

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

### **ITS (International Tracing Service—Service international de recherches—Internationaler Suchdienst)**

The ICRC has just published two brochures with the above title, one describing the International Tracing Service as it is today and the other telling of its origin and development.

The International Tracing service was created in 1943 and given a mandate to gather, classify, preserve, and put to use individual documents relating to people persecuted by the National-Socialist regime under the Third Reich. The ITS has the task of providing documentary proof of the persecution of civilians who were imprisoned or sent to do forced labour during the National-Socialist era for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or moral or political convictions. The proof is supplied in the form of certificates or extracts from other documents. These are the only documents which are officially recognized by the authorities and can be used for compensation and pension claims. The ITS still receives every year 30,000 to 40,000 requests annually from about 35 countries and the resulting information is supplied to the victims themselves, their beneficiaries or to the authorities responsible for compensation and pensions.

The activities of the ITS are presented in detail with the aid of statistics, graphs, maps and photos, which effectively illustrate the Service's work.

The development of the role and organization of the ITS, which has been in Arolsen in the Federal Republic of Germany since 1946, is the subject of a special brochure modelled on the above-mentioned one. It relates the founding in London of a central tracing bureau in 1943 and the setting up of the International Commission for the ITS, with 10 member States: Belgium, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, UK and USA) whose task is to supervise the Service's work and co-ordinate the activities of the governments represented.

There is also an account, complete with reproductions of historic documents, of the negotiations between the Allied Powers and the Federal Republic which led to the Bonn Agreements of June 1955 under which the Federal Republic of Germany assumed financial responsibility for the ITS and the Service's exclusively humanitarian objectives were reaffirmed.

At the same time, there was an exchange of notes between the governments concerned relating to the future work of the ITS in which it was agreed that the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva would be responsible for administering the ITS.

These brochures are available from the ICRC in English, French and German.