

The ICRC President in the People's Republic of China

Responding to a long-standing invitation from the Chinese Red Cross, the ICRC President, Mr. Alexandre Hay, was in the People's Republic of China from 2 to 11 November, accompanied by his wife, by the Director of the Operations Department, Mr. J.-P. Hocké, and by the Chief of the Dissemination and Documentation Division, Mr. R. Gaillard-Moret.

The presidential mission was warmly welcomed by the Chinese Red Cross and by its President, Mr. Qian Xin Zhong, who is also Minister of Health, and discussions were extremely fruitful.

The ICRC mission also had talks with senior government officials of the People's Republic of China including the Vice President of the Standing Committee of the People's National Assembly, Mr. Liao Cheng Zhi; the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Zhang Wen Jin; the Deputy Director of the Political Department of the Ministry of Defence, General Yan Jin Cheng; and the Vice Minister of Education, Mr. Kao Yi. Discussions centred on topics of common interest, like the ratification by the People's Republic of China of the 1977 Protocols, the dissemination of international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles among the armed forces and in schools and ICRC activities throughout the world, in particular in the Cambodian conflict.

Mr. Gaillard-Moret prolonged his stay in Peking to discuss with the Chinese Red Cross, at the request of the Vice Minister of Education, the teaching and dissemination of international humanitarian law. He gave three lectures on the subject for the Chinese Red Cross, the People's University and Peking University.

ICRC mission in Moscow

An ICRC delegation, led by Mr. Richard Pestalozzi, Vice-President, who was accompanied by Mr. J. Moreillon, director of the ICRC Department of Principles and Law, and by Mr. Ph. Grand d'Hauteville, regional delegate for Europe, went to Moscow at the invitation of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR, and stayed there from 27 to 31 October 1980.

In the course of a lengthy series of discussions, the members of the delegation and leaders of the Alliance exchanged views on a great number of subjects, including the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law; the ratification of the 1977 Protocols; the problem of Red Cross and Peace; and the ICRC's activities throughout the world.

At the ICRC delegation's request, arrangements were made for them to meet also a number of government officials. They had discussions with representatives of the Soviet Armed Forces and of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, as well as prominent persons from scientific and university circles. One of the results of those conversations, in which the topics mentioned above were also discussed, was that the ICRC representatives and their interlocutors agreed to review ways and means of co-operation in the years ahead, in particular for dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law.

In its talks the ICRC delegation also raised the question of the humanitarian problems created by the conflict which was taking place in Afghanistan.

Declaration by UNITA

In a message addressed in French on 25 July 1980 to the ICRC and signed by its Information Secretary, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) made the following declaration:

“We welcome your assistance project for Angola and have requested the above-mentioned to notify you of the terms of our declaration of principle, as follows: . . .

“UNITA renews its commitment to the Geneva Conventions and subscribes to the fundamental rules of international law applicable in armed conflicts. . . .”