

The ICRC delegation was made up of Mr. R. Hammer, dissemination delegate for Latin America, several ICRC staff members and regional delegates.

San José

The ICRC took part in the *fourth interdisciplinary course* which is organized every year by the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights in San José (Costa Rica).

International humanitarian law has been taught at the Institute since 1985, when the ICRC founded "the Jean Pictet chair of international humanitarian law".

The course, held from 17 to 30 August, was attended by 182 participants representing governments, the judiciary, universities and national non-governmental human rights organizations from all the countries in the Americas.

The ICRC was represented by Mr. C. Swinarski, legal adviser.

Mexico one year after the earthquake

On 19 September 1985 Mexico City and the provinces along the Pacific coast were hit by a strong earthquake which left over 5,000 people dead and hundreds of thousands homeless. The rehousing of survivors was and remains the most imperative problem, since almost 100,000 persons are still living in temporary shelters.

After the earthquake, the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies received about 54 million Swiss francs in cash and in kind from National Societies and governments. Red Cross relief operations began immediately after the disaster, distributing thousands of tonnes of relief supplies for a total value of 8.5 million Swiss francs.

Operations are still continuing, but today the accent is on rehabilitation and reconstruction. More than 2,000 houses have been built in the States of Guerrero and Jalisco, as well as in the Federal District. Priority is given to housing in rural areas to stop families flocking to urban centres and aggravating already existing problems.

The joint League/Mexican Red Cross operation has set up a prosthesis service which has assisted more than 500 amputees. This service provides not only prosthetic appliances, but also psychological counselling, house care for the handicapped, an at-home training programme and vocational training.

In addition, the Mexican Red Cross has handled thousands of tracing requests from people all over the world anxious about relatives. Tracing work is still going on, and it is now a regular service provided by the National Society.

Some of the Mexican Red Cross centres destroyed in the earthquake have been repaired, and new ones are being built.

The Mexican Red Cross has organized several events to mark the first anniversary of the earthquake. Among them was the inauguration of 337 family homes in Ciudad Guzman on the Pacific coast, attended by delegates from several National Societies. In Geneva, the League Secretary General, Mr. Hans Hoegh, declared that the priority of the joint League/Mexican Red Cross operation for 1987 was to build yet more houses, concentrating in particular on Mexico City, where most of the homeless are living.

Other projects under way include the creation of two orphanages, homes for the elderly, a fleet of 54 ambulances in Mexico City and an emergency radio communication network, and the construction of seven Red Cross first-aid posts in the capital.
