special print has been used to make a number of important texts stand out. Attention is thus immediately drawn to:

¹ *Manuel de la Croix-Rouge internationale*, Geneva, February 1983. 768 pages. Available from the ICRC, the League or the Henry Dunant Institute.

- the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross, as proclaimed by the Twentieth International Red Cross Conference at Vienna in 1965;
- the Fundamental Rules of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts, which summarize in a few phrases the approximately 600 articles of this law;
- a historical review of the Red Cross, a one-page table of the most outstanding events and dates in the hundred and twenty years of its existence;
- notes on the nature and activities of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the ICRC and the League;
- a table showing the principal recognized protective signs.

The Handbook is composed of three main parts and several annexes.

The first part of the Handbook is devoted to international humanitarian law. With the exception of the “mother” Convention of 1864, the Conventions reproduced in the Handbook are the law currently in force. It is not a collection of all international conventions or agreements on the subject and does not therefore provide all existing documents for historical research. In comparison with the 1971 edition, the principal innovations are the inclusion of the text of the two 1977 Protocols and a more comprehensive section on the regulations relating to the conduct of hostilities, which have traditionally come under the law of The Hague.

The second part contains the statutes and internal regulations of the Red Cross, several of which have been revised in the past few years. This part has also been enlarged to include several new texts, in particular the Interpretation of the Agreement of 1969 between the ICRC and the League specifying certain of their respective competences in the field of relief (1974), the Principles and Rules for Red Cross Disaster Relief, the International Red Cross Statement of Policy on Aid to Refugees, model statutes for National Societies, the Regulations for the Maurice de Madre French Fund and the Code of Ethics for Blood Donation and Transfusion.

The third part, to which there is an index, is devoted to resolutions. To avoid excessive bulk, a very restrictive selection had to be made of the resolutions adopted by the International Red Cross Conferences, the Council of Delegates and the League General Assembly. The new edition reproduces only those which appear essential in every field of Red Cross activity and certain of the earliest ones which remain fundamental because of their historic character or the unique value which they have retained. It is intended to compile and publish, at a later date,

a separate volume containing all resolutions adopted since the inception of the Red Cross.

The annexes give only brief particulars, such as the list of International Red Cross Conferences and sessions of the League General Council and Board of Governors—now the General Assembly—, the list of Presidents of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Presidents of the League of Red Cross Societies and Chairmen of the Standing Commission, and a list of the dates on which the ICRC, the League and Henry Dunant himself were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

This work will be of invaluable service to all who need, unannotated, the documents of a legal nature on which Red Cross action is based.

J. L. Cayla

RECUERDO DE SOLFERINO

The book by Henry Dunant, "*Un souvenir de Solferino*", which is at the origin of the world Red Cross movement, has already often been translated. To date, there have been two Spanish translations. The first was by Rafael Dominguez, published by Editions Botas, in Mexico, in 1937; this was reprinted in Buenos Aires, in 1963, by the Argentine Red Cross, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the Red Cross. A second version, by V. Santiago, was published in Barcelona by Editions Mateu, in 1965.

These two editions have long been out of print and the need was felt among the Spanish-speaking public for a new printing of Dunant's work. An examination of the two existing Spanish translations showed that they often strayed far from the original text. The translators had not only evaded all the difficulties, but they had often simplified the original excessively (in the Barcelona version, for example, all explanatory footnotes were left out). It thus appeared necessary for there to be an entirely new translation of "*Un souvenir de Solferino*".

This new Spanish translation, by Mr. Sergio Moratiel Villa, has just been published by the ICRC, in Geneva.¹ It appears as one small

¹ *Recuerdo de Solferino* by Henry Dunant, translated by Sergio Moratiel Villa, published by the ICRC, Geneva, December 1982.