

The Federal Republic of Germany stands firmly by its commitment to ensure the continuation of the tasks undertaken by the International Tracing Service.

The Government of the Federal Republic will continue giving as much moral and financial support as possible to the activities carried out by the Service. The information still stored in its archives on about 10 million people of various nationalities who became the victims of tyranny and concerning whom no one has so far instigated an inquiry must on no account fall into oblivion.

I can assure you that my Government highly appreciates the ICRC's willingness to continue assuming responsibility for the International Tracing Service.

**Hans-Dietrich Genscher**

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Bonn, 16 June 1980

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## **World Congress on Prostheses in Bologna**

The third World Congress of the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO) and the International Association of Orthotists and Prosthetists (INTERBOR) was held in Bologna from 28 September to 4 October 1980. In addition to some 1,500 visitors, the Congress was attended by most of the world's orthopedic technicians and surgeons and the heads of firms specialized in orthopedic equipment.

The ICRC, which is active in several areas of the world helping disabled victims of war, was invited to take part in this Congress to inform participants of its activities and to compare its experience of orthopedics in the developing countries with that of other organizations.

The ICRC representatives gave the Congress an account of ICRC and Swiss Red Cross activities over the past few years, describing in particular the ongoing programmes in Lebanon (implemented by the Swiss Red Cross), Angola and Ethiopia (ICRC), where workshops have been set up, local staff trained to manufacture and adapt prostheses, and some 1,500 amputees and paraplegics fitted with prostheses.

The ICRC has always emphasized the need to find local solutions for manufacturing prostheses, because the cost of imported materials and parts is quite beyond the beneficiaries' financial means and damaged equipment cannot be repaired locally. Moreover local workshops provide disabled persons working there with an ideal opportunity to get re-integrated into a normal professional and social environment.

To illustrate its success in this field the ICRC set up a small exhibition of orthopedic apparatus (feet, orthoses, protheses, wheel-chairs and spare parts), all of which had been made with local raw materials by disabled people themselves.

The members of the Congress were also shown an ICRC video film called "Debré Zeit, an Orthopedic Centre in Ethiopia", describing the work done by the centre, which is financed and equipped by the ICRC but differs from other orthopedic establishments in that it is run entirely by local Ethiopian staff (composed of disabled persons trained by specialists from various countries) and employs only local materials.<sup>1</sup>

All participants, and especially those from the developing countries, were extremely impressed by the ICRC's lectures, exhibition and film, which opened up entirely new prospects to them. It is very likely that the contacts established with the ICRC representatives will have most favourable consequences for disabled people in many countries. This augurs well for 1981, which is to be the International Year of Disabled Persons.

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<sup>1</sup> "Debré Zeit, an Orthopedic Centre in Ethiopia" a video film produced by Jean-Phillipe Naef for the ICRC and available with commentaries in French, English and Amharic. Length: 35 minutes; price: 250 Swiss francs.