

Protection of the victims of the armed conflict in the Falkland-Malvinas Islands (1982)

The Red Cross and Red Crescent movement attaches increasing importance to the propagation of knowledge of international humanitarian law, regarded more and more as an instrument of peace. To make international humanitarian law—which aims at protecting the victims of armed conflicts—known worldwide is an essential step towards implementing it, for if the law remained unknown, it would go unheeded.

Teaching international humanitarian law, making it comprehensible and accessible to the layman is no easy task: it is difficult and very technical, extensive and full of abstract matter. The task would be easier if examples were quoted; most of the time, that is not the case, or such examples as are given only illustrate violations and consequently the law seems utopian and inapplicable.

The publication we wish to introduce¹ sets out to make the propagation of international humanitarian law easier by describing the successful implementation of the Geneva Conventions and their effective practical use in the 1982 armed conflict over the Falkland-Malvinas Islands. As its sub-title indicates, it illustrates the connection between theoretical law and humanitarian action in aid of protected persons.

The publication covers the period from 2 April 1982 (start of hostilities) to 14 July 1982 (release of the last prisoners of war) and focuses solely on humanitarian factors. If the reader wishes to have an account of military operations, he will have to consult historical works.

The publication is directed at anyone who, without being an expert, is interested in international humanitarian law, its propagation and application. It will be of value to Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, teachers, mass media and anyone interested in the activities of the Red Cross and in the implementation of the Geneva Conventions in a recent armed conflict.

¹ Sylvie S. Junod: *Protection of the victims of armed conflict Falkland-Malvinas Islands (1982)*. *International humanitarian law and humanitarian action*. Geneva, ICRC, 1984. Published in French, English and Spanish.