

Relations with Red Cross and International Organizations

Objekttyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **Annual report / International Committee of the Red Cross**

Band (Jahr): - **(1951)**

PDF erstellt am: **23.07.2024**

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II. RELATIONS WITH RED CROSS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

THE LEAGUE OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES AND NATIONAL RED CROSS SOCIETIES

The Committee remained in its usual close contact with National Red Cross Societies and the League of Red Cross Societies.

In the course of missions made necessary by events, the representatives of the ICRC made a point of calling upon all Societies in countries they were passing through, in order to have talks with members of their Central Committees and to become acquainted with the Societies' work.

As however in view of their nature these missions cannot be very frequent, the ICRC suggested to the Chairman of the League Board of Governors to hold a meeting (at the ICRC headquarters) for the delegates of National Societies present at Geneva to attend the meeting of the League Executive Committee and of the Standing Commission of the International Red Cross Conference. On May 14, 15 and 16 numerous personalities representing fifteen National Red Cross Societies¹ took part in discussions which more particularly concerned the work of the ICRC. Further, eleven Societies, who were not able to be present, indicated their interest in being invited to this gathering.

¹ Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR, National Societies of Australia, Brazil, China, Greece, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Yugoslavia. The list of the persons present at this meeting was published in the *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge* June 1951, page 440.

STANDING COMMISSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL
RED CROSS CONFERENCE

The Standing Commission of the International Red Cross Conference met in Geneva on May 12 and December 7, with M. A. François-Poncet in the Chair. It took note, in particular, of the efforts made by the ICRC for the application of the Geneva Conventions in Korea. A further extraordinary meeting was held in Paris on October 4, to determine where the XVIII International Red Cross Conference should be held.

The Chairmen of the Standing Commission and the League Board of Governors with the President of the ICRC also held meetings in Geneva on January 27, and at Godesberg on August 28, to discuss the revision of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and the preparations for the International Conference which the Canadian Red Cross had offered to hold in Toronto in July 1952.

NATIONAL SOCIETY DELEGATES TO THE COMMITTEE

The following modifications occurred during the year in the list of National Society Delegates to the ICRC.¹

The French Red Cross gave up its general representation in Geneva, the relations between it and the ICRC being carried on direct by post or through the ICRC Delegation in Paris. The Greek Red Cross nominated M. E. Ioannides as Assistant-Delegate to Dr. D. Marmora for its representation with the ICRC. The Cuban Red Cross appointed a special Delegate, M. Alfonso Hernandez Cata. The Red Cross Society of San Marino will in future be represented by M. Boris Lifchitz, Minister Plenipotentiary. The Uruguayan Red Cross is no longer represented with the ICRC.

In view of the preparations for the Toronto Conference, the ICRC was gratified to have at its disposal, for questions concerning Latin America, the advice of M.J.G. de Rueda, delegate in Geneva

¹ The list of these delegates appears in the ICRC Report for 1950, page 23.

of the Mexican Red Cross and Member of the League Board of Governors.

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS BROADCAST

On May 8, at the instance of the ICRC, Radio-Geneva organised for the second time the annual international Red Cross Broadcast, presented under the auspices of the European Broadcasting Union, the ICRC and the League. Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Indochina, Luxemburg, Monaco, Morocco, Switzerland and Syria (i.e. seven more countries than in the previous year) participated. The broadcast, entitled "A Century later", had for object the commemoration, as in 1950, of the anniversary of Henri Dunant, the Founder of the Red Cross, coupled on this occasion with typical information on the work of National Societies. Fourteen broadcasting stations gave their services to Radio-Geneva.

ICRC Radio Telephone Service.

Some 500 Watch reports from listeners reached ICRC Headquarters from 31 different countries in Europe and neighbouring territories, thus making it possible to map for each hour of the day the probable quality of the reception.

The ICRC also tried out a regular radio Telephone system with its delegations at a long distance (Far East).

Trials were made for sending by radiophonic channel radiophotos of documents likely to be of use for the Central Prisoners of War Agency. The ICRC thus received, direct from New York to Geneva, radiophotos of death certificates, authentic documents which could be produced by the Agency in case of need.

HANOVER CONFERENCE ON REFUGEES

The ICRC was represented by one of its members M. Olgiati, accompanied by three assistants, at the International Conference

convened at Hanover early in April by the League of Red Cross Societies to examine the position of refugees in Germany.¹

This Conference had been planned by the ICRC and the German and Austrian Red Cross Societies at the suggestion of the Swiss Red Cross; and the idea was approved by the League Board of Governors at Monaco in the autumn 1950.

The ICRC mission to the Hanover Conference took advantage of their passage through Germany to pay a visit to the German Federal Republic authorities in Bonn and to the German Red Cross in that town. They also had various interviews at the Federal Chancellery, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Refugees. A little later on May 27 the ICRC was also represented at Bonn for the first General Assembly held by the German Red Cross since its official recognition by the Government.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE XVIII INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS CONFERENCE

The Secretary-General of the ICRC, who was in the United States, left for Toronto in October in order to study with the Canadian Red Cross the planning of the XVIII International Red Cross Conference which is to be held in that city in July-August 1952. On three successive days M. Duchosal had interviews with the directors and staff of the Canadian Red Cross.

RELATIONS WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The United Nations General Assembly at its Fifth Ordinary Session adopted three resolutions, which call for the services of the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies, concerning :

- I. The repatriation of Greek military personnel still in captivity in certain European countries.
- II. The repatriation of displaced Greek children.

¹ An account will be found below (see page 45) of the results of this Conference, in particular with regard to the question of legal assistance, in which the ICRC is specially interested.

III. Measures towards a pacific solution of the question of prisoners of war.

These resolutions were notified to the ICRC by letters from the General Secretariat of the United Nations, dated December 6, 1950 and January 12, 1951 respectively.

In its reply the ICRC recalled that in this matter, as in all others, it could only act in a manner compatible with its traditional position, i. e. in full agreement with all the States concerned in such action. The ICRC declared that its attitude was governed by its desire to safeguard in all circumstances its neutral and impartial position as being of primary importance, and by its concern to undertake no action likely to hamper its traditional task, which it never ceases to pursue, of searching for the missing. ¹

During a brief visit to Geneva the Secretary-General of the United Nations had an interview on January 14 with the President of the ICRC on the question.

Early in September the President of the ICRC was invited by the Chairman to attend the Conference held in San Francisco for the signature of the Peace Treaty with Japan, Article 16 of which provides for action by the ICRC. ²

From March 16 to 22 in Geneva the ICRC took part in the Third Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations Interested in Migration. This Conference received all the necessary technical assistance from the United Nations thanks to the participation of such specialized governmental agencies as the International Labour Office and the International Refugee Organization. It considered in particular the draft Migrant Charter presented by Caritas Internationalis, in the drafting of which the ICRC had taken part in conjunction with a working party, which included representatives of the principal humanitarian institutions with headquarters in Geneva.

On the initiative of the World Federation of Trade Unions a meeting was held in Geneva on April 25 and 26, which included the representatives of this Federation, of the World Health Organi-

¹ This correspondence was published by the ICRC in a pamphlet entitled *The International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations*, Geneva 1951.

² See below, page 38.

zation, the International Council of Nurses, the League and the International Committee. The object of this meeting was to establish close contact between the medical organizations and the Red Cross agencies. These organizations promised their entire assistance to the ICRC particularly in time of war, in regard to medical relief to prisoners, the dissemination of medical and therapeutic information, and the protection of civilian populations in general.

At the end of October the ICRC received a visit from the delegates to the World Peace Congress, led by M. Joliot-Curie, Chairman of the Congress.

The ICRC continues to follow the work of the United Nations Commission for the progressive development of international law and its codification, which deals with certain subjects in relation with the Geneva Conventions.

MISSIONS

The President of the ICRC headed an important mission to Asia from February 26 to April 4. M. and Mme P. Ruegger were accompanied by M. A. Escher, Personal Adviser to the President, and Doctors R. Marti and Ch. Bessero. They travelled on the aircraft "Henri Dunant" with a Swissair crew.

In Peking, where they stayed from March 14 to 28, the ICRC representatives had long interviews with Mme Li-Teh-Chuan, Minister of Health, President of the Chinese Red Cross, and with the Committee of that Society. The President also had a long conversation with M. Chou-en-Lai, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Central Government of the People's Republic of China.¹

The ICRC mission made several stops on the return journey, e.g. in *Indochina*.²

¹ The object of this mission was to examine with the Government and the Red Cross of the People's Republic of China all Red Cross questions of mutual interest. But M. Ruegger of course also raised the various questions calling for urgent settlement in connection with the Korean conflict (relief, Safety Zones, mail, news, etc.). These questions were again discussed in May and December 1951 with the Chinese Red Cross in Geneva.

² See above, page 64.

It also stopped at *Bangkok*, where it was received by Prince Chumbothong Paribatra, Vice-President of the Siamese Red Cross, and visited that Society's headquarters and hospital.

A similar visit was paid to the *Burmese* Red Cross.

In *India* the President of the ICRC met M. Nehru, Prime Minister, and Mme Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, President of the Indian Red Cross and Minister of Health. In *Pakistan* he visited the National Red Cross Society, and met the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, M. Jkrammullah. He then stopped at *Athens* to meet M. Georgacopoulo, President of the Greek Red Cross, and made a final stop at *Rome* for discussion with Professor Mario Longhena, General Chairman, and Dr. Minucci, Director, of the Italian Red Cross.

From September 17 to October 25 the ICRC was represented at the *Pan-American Red Cross Conference in Mexico* by MM. Olgiatti, Pictet and Duchosal, who were enabled by their participation in the work of this Conference to spread the knowledge of the work of the ICRC on the American continent.

In addition to contacts made during the San Francisco Conference¹ two representatives of the ICRC visited the *United States* from January 30 to March 23 to discuss questions concerning ICRC action with Government authorities and representatives of the American Red Cross.

In *Germany* the ICRC, represented by its Vice-President M. Bodmer, attended the First General Assembly of the German Red Cross at Bonn on May 27.

As already stated, M. Bodmer had taken part in the Hanover Conference early in April.²

On two occasions (in October and December) a mission of the ICRC visited Germany to settle sundry questions relating to the distribution of relief supplies.

One mission made a short visit to *Warsaw* in July, and another visited *Belgrade* early in August.

Iran and *Iraq* were visited in July and August by the ICRC Delegate in Cairo, M. P. Gaillard, who had conversations in Bagdad with M. Arshad Pacha Al Omari, President of the Iraq Red

¹ See above, page 28.

² See above, page 26.

Crescent, and with M. Abdul Majid Mahmoud, Minister for Economic Affairs. He stayed for one week in Teheran, where he was given interesting documentary information concerning the work of the Red Lion and Sun. This Society has some 40,000 members and over 70 health centres (including 12 hospitals), which are distributed over the whole country, and operated exclusively by the Society's personnel and at its expense.

In *Japan* the representative of the ICRC, M. M. Wolf, had important conversations with the Red Cross, the Japanese authorities and the United Nations High Command.

During his mission he met M. Syngman Rhee, President of the Korean Republic.

In various other connections the ICRC was represented by the President (in Holland) and by its Vice-Presidents, M. J. Chenevière (in France), M. M. Bodmer (in Greece) or by heads of departments or staff members (in Austria, Belgium, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Sweden).
