

# M I S C E L L A N E O U S

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## 54th CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL LAW ASSOCIATION

Nearly 500 jurists from 45 countries took part in this important meeting at The Hague from 23 to 29 August 1970. As is well known, the ICRC has always taken a keen interest in the work of the International Law Association and Mr. Frédéric Siordet, who attended as the ICRC observer, delivered a paper on the preparatory work now being undertaken by the ICRC with a view to the development of international humanitarian law.

Fourteen commissions examined various problems relating to contemporary international law. These included: territorial and diplomatic asylum; human rights; medical law; aero-space law; the law of outer space; piracy; international co-operation; international monetary law; and foreign investments in the developing countries. It is worth mentioning that the medical law commission examined the problem of protection for wounded and sick, and other aspects of medical law particularly with respect to the Geneva Conventions. On the question of the application and respect of those Conventions, three reports were submitted to the commission which, following an interesting discussion, drew up a resolution which was unanimously adopted by the Conference.

That resolution certainly encourages the ICRC in the performance of the preparatory work it has undertaken for the development of international humanitarian law. The text is as follows: <sup>1</sup>

The 54th Conference of the International Law Association at The Hague from 23 to 29 August 1970

- (1) considering the reports submitted by the International Medical Law Commission and the comments to which they gave rise
- (2) anxious to strengthen international protection for the human being and in particular to ensure effective application of the Geneva Conventions,

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<sup>1</sup> Our translation.

## MISCELLANEOUS

- (3) mindful of the fact that the Geneva Conventions are of primary importance for International Medical and Humanitarian Law, pointing out that the following problems have been considered and judged worthy of solution as a matter of urgency:
1. extension of the Geneva Conventions with a view to ensuring their application in all circumstances to all civilian health services;
  2. adoption of an international statute on international relief actions, the work of medical teams and international humanitarian missions in the event of armed conflict of any nature whatsoever or of disaster;
  3. the setting up of an international organization to organize, co-ordinate and carry out relief work in armed conflict of any nature whatsoever or in cases of disaster, with due respect for the powers and mandates of existing organizations, notably the International Red Cross;
  4. research into methods of making the role of Protecting Powers effective, taking into consideration the experience acquired since 1949;
  5. the imperative nature, consistent with the standards of international law (*jus cogens*), of the Geneva Convention principles relating to the protection of the human being:
    - requests the International Medical Law Commission to continue its studies and efforts with a view to achieving the aforesaid objectives and requests it also to prepare detailed drafts on these questions for submission to the 55th Conference;
    - pays tribute to the United Nations Organization and to the International Red Cross for their efforts in the field of international medical law;
    - recommends that the scope of the Commission be extended to include other fields of international medical law, a list of priorities for these problems having to be drawn up by the International Medical Law Commission for the next Conference.
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