



**Resolution 1085 (1996)<sup>1</sup>**

## **Activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 1992-95**

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly pays tribute to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for the work which it does, as a neutral intermediary, for the victims of armed conflicts, disturbances and internal tensions.
2. The Assembly recognises that the ICRC, by reason of the special status accorded it concerning the implementation of international humanitarian law by the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their protocols of 1977, constitutes a unique humanitarian organisation, playing an irreplaceable role in the areas for which it is responsible.
3. The Assembly considers that in present-day conflicts, where all civilians - men, women, children and old people - are increasingly endangered, the ICRC's role is growing continually.
4. In the years 1992-95, the ICRC protected and assisted millions of people throughout the world. Very special mention should be made of its work in Rwanda where, after appalling massacres, state authority and the judicial system collapsed, epidemics broke out, and countless prisoners were held in catastrophic conditions.
5. The Assembly expresses its gratitude to the ICRC for its work on behalf of the victims of the war in the former Yugoslavia, and particularly the thousands of persons interned during the conflict. It offers its firm support in carrying out the tasks entrusted to it under the Dayton Peace Agreements on Bosnia-Herzegovina, that is, to arrange for liberation of the prisoners as soon as possible and determine the fate of those who have disappeared.
6. Apart from its work in the field, the Assembly appreciates the efforts made by the ICRC to disseminate international humanitarian law, and its diplomatic efforts to secure the banning of certain particularly cruel weapons, such as antipersonnel mines and laser weapons that blind victims. In this connection, it welcomes the recent adoption of the fourth protocol to the United Nations Convention of 1980 on the prohibitions or restrictions on the use of certain conventional weapons, prohibiting deliberate blinding by means of laser weapons.
7. The Assembly further welcomes the stepping-up of its own co-operation with the ICRC, practical details of which were set out in the letters of their respective presidents in June and July 1995.
8. Accordingly, the Assembly invites, in particular, the governments of the member states of the Council of Europe, of the states whose parliaments enjoy or have applied for special guest status with the Assembly, of the states whose parliaments enjoy observer status, namely Israel, and of all other states to:
  - a. ensure that the Geneva Conventions of 1949, their 1977 protocols and other provisions of international humanitarian law are respected strictly and in all circumstances;
  - b. ratify, if they have not done so, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their 1977 protocols, as well as the United Nations Convention of 1980 on the prohibitions or restrictions on the use of certain conventional weapons and its protocols;

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1. Assembly debate on 24 April 1996 (13th Sitting) (see [Doc. 7499](#), report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography, rapporteur: Mr Billing). Text adopted by the Assembly on 24 April 1996 (13th Sitting).



*Resolution 1085 (1996)*

- c.* recognise the jurisdiction of the International Fact-Finding Commission provided for in Article 90 of Protocol I (1977) to the Geneva Conventions;
- d.* adopt national laws implementing international humanitarian law;
- e.* allow the national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of their country to work in full independence;
- f.* give representatives of the ICRC access to persons detained in international or internal armed conflicts, and also in other situations where the intervention of a specifically neutral and independent institution can help solve humanitarian problems;
- g.* increase their political and financial support for the activities of the ICRC;
- h.* promote the dissemination of international humanitarian law in their own countries, particularly among the armed forces and police;
- i.* support total prohibition of the transfer and use of land-based antipersonnel mines, and to ban their export immediately;
- j.* promote extension of the aforesaid United Nations Convention of 1980 to non-international armed conflicts, and inclusion in its provisions of effective procedures for verification and regular inspection;
- k.* take into consideration the fact that the humanitarian, the political and the military must each keep to its own dynamic, without confusion of objectives and tasks, with a view to preserving the independence, neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian action.