

## **The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics ratifies the Protocols**

On 29 September 1989, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics ratified the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts (Protocol I) and non-international armed conflicts (Protocol II), both adopted in Geneva on 8 June 1977.

The instrument of ratification for Additional Protocol I contained the following declaration:

*In accordance with Article 90 (2) of Protocol I, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics recognizes ipso facto and without special agreement, in relation to any other High Contracting Party accepting the same obligation, the competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission (Russian original).*

The USSR is the **sixteenth** State to make the declaration regarding the Commission, which will be set up once twenty States have made such declarations.

In addition, the instrument of ratification was accompanied by the following general statement:

*The Soviet Union's ratification of the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions for the protection of the victims of war constitutes an unusual event in the recent diplomatic history of our country.*

*It reflects the spirit of new political thinking and demonstrates the Soviet State's commitment to humanizing international affairs and strengthening the system of international law.*

*At the same time, it exemplifies the spirit of continuity between Russian and Soviet diplomacy, extending back to the 1860s, in seeking to ensure that the principles of humanism and mercy are respected even in the tragic circumstances of war.*

*The Additional Protocols, in whose drafting the Soviet Union played a universally recognized role, were among the first international instruments presented for ratification to the new Soviet Parliament.*

*It should be pointed out that the Supreme Soviet of the USSR chose to ratify the Protocols without any reservation whatsoever. At the same time, our State recognized the competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission in cases where international humanitarian law is violated.*

*We in the Soviet Union hope that the ratification of the Additional Protocols will be duly appreciated by all those involved in the noble cause of humanism and the endeavour to free mankind from the horrors of war (Original French).*

In accordance with their provisions, the Protocols will come into force for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on 29 March 1990.

This ratification brings to **91** the number of States party to Protocol I and to **81** those party to Protocol II.

---

## The Paul Reuter Prize

The Paul Reuter Fund was created in 1983, thanks to a donation made to the ICRC by Professor Paul Reuter, Honorary Professor of the University of Paris and member of the Institute of International Law. Its purpose is twofold: its income is used to encourage a work or an undertaking in the field of international humanitarian law and its dissemination, and to finance the *Paul Reuter Prize*.

The prize, in the amount of 2,000 Swiss francs, is awarded for a major work in the field of international humanitarian law. It was first awarded in 1985 to Mr. Mohamed El Kouhène, Doctor of Laws, for his doctoral thesis entitled *Les garanties fondamentales de la personne en droit humanitaire et droits de l'homme* (Fundamental guarantees of the individual under humanitarian law and in human rights)<sup>1</sup>.

The second award was made in 1988 to Ms. Heather Anne Wilson, also Doctor of Laws, for her thesis entitled *International Law and the Use of Force by National Liberation Movements*<sup>2</sup>. The prize will be awarded for the third time in 1990. In accordance with the Regulations of the Paul Reuter Prize, to be considered for the next award, the applicants must fulfil the following conditions:

1. The work submitted must be aimed at improving knowledge or understanding of international humanitarian law.

---

<sup>1</sup> See the *International Review of the Red Cross*, No. 257, March-April 1987, pp. 231-232.

<sup>2</sup> See *IRRC*, No. 266, September-October 1988, pp. 477-478.