

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

Official visits to the ICRC

His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain and Queen Sophia visited the headquarters of the ICRC on 21 October 1987. The royal couple were in Geneva for the presentation of the Nansen Medal, awarded to the King by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The King and Queen of Spain, accompanied by the Spanish Foreign Minister, Francisco Fernández Ordóñez, Government officials, and the President of the Spanish Red Cross, Leocadio Marín, were received by the ICRC President, Cornelio Sommaruga, and members of the Committee and Directorate.

In his speech of welcome, the President of the ICRC paid tribute to his guests as the highest-ranking representatives of the Spanish Red Cross. The National Society, which is under the patronage of the royal family, is one of the oldest and most active in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

President Sommaruga offered his congratulations to King Juan Carlos for the distinction conferred on him in the morning. He also took the opportunity to thank the Spanish Government, Red Cross and people for the moral, diplomatic and financial support they give to the ICRC.

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On 27 October 1987 the head of the Swiss Federal Military Department, **Federal Councillor Arnold Koller**, visited the ICRC, where he was welcomed by President Cornelio Sommaruga.

The President of the ICRC took this opportunity to thank the Federal Council for the moral, diplomatic and financial support which the ICRC receives from the Confederation.

In his reply, Federal Councillor Koller stressed the close and effective co-operation between his Department and the ICRC. He also paid tribute to the delegates who had recently died in Angola and Lebanon while on mission for the ICRC, and he conveyed to President Sommaruga the Federal Council's heartfelt sympathy.

The head of the Federal Military Department was accompanied by the Director of the Federal Military Administration, Mr. Hans-Ulrich Ernst, and by the Director of the *Office fédéral de l'adjudance*, Major-General Emanuel Stettler. In a discussion with members of the Committee and the Directorate, the delegation from the Military Department broached several aspects of the relations between the ICRC and the Department, including the dissemination of international humanitarian law in the officer training courses organized by the Swiss Army.
