

Movement itself. The second is constant vigilance to ensure that the assistance which it offers is adequate—neither excessive nor insufficient, and in no sense creating a state of individual or communal dependence—and, above all, impartial. These two simple principles have been responsible for bringing about a change from strictly emergency aid to programmes designed to attack the root causes of continuing disasters.

Immediate assistance to the victims of conflicts and natural disasters will of course remain a primary obligation for the Movement, but attempts to find durable solutions fully independent of any political pressure and with the participation of local populations must continue and indeed grow. Only in this way can the long-term goals of the Red Cross and Red Crescent be achieved. The Movement still has a lot of growing to do both in size and, even more, in understanding its own potential. For this to be achieved it needs a great increase in public interest and support in every country.

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## **Statutory meetings in Geneva**

The XXIst session of the Executive Council of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies took place in Geneva on 21 and 22 April 1988 under the chairmanship of League President Mario Villarroel.

The delegates heard a report by the Secretary General, Mr. Pär Stenbäck, on the activities of the League Secretariat since November 1987.

Among the Council's major decisions were the provisional admission to the League of the Red Cross of Chad, 146th member of the federation (see below), and the creation of a nine-member commission with a mandate to review the "Strategy for the Development of National Societies in the Eighties", adopted in 1981 by the Twenty-fourth International Conference of the Red Cross, and to draw up development guidelines for the coming decade.

After reviewing the progress of Red Cross and Red Crescent National Society action against AIDS, the Council voted to address a statement to the World Health Assembly voicing support for the WHO Global Programme on Aids and reiterating the commitment of the League and the National Societies to preventive measures, assistance for AIDS victims, and co-operation with all those involved in combating the pandemic.

The Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace, reporting to the Council, detailed plans to devote its next meeting, due to take place in the

USSR from 10-15 October, to the theme "Information, dissemination and peace", and described progress in the organization of a worldwide campaign for the protection of war victims.

Lastly, Mr. Koichi Watanabe, Director General of International Relations of the Japanese Red Cross, was appointed League Under Secretary General in charge of Operations.

The Executive Council meeting was preceded by meetings of the bureaux of the League's advisory Commissions (Health and Community Services, Youth, Disaster Relief and Development), the League's Finance Commission, the Commission on the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Peace, and the League Working Group on the Revision of the ICRC-League Agreement. The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent met on 20 April. Lastly, an information meeting took place at the ICRC for the delegates of the National Societies present.

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