

The President of the French Republic visits the ICRC

The President of the Republic of France, Mr François Mitterrand, visited on June 2 the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross during his stay in Geneva. Mr Mitterrand was accompanied by Mrs Nicole Questiaux, Minister of National Solidarity, and Mr Jean Auroux, Minister of Labour. He was welcomed by the ICRC's President, Mr Alexandre Hay, and a former ICRC President, Mr Marcel Naville, together with members of the ICRC's Directorate. Also present were representatives from Geneva authorities and from the League of Red Cross Societies.

After recalling the past century's links between France and the ICRC, Mr Hay gave Mr Mitterrand an outline of the ICRC's current activities.

Visit of Pope John Paul II to the ICRC

Pope John Paul II visited the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva on 15 June 1982, the first visit by a sovereign pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church to the ICRC. He was accompanied by Cardinals A. Casaroli and B. Gantin and numerous other church dignitaries.

The Pope was greeted on his arrival by the President of the ICRC, Mr. Alexandre Hay, together with members of the International Committee, the directors of the ICRC, representatives of the League of Red Cross Societies, of the Swiss Red Cross and of the Henry Dunant Institute. Official representatives of the Swiss Confederation, the Republic and Canton of Geneva, the City of Geneva, the United Nations Office in Geneva and the International Labour Office were also present.

In his reply to the ICRC President's greeting, the Pope launched an urgent appeal for "respect for the international humanitarian conventions and additional Protocols by the States and authorities whose function it is to apply their wise provisions. It is the duty of each State, with the welfare of its citizens at heart, to subscribe to them without reservation and to put them into practice."