

Books and reviews

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Under this heading, the *Review* lists recent publications which may interest readers, particularly those engaged in research. Selected works will be reviewed in future issues. Having received a number of requests from readers, we would like to point out that these publications are not on sale at the ICRC but are available for consultation at the ICRC library or at the Henry Dunant Institute.

- **Mohamed Bedjaoui** (editor), *Droit international - Bilan et perspectives*, Pedone, UNESCO, Paris, 2 volumes, 1991, 1,362 + xviii pp.

This is a new kind of handbook of international law which, according to the editor, is multicultural in that it takes into account "the great civilizations" and "the main legal systems throughout the world". The handbook is also an introduction for students and practitioners, a learning tool with a clearly internationalist outlook. The book's aim is to describe international law as it is today, explaining its nature and purpose and pointing out its strengths and weaknesses.

- **Yves Beigbeder**, *The Role and Status of International Humanitarian Volunteers and Organizations - The right and duty of humanitarian assistance*, Martinus Nijhoff, Dordrecht, Boston, London, 1991 (Legal aspects of international organizations, vol. 12), 416 pp.

A detailed analysis of the interplay between the individuals, governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations that go together to make up today's humanitarian network. The author studies problems such as exercising discretion versus revealing the facts, preserving neutrality, avoiding politicization, and the right - and duty - to provide humanitarian assistance vis-à-vis the paramountcy of national sovereignty. The author also deals with the difficulty in balancing the twin imperatives of providing humanitarian assistance for the victims of an existing conflict and respecting the stark reality of national sovereignty.

- **Isse Omanga Bokatola**, *L'Organisation des Nations Unies et la protection des minorités*, Bruylant, Brussels, 292 pp. (Organisation internationale et relations internationales)

The problem of minorities is an extremely serious one; it can undermine the integrity, stability and unity of all the states in the world. In his study of the question, the author looks at solutions of two general kinds, some proposed by the UN, and others practised by member states. Radical solutions tantamount to excluding minorities from society or simply ignoring the problem contrast with compromise solutions aimed at protecting minorities while preserving the territorial integrity of the states. This book also contains a detailed study of the declaration on the rights of minorities currently being prepared by the UN Commission on Human Rights.

- **Antonio Cassese** (editor), *The International Fight Against Torture - La lutte internationale contre la torture*, Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, Baden-Baden, 1991, 186 pp.

How effective are existing mechanisms to safeguard human dignity against torture and other inhuman or degrading treatment? A group of experts has undertaken to answer the various aspects of this question by examining current legal literature and the practice in the various states and referring to studies of actual cases.

- **La Croix-Rouge et la carrière - Le rôle de la Croix-Rouge suisse dans la formation du personnel soignant (1882-1976)**, (ed. Enrico Valsangiacomo), Schwabe & Co. AG, Bâle, 1991, 440 pp.

This book describes how, in times of change, the Red Cross has kept pace with the needs of medicine and society as a whole and the contribution it has made to developing and serving as a hallmark of quality for a profession which, more than any other, has responded to the various phases of social development.

- **Humanité et droit international - Mélanges René-Jean Dupuy**, Pedone, Paris, 1991, 382 pp.

This work contains a series of articles by experts and scholars on the concept of humanity and how it relates to politics, economics, social issues and the judiciary in contemporary society.

- **B.G. Ramcharan**, *The International Law and Practice of Early-Warning and Preventive Diplomacy: The Emerging Global Watch*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Dordrecht, Boston, London, 1991, 185 pp.

With so many threats to international security (environmental pollution, terrorism, drug trafficking, famine and other large-scale disasters, grave violations of human rights and enormous population movements), the author advocates an integrated strategy to deal with these problems and the setting up of a truly preventive form of diplomacy.

- *Les religions et la guerre - Judaïsme, Christianisme, Islam* (edited by Pierre Viaud), Editions du Cerf, Paris, 1991, 584 pp.

What do religions say about peace and justice? What do they do about it? Do religions polarize people in conflicts or do they help to overcome conflict by exercising a benign influence on individuals and societies? Writing on six different fields, twenty-one theologians from Judaism, Catholicism, the Orthodox Church, Protestantism and Islam explain their religions' precepts on the following subjects: tradition, conventional war, dissuasion, nuclear and other modern weapons, terrorism, undeclared war and, finally, the economic implications of defence. These monotheistic religions lay down codes of peace, fraternity and respect for life that can attenuate the effects of what human hatred seeks to render inevitable.

- **Leon Stubbings**, *Look what you started Henry! - A history of the Australian Red Cross, 1914-1991*, Australian Red Cross, 1992, 316 + x pp.

Leon Stubbings is a leading Red Cross figure, both in Australia and worldwide, who has been awarded the Henry Dunant Medal in recognition of his work. Mr. Stubbings relates the history of the Australian Red Cross Society with special emphasis on the men and women who have worked as its volunteers since it was founded three quarters of a century ago. This personal approach to a history laced with anecdotes and practical examples is a fervent tribute to all those, famous and unsung alike, who have forged the Red Cross.