

Other speakers mentioned factors which must be taken into account to ensure the complete success of the National Red Cross Society's campaign, for which the ICRC also extends its best wishes.

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## Portugal

Portugal was one of the first countries to display interest in an effective manner in the international cause of victims of war. In 1863 a number of relief committees were set up which were at the origin of the present-day national societies.

Already at that time, the ICRC (then known as "International Committee for Relief to Military Wounded") had observed the favourable trend in Lisbon: "There is as yet no Committee in Portugal, but the Government has promised its protection to one if formed and Dr. José Antonio Marques, assistant head of the Army Medical Service, has publicized the resolutions passed by the Conference<sup>1</sup> in such a way as to encourage his fellow countrymen. It would therefore be indeed surprising if some Portuguese philanthropists would not come forward to champion our cause with State support."<sup>2</sup>

The optimism in these lines was fully justified as Portugal was one of the states signatory to the First Geneva Convention of August 22, 1864. Portugal was represented by Dr. Marques and at the opening of the Conference on August 8, he had presented credentials vesting in him authority to negotiate and sign the planned Convention on behalf of H.M. the King of Portugal and of Algarves.

Six months later a Society had been formed in Lisbon under the name "Portuguese Commission for Assistance to Military Wounded and Sick in Time of War" which, under our common sign, was soon to carry out relief work both nationally and internationally.

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<sup>1</sup> Convened by the Committee of Five and held in Geneva in October, 1863.

<sup>2</sup> *Communication du Comité international de secours aux militaires blessés*, Geneva, 1864.

Thus, from June 19 to 26, 1965 the Portuguese Red Cross commemorated the Centenary of its foundation. The celebrations were attended by a huge gathering including many dignitaries from abroad who came to Lisbon to convey the congratulations of sister societies. The ICRC was represented by one of its Vice-Presidents, Mr. Jacques Freymond, and the League by its Secretary-General, Mr. Henrik Beer.

A number of receptions were held, one of them at the headquarters of the Red Cross, and a demonstration was given by the Medical Team Volunteers from the National Society. Visits had also been arranged to several welfare services, the fine hospital run by the Red Cross and the estate of model dwellings built by the Society to house the inhabitants of the "shanty towns" in the outskirts of the capital.

The ICRC, for its part, will not forget the valuable assistance it received from the Portuguese Red Cross during the Second World War, when, through the intermediary of its Lisbon Delegation, it forwarded some 250,000 tons of parcels and goods to war victims. It was pleased to convey its congratulations and wishes to the Portuguese Red Cross in this year of celebration of a great anniversary.

Various documents published for the occasion describe the work accomplished in a number of fields, particularly by the Medical Team Volunteers who, since 1887, have intervened with dedication in all circumstances and in all climes, with the necessary ambulances and equipment.

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## Spain

The Madrid newspaper, ABC, recently issued an article on diabetes and its symptoms, the prevalence of the disease in Spain and the prophylactic measures in which the National Red Cross participates. It is interesting to note how the struggle against this scourge is undertaken and we think it might be useful to summarize the methods.