

International Committee of the Red Cross

ICRC APPOINTS TWO NEW MEMBERS

At its latest meeting on 20 and 21 January 1993, the Assembly of the International Committee of the Red Cross appointed two new members, Mr. Jean-François Aubert and Mr. Josef Feldmann. Their appointment brings the membership of the Committee, which is composed exclusively of Swiss citizens, to 21.

Jean-François Aubert, LL.D., is a professor of constitutional law at the Universities of Neuchâtel and Geneva. He was born in 1931 and is originally from Savagnier in the canton of Neuchâtel. He studied in Neuchâtel, Tübingen, Paris and Ann Arbor. He was a member of the Swiss National Council from 1971 to 1979, and of the Council of States from 1979 to 1987.

Josef Feldmann, Ph.D., was born in 1927 and is originally from Amriswil in the canton of Thurgau. He studied at the Universities of Zurich, Geneva and Louvain, and from 1958 to 1963 headed the Swiss school in Florence. He was active in the Swiss army, commanding a field division and a field army corps before becoming a full corps commander. He is a tenured professor at the University of St. Gallen, where he has taught a number of subjects, including security policy.

At the same meeting the Committee conferred honorary membership on Mr. **Rudolf Jäckli**, member of the ICRC's Executive Board since 1979.

MISSIONS BY THE PRESIDENT

● New York (20 November 1992)

On 20 November 1992 ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga made a statement to the United Nations General Assembly during the debate

on strengthening the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance (text published in this issue of the *Review*, pp. 49-56).

This was the first time that an ICRC President had addressed a plenary session of the General Assembly. His statement was all the more significant as it concerned an issue of great topical importance, that of cooperation between the ICRC and the United Nations in the field of humanitarian assistance.

President Sommaruga was received by the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, with whom he reviewed the problems encountered by humanitarian assistance programmes in countries where both organizations are currently working, and Mr. Stoyan Ganev, the Bulgarian Foreign Minister and President of the 47th United Nations General Assembly, with whom he spoke about compliance with humanitarian law and the danger of confusing humanitarian activities with political action.

Mr. Sommaruga also met Baroness Chalker, British Minister for Overseas Development, and Mr. Marrack Goulding, United Nations Under Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations, with whom he discussed the situation in the former Yugoslavia and in Somalia. With Mr. Goulding the President also talked about "protected zones", anti-personnel mines, and dissemination of international humanitarian law among peace-keeping forces.

While in New York Mr. Sommaruga also had a meeting with Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, who raised the questions of evacuating detention camps, finding host countries for refugees, and setting up "protected zones".

● **Rome (30 November-2 December 1992 and 11-13 January 1993)**

During his two recent trips to Rome the ICRC President met several State dignitaries and leaders of the Italian Red Cross. He also visited the Vatican.

On the first visit Mr. Sommaruga was accompanied by Professor Marco Mumenthaler, member of the Committee, and Mr. Harald Schmid de Grunec, head of the Financing Division of the Communications and External Resources Department. He first had talks with Mr. Emilio Colombo, Italian Foreign Minister, and some of his close aides, including Mr. Enrico de Maio, in charge of multilateral cooperation matters at the Ministry, about the current operations in Somalia,

Mozambique and the former Yugoslavia, and compliance with humanitarian law. Other topics discussed at the Ministry were the statutes of the Italian Red Cross, the future of the San Remo International Institute of Humanitarian Law, and the financing of the ICRC. With regard to this last point, the Italian authorities announced contributions for several ICRC operations.

The above issues were later discussed with Professor Luigi Gianico, Commissioner Extraordinary of the Italian Red Cross, and his two deputies, Ambassador Remo Paolini and Inspector General Paolo Carlini. The ICRC delegation also visited several centres run by the National Society and attended a demonstration given by army health auxiliaries.

At the Vatican Mr. Sommaruga met the new Secretary of State, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, and Monsignor Jean-Louis Tauran, secretary for State relations, with whom he talked about ICRC activities and financing. He also had an exchange of views with Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, President of the Pontifical Commission.

On his second visit to Rome Mr. Sommaruga was accompanied by Ms. Francesca Pometta, member of the Committee, and by his assistant, Mr. Dominique Buff. He was received by the Italian President, Mr. Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, and had talks with the Minister of Health, Mr. Francesco De Lorenzo, and the Secretary-General at the Foreign Ministry, Mr. Bruno Bottai.

The discussions covered progress on the revision of the Italian Red Cross statutes, strengthening Italy's financial support for the ICRC, operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Somalia, and the Italian government's project for cooperation with the ICRC in Somalia. Regarding this last issue, a working meeting was organized at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, attended by Ministry officials, representatives of the Italian Red Cross, and the ICRC delegation. The participants examined the arrangements for the Italian government's takeover of the Quetta hospital in Pakistan as well as discussing the possibility of turning over to the Italian Red Cross a specific project, part of the ICRC's programme in Somalia, to be financed by the Italian government.

During his two visits the ICRC President gave a number of press and television interviews. On 12 January he gave a lecture at Italian Red Cross headquarters on the ICRC and human rights.

- **The Hague (12 December 1992)**

On 12 December President Sommaruga attended the official celebration of the 125th anniversary of the Netherlands Red Cross, held at the “Ridderzaal” in the Hague, in the presence of H.M. Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, Princess Juliana and Princess Margriet, several ministers, representatives of civilian and military authorities, and members of the diplomatic corps.

Mr. Sommaruga delivered a speech on the joint responsibility of all States to ensure compliance with international humanitarian law.

The address on behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies was given by Mr. Karl Kennel, President of the Swiss Red Cross and the Federation’s Vice-President.
