

WORLD RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT DAY 1993

JOINT MESSAGE OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION
OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES
AND OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

DIGNITY FOR ALL

Today, 8 May 1993, is World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement wishes to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all who serve its humanitarian cause, whose selfless activities bring not only healing and assistance to millions of people in distress but also hope to a world overshadowed by disasters, war and suffering.

With the end of the cold war, we thought that a brighter future might lie ahead. But suffering has not diminished. On the contrary, in many parts of the world it is becoming even more acute. Armed conflict, ethnic violence and natural disasters are a constant threat to the lives and dignity of millions of men, women and children. Diseases such as AIDS and malaria, as well as poverty and malnutrition, also afflict countless people throughout the world.

There is an urgent need for food, medicines, clothing and shelter for the world's hungry and destitute. But it takes more than food and other relief supplies to address the problems of human suffering. No less important is the need for dignity... the need to protect the human rights of the individual and ensure that the victims of conflict and other adversity are respected.

The life of every human being is unique and irreplaceable. The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights attest to the common agreement of nations that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Without respect for the dignity of human beings, the quality of life is lost; our society, and civilization itself, are at stake.

Today we are launching an appeal on behalf of the hundreds of millions of people suffering from the consequences of war, from ethnic and other violence, natural disasters, disease and malnutrition. We call on every individual to respect the dignity of the people most in need. We ask for the soli-

parity of everyone, everywhere, to support humanitarian assistance and thereby to help safeguard human rights and dignity.

Let us pledge that each and every one of us will continue to combat the suffering of this world. Let us work to provide food, shelter, medical care, blood services and other necessary relief.

Let us also pledge that we shall refuse to accept the inevitability of conflict by working towards peace and reconciliation.

“Dignity for all” must be our common goal.

Note:

This message was recorded by:

Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (speaking in *French, German and Italian*);

Dr. Mario Villarroel Lander, President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (speaking in *Spanish*);

Mr. George Weber, Acting Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (speaking in *English*);

Dr. Fouad Hamza, President of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and Vice-President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (speaking in *Arabic*);

The recording (on 7 1/2 inch reel tape or cassette) can be obtained from the Public Affairs Department of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.