

A note from the Editor

The December 1999 issue of the Review is divided into three parts, comprising two quite different groups of texts and a section concerning an important event. To begin with the last, ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga is stepping down at the end of the year after more than twelve years at the helm. Permanent Vice-President Jacques Forster looks back at the challenges faced by the ICRC during this period. The new President of the Committee, Mr Jakob Kellenberger, takes up his post on 1 January 2000.

Another section of the Review is devoted to the results of the 27th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, which took place in Geneva from 31 October to 6 November 1999. Defined in the Movement's Statutes as the "supreme deliberative body for the Movement", the Conference brings together representatives of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, their International Federation and the ICRC on the one hand, and government representatives from the States party to the Geneva Conventions on the other. The Conference is thus a forum where the Red Cross/Red Crescent and governments can together take stock of humanitarian action and launch new initiatives in that regard. This issue of the Review contains a short summary of the proceedings of the Conference and the main decisions taken, in particular the text of the Plan of Action for 2000-2003. The section on the statutory meetings held during 1999 ends with the resolutions adopted by the Council of Delegates.

As always, the Review also contains individual contributions on a wide range of subjects. We hope these will prompt our readers to reflect on some significant aspects of humanitarian action at the end of another year.

THE REVIEW