

## **Training course for dissemination officers of Portuguese-speaking National Societies**

The first training course for dissemination officers of Portuguese-speaking National Societies took place from 2 to 10 August in Sao Tome (Sao Tome and Principe).

The course, which was organized jointly by the ICRC and the League in co-operation with the Sao Tome and Principe Red Cross, was attended by 27 representatives from the following seven National Societies: Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and Sao Tome and Principe. Also attending the course were officers from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Sao Tome and Principe and representatives of the Presidential Guard, the Prison Service, the Police, State Security and the Head of State's Protocol Service.

The opening meeting took place on 2 August in the presence of the First Lady of the Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, Mrs. Amélia Pinto da Costa, who is also President of the country's Red Cross, ministers, representatives of the diplomatic corps and delegates from National Societies, the ICRC and the League.

The programme covered the history of the Movement, its principles and the responsibilities of National Societies, various aspects of humanitarian law, principles and techniques for relief operations, dissemination and information. Papers on these topics were read by Mrs. Rosely Cézar Pimentel, a dissemination officer from the Brazilian Red Cross, Dr. Isabel Navega, a lawyer from the Portuguese Red Cross, Dr. Luis Nunes, programme officer at the League's Africa Department, and Mr. Léonard Isler, who is in charge of dissemination and co-operation for Africa at the ICRC.

A new approach was adopted at the course: first practical exercises on each theme were carried out by working groups, then the proposals and suggestions made were discussed in plenary session, and finally the whole procedure was rounded off by a lecture. The active participation of the delegates bore testimony to the success of this new method.

The course should give a decided impetus to the organization of national dissemination programmes by the various National Societies which were represented. Incidentally, it demonstrated the value in the medium term of producing more dissemination material and publications in Portuguese.