Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 991 (1992)[1]

Activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross (1989-1991)

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) derives its mandate from the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols of 1977.

2. The latter lay down the role of the ICRC as a neutral intermediary between parties to armed conflicts and its right to provide protection and assistance to all civilian and military victims of armed conflicts and to visit prisoners held for reasons connected with armed conflicts with the consent of the states concerned.

3. The fundamental principles guiding the ICRC actions are humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

4. The horrific sights of the battlefield at Solferino that led to the creation of the ICRC have unfortunately since been repeated during innumerable crises. Scenes of the seriously wounded lying unattended or actually being ill-treated have been witnessed again during the war in the former Yugoslavia.

5. In recent years the ICRC has been called on to intervene in an increasing number of conflicts. Moreover, these conflicts have been more intensive and cruel in nature than before and often were non-international in that they arose from internal disturbances.

6. On several occasions there have been breaches in the security of delegates of the ICRC, its installations and means of transport. Also, the belligerents have refused to allow the ICRC to bring relief to the affected civilian populations.

7. The ideological character of the conflicts has raised new problems for humanitarian action.

8. Insufficient knowledge of international humanitarian law in certain central and east European countries where conflicts have broken out poses problems to the ICRC in the carrying out of its tasks.

9. The Assembly considers it deplorable that various obstacles have been placed in the way of effective pursuit of the ICRC's operational objectives in recent months.

10. The Assembly invites the governments of Council of Europe member states and of those seeking membership as well as those of the states whose parliaments enjoy observer status or who have or are seeking special guest status with the Parliamentary Assembly :

10.1. to ensure that the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols of 1977 as well as the humanitarian laws applicable to armed conflicts are respected in all circumstances ;

10.2. to give or increase their political support to the ICRC and annual contributions to its budget ;

10.3. to make urgent and substantial contributions to enable the ICRC to carry out emergency humanitarian action in the field ;

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1. Assembly debate on 7 October 1992 (21st Sitting) (seeDoc. 6670, report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography, Rapporteur : Mr Flückiger ; andDoc. 6701, opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Rapporteur : Mr Amaral). Text adopted by the Assembly on 7 October 1992 (21st Sitting).

10.4. to help increase public understanding and awareness in all countries of the obligations arising from humanitarian law ;

10.5. to promote knowledge of the ICRC and its activities in their countries ;

10.6. to encourage public support for the ICRC and the national Red Cross societies ;

10.7. to ratify, without delay, if they have not yet done so, the additional protocols of 1977 to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, or to accede to them ;

10.8. to recognise the jurisdiction of the International Fact-Finding Commission.