

Declaration of succession of the Solomon Islands to the Geneva Conventions

On 6 July 1981 the Solomon Islands deposited with the Swiss Government instruments containing its declaration of succession to the Four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 for the protection of war victims, pursuant to the previous ratification of those Conventions by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Following this declaration the Solomon Islands became a Party to the Geneva Conventions on 7 July 1978, the date of its independence.

The Solomon Islands is the 149th State to become party to the Geneva Conventions.

Death of Dr. R. Käser

The Red Cross learned with great sorrow of the sudden death of a long-time friend and colleague, Dr Reinhold Käser, M. D., who passed away in Berne on 29 June 1981, at the age of seventy-one.

After studying at the Universities of Geneva, Zurich, Kiel and Berne, Dr Käser practised in Solothurn and then in Berne from 1943 to 1960. He is the author of several books on medicine.

From 1954 to 1958 he held the post of chief medical officer of the Swiss Red Cross. He organized basic first aid and life saving courses, and was the very active chairman of the First Aid and Life Saving Medical Commission of the Swiss Red Cross from 1973 until his death. At the same time he was an honorary member of the Swiss Red Cross and a member of its Board of Directors.

From 1960 to 1973, Dr R. Käser held the high function of chief medical officer of the Swiss army with the rank of major-general. He was also the Swiss representative at the International Committee of Military Medicine and Pharmacy, an intergovernmental organization connected with the World Health Organization. He was appointed an honorary member of this Committee and remained, until his death, the director general for its International Further Training Courses for Young Army Doctors. In that capacity he organized the first further training course held in the autumn of 1980 at the Henry Dunant Institute.

From 1974 to 1977, Dr Käser was a member of the Swiss delegation to the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law, which ended with the signing of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions.

Dr Käser joined the ICRC on 1 June 1975 as chief medical officer and held this post until April 1978 when he asked to be released, while remaining in charge of the ICRC international medical missions group. Dr Käser rendered very considerable service to the ICRC during those three years. Through patience, knowledge of medical circles, organizational qualities and untiring efforts he developed the ICRC medical division to such an extent that the machinery he set up enabled the ICRC to carry out large-scale medical assistance activities in different areas of the world.

Dr Käser's work to introduce and disseminate international humanitarian law among medical circles was also remarkable and those who will benefit from the instruction he initiated will owe him a great debt of gratitude.

All who knew Dr Käser will remember him as a man who, despite his very demanding duties, remained a warm and loyal friend.