

5. All states are requested to facilitate the admission, transit and distribution of relief supplies by such organization for the benefit and welfare of civilian populations; and
6. All other authorities should also facilitate disaster relief activities.

This resolution is not merely a collection of pious platitudes. Passed as it was by a conference grouping both the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies, the organizations best qualified to claim the title of impartial international humanitarian organizations, and at the same time those with the greatest experience in providing relief to both natural and armed conflict disaster situations, the Declaration represents not merely a cry from the conscience of mankind but a demand for concrete action.

The other two related decisions adopted at the Conference go a step further towards concrete action by states to incur actual legal in addition to moral obligations to facilitate the provisions of disaster relief.

One of these resolutions, sponsored by Switzerland, actively supported by Canada and drafted together by the two countries, was adopted unanimously. It is entitled: "The Reaffirmation and Development of the Laws and Customs Applicable in Armed Conflicts". This resolution refers to the tragic fact of life that armed conflicts and other forms of violence continuously imperil peace and the values of humanity; it underlines the necessity and urgency of reaffirming and developing humanitarian rules of international law applicable in armed conflicts of all kinds, in order to strengthen the effective protection of the fundamental rights of human beings in keeping with the Geneva Red Cross Conventions of 1949. It goes on to request the International Committee of the Red Cross to pursue actively efforts towards four objectives, namely:

- a) Proposing as soon as possible concrete rules which would supplement the existing humanitarian law;
- b) Inviting governmental, Red Cross and other experts representing the principal legal and social system in the world to meet for consultations with the International Committee of the Red Cross on these proposals;
- c) Submitting these proposals to governments for their comments, and