

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

President of Hellenic Republic visits ICRC

The President of the Hellenic Republic Mr. Constantin Tsatsos visited the ICRC on 19 March. He was received by the ICRC President Mr. Alexandre Hay, members of the International Committee, the ICRC directors and leading officials of the League of Red Cross Societies.

After seeing a display of the work of the Central Tracing Agency, President Constantin Tsatsos discussed questions of common interest with the ICRC representatives.

ICRC President's mission to the Middle East

From 27 January to 6 February, the President of the ICRC, Mr. Alexandre Hay, went to Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. He was accompanied by Mr. Serge Nessi, head of the Financing Division, and Mr. Jean-Marc Bornet, regional delegate. This was the first official visit paid by an ICRC President to that part of the Arab world.

Mr. Hay was everywhere most cordially received by the Heads of State, members of governments and leaders of the National Red Crescent Societies.

In his conversations, Mr. Hay described the ICRC's principal activities throughout the world, particularly those carried out in Muslim countries, and the difficult problems it had to face, especially with regard to its swelling financial requirements, which continued to increase owing to its manifold commitments in areas beset by conflict. Mr. Hay's words attracted keen interest and sympathetic understanding. The personal links forged, resulting from his mission, are bound to lead to permanent and fruitful contacts.

This is certainly most encouraging for the ICRC which has expressed its appreciation at the prospect of obtaining assistance for its humanitarian activities. Already, the State of Kuwait has remitted the sum of 1.2 million Swiss francs as an extraordinary contribution for the ICRC's emergency aid programmes.

Central Tracing Agency director retires and successor appointed

The ICRC has appointed Mr. Ulrich Wasser to the post of director of the Central Tracing Agency as from 1 March to succeed Mr. Pierre Basset who has reached retirement age.

Mr. Basset joined the ICRC in 1963. During his seventeen years with the ICRC, he occupied successively several important posts: head of administration and finance, delegate general for the Middle East, assistant director attached to the President's office, head of the Executive Board secretariat and from 1977 director of the Central Tracing Agency. During the last three years, he initiated electronic data processing at the Agency and was involved in the preparatory work for the construction of the Agency's new premises. He will continue his work in connection with this building for the next few months. The ICRC has expressed its warm appreciation to Mr. Basset for the valuable services he has rendered.

The new director of the Central Tracing Agency, Mr. Ulrich Wasser, was born in 1945. He graduated in economics and in 1973 joined the ICRC, where his activities were mainly with administrative and financial matters at ICRC headquarters in Geneva and in various delegations in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Before being appointed Tracing Agency director, he occupied the post of management controller of the ICRC.
