

Third Regional Conference of the National Societies of Asia and the Pacific

The Third Regional Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of Asia and the Pacific was held in Melbourne (Australia) from 4 to 9 February 1985. It was organized jointly by the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Australian Red Cross. Sixty participants from twenty-three National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of Asia and the Pacific attended the meeting, as did representatives from emerging Societies. Were also present observers sent by ten Societies from other regions or by intergovernmental organizations such as Unicef, Undro, the World Health Organization and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees. There were also five delegates from the League, six from the ICRC and six representatives from the Australian Red Cross, bringing the total to 103 participants.

The League was represented by, among others, Mr. Enrique de la Mata Gorostizaga, its President, and Mr. Hans Hoegh, Secretary General. The ICRC sent Mr. Rudolf Jäckli, Vice-President, and Mr. Jean de Courten, delegate-general for Asia and Oceania, together with four other representatives.

After the opening addresses at the first general meeting by the President of the Australian Red Cross, Lady Stephen, by the President of the League and by the Chairman of the Australian Red Cross, Mr. N. Buckley, conference statements were delivered by Mr. R. Jäckli, Vice-President of the ICRC, Mr. Mohammad Essaafi, Under-Secretary-General of Undro, and Mr. Hans Høegh, Secretary-General of the League. Two reports were also presented: on the League's activities in Asia and the Pacific by Dr. K. Sevaratnam, and on those of the ICRC in the same region, by Mr. Jean de Courten.

After the general opening session, the work of the conference centred on seven main subjects: these were introduced by the League, the ICRC or one of the National Societies and then discussed by one of the *ad hoc* working groups:

1. The regional structures of the Red Cross (a review by Mr. Bergström, Under-Secretary-General of the League);
2. Disaster: preparedness and relief (presented by the New Zealand Red Cross and the Bangladesh Red Cross, followed by a statement by Undro);
3. Health and social welfare programmes (work by the Thai Red Cross followed by statements by Unicef and WHO);
4. Refugees (introduction to the subject by the Malaysian Red Crescent and the Australian Red Cross, followed by an intervention by the Pakistani Red Crescent, which attracted considerable attention, and by a statement by the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees);
5. International Humanitarian Law (an outline by the ICRC headed "Reflections on dissemination") and Information (presented by the Japanese Red Cross);
6. The Second Red Cross Conference on Peace (presented by the Indonesian Red Cross);
7. Youth (by the Philippine Red Cross and the Fiji Red Cross).

During a special session, two cheques, each worth 250,000 Australian dollars, were handed to the League and the ICRC for their activities in East Africa. This money had been collected at a public concert which a group of Australian singers and musicians had given free of charge. The concert had been organized with the support of the music industry of Australia and in co-operation with the Australian Red Cross.

Sixteenth Conference of Arab Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The Sixteenth Conference of Arab Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the annual regular meeting of the General Secretariat of Arab National Societies, was held in Tunis from 25 to 28 March under the direction of Mr. Abdel Ghani Ashi, Secretary General.

National Societies from the following countries sent representatives: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen Arab Republic.