

recognition of that role the Henry Dunant Society of Geneva presented the three cities with commemorative plaques to be laid at sites associated with this historic event.

Thus on 1 February 1994, exactly 75 years after a Committee of Red Cross Societies had been formed in Cannes to set up programmes for Red Cross activities in peacetime, a commemorative plaque was affixed to the *Maison Mallet* in Geneva, the League's first world headquarters. A second plaque was laid in Cannes on 9 April to mark the 75th anniversary of the medical conference and a third was unveiled on 5 May at the Hotel Regina in Paris, where the League was officially set up. These events were attended by local authorities of the three cities and representatives of the Federation, the ICRC, various National Societies, the Henry Dunant Society and the *Association Henry Dunant/France*.

The Henry Dunant Society has also published a book entitled "The Cannes Medical Conference", which contains the speeches delivered at the ceremony held on 9 April when a commemorative plaque was laid at the Cannes town hall, and various articles contributed by specialists and public figures about Cannes, the Nautical Circle and the medical conference. In addition, the Society is preparing an historical work entitled "The seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the League of Red Cross Societies", which will contain papers retracing the League's origins, articles about the activities of the institutions concerned and the speeches delivered on 5 May at the Hotel Regina. The *Review* will publish accounts of these two works in a forthcoming issue.

Official celebration (Paris, 5 May 1994)

The official celebration of the founding of the Federation took place in Paris on 5 May. It was attended by delegations of 70 National Societies, including the five co-founders, and representatives of the Federation and the ICRC. To mark the occasion the French Red Cross, in cooperation with the Federation, organized several ceremonies in which the French authorities took an active part.

On 4 May the members of the Federation's Executive Council, the heads of National Society delegations and the members of the ICRC were received at the Elysée Palace by the President of the French Republic, Mr François Mitterrand, who spoke of the Federation's "invaluable role".

The commemorative ceremony took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the presence of Mr Philippe Douste-Blazy, Minister Delegate attached to the Ministry of Health. After a welcoming address delivered by Professor André Delaude, President of the French Red Cross, Lady Limerick, a Vice-President of the Federation and Chairman of the British Red Cross, took the floor on behalf of the National Societies. Lady Limerick outlined the circumstances in which the League was set up in 1919 and gave an overview of the Federation's past and present activities, then concluded her talk with the following words: "The

generation who founded the League in 1919 may have hoped that the First World War was the war to end all wars, and certainly those who adopted the League's motto in 1960, *per humanitatem ad pacem*, hoped that the Red Cross and Red Crescent, through its actions to promote health and social welfare and to assist the victims of all kinds of disaster, would bring peace to the world. To meet the continuing challenge arising from resort to force and damage to the environment, the Federation and its member National Societies will remain steadfast in carrying out our common mission, with the ICRC, to protect life and health, uphold human dignity and relieve suffering amongst the growing numbers of vulnerable people, in accordance with our fundamental principles".

The President of the ICRC, Mr Cornelio Sommaruga, and the President of the Federation, Mr Mario Villarroel Lander, then gave the addresses published below.

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS,
MR CORNELIO SOMMARUGA**

I should like to start by extending to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies the best wishes of the International Committee on this its 75th anniversary. I congratulate the Federation, as well as its Secretariat and all the member National Societies, on the tremendous amount of work achieved in all areas within its purview, especially in the development and promotion, at all times, of the National Societies' manifold humanitarian activities.

The Statutes of our Movement remind us that the mission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, to protect life and health and ensure respect for human dignity. By so doing, in accordance with the principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence, the components of this universal Movement, to which we are so proud to belong, are helping in their own way to promote and maintain peace.

The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols — all of which came into being at the ICRC's initiative — constitute an extraordinary expression of humane values, a heritage entrusted by the Red Cross to the international community. The International Federation and its member Societies well know the importance that the ICRC attaches to thorough and consistent work to promote knowledge of the principles and rules of the law of Geneva, laid down to preserve fundamental human rights during armed conflicts.