

A note from the Editor

Last year, international humanitarian law experts gave special thought to Fyodor Fyodorovich Martens (1845-1909) on the 150th anniversary of his birth. The Review is pleased to include in this issue an article about that renowned authority on international law. It is written by Professor Vladimir Pustogarov, a well-known Russian scholar whose works include a biography of Martens (as yet available only in Russian). The Review also hopes that publication of his article will pave the way for a further extension of its relations with the Russian-speaking world.

The Review Conference of the 1980 United Nations Weapons Convention, which ended on 3 May last, produced two specific results. Louise Doswald-Beck reports on the development and scope of the new Protocol IV prohibiting the use of blinding laser weapons in war, a very commendable achievement. The other, less commendable, result of the Review Conference is dealt with by Peter Herby in his report on the revision of Protocol II on mines, and the failure of the representatives of the States party to the Convention to agree on a satisfactory text. As a result of their failure, the law still provides civilians in particular with no effective protection against the scourge of those cruel devices.

In his article, Paul Berman describes the organization and work of the ICRC's new Advisory Service on international humanitarian law, set up to help implement the recommendations of the 1993 Conference for the Protection of War Victims and thereby promote greater compliance with the Geneva Conventions in all armed conflicts.

Finally, it is the Review's sad duty to report the killing of three ICRC delegates on 4 June last in Burundi, when an ICRC convoy came under fire. Three young men who sought to bring some small measure of humanity to that tormented country paid for their dedication with their lives. The ICRC has had to suspend its work in Burundi, as the red cross emblem obviously no longer provides the guarantee of protection essential for its delegates' activities. A lamentable fact in a lamentable situation.

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