

A note from the Editor

On 8 July 1996, the International Court of Justice issued an advisory opinion entitled “Legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons” in reply to a question submitted to it by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The Review subsequently invited a number of international legal experts to discuss the implications of this opinion for international humanitarian law as a whole, and we are happy to be able to publish eight articles on the subject by as many authors. While they have expressed a variety of viewpoints about the Court’s conclusions on the main issue, they all stress in one form or another the importance of the advisory opinion for international humanitarian law in general.

The Review is particularly pleased that Professor Géza Herczegh, a judge at the International Court of Justice and a renowned authority in the field of international humanitarian law, has agreed to write the foreword to this series of articles.

In his introduction to the articles regarding the Court’s conclusions, Yves Sandoz, the ICRC’s Director for International Law and Policy, reminds those in positions of political power that they have a responsibility to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again.

At our invitation, John H. McNeill had already set about drafting an article when his work was abruptly interrupted by his sudden death. His passing away constitutes a great loss to all those who knew this eminent jurist and expert in international humanitarian law. The Review is grateful to his close colleague at the United States Department of Defense, Ronald D. Neubauer, for completing the unfinished text.

The Review