

This is certainly an important gain for the state of international law on this question.

Lastly, the imprescriptible nature of war crimes was reaffirmed as follows: "*The special character of international crimes stricto sensu (violation of the highest values of the international community — Ed.) justifies that they are not subject to statutory limitation*".

It will be seen from the above that the proceedings of the XIVth International Congress on Penal Law concerning international crimes and domestic criminal law are of great interest to anyone concerned with the relationship between international humanitarian law and international penal law, or who would like to see the domestic legal system accommodate the obligations placed on the State by international humanitarian law. Accordingly, it is very strongly to be hoped that the work of the Congress will have the complete success it deserves.

D. P.

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## **Course on humanitarian law for senior armed forces officers in South America**

*(Buenos Aires, 23 October - 3 November 1989)*

A course on international humanitarian law for senior armed forces officers from nine South American countries was held in Buenos Aires from 23 October to 3 November 1989.

Organized under the auspices of the Ministry of Defence by the International Humanitarian Law Department of the University of the Saviour in Buenos Aires, with the participation of the ICRC, the course was attended by 19 officers of tactical command level from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela. The course had classes on theory and practical exercises, and was based on the courses for officers given at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo, but adapted to regional needs.

The first week of the course consisted of a series of classes on the theory of international humanitarian law given by the head of the above-mentioned Department, General Carlos Cerda, and his colleagues. Lectures were also given by specialists from the region: Mr. Fernandez Illanes of the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs spoke on the system of collective security in America; Dr. Cañado Trindade, legal adviser at the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, spoke on the use of force in public international law; and Dr. Cova Arria, from Venezuela, spoke on non-international armed conflicts. The ICRC regional delegate in Buenos Aires, Christophe Swinarski, gave talks on international humanitarian law and human rights, repression of breaches of international humanitarian law, and the humanitarian activities of the ICRC.

The second week of the course was taken up by practical exercises aimed at showing the participants how to introduce elements of international humanitarian law into the military decision-making process. This part of the course was led by Bruno Doppler, delegate in charge of dissemination to the armed forces at the ICRC Co-operation and Dissemination Division, and Colonel R. Martin Lucati, a colleague of General Cerda.

On 3 November, the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs arranged a lecture by Mrs. Z. Regazzoli, Under-Secretary of State for Human Rights. For his part, the Swiss Ambassador in Buenos Aires gave a talk on neutrality to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the initial Geneva Convention.

Both the participants and the organizers considered the course to be a constructive experience in the field of dissemination to the armed forces in South America.

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