

*EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES**(November-December 1987)***Africa****Mozambique**

During the final months of 1987 the ICRC gradually managed to overcome the numerous logistic difficulties it had encountered; its aid programme, conducted together with the National Society, went as planned. Thus, by the end of 1987, ICRC delegates were working as normal in 51 areas throughout 41 districts in seven of the country's ten provinces. From the beginning of 1988 onwards their activities should increase in the province of Manica and in the Inhambane region.

Nevertheless, at the end of December the ICRC temporarily had to limit its activities for security reasons, particularly in areas where the fighting was heaviest. Negotiations were under way with the forces there to obtain the necessary safeguards for its work to continue and to allow the ICRC to extend its activities to areas where it had not yet reached.

**Ethiopia**

Following an appeal by the ICRC President on 9 November for "open roads for survival", food distributions began on a large scale in northern Ethiopia. By the end of December, the ICRC had supplied food rations to some 300,000 civilians threatened by famine, mainly in Tigre.

## **Burundi**

Shortly after the *coup d'état* of 3 September 1987 the ICRC delegate to Kinshasa visited Burundi. Even though security detainees in the country were speedily released, an agreement was reached with the Burundi authorities for another visit to the places of detention before the end of 1987. Consequently, between 12 and 24 November three delegates and an ICRC physician visited seven prisons (where there were no longer any security detainees) as part of their ongoing activities.

In collaboration with the authorities, an ICRC sanitary engineer set up a water-purification project at Bujumbura prison at the end of 1987.

## **Uganda**

On 29 December an agreement was signed between the ICRC and the Uganda Government, giving an official basis to the ICRC's presence in that country.

## **Latin America**

### **Brazil**

President Sommaruga, who headed the ICRC delegation that attended the meetings of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement held in Rio de Janeiro in November, had several discussions with the Brazilian authorities in the presence of leaders of the National Society. On 16 November he was officially received by Dr. José Sarney, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, in Brasilia. On 24 November President Sommaruga had discussions with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of the Armed Forces, the President of the Senate and the President of the Chamber of Deputies. These talks were concerned mainly with the question of the Additional Protocols, to which Brazil is not yet a party, the funding of the ICRC and the dissemination of international humanitarian law.

**Cuba/Haiti**

On 12 December, 153 Haitians wishing to return home were repatriated from Cuba under ICRC auspices, with the co-operation of the Cuban and Haitian Red Cross Societies.

***Visits to places of detention***

Security detainees were visited in the following countries: Chile, Colombia, Nicaragua and Peru (within the limits imposed on the ICRC since the beginning of 1987). In El Salvador, following the government's decision to release certain detainees under the Esquipulas II peace plan, the ICRC was visiting only 33 detainees in Ministry of Justice penitentiaries at the end of December, in addition to those visited regularly in detention centres run by the armed forces and the security corps. Visits were also carried out in Suriname, where detainees held at Fort Zelandia prison in Paramaribo were released by the authorities at the beginning of December.

***Assistance programme for the civilian population***

The various assistance programmes for the civilian population in Nicaragua and El Salvador continued (food and medical assistance, sanitation, etc.). In El Salvador regular food distribution ended in November; henceforth the ICRC will undertake limited distributions only as the need arises. The ICRC also concerned itself with the situation of Salvadorian nationals who had returned from Honduras; after a visit to the camps it was decided to organize a number of sanitation projects.

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Various missions were carried out by the Buenos Aires, Bogotá and San José (Costa Rica) regional delegations in order to maintain relations with the authorities and the National Societies of the following coun-

tries: *Bahamas* (an introductory seminar on international humanitarian law and on the Red Cross), *Brazil*, *Guatemala* and *Paraguay* (training seminar for leaders of the National Society on the dissemination of international humanitarian law).

Since November, one ICRC delegate has been based permanently in *Suriname* (for the purposes explained in the issue for July-August 1987), and another in *Haiti*. In Haiti the objectives were to strengthen the operational capacity of the National Society and launch a programme for the dissemination of international humanitarian law. In the first stage, the ICRC delegate worked with the Haitian Red Cross to prepare the Port-au-Prince ambulance service to cope with the election weekend at the end of November.

## **Asia**

### **Afghan conflict**

*Afghanistan* — The ICRC delegate general for Asia and the Pacific visited Kabul between 8 and 12 December 1987 to discuss with the Afghan authorities the continuation of ICRC activities in that country.

The main result of the mission was an agreement in principle for the ICRC to resume visits, carried out in accordance with its customary procedure, to persons detained in Afghanistan. Starting with Pul-I-Charki Prison in Kabul, these visits were expected to begin in early February 1988.

Discussions also concerned medical programmes run or proposed by the ICRC (orthopaedic programme, medical assistance for Afghan Red Crescent dispensaries in the provinces and a planned orthopaedic hospital).

*Pakistan* — During the period under consideration, both ICRC orthopaedic hospitals in Peshawar and Quetta were kept very busy because of the fighting which took place in the border provinces: a total of 412 patients were admitted to the hospital in Peshawar and 949 operations were carried out; the hospital in Quetta received 373 patients and performed 718 operations.

At the beginning of December, ICRC delegates had access to about 100 prisoners in the hands of the Afghan opposition.

### **Sri Lanka**

Following an offer of services to set up a joint League/ICRC programme, Mr. A. Pasquier, ICRC Director of Operations, and Mr. H. Bucher, Deputy Secretary General of the League, went on mission to Sri Lanka in October 1987.

During discussions in Colombo concrete proposals were made to the authorities as regards medical aid, equipment and orthopaedics. The ICRC is continuing negotiations to this effect with the Sri Lanka Government and the Indian authorities so as to set up a programme to help all the victims of the situation in Sri Lanka, particularly in the northern and eastern parts of the country.

### **Philippines**

In November and December 1987 the ICRC continued its programmes in the Philippines and visits to prisoners arrested in connection with insurgency-related incidents (169 detainees visited); it also provided relief supplies and medical aid to people displaced or cut off by the events (7,625 people assisted) and continued to disseminate international humanitarian law and the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.

### **Conflict in Kampuchea**

The ICRC pursued its negotiations to provide better protection for some 250,000 civilians displaced along the Khmer-Thai border and to visit all persons detained because of the conflict. The three teams working in the ICRC orthopaedic hospital in Khao-I-Dang operated on 2,384 Khmer and Vietnamese patients. At the request of the families, the ICRC Central Tracing Agency tried to trace more than 2,000 Khmer and Vietnamese by making enquiries both along the border and abroad. The ICRC also forwarded mail between the camps (more than 4,200 letters).

## **Middle East**

### **Iran/Iraq Conflict**

During the last two months of the year, ICRC delegates continued their visits to prisoner-of-war camps in both Iran and Iraq. In November two teams of delegates completed the sixth series of visits to Iranian prisoners of war held in ten camps in Iraq and, in December, began the seventh series which should end in January 1988. In Iran, the team of delegates continued and completed the round of visits begun in December 1986, by visiting the fourteenth and fifteenth camps for Iraqi prisoners of war covered by the series.

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

In November ICRC delegates, including a physician, continued and completed the annual round of prison visits begun at the beginning of August.

The delegates followed with close attention the situation resulting from the events which broke out on 9 December in the Occupied Territories (West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem). They frequently went to the scenes of clashes, especially in the refugee camps, and made many visits to hospitals receiving the wounded, both in the Occupied Territories and in Israel. In particular they made sure that the evacuation of the wounded went forward unhindered. They also visited persons arrested in connection with the incidents, who numbered several hundred at the end of December.

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