

## FIRST PLENARY MEETING

(4 December 1995)

In his opening remarks, Botho Prince of Sayn-Wittgenstein-Hohenstein urged the representatives of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and States attending the International Conference, and the members of governmental and non-governmental organizations participating as observers, to give priority to discussing the interests of the victims of conflicts and natural disasters.

The following officials of the Conference, whose names had been proposed by the Chairman of the Council of Delegates at the recommendation of the Standing Commission, were then elected by acclamation:

*Chairwoman:*

**Professor Astrid Heiberg**, President of the Norwegian Red Cross

*Vice-Chairmen:*

**Doctor Hugo Palazzi**, President of the Bolivian Red Cross

**H.E. Ambassador Mohammed Ennaceur**, Permanent Representative of Tunisia in Geneva

**H.E. Ambassador Tej Bunnag**, Permanent Representative of Thailand in Geneva

### **Commission I (War Victims and Respect for Humanitarian Law)**

*Chairman:*

**H.E. Ambassador Hisashi Owada**, Permanent Representative of Japan in New York

*Vice-Chairmen:*

**Mr Miguel Carmona Jiménez**, President of the Costa Rica Red Cross;

**H.E. Ambassador Tichaona Joseph B. Jokonya**, Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe in Geneva.

*Rapporteur:*

**Professor José Manuel Carilho Ribeiro**, President of the Portuguese Red Cross

**Commission II** (Humanitarian Values and Response to Crises)

*Chairman:*

**Mr Ousmane Diagne**, President of the Senegalese Red Cross Society

*Vice-Chairmen:*

**Mr Kenneth Montplaisir**, President of the Red Cross Society of Saint Lucia

**H.E. Ambassador Ludwik Dembinski**, Permanent Representative of Poland in Geneva

*Rapporteur:*

**Mr Jaime J. Yambao**, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Philippines in Geneva

**Drafting Committee:**

*Chairman:*

**H.E. Ambassador Philippe Kirsch**, Legal Advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade of Canada

*Vice-Chairman:*

**Hon. Jim Carlton**, Secretary General of the Australian Red Cross Society

*Secretary General* of the International Conference:

**H.E. Ambassador Jean-Daniel Biéler**, Commissioner of the 26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

*Assistant Secretaries General:*

**Mrs Yolande Camporini**, Head, Governance Support Unit, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**Mr Olivier Dürr**, Head, Division for Principles and Relations with the Movement, ICRC.

Mrs Astrid Heiberg, Chairwoman, reminded participants that the success of the meeting depended on each of them and that they were jointly responsible for its results. She also made two points on participation:

- the participation of the Yugoslav Red Cross had no bearing on the question of State succession in the former Yugoslavia;
- the term “Palestine” would be used in the present Conference for PLO and was not intended to designate a territory.

**The agenda of the Conference was adopted without discussion.**

Mr Mario Villaroel Lander, President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and Mr Cornelio Sommaruga, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, took the floor in turn to speak of the humanitarian challenges facing the world on the eve of the 21st century.

The complete text of the two statements is given below.