

IN THE RED CROSS WORLD

FIFTH REGIONAL MEETING OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES IN PANAMA

The Fifth Meeting of Presidents and Technical Personnel of the National Societies of North America, Mexico, Central America and Panama was held in the capital of the last-mentioned country from 8 to 11 February 1972. It was organized by the Panamanian Red Cross under the patronage of the League of Red Cross Societies and followed up the meeting held in Mexico in 1969.¹ Delegates were sent by the National Red Cross Societies of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and the USA, and observers by the Societies of Bolivia, Colombia and Spain. The League was represented by Mr. J. Barroso, Chairman of the Board of Governors, Mr. B. Petterson, Under-Secretary-General-designate, and Mr. R. Bermudez, Delegate-General for Latin America, and the ICRC was represented by Mr. S. Nessi, Delegate-General for Latin America, and Mr. Leemann, Regional Delegate for Central America and the Caribbean.

The inaugural session was addressed by the Panamanian Minister of Health and several leading figures of the Red Cross. Mr. Nessi greeted the assembly in the name of the President of the ICRC and wished them success in their work. The ICRC representatives took the floor three times during the ensuing meetings, to deliver expositions on the development of international humanitarian law, the work that the ICRC is currently doing throughout the world and the work that the ICRC is currently doing in Latin America.

During the technical seminars, the participants examined several activities which can be summed up under the following headings: Youth—women's voluntary work—relief work—medico-social work—public relations, information, publicity and fund raising. We should mention here that the "Youth" project, which

¹ See *International Review*, February 1970.

was approved by resolution 46, provides for the study of the history and principles of the Red Cross and of the Geneva Conventions, mainly by the use of the school textbook "The Red Cross and My Country" and the "Teacher's Manual", published by the ICRC.

The Fifth Meeting of Presidents and Technical Personnel adopted 47 resolutions, some of which, of especial interest to the Red Cross, are mentioned below.¹

The Fifth Meeting of Presidents and Technical Personnel of the Red Cross Societies of the USA, Mexico, Central America and Panama decided:

Resolution No. 3.—*To urge the National Societies of the area to act on Resolution No. 1 of the Ninth Inter-American Conference and on Resolutions Nos. 2 and 41 of the Fourth Meeting of Presidents and Technical Personnel and to approach their official educational bodies in order to have courses in the history of the Red Cross, its basic principles and activities, included in school syllabi and military and police training programmes.*

Resolution No. 4.—*To ratify recommendation No. 10 adopted by the Fourth Meeting of Presidents and Technical Personnel which reads as follows:*

The Red Cross Societies of the United States, Mexico, Central America and Panama decide:

To express their gratitude to the International Committee of the Red Cross for its humanitarian activities in various parts of the world to help persons whose freedom has been restricted for reasons of a political or ideological nature;

To recommend that National Societies support future ICRC efforts and initiatives in this sphere.

Resolution No. 5.—*To reaffirm Resolution No. XI adopted by the Fourth Meeting of Presidents and Technical Personnel of the National Red Cross Societies of the region and*

To recommend that National Societies approach their respective Governments to ensure that knowledge of the Geneva Conventions be

¹ Our translation.

spread as widely as possible among the armed forces and the population in general.

Resolution No. 6.—*To recommend that National Societies approach their respective governments to obtain authorization for the use of the radio frequencies allocated to the ICRC by the International Telecommunications Union.*

Resolution No. 7.—*To recommend that the National Societies of the region obtain radio equipment through the ICRC as soon as possible in order that, by using the frequencies allocated to the ICRC by the ITU, they may establish permanent contact with one another and, through the ICRC regional delegation, with the international Red Cross organizations in Geneva.*

Resolution No. 11.—*To recommend :*

- (1) that each National Society be obliged to supervise the use of the emblem ;*
- (2) that all National Societies examine any abuses occurring in their respective countries and forward their findings to the ICRC and League delegates so that steps may be taken to have such abuses curbed by the government authorities ;*
- (3) that in so far as is possible all emblems be changed to comply with the specifications laid down.*

MEETING IN BAGHDAD OF THE ARAB RED CRESCENT AND RED CROSS SOCIETIES

From 5 to 9 March 1972, the Fifth Meeting of Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies in Baghdad was attended by some ten National Societies. The League of Red Cross Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross having been invited to send observers, the League was represented by Mr. H. Beer, Secretary-General, Mr. A. Rörholt, Director, and Mr. Y. Kiamouche, Head of the Regional Service for North Africa and the Near East,