

A note from the Editor

The unity of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is perhaps best illustrated by the concerted action taken by the Movement's various components on behalf of people who need assistance. Several articles in this issue of the *Review* highlight different types of cooperation between National Societies and the ICRC. The first shows that cooperation with National Societies is essential in spheres of activity which fall within the ICRC's mandate, for instance in the conduct of humanitarian operations and the dissemination of international humanitarian law. Another article examines certain aspects of action taken during an armed conflict or in its immediate aftermath, viewed mainly from the angle of operational cooperation. These two general presentations are followed by texts focusing on specific examples, notably the assistance operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. By publishing these articles, the *Review* wishes to contribute to a better understanding of the day-to-day cooperation between the components of the Movement.

The *Review* is also pleased to offer a number of contributions from authors with firsthand experience of some practical problems encountered by a humanitarian organization. Michel Minnig comments on the role of "neutral intermediary" that the ICRC endeavours to play in humanitarian matters; as a member of the ICRC delegation in Peru he was personally involved in the hostage crisis in Lima, and is therefore well placed to discuss the question. Another ICRC delegate, Thomas Jenatsch, describes the institution's activities in the context of Colombia's bloody internal conflict.

Other topics addressed in this issue include security as a prerequisite of humanitarian action and rules of behaviour in assistance operations.

Catherine Rey-Schirr takes us back in time with her account of ICRC activities on the Indian subcontinent during the events leading up to

partition, and the subsequent establishment of two new States, India and Pakistan, *half a century ago*.

Finally, there is a general presentation of a chapter of the law of armed conflict that has been somewhat neglected in publications of recent years, namely the rules of international law applicable to air warfare.

The Review