

*EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES***Africa****Angola**

As a post-war emergency assistance operation, the ICRC, at the end of February, submitted to the Government of the People's Republic of Angola (RPA) a six-month medico-social programme to supplement the humanitarian activities which it had been carrying on for several months. In a letter on 13 April, the Angolan Prime Minister, Mr. Lopo do Nascimento, informed the ICRC of the Angolan Government's wish for assistance programmes for the Angolan people to be conducted by national agencies and particularly through the National Red Cross Society which was then being organized.

On 4 May, the ICRC sent the Angolan Prime Minister an official note expressing its satisfaction at the forthcoming reorganization of the National Society and at the active role which would be assigned to it in the programme of national reconstruction. It also informed the Angolan Government of the phasing out of the emergency programme infrastructure which had been operating for the benefit of the conflict victims. It added that its services were available to the National Society to study a programme for the training of personnel, particularly in the tracing of missing persons. The ICRC also thanked the authorities of the MPLA and of the RPA for their co-operation and expressed the hope that this would be continued in the interest of the victims of the armed struggle going on in southern Africa.

The ICRC informed the governments and National Red Cross Societies to which it had appealed for support to carry out the six-month medico-social programme, of the Angolan Government's decision to assign to the National Society the forwarding of relief supplies made available to the ICRC for victims of the events in Angola.

It recalled the Head of its Angola delegation, Mr. C. A. Neukomm, to Geneva to work out with him arrangements for the phasing out of ICRC

medical activities and relief, scheduled to be completed by the end of June.

By the end of May, ICRC strength in Angola was still a score of people, including a medical team provided by the Swedish Red Cross and working at the Dalatando hospital, and three mobile medical teams working in the Huambo and Bie districts, supplied by the British and Swiss Red Cross Societies.

South Africa

In April an ICRC mission visited four places of detention in South Africa (Robben Island, Pretoria Prison, Kroonstad and Pretoria Central), where there were a total of 258 prisoners convicted for subversive activities. The mission interviewed the detainees of its choice without the presence of witnesses.

Apart from their various interviews with the competent authorities concerning their prison visits, the ICRC representatives conferred with the leaders of the South African Red Cross in Johannesburg and with several leaders of local sections.

Uganda

The two ICRC regional delegates for East Africa, Mr. U. Bédert and J.-F. Borel, accompanied by Dr. Meyenberg, a medical delegate, have just carried out a series of visits to places of detention in Uganda. In April they went to nineteen penitentiary establishments and one hospital—at Kampala (3 prisons), at Masaka, Mutukula-Farm, Mbarara, Mubuku Farm, Fort Portal, Gulu, Arna, Patiko Farm, Soroti, Moroto, Namalu Farm, Murchison (2), Jinga (2), Bugungu and Rippon Falls. In all they saw 6,000 detainees. The delegates talked in private with the detainees of their choice and provided relief material.

A delegate will return to Uganda in June to distribute further relief material in these establishments and to give a series of conferences on the ICRC at the headquarters of the Ugandan Red Cross in Kampala and at local provincial sections.

Morocco

While in Morocco for a second visit to 99 Algerian prisoners—five of whom are being tended at the Rabat Military Hospital for their wounds—Mr. P. Gaillard, adviser to the ICRC, gave a series of conferences on the Geneva Conventions. These prisoners, captured by the armed forces of Morocco, had been visited for the first time on 4 February.

Latin America

Chile

In April the ICRC delegation in Chile, led by Mr. R. K. Jenny, visited nine places of detention in which there were 606 detainees. As customary, the ICRC delegates distributed various relief supplies to a total value of about 11,000 dollars. In addition, 52 kilos of medical supplies were handed to the infirmaries of six prisons.

At the same time, the delegation continued its assistance to detainees' families. In Santiago 390 families, and in the provinces 1,410 received the benefit of this assistance which was valued at about 32,000 dollars.

The ICRC does not have access to all detainees from the moment of their detention. The Chilean authorities have allowed it facilities to visit camps holding persons detained under the emergency regulations and civilian prisons. The delegates also have access to some places of detention under military control. On the other hand, the ICRC is still not authorized to visit certain centres which are controlled by security agencies, except for one, and even there the delegates may not interview the detainees without witnesses, unlike the procedure in the other places of detention to which the delegates have access. The ICRC is continuing its efforts to obtain access to all places where detainees are held.

Uruguay

As we mentioned in our April issue, the ICRC delegate general for Latin America, at an interview last February with the junta of the Commanders of the Armed Forces, was assured that the ICRC would again be able to visit places of detention in Uruguay.

In April, the two regional delegates for the southern states of Latin America, Mr. B. Glauser and Mr. W. Monnier, were authorized to visit several places of detention controlled by the military authorities; they were able to interview detainees but only in the presence of authorities.

Venezuela

The ICRC regional delegate for the countries of the Andes, Mr. Eddi Leemann, has had a number of interviews with the new Venezuelan Minister of Defence and members of his staff concerning visits to places of detention and the dissemination of knowledge of the Geneva Conventions through the Military Academies.

The ICRC delegate also contacted the Minister of Justice who renewed his general authorization to permit the delegate to visit places of detention. On 27 April, the delegate went to an establishment in Caracas where there were 44 detainees with whom he talked in private.

Asia

Pakistan

The new ICRC regional delegate in the Asian sub-continent, Mr. D. Borel, went to Pakistan at the end of April in order to contact the authorities and Red Crescent Society. He had various interviews with the Pakistan Minister of Foreign Affairs, mainly on the question of the transfer to Pakistan of "non-locals" from Bangladesh.

The delegate also conferred with leaders of the Red Crescent—in particular the Begum Nusrat Bhutto, Executive President—on the dissemination of knowledge of the Geneva Conventions and Red Cross principles among the armed forces and youth.

Timor

Mr. S. Nessi, delegate general, went at the end of May to Djakarta to discuss with the Indonesian National Society and the competent authorities from Dili the continuation of Red Cross action in Timor. The purpose of these conversations was primarily to make arrangements for the implementation of an agreement concluded earlier in the month in Geneva between the ICRC and the Indonesian Red Cross. This agreement relates to the distribution of 2,000 tons of cereals and 100 tons of milk powder donated by the European Economic Community for the benefit of displaced persons in Timor.

Middle East

Lebanon

In view of the persistent fighting, and to help the victims on all sides, the ICRC has maintained in Lebanon:

- a delegation in Beirut and an office at the airport, both in the western part of the town, with five delegates and local personnel;
- a field hospital in the Ouzai quarter, staffed by three doctors, seven female nurses and a technician, who were all made available by the Red Cross Societies of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden;
- an office at Jounieh, with two delegates;
- a mobile medical team—a doctor, a female nurse and a delegate—based in Tripoli and working in Akkar;
- a mobile medical team at Baalbek, working in Bekaa.

In the middle of May, for the safety of the patients and to provide better working conditions, a part of the hospital was transferred to buildings, the tents no longer being safe. Surgeons, anaesthetists and nurses work day and night to care for the war-wounded coming from surrounding districts. Since the hospital went into action in February, it has performed 510 operations, 135 involving major surgery. In addition, 5,154 consultations were given to 3,860 out-patients.

While the medical team based on Tripoli continues to go each day to various villages of the Akkar region to tend the isolated inhabitants and provide medicaments, the team working at Bekaa had to suspend its activities at the beginning of May as conditions had become too dangerous. Arrangements slightly different from those originally planned will therefore be made.

The ICRC continued sending relief supplies, mainly medical. These go direct by air to Beirut, via Cyprus to Jounieh, and via Damascus for the plain of Bekaa and for Akkar. These consignments are not only for the ICRC medical teams but also for various hospitals in the capital and the provinces which are short of medical supplies. To distribute these provisions, the ICRC works closely with the Lebanese authorities, the Lebanese Red Cross, the "Palestinian Red Crescent" and various local organizations. A large part of the medicaments are provided by the WHO.

Since it began its assistance operations in Lebanon last autumn the ICRC had sent to that country by mid-May this year some 225 tons of relief supplies to a value of 3.6 million Swiss francs. These supplies are provided by the ICRC, National Red Cross Societies, governments and various organizations.

The ICRC delegation in Beirut is also active in carrying out the operations of the Central Tracing Agency. By the beginning of May it had received more than 5,200 inquiries, many of them coming from the occupied territories of Israel. Positive replies have been given to 70% of the inquiries, negative replies to 9% and investigations are continuing for 21%.

Israel and the occupied territories

In March and April, ICRC delegates carried out the 34th series of visits to places of detention in Israel and the occupied territories. They went to fourteen places of detention where there were more than 3,200 civilian detainees from the occupied territories or from neighbouring Arab states. They were able to interview without witnesses the detainees of their choice.
