

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

Regional delegations in Africa

In 1970, the ICRC opened two regional delegations in Africa, one at Yaoundé (Cameroon) for West and Central Africa, and the other at Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) for East Africa. In both countries, the ICRC permanent delegates enjoyed throughout their mission the full support of the authorities and the co-operation of their National Red Cross Societies.

In February 1974, the ICRC moved its regional delegations from Yaoundé to Lomé (Togo), and from Addis Ababa to Nairobi (Kenya). The ICRC wishes, by carrying out such transfers from one capital to another, to develop the particularly close links that are forged by the setting up of a regional delegation.

Mozambique

From 21 January to 12 February 1974, two ICRC delegates and a doctor visited several Mozambican places of detention. They went to the following prisons and camps: Machava (22, 23 and 26 January), Ponta Mahone (24 January), Tete 2 (28 and 29 January), Tete 1 (30 and 31 January), Vila Cabral (1 February), Porto Amelia (2 February), Ibo (3 February), Nampula (6 and 7 February), Quelimane (8 February) and Nicoadala (9 February).

They saw about 1,900 persons detained for reasons or offences of a political nature, and were able to talk privately with prisoners of their choice.

Following this round of visits, the delegates conveyed their observations and suggestions to officers of the General Directorate of Security. The distribution of material assistance in the places of detention visited totalled 20,000 Swiss francs.

Members of local delegations of the Portuguese Red Cross received the delegates and helped them with transport arrangements. As usual, reports on the visits will be sent to the Portuguese authorities along with the ICRC's remarks and recommendations.

Mission of delegate-general for Latin America

On 24 January, Mr. Serge Nessi, ICRC delegate-general for Latin America, left Geneva on a mission to Latin America which was to last several weeks.

Mr. Nessi first proceeded to Honduras where, from 29 January to 1 February, he attended the VIth Meeting of Presidents and Technical Seminars of National Societies of Central and North America, jointly organized by the Honduran Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies. The ICRC delegate-general made a statement on the ICRC's activities.

During his stay in Honduras, Mr. Nessi visited the Tegucigalpa penitentiary and there saw more than 2,400 detainees. After stopovers in Costa Rica and Panama, the ICRC delegate-general went to Chile.

Chile

In January, the ICRC delegates in Chile visited more than 4,000 detainees in 49 places of detention, namely 23 in the central area, 14 in the north and 12 in the south. During the same month, the following relief supplies were distributed to detainees: 25 batches of medicaments in 25 places of detention; 1,500 blankets and 6 tons of powdered milk in six places of detention; toilet items for 600 detainees in five different prisons; and, lastly, medical supplies and various articles in four places of detention. From September to December 1973, ICRC material assistance to Chile, thanks to the contributions made by various Red Cross Societies and Governments, reached a total of more than half a million Swiss francs, representing 5 tons of medicaments, 30 tons of powdered milk, 21 tons of medical supplies and equipment, 5,000 blankets and several hundred mattresses.

In January, the Central Tracing Agency delegates issued 95 "travel documents" for refugees who could leave the country but had no papers. This brings the total number of documents issued by the ICRC since the beginning of its action in Chile to around 600.

Asian Sub-Continent

From September 1973 to the beginning of February 1974, some 200,000 persons in the Asian sub-continent were repatriated: 45,000 prisoners of war and 15,000 civilian internees from India to Pakistan: 91,000 Bengalis from Pakistan to Bangladesh, and 47,000 non-locals from Bangladesh to Pakistan.

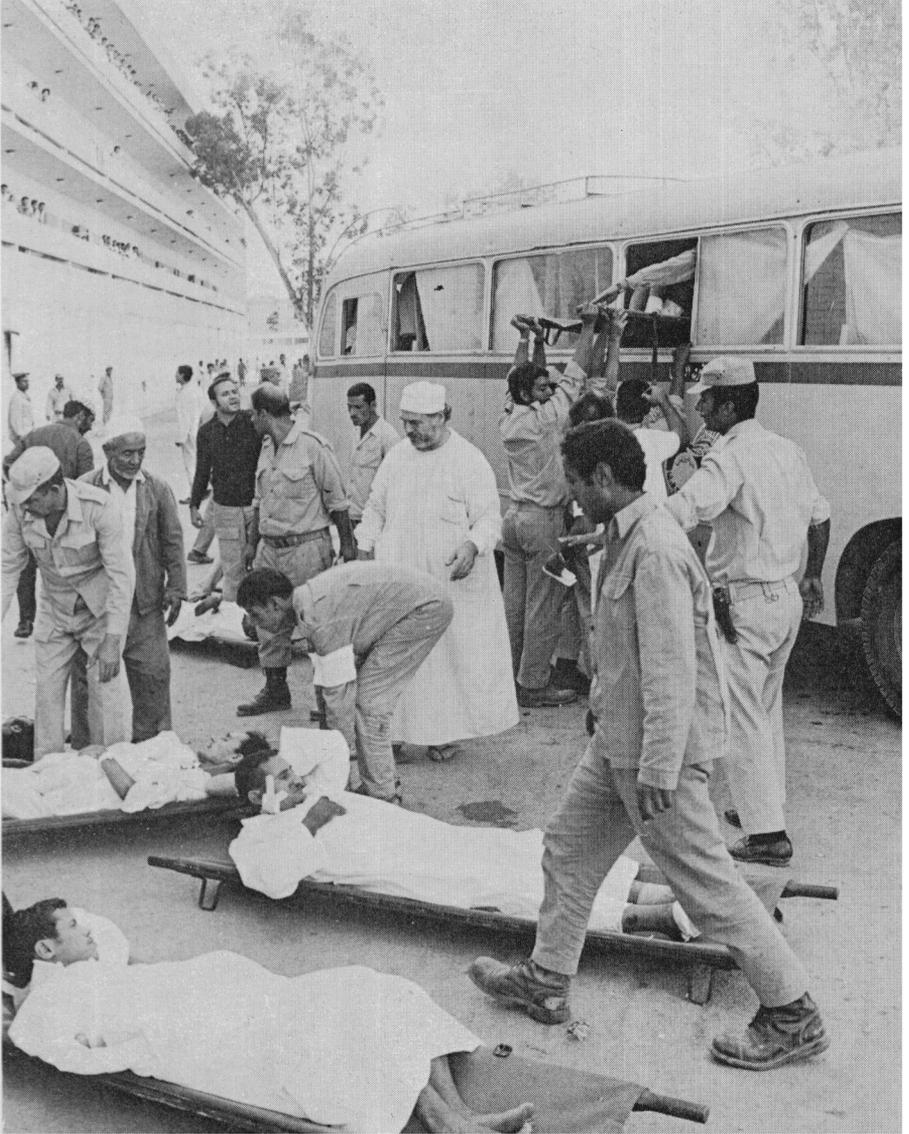
In this vast operation, the ICRC's activities consisted mainly in registering applicants for repatriation, in Pakistan and Bangladesh, and providing them with the requisite travel documents once they had secured an entry visa from the authorities of the country of refuge. By 12 February 1974 the work was almost concluded, 125,000 persons having been registered in Pakistan and 535,000 in Bangladesh. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), for its part, is providing transport between Pakistan and Bangladesh by means of an air-lift. Released Pakistanis, who are being repatriated from India by rail, are escorted by ICRC delegates.

People's Republic of China

At the request of the Red Cross Society of China, on 31 January an ICRC delegate proceeded to Shum Chun, a town on the border between Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China, to take over five wounded South Vietnamese servicemen captured during the incidents on the Paracel Islands and released by the Chinese authorities.

On 17 February, a second operation took place whereby a further 43 Vietnamese prisoners were released and repatriated, in the presence of the ICRC.

MIDDLE EAST — NOVEMBER 1973



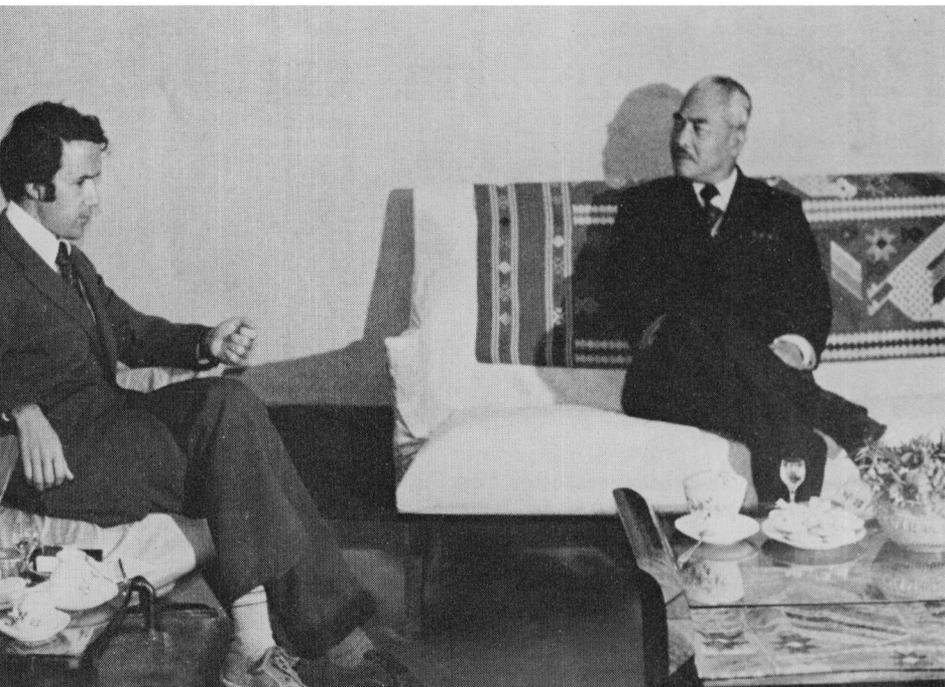
Suez: Egyptian wounded being evacuated from the Suez hospital, by the ICRC, with the co-operation of the United Nations Emergency Force.

Photo Vaterlaus/ICRC



Malaysia: Under the auspices of the Malaysian Red Cross Society, the ICRC regional delegate addresses trainee Teachers, members of the Red Cross, on the ICRC and the Geneva Conventions.

Pathet Lao: The ICRC delegate who is at the head of the International Red Cross Assistance in Indo-China (*left*), received at Sam Neua by H.H. Prince Souphanouvong, President of the Central Committee of Neo Lao Hak Sat, in February 1974.



Middle East

Prisoners of war

During January and February 1974, the ICRC pursued its activities and approaches on behalf of prisoners of war.

In Israel, ICRC delegates several times visited some 400 Syrian, Iraqi and Moroccan prisoners of war and about ninety new Egyptian prisoners of war captured since 22 November 1973.

Repatriation of prisoners of war

On 14 February, the ICRC repatriated on the El Qantara road fifteen Egyptian prisoners of war who had been captured on 22 November 1973 and released by the Israeli authorities.

Six wounded Egyptian prisoners of war had already been repatriated on 24 January.

Evacuation of wounded and sick

On 23 January, 250 wounded and sick were evacuated from the Suez hospital under the auspices of the ICRC. They were transported in about twenty buses converted into ambulances and with United Nations drivers. This operation brings the total number of the wounded and sick whom the ICRC has evacuated from the Suez hospital to 1,635.

On 27 January, the ICRC arranged for the evacuation of a seriously wounded Egyptian soldier from the Kabrit area, on the east bank of the Suez Canal, to Cairo.

Mortal remains repatriated

The search for and repatriation of bodies of Egyptian and Israeli servicemen, which had been suspended at the end of November 1973, were resumed on 23 January 1974. Search operations are conducted by the parties concerned while ICRC delegates arrange for the mortal remains to be returned to the respective countries.

Thus the bodies of nineteen Israeli and twenty-seven Egyptian soldiers were repatriated on the El Qantara road, on 5 February, in the presence of the ICRC. The mortal remains of twenty-seven

Egyptians and seventeen Israelis were repatriated on 12 February, and those of twenty-seven Egyptians and eighteen Israelis on 19 February.

Occupied territories

The ICRC has continued to fulfil its duties to the Arab civilian population in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967. The ICRC has made several approaches to the Israeli authorities regarding the territories occupied since the October 1973 conflict. So far, delegates have been authorized to proceed to the newly occupied Egyptian territory on the west bank of the Suez Canal. Visits were made in January and February to Kabrit, Fanara, Faed and Abu Sultan, where the delegates were able to talk with the inhabitants about their various problems, without any witness.

On the other hand, ICRC delegates were not allowed to carry out their activities in newly occupied Syrian territory, on the Golan Heights.

IN GENEVA

Mauritanian President's visit

On the occasion of his visit to Switzerland, H.E. Mr. Moktar Ould Daddah, President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, called at the headquarters of the ICRC on 19 February 1974.

President Moktar Ould Daddah was accompanied by Madame Ould Daddah, Honorary President of the Mauritanian Red Crescent, Madame Abdul Aziz Sall, the Society's active President, and several high government officials. He was received by Dr. Eric Martin, President of the ICRC, Mr. Roger Gallopin, President of the Executive Board, and members of the Directorate.