

# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

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## *EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES*

### **Africa**

#### **Ethiopia**

The offer of services of the International Committee of the Red Cross to the Ethiopian authorities when trouble broke out in Asmara at the end of January, confirmed by a cable sent by the President of the ICRC Executive Board on 9 February to the Head of the Provisional Military Government, is still being considered in Addis Ababa.

In addition to this offer from the ICRC, the Ethiopian Government is studying a report drawn up by the Ethiopian Red Cross, which was authorized last week to go to the capital of the province of Eritrea to survey the situation and the humanitarian needs.

Two ICRC delegates, one of them a doctor, have been in Addis Ababa for several weeks. They were joined on 10 February by the ICRC delegate-general for Africa, who returned to Geneva on 15 February after various contacts with the Ethiopian authorities and Red Cross.

#### **Mali and Upper Volta**

Following recent incidents that took place on the border between Mali and Upper Volta, an ICRC regional delegate for West and Central Africa went to the Republic of Upper Volta from 22 January to 1 February 1975 and to the Republic of Mali from 1 to 11 February 1975. In each of those countries, the regional delegate conferred with the Head of State and the principal ministers concerned on the humanitarian questions raised by the conflict. In Mali he visited two nationals of the Upper Volta made prisoner of war, and in Upper Volta he saw four Malian civilian internees. He also visited in the latter country fourteen persons under police surveillance who were released that same day. In

every place of detention, the ICRC delegate spoke to the prisoners without witnesses and transmitted to them family messages. This mission was carried out with the assistance of the Red Cross Societies of both countries.

### **Togo**

*Visits to places of detention.* — From 28 January to 6 February 1975, one of the ICRC regional delegates visited the seven main prisons of the Togolese Republic, namely, at Dapange, Mango, Lama-Kara, Sokode, Atakpame, Anecho and Lomé. He talked with inmates of his choice without witnesses and handed over relief supplies consisting of medicaments to the infirmary of each of the prisons which he visited.

## **Latin America**

### **Chile**

During January 1975, ICRC delegates in Chile visited forty-four places of detention and altogether saw some 6,500 detainees, of whom over 2,200 were being held by order of the military authorities. Medicaments were distributed by the ICRC in sixteen places of detention.

From September 1973 to the end of January 1975, the ICRC carried out 389 visits to 125 places of detention, both civilian and military.

Aid to the families of detainees was continued in January. In Santiago 885 families, and in the rest of the country 1,850 families, received assistance. Purchases for this purpose amounted to 22,000 US dollars. A large quantity of articles held in stock by the ICRC in Santiago, including ten tons of powdered milk, miscellaneous foodstuffs, clothing and toilet articles, were distributed to those families.

## **Asia**

### **Khmer Republic**

*More refugees flock to Phnom Penh.* — Owing to renewed fighting in the Khmer Republic, more and more civilians have fled from the outer zones around the capital to seek refuge in the city centre. To cope with this situation, the International Red Cross Assistance delegation, in co-operation with the Khmer Red Cross, has stepped up its programme (distribution of medicaments, foodstuffs, clothing, blankets, etc.).

The medical teams have been working unremittingly in Phnom Penh and in the provinces. Two surgical teams are at present operating in Kompong Chhnang and Phnom Penh hospitals, where civilian and military casualties are taken. Three further teams, including one specializing in nutritional problems, are making regular visits to displaced person camps, and a paediatric team is continuing its work at the Kantha Bopha hospital in Phnom Penh.

*Visits to places of detention.* — On 21 January, ICRC delegates in the Khmer Republic began a new series of visits to places of detention in Phnom Penh and the provinces. They talked in private with the detainees (mainly prisoners of war) who received various relief supplies and were examined by the medical delegates.

### **Laos**

The International Red Cross Assistance delegate in Laos went several times during the last few weeks to Ban Kok Van, a village close to Luang Prabang, where the Lao Red Cross is attempting to settle about a thousand displaced persons. With a view to facilitating their resettlement he distributed various items, including seeds, agricultural implements and building tools.

### **Republic of Vietnam**

From 4 to 6 February 1975, ICRC delegates in the Republic of Vietnam visited the prisoner-of-war camp at Can Tho.

### **Philippines**

Following a mission by its regional delegate last December in the southern area of the Philippines, the ICRC sent 10,000 Swiss francs to the National Red Cross Society, to finance part of the Society's programmes in aid of refugees who fled from the areas where incidents had taken place.

### **Singapore**

The ICRC regional delegate for South-East Asia was in Singapore from 27 to 30 January. He visited three places of detention, where he saw about forty political detainees with whom he spoke without witnesses.

## Europe

### Cyprus

In January, the 15 ICRC delegates in Cyprus, and the three medical teams provided by the National Red Cross Societies of Denmark and Ireland pursued their activities for the benefit of Greek and Turkish Cypriot minority groups.

The work of the delegates mainly consisted in registering people liable to be transferred to another zone, tracing missing persons, transmitting family news and distributing relief. The medical teams continued to provide medical care to persons in remote districts and to transfer serious medical cases to hospital.

*In the south*, the ICRC has compiled a list of all Turkish Cypriot villages and made surveys of the health and food situation facing the inhabitants of those villages which were visited.

*In the north*, although certain travelling restrictions are still in force, the delegates and medical teams regularly visited the Greek Cypriot localities, especially those in the Karpas area and in the Kyrenia and Morphou regions.

By the end of January 1975, the ICRC delegation in Cyprus had distributed or handed over to the authorities 30 tons of medicaments, 50 tons of powdered milk, 60 tons of baby foods, 335 tons of protein-enriched food, 160,000 blankets, 9,700 tents, 15,000 camp-beds, and other miscellaneous relief supplies.

### Middle East

*Thirtieth series of prison visits.* — During the last three months of 1974, the ICRC carried out its thirtieth series of visits to prisons in Israel and the occupied territories. Its delegates went to thirteen places of detention and saw about 2,700 civilian detainees from various Arab countries and from the occupied territories.

The ICRC is authorized to see, usually about a month after they have been arrested, those known as “security” prisoners—whether sentenced, on remand or detained under an administrative order—and penal law prisoners—sentenced or held on remand. Arab detainees of Israeli nationality are not visited by ICRC delegates as they do not fall under the category of persons protected by the Fourth Geneva Convention.

*Reuniting of families.* — A family reuniting operation took place under ICRC auspices on 29 January on the El Qantara road, in the United Nations buffer zone between the Gaza-Sinai occupied territory and the Arab Republic of Egypt. It enabled 174 persons to cross into occupied territory and 241 to cross over into the Nile Valley.

*Visit to an Israeli prisoner of war.* — On 10 and 24 January and on 8 February 1975, an ICRC delegate in Beirut visited an Israeli prisoner of war captured by the Lebanese authorities on 2 January 1975. ICRC delegates talked in private with the prisoner and handed him some of his personal belongings. He was repatriated on 17 February.

*Kafr Shouba cease-fire.* — At the request of the Lebanese authorities, the ICRC approached the Israel government for a truce to be arranged in the area around Kafr Shouba in southern Lebanon, which was the scene of severe fighting. A truce was then called on 15 January 1975, when a number of casualties were evacuated by the Lebanese Red Cross. During a second truce on 21 January, the personal belongings of the inhabitants who had fled were collected and taken away in a convoy of thirty lorries.

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