

## Missions by the President of the ICRC

From 2 to 11 February, Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the ICRC, accompanied by Mr. S. Nessi, Head of the Financing Division, visited Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia in that order.

In *Bahrain*, where he stayed until 4 February, Mr. Hay was received by Emir Issa Ben Selman Al-Khalifa and had discussions with Sheik Mohammad Ben Moubarak Ben Hamad Al-Khalifa, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Ali Mohammad Fakhro, Minister for Education (who is also President of the Bahrain Red Crescent) and with other senior staff members of the National Society.

In *Qatar* (5 and 6 February) Mr. Hay met Emir Khalifa Bin Hamad Al-Thani, H.E. Ali Ben Ahmad Al-Ansari, Minister for Labour and Social Affairs (and, at the same time, Vice-President of the Qatar Red Crescent), Mr. Khalid Bin Mohamed Al-Mana, Minister for Health, Mr. Mohamed Nour Al-Obeidli, Director of the Department of International Organizations at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as well as H.E. Sheik Ali Bin Jaber Al-Thani, President of the Red Crescent Society, and other people in charge of the National Society.

In *Saudi Arabia* (8 to 11 February), the President of the ICRC had discussions with Sheik Mohammad Abalkhail and Mr. Osama Fakeeh, respectively Minister and Vice-Minister for Finance and the Economy, Mr. Gaafar Allagany, Director for International Organizations at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Abdul Aziz Al-Jallal, Director General of the Gulf Council for Co-operation. Contacts were also made with senior members of the National Society and, in particular, with H.E. Dr. Hamad Abdullah Al-Sugair, President of the Saudi Arabia Red Crescent.

In each of the countries visited, Mr. Hay presented an overall survey of the ICRC's activities in the Middle East to those with whom he had discussions. He stressed the need to ratify the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions and to disseminate knowledge of international humanitarian law, and he emphasized the increased needs of the ICRC with regard to the financing of its humanitarian work.