

MEETING OF SEVERAL NATIONAL SOCIETIES AND THE ICRC

On 17 and 18 October, a meeting was held in Copenhagen to discuss ways and means for National Societies to increase public interest in the Red Cross ideal and National Society co-operation with the ICRC. The meeting was attended by leaders of the National Societies of Denmark, Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, while the ICRC was represented by Mr. Freymond, member of the Committee, Mr. Le Fort, Secretary-General, and Mr. Modoux, head of the Press and Information Division.

The discussions were concerned particularly with public interest in humanitarian operations and the scope for National Societies to stimulate such interest. Experience over the last few years, particularly during large-scale relief operations, has been that the public expects the Red Cross to provide war victims not only with material relief but with protection consistent with its real vocation. Assistance and protection are intimately linked; it is in this dual function with which it is identified that the Red Cross differs from other charitable organizations.

Participants in the meeting felt that the ICRC was able to help National Societies to maintain the necessary cohesion between humanitarian principles and action. They asked the ICRC to co-ordinate efforts to that end and to draw up a programme for permanent contact with National Societies for that purpose.
