Resolutions of the XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross

I

Mission of the Red Cross

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

recognizing the great significance for the Red Cross of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Protocols additional to these Conventions,

stressing the attachment of the Red Cross to the fundamental principles adopted by the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross (Vienna 1965),

1. confirms the dedication of the Red Cross movement to its fundamental mission of preventing and alleviating human suffering wherever it may be found; protecting life and health and ensuring respect for the human being; and affording impartially, without discrimination as to race, nationality, religious beliefs or political opinions, protection and assistance to those who need it, in the event of armed conflicts and other disasters,

2. emphasizes the extreme importance of the work carried out by National Societies within their medico-social programmes for the prevention of disease and the promotion of health, and in the encouragement of social responsibility and voluntary service among their members,

3. considers that the Red Cross, in respecting its principles and in developing its manifold activities, should play an essential part in
disseminating to the population, and especially to youth, the spirit of mutual understanding and friendship among all peoples, and thus promoting lasting peace.

II

Re-appraisal of the role of the Red Cross

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

expressing its deep appreciation to Mr. D. D. Tansley, Director of the Study on the Re-appraisal of the Role of the Red Cross, for the successful completion of his Report,

noting with satisfaction that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the League of Red Cross Societies (League) and the National Societies have given consideration to the comments and suggestions in the Study,

considering that the Study has greatly contributed to a process of re-evaluation, which should continue, to the benefit of the Red Cross,

urges the ICRC and the League
(a) to set up individually and jointly, procedures to identify those aspects of the Study which need further examination, and present them for consideration at appropriate Red Cross meetings;
(b) to report to the competent bodies on the actions taken and progress achieved;

invites all National Societies to continue the process of re-evaluation initiated by the Study and to implement the proposals arising from this process which could be of benefit to them.

III

The Geneva Conventions and the Protocols Additional

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

noting that the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law applicable in Armed
Conflicts concluded its work on 10 June 1977 at Geneva, with the signature of the Final Act, to which are annexed the two Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, one relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts and the other to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts,

mindful of the interest which the International Conference of the Red Cross has always devoted to the reaffirmation and development of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflict,

1. notes that the objective of Resolution No. XIII of the XXIst International Conference of the Red Cross "Reaffirmation and Development of the laws and customs applicable in Armed Conflicts" and Resolution No. XIII of the XXIIInd International Conference of the Red Cross "Reaffirmation and Development of the laws and customs applicable in Armed Conflicts" has been achieved,

2. expresses satisfaction at the substantial development thus accomplished in international humanitarian law, and especially at the provisions intended to relieve the suffering caused by armed conflicts and to protect the civilian population against their evils,

3. congratulates the Swiss Government which convoked and organized the Diplomatic Conference, the governments which co-operated in drawing up these Protocols, the numerous experts, the National Societies and the ICRC which inspired and prepared the work,

4. expresses the wish that the Protocols be signed and ratified, or acceded to, as soon as possible, so that they become as universally accepted as the Geneva Conventions,

5. expresses satisfaction at the important role assigned by the Protocols to the Red Cross and, in particular, to the National Societies, and invites the ICRC, the League and the National Societies to take steps to carry out this role to the full,

6. requests all States which have not yet done so to accede to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and to become parties to the Protocols,

7. expresses its deepest concern regarding the non-application, in certain cases, of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and urges all the High Contracting Parties to ensure respect for those Conventions in all circumstances,
8. asks the ICRC to report to the XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross on signatures, ratifications and accessions to the Protocols.

IV

The Red Cross and famine

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

considering that malnutrition and famine still prevail in many parts of the world and are a constant threat to human life, health and economic stability,

stressing that its fundamental principle of humanity necessitates Red Cross intervention,

recalling Resolution No. XII/1975 of the XXXIIIrd session of the Board of Governors of the League,

calls upon National Societies in famine-prone regions to include all feasible preventive measures in their current activities and disaster preparedness plans,

requests the Red Cross to collaborate more closely, especially in acute situations, with governments and intergovernmental organizations working in this field, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children’s Fund and the United Nations Disaster Relief Office,

appeals to governments to intensify their efforts to alleviate suffering in such catastrophes and urges the Red Cross to co-ordinate its activities more closely with those of governments.

V

Issue of visas to delegates appointed in connection with appeals for assistance in time of disaster

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

recalling that the Principles and Rules for Red Cross Disaster Relief, approved by the XXIst International Conference of the Red Cross
(Istanbul, 1969), stress the need for rapid action in time of disaster, which necessitates careful and complete pre-disaster planning in National Societies and in the international bodies of the Red Cross,

noting that in Article 13 of the said Principles and Rules, National Societies are in particular responsible for obtaining travel facilities and the quick granting of visas for Red Cross personnel in relief operations,

observing that, in Resolution No XXV, the XXIst International Conference of the Red Cross (Istanbul, 1969) "urges all governments which have not already done so to prepare and to pass the necessary legislation enabling immediate and adequate action to be taken, in conjunction with the Red Cross, along the lines of a pre-established plan based on the disaster relief rules adopted by this Conference",

regretting that experience indicates that the obtaining of visas for disaster and relief delegates and teams remains a time-consuming procedure which often delays their departure,

urges National Societies to make representations to their governments, with a view to achieving an easing of governmental formalities for the entry of official League delegates or official national teams provided by other Societies in response to a League appeal,

recommends any National Society requesting assistance following a disaster to obtain from its government the assurance that the relief personnel sent out at the request of the League, whether official League delegates or teams made available by National Societies, will be given the advantage of simplified entry formalities, such as exemption from visa obligation, issue of visa at points of entry, or any other facility enabling this relief personnel to fulfil its mission without delay, while respecting local legislation; the Society launching the appeal shall inform the League of the measures taken by the government in this respect.

VI

Measures to expedite international relief

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

considering the important part played by the Red Cross in assistance to the victims of natural disasters and other emergency situations,
reaffirming the solidarity of National Red Cross Societies and their duty to help each other when one of them is struck by an emergency situation exceeding its resources,

recalling that the plight of victims to a large extent depends on the speed with which adequate help arrives,

noting that there are still too many obstacles and difficulties which slow down the movement of international relief supplies and relief personnel to the detriment of those in urgent need of assistance,

noting with satisfaction the joint League of Red Cross Societies-UNDRO study on these obstacles, and the resulting recommendations concerning the measures to be taken to overcome them and to speed up the movement of relief personnel and supplies,

taking into consideration Resolution No 2102 (LXIII) adopted by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations on 3 August 1977 at its 2084th plenary meeting,

supports the League-UNDRO recommendations as set out in the annex,

hopes that the United Nations General Assembly will adopt them,

urges National Societies, governments, inter-governmental bodies and non-governmental organisations concerned with relief operations to implement these recommendations to the fullest possible extent,

requests the League, in liaison with the ICRC, to continue in its endeavours with organisations engaged in disaster relief, and in particular UNDRO, with a view to surmounting the obstacles and difficulties in the way of the despatch of international relief and the movement of relief personnel.
ANNEX

RECOMMENDATIONS

Measures to expedite international relief

Recommendation A

It is recommended in accordance with paragraph 8 (b) of General Assembly resolution 2816 (XXVI) that potential recipient Governments, if they have not already done so, designate one single national relief authority to co-ordinate all domestic relief activities; this authority will collaborate with appropriate government departments and with domestic and international relief agencies in defining and quantifying those relief items required from abroad.

Recommendation B

It is recommended that potential recipient Governments waive requirements for consular certificates of origin and invoices, with respect to relief consignments (as distinct from normal commercial imports), on condition that adequate documentation from recognised relief agencies accompany such consignments. Examples of such documentation are provided in the LICROSS Recommended Procedures for Packaging and Labelling or Marking Consignments of Supplies for International Disaster Relief Operations, UNICEF shipping lists, and similar documents from other recognised relief agencies.

Recommendation C

It is recommended that potential recipient Governments waive requirements for import and/or export licences, possibly through extending the scope of the Annex to the Convention of the Customs Co-operation Council (Provisions 3 to 28) to apply to relief shipments destined for any kind of disaster.

Recommendation D

It is recommended that potential recipient Governments waive—to the extent compatible with minimum standards of hygiene and animal protection—normal requirements regarding fumigation certificates and restrictions on food imports where these would impede the admission of relief essential for the protection of disaster victims.
**Recommendation E**

It is recommended that all Governments waive requirements for transit, entry and exit visas for relief personnel acting in their official capacity as representatives of internationally-recognised relief agencies. In this connexion, attention is drawn to resolution No 13 adopted by the Board of Governors of the League of Red Cross Societies at their 33rd Session, and Governments are urged to approve its adoption at the forthcoming 23rd International Conference of the Red Cross as well as to generalise its provisions so as to apply them to all relief personnel representing internationally-recognised relief agencies.

**Recommendation F**

It is recommended that all donors restrict their relief contributions to those high-priority relief needs identified by appropriate relief authorities and agencies with a view to more efficient utilisation of resources and more rapid fulfilment of essential relief needs.

**Recommendation G**

It is recommended that all Governments, inter-governmental agencies and non-governmental organisations concerned with relief operations undertake programmes to educate donors on the importance of avoiding contributions of non-essential items for relief purposes.

**Recommendation H**

It is recommended that all donors ensure that prompt notification is given to consignees of impending relief shipments; that they review procedures for consigning relief shipments; that they include detailed manifests with each consignment; and that they seek to secure prompt acknowledgement of arrival of the consignee. In this connexion, donors are encouraged to refer to the Recommended Procedures for Packaging and Labelling or Marking Consignments of Supplies for International Disaster Relief Operations, prepared by the League of Red Cross Societies.

**Recommendation I**

It is recommended that Governments of transit and recipient countries ensure that their customs authorities receive standing instructions to expedite processing of relief shipments in their custody. In this connexion, Governments are urged to consider acceding to Annex F.5 concerning Urgent Consignments adopted in Brussels in 1976 as an annex to the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures adopted by the Customs Co-operation Council at Kyoto (1973).
Recommendation J

It is recommended that all Governments authorise their national airlines—whether members of IATA or not—to accord free transportation or, if this is not possible, transportation at minimal rates to relief consignments and relief personnel wherever reasonably possible. Potential recipient Governments in particular should instruct their national airlines to accord such treatment to incoming relief personnel and relief shipments, even to the extent of deferring transport of regular passenger and commercial cargo.

Recommendation K

It is recommended that all Governments relax limitations imposed on carriers not possessing traffic rights where this action would facilitate the travel of relief personnel or the transport of relief supplies and equipment.

Recommendation L

It is recommended that all Governments explore the possibility of according overflight permission and landing rights for aircraft transporting international relief at the outset of disaster emergency operations. It would be desirable for such authorisations to be valid for the duration of the emergency relief phase, thereby obviating the need for subsequent time-consuming *ad hoc* overflight and landing requests.

Recommendation M

It is recommended that potential recipient Governments take advance measures to authorise recognised relief agency personnel to have access to all available telex, cable, wire, telephone and radio facilities, as disaster relief circumstances require, for their internal and external communications.

VII

Dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts and of the fundamental principles of the Red Cross

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

*considering* that the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts is one of the vital conditions for its observance,

*considering* further that the dissemination of Red Cross ideals should not be limited to the Geneva Conventions but should also cover the
Red Cross fundamental principles and be included within the broad concept of man’s responsibilities to man, being of the opinion that dissemination cannot be dissociated from the propagation of a spirit of peace and should never make war appear “acceptable”,

mindful of the resolutions on the dissemination of knowledge of the Geneva Conventions, adopted by previous International Conferences of the Red Cross, and especially Resolution No XII of the XXIInd International Conference of the Red Cross (Teheran, 1973),

noting with satisfaction Resolution No 21/77 on the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts, adopted by the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law applicable in Armed Conflicts,

bearing in mind that the new Constitution of the League of Red Cross Societies lays down that it is a function of the League to assist the International Committee of the Red Cross in the promotion and development of international humanitarian law and to collaborate with it in the dissemination of knowledge of that law and of the fundamental principles of the Red Cross among the National Societies,

taking note with interest of the report submitted by the Polish Red Cross and the ICRC on the First European Red Cross Seminar on the dissemination of knowledge of the Geneva Conventions (Warsaw, March 1977) and of its conclusions, and of various projects drawn up by the ICRC, in co-operation with several National Societies and specialized institutions in all parts of the world,

1. congratulates the ICRC on its action to promote the dissemination of international humanitarian law throughout the world and to improve the methods of dissemination, in agreement with various National Societies and the League,

2. invites National Societies to intensify their efforts, in collaboration with their governments, for the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law and of its principles as widely as possible among the population and especially among youth,

3. requests the ICRC and the League to lay down guidelines for their co-operation in the sphere of dissemination in order to give more
effective help to National Societies in drawing up programmes of activities concerning the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law and the training of national officers in this field,

4. recognizes the role of UNESCO in the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law and invites the ICRC and the League to intensify their collaboration with UNESCO with a view in particular to the award of training fellowships at specialized institutes,

5. expresses the wish that governments and National Societies continue the existing practice of informing the ICRC periodically of their dissemination efforts and invites the ICRC to submit to the XXIVth International Conference, a report on the dissemination of international humanitarian law, in conformity with Resolution No XII of the XXIIInd International Conference (Teheran, 1973).

VIII

Taking of hostages

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

concerned by the increase in hostage-taking in the world,

alarmed by the suffering inflicted on the hostages involved in these acts and on their families,

1. condemns the taking of hostages,

2. urges all governments to take the necessary measures to prevent the recurrence of such acts.

IX

Red Cross emergency radiocommunications

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

taking note with satisfaction of the considerable developments in the Red Cross emergency radiocommunications network,
stressing that in emergency situations the Red Cross must have at its command, direct, independent and speedy communications for its action for the victims,

thanks the national and international administrations which have granted the Red Cross many facilities in this field,

requests the World Administrative Radiocommunications Conference, to be held at Geneva in 1979, to take a constructive approach to all practical measures which might make this emergency network still more effective, in particular by according additional frequencies.

X

Application of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 in the occupied territories in the Middle East

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

having considered the Report of the ICRC on its activities from 1973 to 1976, its Annual Report for 1976, and the provisional Report on its activities from 1st January to 30th June 1977,

deploy concerned about the continued refusal of the Occupying Power to acknowledge and comply with its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war,

deploy disturbed by the policies and practices contrary to Article 49, paragraph 6, of the Fourth Geneva Convention, affecting the Arab civilian population in the occupied territories in the Middle East,

recalling Resolution No III of the XXIIInd International Conference of the Red Cross on the implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the action taken by the ICRC in pursuance of that Resolution,

conscious of the fact that the Parties to the Geneva Conventions have undertaken, not only to respect, but also to ensure respect for the Conventions in all circumstances,

1. expresses once more its deep concern for the situation of the Arab civilian population of the occupied territories in the Middle East,
2. reaffirms the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the occupied territories in the Middle East,

3. calls upon the Occupying Power to acknowledge and comply with its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention, and to this effect cease forthwith all policies and practices in violation of Article 47 of the Fourth Geneva Convention,

4. expresses its appreciation to the ICRC and its delegates in the Middle East for their continuous efforts in that region.

XI

Misuse of the emblem of the Red Cross

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

having considered the difficulties arising in several countries by the misuse of the emblem of the red cross, red crescent, red lion and sun by numerous unauthorized persons, private enterprises and organizations,

recalling the provisions of the First Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 restricting the use of the emblem, by which the States Parties to this Convention have undertaken to take necessary measures for the prevention and repression at all times of the misuse of the emblem,

invites the governments of States Parties to the Geneva Convention to enforce effectively the existing national legislation repressing the abuses of the emblem of the red cross, red crescent, red lion and sun, to enact such legislation wherever it does not exist at present and to provide for punishment by way of adequate sentences for offenders,

takes note with satisfaction of the steps undertaken by the ICRC in this field with National Societies and invites it to continue its efforts in conjunction with those governments wherever necessary,

invites the National Societies to assist their own governments in fulfilling their obligations in this respect and to support the efforts of the ICRC to that end.
XII

Weapons of mass destruction

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

recalling that, in compliance with the fundamental principle of humanity adopted by the XXth International Conference (Vienna, 1965), the International Red Cross is called upon to carry out its humanitarian mission aimed at protecting the life and health of man, to prevent and alleviate suffering and contribute to a lasting peace throughout the world,

confirming the resolutions promoting peace and condemning the arms race, in particular Resolutions Nos XXIV, XVIII, XVIII, XXVIII and XIV, respectively adopted by the XVIIth, XVIIIth, XIXth, XXth and XXIst International Conferences of the Red Cross,

expressing its deep concern about the dangers threatening universal peace and security, the life and health of man as a result of the existence and the development of weapons of mass destruction,

noting that these weapons are in contradiction to the aspirations of all men of good will for the further relaxation of international tension and the establishment of a lasting peace in the world,

invites all governments to take urgent measures to reach agreement on the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction,

invites the ICRC to pursue its efforts to contribute to ensuring the better protection of the civilian population, in particular by paying special attention to the need for protecting it from the sufferings resulting from the use of weapons of mass destruction,

asks National Societies to reinforce their co-operation with their governments with a view to solving this problem in good time and calls on all governments to support the efforts of the International Red Cross in this field.

XIII

Commission for the financing of the ICRC

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

noting with satisfaction the work done by the Commission for the financing of the ICRC,
noting further that thanks to the joint efforts of the Commission and the International Committee the contributions of National Societies have appreciably risen during the course of the past four years,

renews the term of office of the Commission with its present membership,

invites National Societies to continue and to increase their efforts to contribute, through their financial participation, to the discharge of the ever-increasing activities of the ICRC,

reiterates its appeal to all governments signatories to the Geneva Conventions to give their systematic and more substantial support to the regular financing of the ICRC,

expresses the hope that the governments and National Societies which have not yet contributed to the ICRC budget will from now on give it their financial support, even if they are only able to contribute by a token payment.

XIV

Torture

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

alarmed by the recrudescence of torture in the world,

aware that torture is forbidden by numerous national and international provisions and that it violates basic human rights, debases human dignity and degrades the torturers as well as their victims,

considering that torture offends the conscience of mankind and, by the hatred which it arouses, is a threat to peaceful relations between peoples and to peace and security,

mindful of article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the United Nations Declaration of 9 December 1975 on the Protection of all Persons from being Subjected to Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,

reaffirming that torture is contrary to the fundamental principles of the Red Cross and considering that its elimination is essential for the observance of those principles,
bearing in mind the need to make known and ensure respect for those provisions in the Geneva Conventions and their Protocols additional which prohibit torture and for those resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross which condemn inhuman and degrading treatment:

1. **condemns** all forms of torture,
2. **urges** governments and appropriate international organizations to ensure application of the international instruments and laws forbidding torture and to do their utmost to eliminate its practice,
3. **invites** the Red Cross organizations to co-operate in the realization of this objective.

XV

**Joint effort of National Societies and governments for improving health and social well-being**

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

*reaffirming* respect for the cultural, religious, and moral customs and beliefs of all peoples of the world, particularly in relation to the dignity of the individual and the right to life,

*realising* that if the population growth of the world continues at its present rate, new problems may arise for socio-economic development,

*confirming* the views expressed by the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization, and other agencies that immediate action is needed to ensure the health and well-being of the human race for a peaceful existence in the future,

*recalling* that Resolution No XVI of the XXIIInd International Conference of the Red Cross (Teheran, 1973) noted that National Societies act as auxiliaries to public authorities and that their mission is to co-operate in the fields of health and social development at all levels of the community, and recommended that governments take Red Cross experience into account when drawing up national development plans, thereby ensuring co-ordinated efforts and positive results for all concerned,

*recognizing* the importance of health education and primary health care for the protection and promotion of health in the developing world,
and specially in rural areas and urban areas which lack such facilities, thus contributing to the preservation of peace,

*observing* that the Board of Governors of the League of Red Cross Societies at its XXXIIIrd session (Geneva, 1975) decided that the League should strengthen its co-operation with the World Health Organization in its efforts to protect and promote the health of the people of the world,

*noting* that a World Congress on Primary Health Care will be held in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1978 under the auspices of the Soviet Government and the World Health Organization,

*desiring* that the people of every nation benefit now and in the future from the services of the Red Cross, especially in the fields of health and social welfare, and in particular by actions that contribute to the promotion and development of peace,

*appeals* to governments to intensify their programmes:

(a) to provide health education aimed at reducing infant and child mortality,

(b) to expand and broaden health education opportunities, especially mother and child care for women,

(c) to provide primary health care,

(d) to make opportunities available to increase the vocational skills and the earning opportunities of low-income groups, and

(e) to raise the status of women socially and economically by providing opportunities for learning and for leadership,

*urges* National Societies to participate with their governments in these programmes in conformity with recognised Red Cross aims,

*expresses the hope* that these joint efforts will assist in protecting man now and in the future from the sufferings inherent in overpopulation of the world thus serving as a factor in world peace by aiding in establishing conditions conducive to peace.

**XVI**

**The Red Cross and blood transfusion**

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

*recognizing* with satisfaction the significant growth of Red Cross Blood Transfusion Services in the previous four years,
believing that such blood services increasingly demonstrate the humanitarian principles inherent in the non-remunerated donation of blood as urged by Resolution No XVIII of the XXIIInd International Conference, and as endorsed by the 28th World Health Assembly,

taking note of the gratifying actions by other international organizations to affirm support of programmes for voluntary, non-profit blood donation,

recognizing, in particular, the expertise available to National Societies through the International Group of Red Cross Blood Transfusion Experts,

desires to amplify its previously expressed request to governments and National Societies that they develop national blood services based on voluntary participation by their people, and accordingly,

adopts the following principles and rules that should govern the provision of human blood, its components and derivatives based on those elaborated by the International Group of Red Cross Blood Transfusion Experts:

1. The safe, comprehensive and effective supply of blood, its components and derivatives is a community responsibility. It depends on the absence of any financial motive on the part of the donor and of the organizations responsible for the procedures involved in processing and administration, so that high quality service is provided at the lowest possible cost to the community. The donor should be assured that his donation will be given to patients as a service to the public with no financial gain to any party.

2. The provision of blood and blood products is essentially humanitarian in nature. All organizations providing these services have this obligation to the communities that support their operations.

3. Blood transfusion services should be organized on a national basis and should be regulated by the national health authorities.

4. In order to protect the health of both the donor and recipient, the highest medical and ethical standards should be observed in the collection, processing and distribution of blood.

5. Human blood and blood products should be provided to meet world health needs with maximum efficiency. Minimum waste, optimal quality and adequate availability are essential characteristics of blood transfusion services.
XVII

The Red Cross, health and social welfare

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

considering that according to the Red Cross basic principle of humanity, "the purpose of the Red Cross is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being",

noting that the health and social welfare activities constitute the "raison d'être" of most of the National Societies both in normal circumstances and in time of disaster,

considering that although the "Final Report—An Agenda for Red Cross" devotes insufficient attention to these fields, it nevertheless contains observations arising from all sections of the Agenda that may apply to the health and social welfare policy of National Societies,

basing itself, moreover, on Resolution No 5/75 of the XXXIIIrd session of the Board of Governors to the effect that the League and the National Societies should attach greater importance to medical and social activities in rural areas and in urban districts which lack these facilities,

recommends that

1. National Societies embark on genuine evaluation of their activities in the field of health and social welfare in the light of the remarks and recommendations made in the "Final Report—An Agenda for Red Cross",

2. National Societies improve their planning processes, determine their objectives and priorities based on needs, their methods of recruitment of leaders and of volunteers, and their training,

3. at national and international level the greatest attention be paid to community work, owing to which activity develops from within, according to the needs felt by the people concerned,

4. the professionals and the volunteers be given full recognition both at national and international level, so that their skills and knowledge be adequately mobilised in the planning and implementation of all humanitarian and development activities,
XVIII

Red Cross Teaching Guide

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

considering that in carrying out its educational task the Red Cross should be constantly concerned to find new ways of making more widely known its message of humanity, understanding and peace,

noting with interest the Red Cross Teaching Guide prepared jointly by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies in consultation with National Societies, mainly for the use of school teachers,

welcomes this effective implementation of Resolution No XII of the XXIIInd International Conference of the Red Cross (Teheran, 1973) recommending that the teaching on humanitarian subjects dispensed by governments and National Societies be intensified,

urges the appropriate authorities to support their respective National Society's efforts to disseminate the Teaching Guide,

calls upon the League and the ICRC to help National Societies to make the Teaching Guide a success, in particular by
(a) assisting with the training of persons responsible for disseminating the Teaching Guide in their respective countries,
(b) co-operating with National Societies and with the competent authorities in adapting the Teaching Guide to the sections of the population to be reached.

XIX

The Red Cross and Youth

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

having considered the current aspects of Red Cross and of Youth,

reaffirms that to educate young people in international understanding, co-operation and peace, to make them aware of and able to prevent the problems arising from the many forms of human suffering and to
make them responsive to the need to respect and to promote humanitarian principles everywhere and at all times, is one of the fundamental responsibilities of the Red Cross,

*reaffirms* also that to enable youth to participate fully in the activities of the National Society is a vital need for Red Cross development,

*encourages* National Societies and the League in collaboration with the ICRC,

(a) to improve leadership training, in order to ensure the greater development of their Youth Sections,

(b) to continue their efforts to motivate the greatest number of young people to become active members of the Red Cross by providing them with opportunities to participate fully at all levels of activity and in decision-making,

(c) to promote on a larger scale opportunities for their youth groups and leaders to exchange ideas and experiences, at the international level,

(d) and to intensify their educational programmes for children, adolescents and young adults, whether they attend school or not,

*appeals* to the appropriate authorities to support the National Societies in this endeavour.

**XX**

**Promoting the image of the Red Cross worldwide**

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

*having examined* the document entitled "The ICRC, the League and the Tansley Report" with special reference to the chapter on Information,

*takes note* that joint action by the League and the ICRC to promote the image of the Red Cross has continued to develop and will be further consolidated in the future,

*approves* the joint proposal set out in the Information chapter of the above-mentioned document,

*welcomes* the intention of the two Institutions to bring together their strength and resources in order to create a common audio-visual centre,
calls upon the ICRC and the League to undertake a joint study and to report back to the XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross on the most effective ways of translating into Information and Public Relations terms the "concept of International Red Cross" so as to develop its better understanding among the general public. An interim report will be presented to the next Council of Delegates,

considers it imperative to reaffirm Resolution No IX of the XXIIInd International Conference of the Red Cross (Teheran, 1973) on the promotion of the image of the Red Cross in the world,

courages National Societies to pursue their efforts to implement the provisions of Resolution No IX, especially those relating to educating the public towards a better understanding of the principles and action of the Red Cross and urges them to develop their potential in Information and Public Relations upon which their programme and activity resources depend,

urges the League and the ICRC to support the efforts of National Societies in the field of Public Relations and Information and to encourage exchange between Societies in particular by developing contacts between their Public Relations and Information Officers,

expresses the wish that governments and all other public and private bodies facilitate the mission of the Red Cross by continuing to provide access to those information media which, due to their multiplying effect, will enable it to make its action and its needs better known to the public.

XXI

Environment

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

recalling that the XXIIInd International Conference of the Red Cross (Teheran, 1973) made a declaration in its Resolution No XVII to the effect that the Red Cross is directly concerned with the problem of the environment, in so far as the physical and mental health of man is largely conditioned by his environment,

having noted the report of the League of Red Cross Societies on the Red Cross and the Protection of the Environment,
recognizing that the majority of the world’s population lives in an unfavourable environment due to poverty and that its health is exposed to dangers due to lack of basic health facilities, on the one hand, and to dangers of all types of pollution, on the other,

noting that both the protection and improvement of environment are in part an educational problem and that youth is or should be, therefore, not only the most closely involved, but can also be the best instrument as a means of Red Cross action,

recommends that National Societies, in developing their traditional activities, ensure that future plans include public health and environmental education and training of personnel wherever these measures have not been taken, or supplement existing programmes, in close cooperation with governmental and non-governmental organizations working for the same objectives,

requests the League, through its specialised Commission and its Secretariat,

(a) to develop the studies it has already undertaken,

(b) to encourage an exchange of experiences between National Societies,

(c) to promote close bonds with all those organisations which are concerned with the environment,

invites governmental and non-governmental organizations to recognise the actual and potential value of Red Cross volunteers in this respect and to give such volunteers their full support,

appeals to Governments to intensify their efforts to develop and, where necessary, to establish national laws on environment,

urges Governments to encourage increased Red Cross participation in local and national plans aimed at creating an environment permitting improved living conditions for the benefit of present and future generations.

XXII

International Year of the Child

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

considering that the XXXIst General Assembly of the United Nations, in its Resolution A/31/169 of 21 December 1976, decided to proclaim the
year 1979 the International Year of the Child, to invite non-governmental organizations to take an active part in that Year and to contribute to the achievement of the objectives thereof,

noting with satisfaction that the League of Red Cross Societies has been nominated as a member of the Co-ordinating Group of the Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations/International Year of the Child (NGO/IYC),

convinced that the general objective of the International Year of the Child, that is to say the promotion of child welfare nationally and internationally, is consistent with the humanitarian Red Cross aim of promoting health and well-being,

concerned that, despite the efforts of many National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies and those of other organizations, millions of children throughout the world are still lacking the basic necessities of health, food and education, while very many others, such as the physically and mentally handicapped, the children of migrants, or refugee children, need special attention which is in many cases not available,

invites the League to participate in the International Year of the Child,

recommends that

1. arrangements be made at every level to ensure this participation,
2. the League Secretariat co-operate to a greater extent internationally with UNICEF which is responsible for implementing the UN General Assembly Resolution A/31/169,
3. Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies contribute to the work of the National Commissions which governments have been requested to set up with a view to devising long-term programmes for the benefit of children,
4. where such Commissions do not exist, the National Societies consider the possibility of causing a joint plan of action to be formulated for the purpose of alerting the authorities and public opinion to the needs of children with a view to the drawing up of long-term programmes, and even to the enactment of laws, adapted to those needs,
5. the League Secretariat help National Societies establish long-term programmes for child welfare with emphasis on the priority needs for underprivileged and handicapped children,

6. the League Secretariat assist the National Societies, and particularly their Youth Sections, to participate in the International Year of the Child.
Decisions of the XXIIId International Conference of the Red Cross

I

Application and amendment of the Principles and Rules for Red Cross Disaster Relief

The XXIIId International Conference of the Red Cross,

recognizing that the effectiveness and success of any Red Cross relief operation will depend upon strict application of all the Principles and Rules approved in Istanbul in 1969 and revised in Teheran in 1973 by the XXIst and XXIIInd International Conferences of the Red Cross respectively,

urges all National Societies strictly to abide by these Principles and Rules,

decides to add to the said Principles and Rules a new article, 24A, and to amend articles 15, 19 and 26 as follows:

Article 15 — Request for Assistance and Appeal (new version).

Any request from a National Society of a stricken country for international assistance shall be addressed to the League. Such a request must contain all available information on the general situation, the number of persons to be helped and the nature and quantities of relief supplies needed in order of priority by the National Society to carry out its specific responsibilities.

(Second and third paragraphs remain unchanged.)

Article 19 — League Liaison Officer (new version).

When a National Society is in receipt of international assistance, the League will assign to this National Society a liaison officer or a team of delegates, whose name or names will be communicated to it as rapidly as possible and whose number will depend on the magnitude of the disaster.

(Second, third and fourth paragraphs remain unchanged.)
Article 24A — Donating supplies whilst receiving assistance (new article)

A National Society in receipt of international assistance needed in its own country shall not contribute assistance of a similar nature to a sister Society without the prior authorisation of the League.

Article 26 — Relief Surplus (new version)

Goods or funds remaining on hand after the termination of a relief action shall not be used or expended except pursuant to an agreement between the National Society of the stricken country and the League after consultation by the League with the donor Societies concerned. Such an agreement might include the return of the goods or the funds to the donor Societies.

II

Appointment of Members
to the Standing Commission of the International Red Cross

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross elects the following persons to membership of the Standing Commission of the International Red Cross until the next International Conference: Mr. Ahmad Abu-Goura (Jordan), Mr. Rito Alcantara (Senegal), Mr. Werner Ludwig (German Democratic Republic), Sir Evelyn Shuckburgh (United Kingdom) and Mr. Kai J. Warras (Finland).

III

Place and Date of the Twenty-fourth International Conference of the Red Cross

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross directs the Standing Commission of the International Red Cross to decide upon the place and date of the XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross. National Societies prepared to host the Conference are requested to send their offers to the Standing Commission by 30 April 1978.
Thanks

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross

presents its respectful thanks to Mr. Nicolae Ceausescu, President of the Socialist Republic of Romania, for having granted his high patronage, for having honoured the opening meeting with his presence and for having made an eloquent speech, and also to Mrs. Ceausescu for her presence at his side,

expresses its gratitude to the Government of the Socialist Republic of Romania for its assistance to the Romanian Red Cross with the preparations for and the running of the Conference,

thanks the town of Bucharest and the Romanian people for the friendly welcome extended to all the delegates,

conveys its most sincere gratitude to General Burada, the President of the host Society, for having presided its debates with kindly authority, as well as to the Romanian Red Cross and all its volunteers, not forgetting the League and ICRC personnel, who contributed devotedly to the smooth unfolding of the deliberations,

expresses to all the representatives of the Romanian press, radio and television, and to the foreign news agencies who covered the Conference its sincere appreciation of their efforts in making its deliberations and results known to the world.
Decisions of the Council of Delegates

1

The Red Cross and Peace

The Council of Delegates,

having taken note of the report by the Working Group constituted pursuant to point 4 of Resolution 2 (1975),

noting with satisfaction that the Group reached a consensus on ways to meet the comments contained in the League report on the World Red Cross Conference on Peace and in Annex 6 of that report,

approves the proposals of the Working Group intended to define the meaning of the recommendations in the Programme of Action of the Red Cross as a Factor of Peace which were the subject of such comments,

considers the interpretations so approved to be an integral part of the Programme of Action,

asks the League, therefore, to include the interpretations of the Working Group in its report on the World Red Cross Conference on Peace,

considers that the implementation by the Red Cross Institutions of the Programme of Action should fully respect the fundamental principles of the Red Cross and take the aforesaid interpretations into account,

considers that the Working Group has thus fulfilled its mandate, and thanks it for its services.

2

Commission on the Red Cross and Peace

The Council of Delegates,

recollecting that the Board of Governors at its XXXIIrd Session, by Resolution No 20 of 1975, entrusted the Chairman of the Board of
Governors to form a body, the task of which would be to follow the implementation of the Programme of Action of the Red Cross as a Factor of Peace, and to propose to the appropriate bodies of the League and to National Societies measures for the implementation of the tasks deriving from that Programme,

having in view that a Commission on the Red Cross and Peace was formed, that it has worked successfully and has submitted a report to the XXXIVth Session of the Board of Governors,

considering that it is essential to continue to follow up the implementation of the Programme of Action, taking into account the relevant points of view expressed at the World Red Cross Conference on Peace in Belgrade in 1975,

decides to establish a Commission on the Red Cross and Peace, on the lines of the Commission mentioned in paragraph two, to continue the work of that body until the next meeting of the Council of Delegates,

decides that this Commission shall follow the implementation of the Programme of Action of the Red Cross as a factor of Peace, by studying the activities of the Red Cross in terms of their contribution to Peace and by proposing to the appropriate bodies of the League, of the National Societies and to the ICRC measures for the realisation of the objectives and tasks deriving from that Programme.

3

Emblem

The Council of Delegates,

seeing that the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law applicable in Armed Conflicts has not changed the legal situation relating to the emblem, created in 1929 and confirmed in 1949,

considering that the question of emblem unity is still very important for the Red Cross movement and calls for thorough examination by National Societies, the ICRC and the League,
considering further that such an examination requires extensive consultations and prolonged study,

collects a working group to study all questions relating to the emblem and to report to the XXIVth International Conference of the Red Cross,

decides that this working group will adopt its recommendations by consensus and will consist of the ICRC, the League, the Henry Dunant Institute and the National Societies of the following countries: Iran, Malaysia, Niger, Spain, Switzerland, Syria, Turkey, USA, USSR.

4

Approval of Accounts

The Council of Delegates,

approves the accounts of the Augusta Fund, the Florence Nightingale Medal Fund and the Empress Shôken Fund.