

IN THE RED CROSS WORLD

RED CROSS ASSISTANCE IN INDO-CHINA

On 18 March 1974, the President of the ICRC Executive Board, the Secretary General of the League and the Director of the Indo-China Operational Group (IOG) sent National Red Cross Societies a circular letter concerning changes in the responsibilities and organization of the body co-ordinating international Red Cross assistance in Indo-China, although, for the sake of administrative and practical convenience, that body was to continue to be known as the IOG. The tenor of that letter having been given in the April 1974 issue of International Review, we do not feel it necessary to repeat it here.

On 7 April 1975, the ICRC and the League sent National Societies a communication regarding emergency assistance to displaced persons in South Vietnam and Cambodia. It refers to the new arrangement superseding the one mentioned in the circular letter of 18 March 1974 concerning Red Cross activities in that area. We give below an excerpt from the letter :

Based on the Agreement of 25 April 1969 and the interpretation which the ICRC and the Board of Governors of the League adopted concerning relief operations undertaken in circumstances foreseen in article 2 thereof, the co-ordinating body set up by the two institutions has decided that assistance to civilian population in Indo-China territories where hostilities are presently raging shall be a joint ICRC, League and National Societies operation—the ICRC assuming the ultimate responsibility while a state of conflict exists. It has consequently dissolved the Indo-China Operational Group (IOG) as a separate entity, as from 31 March 1975, and established a task force called the “Indochina Bureau” (Indsec) entrusted, under the supervision and direct authority of the responsible executives of the two institutions, with the co-ordination, execution and administration of international relief operations of the Red Cross.