

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

Middle East

Lebanon

Organization of assistance

Since the end of the evacuation operations at Tel Al-Zaatar, the ICRC delegation in Lebanon has continued its work in protecting and assisting the wounded and sick, displaced populations, minorities isolated in hostile territory, and prisoners. It has given special attention to developing the necessary structures for providing medical and material assistance to deal with any worsening of the situation.

The latter work is now virtually complete with regard to medical assistance. The Beirut delegation had already set up a system in the western part of the city, grouping the major hospitals, in order to ration-
alize the supply of medicines and provide the best possible distribution.

A system of the same kind was arranged through the Jounieh delegation for the hospitals in eastern Beirut, the coast and the northern part of the country, which are also overcrowded and working under difficult conditions.

The ICRC is also working to improve existing institutions, and sometimes to create new ones, in various provinces. For this purpose, the medical delegates have visited numerous dispensaries and first-aid posts, co-ordinating this activity with local authorities, members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the medical services of various armed groups and such bodies as the Organization for Social Development (OSD).

With regard to material assistance, the ICRC delegates carried out numerous missions to evaluate needs in several areas, making censuses of displaced persons and isolated minorities. In this field as well, the ICRC has worked closely with local agencies, wherever they exist, supplying them with food and blankets.

At the end of September and in early October, Mr. J. P. Hocké, director of the Department of Operations, visited Lebanon. He was received by Mr. E. Sarkis, President of the Republic, who agreed to support the ICRC's activities in providing protection and assistance.

The ICRC launches an appeal for funds.

Regardless of any changes which may occur in the political and military situation in Lebanon, humanitarian problems are certain to worsen with the coming of winter. Accordingly, the ICRC has drawn up a programme of action for the period from 1 October 1976 to 31 January 1977, with the following main objectives:

Medical assistance: The ICRC will continue to supply medical equipment and drugs to hospitals, which continue to receive many wounded, and to dispensaries in Beirut and in the provinces. It will also continue to maintain the hospital it set up in Beirut, the need for which has been shown by continuing maximum occupancy.

Material assistance: The ICRC estimates that 400,000 persons with no other recourse are in need of its help. The ICRC intends to provide them with supplementary food and other items, including blankets.

Central Tracing Agency: The ICRC plans to extend its activities throughout the country, in order to locate missing persons and make possible exchanges of news between members of separated families.

To carry out this four-month programme, the ICRC on 8 October appealed to governments and National Societies for contributions totalling 46 million Swiss francs to cover a monthly budget of 11.5 million francs, divided as follows:

	millions of francs
Food	5.5
Medical assistance	2.0
Miscellaneous (mattresses, blankets, clothing, cooking utensils)	1.5
Transport	2.0
Operating costs	0.5

It may be recalled that the ICRC delegation in Lebanon is divided into several groups (Beirut, Jounieh, Tripoli and Bekaa) and also has a logistics base in Cyprus from which relief is sent by sea to Lebanon. In addition, it receives logistic support from the delegation in Damascus.

Prisoners

ICRC delegates in Beirut visited two persons held by the communists. They have since been liberated.

Statistical summary

Relief shipments : From the beginning of its relief action through 26 September, the ICRC delivered 2,461 tons of relief to Lebanon, consisting of 491 tons of drugs and other medical material, 1,873 tons of food and 97 tons of blankets, clothing etc., valued at 13.5 million Swiss francs. The ship chartered by the ICRC, the Kalliopi, made two more voyages, carrying more than 500 tons of relief.

Field hospital : As indicated above, the ICRC field hospital in Beirut with its staff of 15 doctors and nurses supplied by the Nordic Red Cross Societies has continued its activities without letup. There were more than 40 permanent patients in the hospital. About 100 surgical operations are carried out weekly and some 600 outpatients are treated every week.

Central Tracing Agency : During September, the Central Tracing Agency in Geneva and local bureaux in Beirut, Jounieh and Tripoli have started about 200 searches, on request, and have transmitted more than 1,700 family messages.

Latin America

Venezuela

At the end of September, Mr. L. Isler, regional delegate for the Andes region, began a series of visits to places of detention in Venezuela.

By mid-October, he had visited three places of detention in Caracas, the "Carcel Modelo", the "Cuartel San Carlos" and the central hospital of the armed forces, as well as two prisons in the provinces, at Valencia and Trujillo. He saw 66 persons detained for political reasons or political offences and was able to speak to them without witnesses.

Chile

During September, the ICRC delegation in Chile, directed by Mr. R. K. Jenny, visited 19 places of detention, with a total of 335 detainees. Relief valued at nearly 3,000 dollars was distributed to the detainees.

The delegation also continued giving assistance to the families of detainees. Gifts in cash and in kind, including food, clothing, medicine, blankets, disinfectants and toilet articles, valued at more than 17,000 dollars, were delivered to 464 families in Santiago and 965 families in the provinces.

Asia

Philippines

During the round of visits to places of detention in the Philippines from 6 June to 21 July, described in the September issue of the *International Review*, Mr. A. Pasquier, regional delegate, made a study of the relief needs of displaced persons in Mindanao. The logistic requirements for a relief programme were discussed with the authorities and with the Philippine Red Cross.

After this mission, the ICRC at the end of September sent to the Philippines 150 tons of milk and 150 tons of rice, contributed by the European Economic Community, and 100 tons of flour and 10 tons of milk, contributed by the Swiss Confederation. The supplies will be distributed by the Philippine Red Cross in co-operation with the responsible authorities.

Africa

Sahara

An ICRC mission consisting of the regional delegate for North Africa, Mr. J. de Courten, a delegate specializing in relief, Mr. A. Beaud, and a medical delegate, Dr. F. Altherr, visited Algeria from 14 to 24 September. Their purpose was to contact the authorities, the Algerian Red Crescent and the Polisario Front, to arrange to visit prisoners captured by the latter movement and to examine the situation in refugee camps in the Tindouf region.¹

The ICRC delegates were able to visit 30 Moroccan and 27 Mauritanian prisoners, with whom they had talks without witnesses.

The delegates also visited eight refugee camps in the Tindouf region.

After making these visits, the delegates requested permission to visit, as soon as possible, Moroccan and Mauritanian prisoners whom they had not yet seen.

They also asked for the release, on humanitarian grounds, of two French nationals.

As soon as news had been received in December 1975 that these two men were missing, the ICRC, with the support of the French Red Cross and the Algerian Red Crescent Societies, took steps to obtain confirmation of their capture and then asked for permission to be granted to their families and ICRC delegates to visit them. This was authorized and the visits took place in May and September 1976.

On 27 October 1976, the ICRC handed over to the French authorities two French nationals who had been released by the Polisario Front.

¹ *Plate.*