

*EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES**July-August 1987***Africa****Mozambique**

Following the appalling massacres in Homoine and Manjacaze on 18 July and 10 August, the ICRC appealed to all the combatants in the conflict in Mozambique to put a stop to such atrocities. In a press release of 14 August, the ICRC reminded those involved in the conflict that one of the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law is that civilians—especially women, children and old people—must be respected, together with hospitals and hospital staff; in short, all those not taking part in the fighting must be spared.

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In conjunction with the National Society, the ICRC delegation in Mozambique carried on its work to help civilians displaced by the fighting. In recent years, the ICRC's sub-delegation in Quelimane (Zambezia province) has functioned as the centre of operations. It was decided to move that centre to Beira (Sofala province) at the end of August, because of the better logistic facilities in Beira (port, railway from Zimbabwe, fuel supplies, etc.), and also because of the growth of ICRC operations in the southern provinces of Inhambane and Manica.

## Angola

The ICRC's activities in the field had to be partially suspended in July for lack of sufficient security guarantees. In August, the delegates were able to resume their customary visits on the Planalto where they began to prepare the distribution of maize, sorghum and soya seed to the civilian population due to take place in September and October.

## Ethiopia

Mr. Rudolf Jäckli, a member of the Executive Board, led a delegation from the ICRC in late July to Addis Ababa where the OAU Summit was being held. The mission also provided an opportunity for the ICRC representatives to meet officials from the Ethiopian Red Cross Society and discuss the resumption of ICRC activities in that country and arrangements for co-operation between the ICRC and the National Society.

The ICRC's locust control programme was launched in August, first in the Asmara region and then in Tigre province. Beginning on 21 August, the ICRC's Piper Aztec aircraft was based in Mekele and a series of successful locust-spraying operations was carried out in Tigre.

Distribution of food by the ICRC was also resumed in June in Eritrea and Tigre. Food distributions were later organized in Gondar. During the month of August, a total of 927 tonnes of food were received by some 38,000 people in Eritrea, 29,000 in Gondar and 16,000 in Tigre.

Finally, a survey of the affected provinces was undertaken in July with a view to setting up an early warning system so that action can be taken quickly in areas where the population is suffering particular hardship.

## Chad

In July and August, the ICRC attempted to carry out its Convention-based protection and assistance activities in connection with the conflict by repeating its approaches to the Chad and Libyan authorities, both in Geneva and through its delegation in N'Djamena. On 2 July, the Director of Operations and the Deputy Delegate General for Africa were received by President Hissène

Habré for discussions on the question of visits by ICRC delegates to the prisoners of war captured by the Chad national armed forces. At the end of August, the ICRC had still not received a reply to its written and oral representations to the two parties to the conflict and further steps were being considered.

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During the Libyan bombing raids on the Tibesti in August, an ICRC delegate and nurse were in Faya-Largeau giving first-aid courses. They returned to N'Djamena on 17 September when their course was finished.

## Latin America

### Haiti

In view of the general situation in the country, the ICRC sent two delegates (including a doctor) to Haiti in early August to determine whether the ICRC would be required to take action. The delegates had numerous discussions with the Haitian Red Cross and travelled to various parts of the country to visit hospitals and outposts of the National Society. Following this mission, a joint programme of action was established with the League to strengthen the structure of the National Society (restructuring six branches, improving ambulance and first-aid services in the capital, disseminating knowledge of Red Cross work and international humanitarian law, etc.).

In addition, the ICRC regional delegate based in Costa Rica had discussions in July with the Haitian authorities on various subjects of common interest.

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The ICRC visited detainees in *Chile* and *El Salvador* (in both countries, visits to places of detention under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice and the security corps), in *Nicaragua* (visits to two prisons in the capital) and in *Peru* (visits to prisons under the

jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice in Lima and in the provinces).

The ICRC continued its assistance programmes for the civilian populations affected by the conflicts in *Nicaragua* and *El Salvador*. In the latter the second phase of its "Agricultural Programme" was successfully completed: during the period under review, bean, sorghum and sesame seeds and insecticides were distributed to more than 12,000 families.

In addition to its routine activities in Nicaragua and El Salvador, the ICRC gave a course for officers of the armed forces of *Honduras* and the *Dominican Republic*, as part of its programme to spread knowledge of international humanitarian law and the activities of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Relations were maintained through the regional delegations with the authorities and/or the National Societies of the following countries: Brazil, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay.

## Asia

### Kampuchean conflict

As the years go by, hopes that the refugees may be able to return to their homes have dwindled and the situation has become increasingly difficult in the camps housing displaced persons on the Khmer-Thai border, especially at Site 2 (160,000 inhabitants). The insecurity there, due both to the conflict and to internal violence, constantly makes itself felt and is a source of great concern to the ICRC.

While waiting for a solution to be found that would enable people to return with dignity to their homes, the ICRC is continuing its efforts to persuade the authorities concerned to provide better protection for the refugees, for example by evacuating the camps in unsafe zones, ensuring that the civilian status of the sites is respected and dividing the Site 2 camp into smaller, more manageable units. In August a delegate was sent from Geneva to study what specific measures could be taken to bring this about.

The three ICRC surgical teams, each made up of a surgeon, an anaesthetist and a nurse, continued their work at the Khao I Dang hospital. In July and August 273 new patients were admitted, 100 of whom had been wounded in the fighting.

Turning to tracing activities, finally, the ICRC remained the only official channel of communication between the camps on the border. During the period under review, 5,037 letters and family messages were exchanged between the inhabitants of the various camps, both Khmer and Vietnamese. The delegates also continued dealing with tracing requests (1,552 requests, of which 667 were resolved) and transferring Khmer and Vietnamese refugees either to the border or to a transit point in preparation for their resettlement abroad.

### **People's Republic of Kampuchea**

The authorities in Phnom Penh agreed to a request for another family reunification, the first carried out under ICRC auspices in 1987. A young girl, accompanied by an ICRC doctor, left Kampuchea to join her family in Paris.

### **Democratic People's Republic of Korea**

At the invitation of the National Society, the head of the ICRC's regional delegation in Hong Kong carried out a mission to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in August. His visit helped the ICRC to maintain its contacts with the National Society and the authorities and to discuss projects of mutual interest.

### **Indonesia/East Timor**

In a further series of visits to detainees (GPK prisoners) from East Timor held in connection with the events there, the ICRC obtained access to 172 detainees in Dili and Jakarta in August.

### **Conflict in Afghanistan**

*Afghanistan:* During a visit to ICRC headquarters Mrs. Soraya, President and Secretary-General of the Afghan Red Crescent, reviewed the activities of the ICRC in her country with President Sommaruga.

In the area of medical care, an agreement between the ICRC and the Afghan Red Crescent on a programme of support for Red Crescent dispensaries was signed on 19 August. The discussions also covered ICRC orthopaedic activities (a third ICRC technician arrived in Kabul in August), the possibility of setting up an ICRC surgical hospital in the capital, disseminating knowledge of international humanitarian law in the National Society and in the Afghan armed forces, and protection for detainees.

*Pakistan:* meanwhile, the number of war wounded admitted to the ICRC surgical hospital in Quetta in July (120) and August (133) has considerably increased. Five hospital tents provided by the Norwegian Red Cross were set up nearby to increase the number of beds. In addition, a new operating room and intensive care unit were inaugurated at the Quetta hospital on 25 August. The two ICRC surgical teams in Quetta perform an average of 300 operations per month. In Peshawar, 264 patients were admitted to the ICRC hospital in July and August and 681 operations were performed.

## Middle East

### Iran/Iraq Conflict

After allegations had been made in July of repeated use of chemical weapons, strictly prohibited by international law, the ICRC once again approached the two belligerents to remind them, in accordance with its principles and customary procedure, that it is always ready to carry out its traditional assistance activities for the victims of armed conflict, whether in cases where prohibited weapons have been used or where attacks have been made on civilians or civilian property.

Delegates meanwhile continued their visits to prisoner-of-war camps in Iran and Iraq. In *Iran*, they visited the ninth and tenth camp in the first series of visits which had begun in December 1986.

In *Iraq*, two teams of ICRC delegates continued their visits to Iranian prisoners of war. The year's fourth series of visits took place in June and July and the fifth series began in August.

From 20 to 31 August, the ICRC delegate general for the Middle East carried out a mission to Tehran. There he met Iranian

authorities to discuss the ICRC's work on behalf of victims of the conflict and many humanitarian questions of mutual interest.

He also met leading officials of the National Society with whom he discussed co-operation between their Society and the ICRC.

### **Lebanon**

During the months of July and August, the fall in the value of the national currency made the economic situation in Lebanon even more critical.

The ICRC continued its usual activities, in particular relief work. In accordance with its mandate, the ICRC assists civilians who are the direct victims of the fighting, especially those living in the villages along the demarcation line between the "security belt" in the south and the rest of the country.

In conjunction with the Lebanese Red Cross, the ICRC used mobile clinics to provide medical consultations for civilians in nine villages in the region without any medical infrastructure. During the period under review, the mobile clinics were on three occasions prevented by lack of security from making scheduled stops in villages. Relief supplies (food, blankets, cooking utensils) were also distributed throughout the country to those most severely affected by the conflict and the economic situation: 7,000 persons in July and over 8,000 in August.

The ICRC continued to have regular access to the Palestinian camps, such as Rachidieh, in the south of the country. It was also authorized to go to the Chatila and Borj-el-Brajneh camps in Beirut to provide medical and tracing assistance. With the agreement of all the parties, the wounded were evacuated from the camps for treatment.

ICRC delegates continued their visits to persons detained by various parties to the conflict; 80 persons were seen in July and 30 in August. In spite of repeated requests, the ICRC did not gain access to all the persons detained. In particular, it was not authorized to visit detainees in the "security belt", such as those in the Khiam prison. The ICRC did, however, have access to persons captured in Lebanon and detained, in violation of the Fourth Convention, in Israel. There were 44 such detainees at the end of August.

### **Israel and the Occupied Territories**

In August ICRC delegates, including a doctor, began the complete annual series of prison visits which should take them to 17

places of detention. The series was delayed because the procedure for the doctor's visit once again became an issue between the Israeli authorities and the ICRC. At the same time, delegates pursued their usual activities, most of them based on the Fourth Geneva Convention relating to the protection of civilians.

### **Yemen Arab Republic**

A series of visits to places of detention in the Yemen Arab Republic which had begun at the end of June was completed on 24 July. The delegates, including an ICRC doctor, visited some 4,000 detainees—42 of them security detainees—in eight detention centres in the capital and in provincial towns.

### **People's Democratic Republic of Yemen**

The regional delegate for North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula went to Aden in early July to meet the Minister of the Interior, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Vice-Chairman of the State Security Committee and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. He handed over to them the report on the visit made in late April to 89 security detainees arrested in connection with the events of January 1986.

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