

## *EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES*

### **Asia**

#### **Thailand**

In March and April, ICRC delegates in Thailand continued their visits to police posts along the border in the north, north-east, south and south-east of Thailand. They visited 102 police posts and six transit camps and saw 5,086 detainees. Of these, 4,888 had entered Thailand illegally. In May, these visits were pursued further, including 18 police posts and four transit camps, which contained, among all the detainees held, 387 persons who had entered the country illegally. The delegates also visited three detention centres in Bangkok, where they saw 31 detainees.

In the course of these visits, relief supplies are distributed to those recent arrivals, among the detainees on Thai territory, who are absolutely destitute. Essential articles (such as clothing, toilet items) are provided by the ICRC. In March and April, six thousand Swiss francs' worth of relief was distributed.

#### **Indonesia**

From 15 March to the end of April 1978, two ICRC teams, each one comprising two delegates, a doctor and an interpreter, visited altogether 26 places of detention in various parts of Java, where they saw 5,930 political detainees. These visits constituted the second stage of the ICRC's programme of visits, which will be pursued in various places of detention on other islands of the Republic of Indonesia.

#### **Iran**

Since mid-April 1978, two delegates and two doctors from the ICRC have been carrying out a new series of visits to places of detention in Iran. By 15 May they had already visited the ten main places of detention

in Teheran and the provinces. Visits are being carried out to other places in the country.

The ICRC has also been granted authorization to open an office in Teheran for a trial period of one year. A delegate, who will be in charge of the office, was despatched to Teheran in mid-April.

### Viet Nam

An ICRC mission was in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam from 17 to 29 May. Its purpose was to examine with the authorities and the Red Cross of Viet Nam the humanitarian needs of persons who had left their homes because of the recent events on the border between Viet Nam and Democratic Kampuchea, and also to make arrangements for visiting, in conformity with the traditional role of the ICRC, military and civilian nationals of Kampuchea who had been captured in the combat zones.

To this end, Mr. Michel Veuthey and Mr André Pasquier, ICRC delegates, and Mr. François Zen Ruffinen, head of the ICRC delegation in Hanoi, met Mr. Nguyen Co Thach, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, who confirmed the determination of the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to pursue a humanitarian policy within the spirit of the Geneva Conventions and to grant the ICRC delegates all facilities for carrying out the ICRC's activities of protection and assistance.

The ICRC delegates went to the border provinces of Tay Ninh and An Giang in the southern part of Viet Nam, where they visited, with representatives of the Red Cross of Viet Nam, a camp at Ben San, sheltering some 7,000 refugees from Kampuchea, and the districts of Tri Ton and Chau Doc, where several tens of thousands of Vietnamese civilians, who had fled their villages when the fighting started, have been established with other refugees from Kampuchea.

A first visit was also made to a camp at Xuan Loc, holding members of the Kampuchea armed forces captured in the combat zones.

At the end of its mission, the ICRC delegation studied with the Red Cross of Viet Nam an emergency aid plan to provide assistance to 725,000 displaced persons over a period of six months in the form of food (rice, powdered milk, sugar, canned meat and fish), clothing, blankets, mosquito-nets and corrugated iron sheeting for temporary shelters. This plan covers the requirements assessed by the ICRC delegates in the two provinces which they visited and also the needs assessed by the National Society for other border provinces affected by the fighting.

## Latin America

### Delegate-general's mission

From 7 to 29 April 1978, the ICRC delegate-general for Latin America, Mr. Serge Nessi, carried out a mission which took him to four countries, namely Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil.

In *Chile*, Mr. Nessi reviewed with the ICRC delegation the programmes of its activities and its plans for the current year.

In *Argentina*, the delegate-general, accompanied by Mr. André Tschiffeli, regional delegate, met in Buenos Aires the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Vice-Admiral Oscar Montes, the Minister of the Interior, General Albano Harguindeguy, and the Army Chief of Staff, General Roberto Viola, who confirmed the facilities granted to the ICRC for discharging its activities of protection and assistance to detained persons. In *Cordoba*, the delegate-general also conferred with General Luciano Menendez, Chief of the Third Army Corps, who authorized the ICRC to visit the detainees held at the disposal of the military authorities in the civilian prisons in the area around *Cordoba*, and in a military barracks.

In *Uruguay*, the ICRC delegate-general met the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Alejandro Rovira and the Joint Armed Forces Chief of Staff, General Julio Cesar Rapella. Mr. Nessi discussed with his interlocutors the possibility of resuming ICRC visits to places of detention in Uruguay.

In *Brazil*, the ICRC delegate-general discussed with National Society senior officials questions of mutual concern in connection with ICRC activities.

### Argentina

The ICRC delegation in Argentina, comprising five delegates, two doctors and a member of the Tracing Agency staff, continued its activities of protection and assistance in March and April. During those two months, seven places of detention were visited by ICRC delegates, who saw altogether 932 detainees. Assistance to families of detainees has increased and at present reaches about 600 families, costing the ICRC an average of about 8,000 dollars every month.

### Chile

In March, ICRC delegates and doctors in Chile visited twelve, and in April fifteen, places of detention, containing in all 148 detained persons. These visits were continued during May, when the delegates went to 13 places of detention in the north of Chile.

ICRC assistance in the prisons amounted to 1,480 dollars in March and April, while the cost of relief to needy persons totalled 19,350 dollars. About 4,000 persons, including a large number of families of detainees and of former detainees, in Santiago and in other parts of the country, are receiving assistance.

### Nicaragua

A further series of visits to places of detention in Nicaragua took place in April. ICRC delegates visited three places of detention in Managua, where they saw altogether 59 detainees. The ICRC, together with the National Society, are working out arrangements for an aid programme covering about thirty families of detainees.

### Europe

#### Portugal

At the invitation of the Portuguese Red Cross an ICRC delegation attended the official ceremony commemorating the 150th anniversary of Dunant's birth. Mr. Athos Gallino, a member of the ICRC, and Mr. Robert Gaillard-Moret, head of the Documentation and Dissemination Division, went to Porto for the inauguration of a monument to the founder of the Red Cross.

During the ceremony, speeches were made by the Minister of Defence, the President of the Porto Section of the National Society, by Mr. Gallino, and other people.

The two ICRC representatives had talks also with the President of the Portuguese Red Cross, General Tender, and his senior collaborators.

While in Portugal, Mr. Gaillard-Moret, on 10 May, visited 13 political detainees at the Caxias prison and military hospital.

### Cyprus

From 10 to 22 April, Miss Lix Simonius and Mr. John Grinling, ICRC delegates, were on mission in Cyprus. They visited Greek Cypriots living in the northern area and Turkish Cypriots who had remained in the south. They had talks with the leaders of the « Cypriot Red Cross », and with authorities in both parts of the island. They also contacted the representatives of the UN Secretary-General and of the UN military forces in Cyprus (UNFICYP) which took over some of the humanitarian work which the ICRC had assumed during and after the 1974 armed conflict.

### Africa

#### Southern Africa

##### *Mission in Southern Africa*

From 10 March to 24 April, Mrs. Jeanne Egger, in charge of the southern Africa operations in Geneva, had numerous contacts with officials of governments and Red Cross Societies. She had working sessions with the ICRC delegates and accompanied them in their activities in the field. Mrs. Egger's mission was to report on ICRC action in southern Africa and to adjust objectives for the coming months to meet the changing situation and her findings on the spot.

#### Rhodesia/Zimbabwe

In Rhodesia/Zimbabwe the ICRC delegates and members of the mobile medical teams sent by the nordic Red Cross Societies (a total of 35 people) continued in March, April and May their protection and assistance operations, particularly in the « protected villages », the missions and in the suburbs of the larger towns. Systematic tours are made in the most needy regions and at the same time relief distributions are made or supervised by the delegates. In March and April, relief to a value of 180,000 Swiss francs was distributed by the ICRC in « protected villages ».

In March, the ICRC started a bus service to take needy families to visit their members in detention. On 20 March the first bus went from Salisbury to Wha Wha Prison. Two others later left from Umtali and Bulawayo. The service is continuing.

As suggested by the ICRC, the Rhodesian authorities have given instructions for hospital and medical establishments to be marked with the sign of the red cross. All parties to the conflict have been advised of this step which should provide better protection for such establishments.

#### *UANC Statement*

Mr. Jacques Moreillon, director of the Department of Principles and Law, was in Rhodesia-Zimbabwe from 16 to 22 April. He met several officials concerned with problems relating to the protection of victims of the conflict.

Following these discussions, the President of the United African National Council, Bishop Muzorewa, signed a statement reading as follows: « The UANC hereby declares that it has decided to respect the humanitarian rules and principles contained in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their first additionnal Protocol, as the high ideals contained in international humanitarian law are in full accord with the philosophy of the UANC. Furthermore, it is the will of the UANC to address to the Swiss Government a declaration of intention according to article 96 of the First Protocol as soon as it will be formally possible ».

#### *Three ICRC Collaborators killed*

The ICRC was profoundly grieved by the death, on 19 May, of three of its collaborators in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe: Mr. André Tièche and Mr. Alain Bieri, ICRC delegates of Swiss nationality, and their African companion, Mr. Charles Chatora. They were killed in tragic circumstances while on their way to the Nyamaropa Clinic in the Inyanga district near the Mozambique border.

The murder took place in broad daylight. The ICRC collaborators were in a white car clearly marked by large red cross signs. They had been on the road only a few minutes and it seems possible that this act was a deliberate attack on the ICRC and its work.

The ICRC has expressed its indignation at the murder of its collaborators in the exercise of their humanitarian activities.

#### **Mozambique**

Mr. Thierry Germond, ICRC delegate, left Mozambique at the end of April. He had been on mission in that country since mid-February. He had many contacts with officials of the Government and of the various liberation movements represented in Maputo.

On 21 April, he attended the inauguration of the rehabilitation centre for the disabled for which the ICRC supplied equipment. This ceremony was held at the ZANU headquarters in Maputo, in the presence of several members of the ZANU Central Committee, including Mr. Mugabe, the ZANU President and co-President of the Patriotic Front. Mr. Germond on that occasion handed over a minibus from the ICRC for the conveyance of amputees between their homes and the rehabilitation centre.

### **Botswana**

A mobile medical team, a doctor and a female nurse from the New Zealand Red Cross, arrived in Botswana on 21 April. It immediately began its work in the Francistown and Selebi Pikwe refugee camps.

The regional delegate, Mr. Frédéric Steinemann, accompanied by Mrs. Jeanne Egger, delegate in charge of southern Africa affairs in Geneva, who was on mission in the region, visited the Gaborone Prison on 16 March. There they saw 18 foreign detainees without diplomatic representation. They also visited the prison and refugee camps of Francistown, Selebi Pikwe and Maun.

### **East Africa**

#### **Ogaden**

Several missions were carried out in March and April in Ethiopia and Somalia to assess the protection and assistance the ICRC was providing for victims of the Ogaden conflict.

In *Somalia*, where he went in March, Dr. Rémi Russbach, chief medical officer of the ICRC, visited hospitals near the frontier. At Mogadishu he had lengthy discussions with the Somalia Red Crescent whose co-operation in the field is essential for the proper conduct of assistance operations. The National Society is in constant touch with the local ICRC delegate.

During the first four months of this year, the ICRC sent 250 tons of various relief goods to Somalia.

In *Ethiopia*, ICRC delegate Eddi Leemann went to Harar to enquire into medical and other conditions for the civilian population. In addition, on 6 March, he visited 17 prisoners of war in Ethiopian hands.

In April, the ICRC director of Operations, Mr. J. P. Hocké, had high level talks in Addis Ababa with the Government and Red Cross on the scope and duration of ICRC activities in Ethiopia. He was joined

in the Ethiopian capital by Dr Russbach who assessed the medical situation preparatory to drawing up priorities and deciding the final details of the ICRC assistance programme.

From 17 March to 25 April, the ICRC in Ethiopia conveyed 28 tons of foodstuffs and blankets to some 5,000 displaced persons in the Bale region and to 3,000 others at Sidamo.

### West and Central Africa

#### Chad

At the beginning of February, the ICRC sent a mission to Chad to examine with the government and with the leaders of the National Liberation Front of Chad (Frolinat) arrangements for ICRC action for the benefit of conflict victims.

Mr. Laurent Marti, the head of the mission, met the President of the Republic, H. E. Mr. Felix Malloum, who agreed to the ICRC's providing protection and assistance to prisoners of war held by the Frolinat in the north.

On 28 February, aboard an aircraft chartered by the ICRC and carrying 2.5 tons of emergency relief goods, Mr. Marti reached Faya-Largeau where he conferred with the Frolinat leaders, including Mr. Goukouni Oueddai, President of the Armed Forces Command Council in the north. Mr. Goukouni Oueddai told the ICRC delegate of the Frolinat's determination to apply the humanitarian principles of the Geneva Conventions for the benefit of prisoners.

An ICRC delegation was quickly set up, with one base at N'Djamena and another at Faya-Largeau, thereby enabling sixteen delegates and doctors to attend to the needs of prisoners. The ICRC aircraft — which on its first flight took to N'Djamena five seriously wounded prisoners who could not be treated at Faya — made six further flights in March, delivering almost 40 tons of foodstuffs to the north, sufficient to provide for prisoners and their families for a month.

The prisoners, of whom there were some 2,500, are periodically visited by ICRC delegates. These captives were given supplies and the opportunity to exchange news with their families through the Central Tracing Agency.

The resumption of hostilities between the Chad army and the Frolinat in the middle of April compelled the ICRC to interrupt its flights between the north and the south. The ICRC has applied for permission to resume flights to take to the north the relief supplies necessary for the prisoners held by the Frolinat and to enable the ICRC delegates at Faya Largeau to continue to give protection and assistance.

On 8 May the aircraft was authorized to make one flight to Faya Largeau to renew contact with the delegation.

In spite of transport and supply difficulties, the delegates continued their activities in the north. They visited prison camps in the region of Kirdimi, Bardai and Yebbi Bou and distributed food sufficient for three to five weeks. The ICRC medical team returned from Koro Toro on 11 May after giving care to the wounded in the fighting which took place in that region. The Central Tracing Agency at N'Djamena transmitted 1,252 family messages in April.

### Zaire

After the violent incidents in Zaire's Shaba province, the ICRC, through its regional delegate, Mr. Frédéric Steinemann, is conducting a humanitarian mission in the area. On 19 May, he reached Lubumbashi by road, and immediately contacted the civil and military authorities and representatives of the Red Cross of the Republic of Zaire.

He then went to Kolwezi, where the first thing he did was to get patients to return to their sick-beds in the hospital which they had been compelled to flee during the fighting. As there was an urgent need for food, Mr. Steinemann next went to Lisaki to take delivery of 2,000 bags of flour donated by the Société Gécamines (which mines the mineral ores in the province). The flour was immediately despatched to Kolwezi on a train with red cross markings and is now being distributed by Zaire Red Cross voluntary workers and officials of the Government Social Welfare services. These voluntary workers have also been identifying and burying the dead victims of the fighting.

Many persons being reported missing, offices of the Tracing Agency have been opened in Kolwezi, Lubumbashi and Likasi.

Mr. Steinemann is continuing to gather information on the volume and nature of medical needs.

### Western Sahara

#### *A mission by the President of the ICRC*

The ICRC President, Mr. Alexandre Hay, carried out a threefold mission in April and May. In Algiers he met H. E. Mr. Houari Boumedienne, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, and the leaders of the Polisario Front; at Fez, H. M. King Hassan II of Morocco; and at Nouakchott, H. E. Mr. Mokhtar Ould Daddah, President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. Following these

discussions, ICRC delegates visited prisoners captured in the western Sahara conflict.

#### *Visits to prisoners*

In *Morocco*, two ICRC delegates visited the 99 Algerian prisoners who had been captured by the royal armed forces at Amgala. The previous visit was in December 1977. The ICRC was authorized also to visit, for the first time, all Polisario Front combatants captured since the beginning of the conflict, whether still in detention or released on the spot.

In *Mauritania*, an ICRC delegate and a doctor visited all the 205 Polisario Front combatants who had been captured while bearing arms.

At the end of May the visits to Moroccan and Mauritanian prisoners held by the *Polisario Front* had not begun.

### **ICRC Appeal**

On 7 April the ICRC appealed for funds to finance its action in Ogaden. However, with the rapidly deteriorating situation in several parts of Africa, it issued a fresh appeal on 24 May expressing its profound concern and asking for the moral and financial support necessary to enable it to accomplish its humanitarian mission.

#### *AFRICA: ICRC APPEAL*

*The International Committee of the Red Cross has launched an appeal for Swiss francs 20 million (U.S. dollars 10 million) to finance its operations throughout Africa during the next six months.*

*The ICRC is deeply concerned by the steadily worsening situation in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe; by developments in such neighbouring countries as Mozambique, Botswana and Zambia; by the resurgence of hostilities in the Horn of Africa; by the conflict between the Government armed forces and the National Liberation Front (FROLINAT) in Chad; by the horrifying events in Zaire; and by the plight of the victims of the conflict in the Sahara.*

*It has called on the parties to the various conflicts to respect the Geneva Conventions and accord the ICRC the necessary facilities to discharge its responsibilities towards the victims, and on the signatories to the Geneva Conventions to fulfil their own obligations by providing the necessary funds.*

## Middle East

### A mission by the delegate general

ICRC delegate general for the Middle East, Jean Hoefliger, carried out a mission in Lebanon, Israel and the occupied territories from 3 April to 7 May in view of the gravity of the events taking place.

In Lebanon he met several government officials, including Mr. Sélim Hoss, Prime Minister, with whom he conferred on ICRC activities in the country.

In Israel and the occupied territories he reviewed current humanitarian problems during a talk with the Minister of Defence, General Ezer Weizmann.

In both Lebanon and Israel, Mr. Hoefliger had working sessions with the ICRC delegates on current operations.

### Lebanon

From the outset of the mid-March events in Lebanon (the advance of Israeli forces in the south of the country, the exodus of displaced persons, the emergency situation in general), the ICRC reminded the parties concerned of their obligations under the four 1949 Geneva Conventions. The essential provisions of those Conventions include, apart from the ICRC's role as a neutral intermediary, the protection of prisoners (Third Convention), protection and assistance to the civilian population of occupied territory (Fourth Convention), the search for missing persons, and exchange of news between members of dispersed families.

At the same time — 22 March — the ICRC appealed to the international community for finance. In a few days cash contributions amounting to more than 3 million Swiss francs were promised by fifteen National Societies and governments.

In addition, from 22 March to 15 May, the ICRC received from ten National Societies, governments and various organizations 202 tons of goods to a value of 886,000 Swiss francs and comprising mainly milk for children, other foodstuffs, blankets, clothing, baby clothes and medicaments. The ICRC also bought in Lebanon and Europe about 70 tons of blankets, detergents, antiseptics, medical supplies and so forth to a value of 740,000 Swiss francs (freight included).

### Assistance

During the fighting the sixteen delegates and doctors of the ICRC based at Beirut and Tyre immediately took the emergency measures required by circumstances. They distributed medical supplies and

equipment in the main hospitals and dispensaries in south Lebanon and, working closely with the Lebanese Red Cross and the « Palestinian Red Crescent », they tended the wounded and helped the civilian population. At Tyre, where the delegates carried on despite the bombing, an emergency dispensary was opened to give care to some 4,000 civilians who had stayed put (out of a total population of 45,000), the two main hospitals having been evacuated to Saïda.

Immediately the cease-fire was declared, the ICRC delegates made a survey in the areas of Israeli military operations. They found food and medical needs to be relatively slight, the Israeli authorities having temporarily coped with the situation in conformity with the Fourth Geneva Convention. On the other hand, there was need for a system of family message transmission for the population which had stayed on and was cut off from their families in the rest of the country.

The ICRC delegates returned several times to the villages in south Lebanon, and drew the attention of the authorities to any acute needs. If necessary they organized distributions themselves. In April and in the first fortnight of May, for instance, the ICRC provided 10.3 tons of relief supplies (milk for babies, clothing, blankets, etc.) in 22 villages. It also provided material for the erection of makeshift shelters in the Palestinian camps.

At Beirut the flood of some 200,000 displaced persons — Lebanese and Palestinians — from the south made immediate government assistance a necessity. As co-ordinator and adviser, the ICRC took part in the meetings of the government relief committee comprising representatives of the Lebanese Red Cross, the « Palestinian Red Crescent » and various humanitarian organizations. The ICRC provided the Lebanese Red Cross with 65 tons of supplies (milk for babies, clothing, detergents, soap and 12,000 blankets), the Government with 17,000 blankets and 3,000 sheets, the « Palestinian Red Crescent » with 14.5 tons of relief (milk for babies, clothing and 8,500 blankets). In addition, medical material valued at some 150,000 Swiss francs was handed to the National Society and to the “Palestinian Red Crescent”. From mid-March to mid-May medical supplies alone amounted to 10.8 tons.

When the first of the displaced persons began to return to the south, towards the middle of April, the ICRC helped the authorities to organize temporary camps to shelter families at night, at Tyre and elsewhere.

#### *Protection*

The ICRC delegates in Israel — for the first time on 19 April and several times since then—have visited the prisoners taken by the Israeli

armed forces south of the Litani. Several have been repatriated by the ICRC.

In Lebanon the ICRC delegates continued visiting Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners held by the "Lebanese Front".

In addition, on 29 April, they made their first visit to an Israeli prisoner of war held by the "Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine", captured on 5 April in the Tyre region.

The work of the Tracing Agency has rapidly developed as a consequence of the events. During the last fortnight of March alone, 1,700 tracing requests were processed and 3,800 family messages transmitted. The work diminished slightly in April, with 1,433 family messages exchanged.

The ICRC acted also as an intermediary between the Lebanese and Israeli Governments. As a consequence a nine-member delegation of the Lebanese Government was able to go south of the Litani to make a survey preparatory to the resettlement of displaced persons and the reconstruction of destroyed buildings. The ICRC co-operated in this survey at the end of April.

#### *Death of an ICRC delegate*

The ICRC delegation in Lebanon mourns the accidental death on 29 March of Mr. Louis Gaulis, a delegate at Tyre. His car was shot at during the night, swerved and hit a wall. Mr. Gaulis was fatally injured.

#### *A delegate wounded*

Mr. Frank Lador, an ICRC delegate in Beirut, was wounded on 15 April in almost similar circumstances. He was hit in the chest by a bullet.

Mr. Lador was treated first in Beirut then in Switzerland. He has returned to Lebanon where he has resumed his duties.

#### **Israel and occupied territories**

Several operations were organized in March, April and May to enable people to travel between the occupied territories and the Arab countries under ICRC auspices.

On 3 April, at Kuneitra, a Syrian civilian who had infiltrated in March 1978 was released by the Israeli authorities and repatriated by

the ICRC. At the same time, three students from Gaza, after completing their studies at Damascus University, returned to the occupied territory.

On 26 April, 34 people from the Syrian Arab Republic returned to their families in the occupied territory of Golan.

Five repatriation operations took place in April and May across the Allenby bridge: two released detainees, a disabled person and two other civilians crossed from Israel to Jordan.

At El Khirba, in the United Nations buffer zone in north Sinai, 256 persons who had been visiting their families in Cairo, and 50 graduated students, returned to the occupied territories of Gaza and Sinai. In the opposite direction, 151 visitors went to Cairo.

On 17 May 115 persons went to Cairo and 223 travelled in the other direction. In addition, on 29 March and 3 May, the ICRC repatriated the bodies of two persons who had died in Cairo.