

and dissemination of international humanitarian law and Red Cross principles and ideals, both nationally and internationally, and from 1979 to 1981 was Vice-Chairman of the joint ICRC/League of Red Cross Societies Working Group in that field. He was one of the National Society's delegates to the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts (1974-1977), and represented it at many International Red Cross and Red Crescent meetings between 1973 and 1986. He lectured at numerous foreign universities and was the author of a number of books and studies on the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions, public international law and international protection of the environment.

Thanks to his keen mind and outgoing nature, Professor Mencer was able to communicate to students his passion for humanitarian law and action. He was held in high esteem in Czechoslovakia and abroad for his professional competence, his warm personality and his talents as a speaker.

Professor Mencer was awarded the Henry Dunant Medal in 1989 in recognition of his dedication to the Red Cross mission of protecting the individual in time of armed conflict.

The ICRC will remember Professor Mencer with continuing gratitude as a great champion of the humanitarian cause.

Professor Hamed Sultan

It is with deep sorrow that we learned of the death in Cairo in early March of Professor Hamed Sultan.

A well-known personality in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and in international circles in general, Professor Sultan led the Egyptian delegation to the 1971-1972 Conference of government experts and to the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts (1974-1977), where he was elected Chairman of Committee III. He soon emerged as a leading figure at the Conference, and played a key role in bringing it to a successful conclusion. In the words of Ambassador George Aldrich, head of the United States

delegation to the Conference, rapporteur for Committee III and current holder of the Chair of International Humanitarian Law at the University of Leiden, “Professor Sultan, as Chairman of the Committee, was a tower of strength and wisdom who ensured that the results of delicate and protracted negotiations were firmly cemented into the text as soon as the moment was right”.¹

Professor Sultan also took a keen interest in the academic side of humanitarian law. For example, he participated in several of the annual Round Table sessions of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo (where he chaired the discussions in 1974 and 1975), and one of his last publications was his contribution, entitled “The Islamic Concept”, to the UNESCO Manual of international humanitarian law.²

But this was only one aspect of a rich and varied career that spanned more than half a century in the service of international law, of humanitarian standards and of Egypt, which he saw and cherished as the country that had brought the most universal and enduring values to the world.

Professor Sultan was born in 1912. After highly successful law studies at Cairo University he began teaching at the same Faculty of Law in 1934. His thesis on neutrality, just before the outbreak of the Second World War, drew wide attention. In 1948 he became head of the International Law Department, where he remained until his retirement in 1977. Thus for well over three decades (and even following his retirement he continued to teach and supervise theses) he trained successive generations of international lawyers from all over the Arab world who came to complete their studies in Egypt. To his students, he was a Master in the full sense of the word, leaving a deep impression on them by his eloquence, his intelligence and his personal example.

Professor Sultan published a wide range of academic works, the best-known being his treatise on international law — still the main Arabic reference work on the subject — and his book on international law in Islam.

¹ George H. Aldrich, “Some reflections on the origins of the 1977 Geneva Protocols”, in *Studies and Essays on International Humanitarian Law and Red Cross Principles*, Christophe Swinarski, ed., ICRC, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Geneva, The Hague, 1984, p. 134.

² *International Dimensions of Humanitarian Law*, Henry Dunant Institute, UNESCO, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Dordrecht, Boston and London, 1988, pp. 29-39.

In addition to his academic career, Professor Sultan was equally busy as a practitioner of international law. He liked to say that he had served Egypt under (and possibly in spite of) its many regimes. He became an adviser to the Egyptian government in 1944, he was legal adviser to the Egyptian delegation to the UN Security Council when the latter was considering Egypt's complaint against the United Kingdom in 1947, and he was a member of the Egyptian delegation to the UN General Assembly from 1946 to 1953. He was also adviser to the Egyptian delegation in the negotiations with the United Kingdom that led to the 1953 agreement on Sudan.

At the same time he served as judge and counsel, presiding over the prize court in Alexandria from its inception in 1949 until 1973. In 1950 he was elected by the General Assembly to be a judge on the UN Administrative Tribunal, a post he held until 1953; he represented the Saudi government in the famous ARAMCO arbitration case (1954-1957) and was much in demand by governments to act as an arbitrator, for example in the case between Kuwait and AMINOIL in 1983 and between Egypt and Israel over Taba in 1988.

Beyond his very long and distinguished academic and professional career in public service at the national and international levels, and his countless accomplishments and distinctions, the most abiding memory of Hamed Sultan is that of the man.³

Professor Sultan was a warm, generous and courteous man who displayed consummate elegance of thought, speech and conduct. With his receptive mind, he sought not what divided people but what they had in common. He was a wonderful listener, knew how to win people's confidence and how to put himself in their place. But he was also a skilled negotiator and a man of principle who never shrank from expressing moral indignation despite the great personal risk that he sometimes took in so doing.

A man of immense culture, both Arab and Western, Professor Sultan was proud of his Egyptian, Arab and Muslim identity, not in a way that opposed or excluded others but in a way that recognized the universal values that underpin all civilization and the contribution that his own culture had made to that civilization.

³ The author was privileged to know Hamed Sultan for over four decades, beginning when he first attended Professor Sultan's introductory course on international law at Cairo University in the early 1950s. He would like to stress Hamed Sultan's absolute loyalty and proverbial devotion to his friends, including his former students whom he thought of as the children he never had.

It is this memory of an exceptional man, who combined a strong feeling of cultural identity with a genuine commitment to universality, gracefully and without contradiction, that will remain with us and will hopefully continue to serve as an example.

Georges Abi-Saab
