

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

November and December 1982

Africa

Southern Africa

A repatriation of prisoners and mortal remains took place on 16 November, via Lusaka (Zambia), under ICRC auspices. It was the result of more than a year of negotiations conducted by the ICRC with the seven interested parties: South Africa, Angola, USSR, Cuba, United States, UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) and Zambia, the country chosen for the operation to take place.

The following were simultaneously repatriated: from one side, 94 Angolan prisoners, one Soviet, one Cuban, five mortal remains (four Soviet nationals and one Cuban), all in South African hands, and two Soviets captured by UNITA; and from the other side, the Angolan Government, three Americans detained at Luanda and the mortal remains of two South African soldiers. The Americans and Soviets were handed over to their respective embassies at Lusaka, while the 94 Angolans and the Cuban national were conveyed to Angola by the ICRC.

Three aeroplanes were used to transport the prisoners and the mortal remains; the operation required the combined efforts of ICRC delegates based at Pretoria, Windhoek, Luanda, Harare, and their colleagues at headquarters in Geneva.

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Also on 16 November, the ICRC delegation at Pretoria took in charge Monsignor Alexandro do Nascimento, archbishop of Lubango (Angola) who left South Africa for Rome, after being provided with an ICRC travel document. Monsignor do Nascimento had been detained by UNITA in the south of Angola since 15 October.

Angola

Mr Jean-Marc Bornet, the ICRC delegate general for Africa' visited Angola from 8 to 16 December. This mission allowed him to work out with the Luanda delegation the broad outline of ICRC action in Angola for 1983.

Because of the danger, ICRC assistance to the displaced civilian population was still suspended on the Planalto at the end of December. Following the closing at the beginning of October of the supply points at Bié, Bailundo and Katchiungo from which the ICRC distributed monthly food rations, the feeding centres set up in these places also had to interrupt their activities at the end of November. (It will be recalled that children suffering from malnutrition were cared for in these centres under medical supervision). The serious cases were transferred to the hospital and the orphanage at Bailundo which the ICRC continues to supply with additional food. ICRC assistance to the Bomba Alta orthopaedic centre which operates under the responsibility of the "Angolan Red Cross" was reduced to the provision of materials necessary for the manufacture of artificial limbs. Nevertheless, at the end of the year, the outlook for the resumption of ICRC action before long on the Planalto was good.

The ICRC sub-delegation at N'Giva, in the extreme south of Angola, continued its activities in the field of medical assistance, supplying many dispensaries in the region with bandages and medicines units. An ICRC doctor and two ICRC nurses continued their work at the N'Giva dispensary during this whole period.

In addition, the ICRC continued negotiations to obtain the liberation of its local employees (four and not seven as previously stated), who had been abducted in October by UNITA in the Cunene province. These efforts had not produced any result by the end of the year but, there again, the outlook appeared good.

Republic of South Africa

Continuing their programme of aid to families of detainees or ex-detainees, the ICRC delegates in Pretoria distributed 734 parcels (ap-

proximate cost: 48,000 Swiss francs) in November and December. The ICRC also paid the transport costs of 161 persons authorized to visit their relatives in the Robben Island, Pollsmoor, Helderstroom and Kroonstadt prisons.

Ethiopia

The joint ICRC and Ethiopian Red Cross relief operation to help displaced persons continued in November and December 1982 in the Gondar, Tigre and Eritrea regions. In November, 105 tons of various aid to a value of about 224,000 Swiss francs, was distributed and in December, 153 tons amounting to 300,000 Swiss francs.

The ICRC delegation continued to supply the provincial hospitals and dispensaries in these regions which care for the displaced persons with medicines and medical material.

Following the inauguration, last July, of the orthopaedic rehabilitation centre for civilian amputees at Asmara, the ICRC began in December to set up a second orthopaedic centre for civilian disabled at Harar.

In November, a special action began in the Gondar for 300-400 children suffering from malnutrition as a result of the conflict situation. Food will be distributed from four rural Ministry of Health clinics. The distributions will be accompanied by advice to mothers on the preparation of the food for the children and on child hygiene and will be followed up and supervised by the regional branch of the Ethiopian Red Cross.

Somalia

In November, an ICRC doctor delegate went on mission to evaluate the general medical situation. Assistance in the form of medicines and medical material was subsequently provided to two Mogadishu hospitals and to one provincial hospital which are caring for victims of the Ogaden conflict. This aid amounted to some 104,000 Swiss francs.

In November, a delegation visited 207 prisoners captured in the Ogaden conflict. These visits were carried out according to customary ICRC procedure. Some aid was handed to the prisoners visited. In June 1982, 193 of these prisoners had been visited by ICRC delegates.

Sudan

ICRC delegates continued their activities on behalf of refugees of various origins in the frontier regions of Sudanese territory throughout

1982. In particular, they carried out Agency work, i.e., inquiries to trace persons separated from their families, exchange of family messages, etc., for which a whole network of Agency offices has been set up in the refugee reception regions.

At the end of November, an Agency delegate went on a mission to Sudan to re-evaluate the structure and work of the Agency under the general conditions prevailing in the zones where there are refugees.

Chad

A series of visits by ICRC delegates to prisoners of war held in the north-east of the country ended on 22 November. Several additional visits were made at the beginning of December. From June to December, a total of 804 prisoners of war were seen in Chad in 27 places of detention. All these visits were carried out according to established ICRC procedure.

In the course of the November visits, various aid (about 3,900 kilos, to a value of some 5,000 Swiss francs) was distributed to some 330 recipients, not only prisoners of war but also orphans, lepers and other sick persons.

A survey in December showed that urgent food aid was necessary in the Biltine and Ennedi regions. The ICRC doctor delegate returned to these regions at the end of December, accompanied by a minister of the Chad Government and by a WFP representative, in order to see for themselves the alarming situation. The League, the World Food Programme (WFP) and "Médecins sans frontières" immediately took action to provide relief.

Zaire

In November, three ICRC delegates visited seven civilian and military detention centres in the region of Upper Zaire where they saw 214 penal law detainees. These visits were made according to usual ICRC procedure.

An ICRC hygiene specialist was authorized to visit the central prison at Makala and the N'Dolo military prison at Kinshasa to inspect the sanitary conditions and advise the prison authorities.

In December, the Zaire Red Cross and the ICRC held a course on information and on the dissemination of knowledge of the principles of the Red Cross and of international humanitarian law for members of the National Society and other persons interested in Red Cross activities. Some 1,400 people attended the four sessions in December, at which ICRC delegates gave several lectures.

Togo

The ICRC regional delegation at Lome resumed its activity at the end of November and Mr Jean-Claude Rochat was appointed regional delegate. The regional delegation's work will involve protection and assistance activities, development of National Societies and the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law among the armed forces, government authorities and universities.

Latin America

Missions from Geneva

Mr André Pasquier, ICRC delegate general for Latin America, went on mission to Nicaragua (6-10 December) and El Salvador (11-16 December). The object of his visit to the two countries was to evaluate current ICRC action and to define the objectives and set the budgets for ICRC action for the first half of 1983. In the course of talks with the authorities of Nicaragua and El Salvador, Mr Pasquier broached problems linked to ICRC protection and assistance activities.

From 16 November to 5 December, Dr Rodrigue Arbex of the ICRC Medical Division, went on a mission to El Salvador and Nicaragua in order to evaluate ICRC medical action in these two countries (see below).

El Salvador

Continuing their work of protection in the different detention centres in San Salvador and in the provinces, in November and December, ICRC delegates carried out 210 visits to places of detention where they saw for the first time and registered 118 and 82 security detainees, respectively. In addition, the ICRC delegates made three visits to the soldiers captured by the movement "Farabundo Marti de liberación nacional" (FMLN). In five operations, the FMLN forces handed over to the ICRC 117 soldiers whom they had captured; these liberated soldiers were transferred to their respective barracks under ICRC protection.

After being held up for a week at the beginning of November by the intensity of the fighting in the eastern part of the country, ICRC assistance action was resumed in the north of Morazan and extended to the north of La Unión: 457 tons of provisions (value: 756,000 Swiss

francs) was distributed in November. In December, 31 distributions of provisions were made in 23 villages housing some 80,000 civilians displaced from the zones affected by the fighting.

To take into account the needs of the rural population in the zones of conflict, according to Dr Arbex's survey, the ICRC decided to strengthen its medical effort and to double the number of its mobile teams caring for displaced persons. Two medical teams were working in the country: one based at San Miguel serving the eastern region; the other operating in the centre and the north, based at San Salvador. In December, these two teams held 27 medical consultations in 19 villages in the Chalatenango, Cuscatlan, Cabanas, San Vicente, Morazan, San Miguel, Usulután and La Unión departments. On average, 200 patients were examined at each of these consultations.

Nicaragua

ICRC delegates visited the Tasba Pri camp in Nicaragua, from 25 to 27 November, to assess the situation of the Miskito Indians who had been moved by the authorities from zones near the Honduran frontier.

In addition, talks took place with the Nicaraguan authorities on ICRC protection activities and in December the delegate general for Latin America discussed with the Vice-Minister of the Interior the problem of persons under interrogation and detained in places administered by the State Security service, to which the ICRC does not have access.

Bogota regional delegation

From 28 October to 7 November, Mr Georges Heumann, regional delegate for Andean countries, based at Bogota, went on mission to Surinam. He had talks with the governmental authorities and the directors of the Red Cross Society, which is in the process of being formed, about the ICRC and its protection and assistance activities, especially those in Latin America.

Mr Heumann then went to Grenada where, on 8 and 9 November, he had talks with the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Peru

From 15 to 16 December, four ICRC delegates, one of them a doctor, visited some 400 detainees in 9 places of detention in Peru, 4 in the capital, Lima, and 5 in the provinces. This was the first series of visits in this country since 1977.

At Lima, the ICRC delegates visited the Callao women's prison where they saw 65 persons detained because of the events, and talked with 25 of them without witnesses. They also went to El Fronton men's prison where they visited 304 detainees, Lurigancho men's prison (9 detainees) and Chorillos women's prison (3 detainees). In the provinces, 60 detainees, ten of whom were women, were visited in the Ayacucho, Puno, Arequipa and Cajamarca prisons. Immediately after this series of visits the delegates provided medicines, blankets, toilet articles and clothes for the prisoners.

Chile

During a series of visits carried out between 3 and 26 November in Chile, ICRC delegates visited 27 places of detention where they saw 163 detainees in meetings without witnesses, 57 of them for the first time. Aid and medicines were distributed during these visits.

Asia

Afghanistan

In November and December, the ICRC maintained its discussions with the different parties to the conflict in Afghanistan in order to try and carry out its protection activities on behalf of all the persons captured during the fighting, both by the Afghan authorities and by the opposition movements, and to continue its medical assistance to the wounded.

Since the departure of the ICRC delegation from Kabul on 8 October last (see previous *Review*), the ICRC has continued negotiations with the Afghan authorities in order to obtain permission for the return of its delegates to Afghanistan to resume their protection activities (visits to places of detention) and medical assistance to hospitals.

In addition, the ICRC has continued its activities in Pakistan on behalf of victims of the conflict in Afghanistan.

Pakistan

The ICRC delegate general for Asia, Mr Jean de Courten, went on mission to Pakistan from 7 to 11 November. At Peshawar, with the ICRC delegation, he examined the situation and current assistance programmes and he met the leaders of the Afghan resistance. He then went to Islamabad to confer with the Pakistani authorities.

The number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan was estimated, in November, at more than 2 million. The ICRC continued its medical assistance activities for them with the collaboration of the Pakistani Red Crescent and medical or surgical teams of the Swiss and New Zealand Red Cross Societies.

In November, 106 war wounded were admitted to the ICRC hospital at Peshawar and 206 surgical operations were performed by the two medical teams. In addition, 621 ambulatory consultations were given during that month.

In December, 91 war wounded were received at the hospital, 147 surgical operations were performed and 518 out-patients were treated.

The two advanced medical posts, at Parachinar and Miramsha, where the Pakistani Red Crescent mobile medical teams are stationed, brought 24 Afghan war wounded from the frontier to the ICRC hospital at Peshawar in November and 18 in December.

At the end of November, the ICRC delegates received permission from the Pakistani authorities to enter the tribal zones along the frontier with Afghanistan which had until then only been accessible to the Pakistani Red Crescent mobile teams.

The centre for war paraplegics and the workshop manufacturing artificial limbs for amputees annexed to the ICRC hospital worked at maximum capacity. Teams of local personnel, trained by ICRC specialists, are able to run the workshop. The last foreign specialist left the workshop on 19 November. The workshop produced 40 artificial limbs in November and 45 in December. Forty-five war wounded patients were under treatment in the paraplegic centre.

On 10 December, the ICRC hospital at Peshawar was transferred to more suitable premises.

The Pakistani Government has given the ICRC the use of some land to build a new centre for Afghan and Pakistani paraplegics, with a capacity of a hundred patients. Plans were drawn up by the ICRC and construction started immediately. The new centre will be totally financed by the ICRC. The cost of construction is estimated at 1.6 million Swiss francs.

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Two Soviet citizens captured in Afghanistan by the Afghan resistance movements declared to the ICRC delegates in Pakistan, in interviews without witnesses, their wish to take advantage of the arrangements negotiated by the ICRC with all the interested parties for their internment in Switzerland. They were transferred to Switzerland on 23 November.

This brings to seven the number of Soviet citizens transferred to Switzerland since the end of May 1982. They are interned in Switzerland under the responsibility of the Swiss authorities and are regularly visited by ICRC delegate and the Soviet consular authorities.

Bangladesh

The ICRC regional delegate in New Delhi, Mr Jean-Michel Monod, visited Dhaka from 7 to 23 November. The essential object of this mission was to discuss with the governmental authorities the repatriation from Lebanon of some 400 Bangladesh citizens released from the Inisar prison camp in Lebanon.

Other questions concerning the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law and of the principles of the Red Cross, and the distribution of the Red Cross school manual and the *Soldier's Manual* were also discussed.

Thailand

Mission by the delegate general

Mr Jean de Courten, ICRC delegate general for Asia, went on mission in south-east Asia from 28 November to 10 December.

He first went to Bangkok for a meeting of the heads of ICRC delegations in Thailand, Kampuchea and Viet Nam. With them he examined current activities and set the objectives and budgets for 1983.

He was received by Squadron Leader Prasong Soonsiri, secretary general of the National Security Council, who assured him that the Thai Government wished to reach a rapid solution of the problem of Vietnamese refugees at the frontier. The secretary general appeared very co-operative regarding the implementation of other ICRC humanitarian programmes in the region.

Finally, the delegate general had a useful working session with the Thai Red Cross on the subject of Agency activities (searches for missing persons, reuniting of dispersed families, exchanges of family messages) on behalf of refugees.

After Bangkok, the delegate general went to Phnom Penh, then to Hanoi.

Among the refugees

Two ICRC delegates, one of them a doctor, took part in a survey on 4 and 5 November, organized by the Thai Supreme Command, in

the frontier zone to the north-east of Aranyaprathet, especially in the O'Bok and Chong Chom regions, accompanied by representatives of the Thai Red Cross, WFP and officials from several embassies. Chong Chom had already been visited by ICRC delegates at the end of September. It was again noted that the refugees in these two places would be in a dangerous situation if armed clashes occurred in the region and that the medical assistance to these camps was insufficient.

The ICRC took the decision to establish a surgical post at Kab Cherng, in the Chong Chom region, the surgical team being relieved every 10 days from Kao-I-Dang, while an ICRC nurse would remain there. The post started to function early in January 1983.

From the middle of November, the general situation along the Khmer-Thai frontier worsened. Fighting and bombardments were reported. In November alone, the ICRC hospital at Kao-I-Dang received more war wounded than in the preceding three months.

The ICRC sent a surgeon, a nurse and an anaesthetist to the Kao-I-Dang hospital to reinforce the eleven-member British Red Cross surgical team which, at the beginning of November, replaced the Swedish Red Cross surgical team that had worked in the camp since August.

Negotiations

In November and December the Thai authorities, representatives of the High Commissioner for Refugees, ICRC delegates and the embassies of various countries at Bangkok continued negotiations to find a solution to the problem of some 2,700 refugees of Vietnamese origin who were in a very precarious situation along the frontier. Several meetings took place in which some countries of asylum finally announced the number and category of refugees they would take. At the end of December, the Thai authorities confirmed their agreement to the proposed procedure which will allow these refugees to leave the frontier in stages, as and when the host countries agree to receive them. In the early days of January, an examination of individual refugee cases started, under the direction of ICM (Intergovernmental Committee on Migration), with a view to their transfer to a safer place.

Traditional activities

The ICRC delegation began to visit the political detainees in Thailand and, at the beginning of 1982, it had seen 278 detainees in 12 Internal Security Operations Command centres. In December, the Bangkok delegation approached the Ministry of the Interior with a view to visiting a new category of detainees.

Contacts with Khmer groups

While on mission in Thailand, Mr de Courten, ICRC delegate general, met Mr Khieu Samphan, Vice-President of Democratic Kampuchea, who was accompanied by Mrs Yeng Thirit, President of the Red Cross. The talks covered the current problems arising along the Khmer-Thai frontier.

ICRC delegates gave a lecture on the ICRC and international humanitarian law at the headquarters of the National Liberation Front of the People of Kampuchea (NLFPK) to 250 persons, army officers and civilian administrators, in the presence of General Dien Del.

Kampuchea

During his stay in Kampuchea at the beginning of December, Mr Jean de Courten, delegate general, accompanied by Mr U. Bédert, head of the ICRC delegation at Phnom Penh, had talks with the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Vice-Minister of Health on questions relating to protection, medical assistance and aid to orphanages.

The ICRC obtained the authorization from the Cambodian authorities to appoint a nurse-pharmacist, because, since July, there had been no medical personnel at the ICRC delegation.

Two Red Cross Societies have medical teams working in Kampuchea. The Swedish Red Cross team is stationed at the Kompong Chhnang hospital and that of the Swiss Red Cross team at the Kompong Cham hospital.

Meeting of donors

A meeting of representatives of donor countries which financially support ICRC activities on behalf of victims of the conflict in Kampuchea was held at the United Nations headquarters in New York on 15 December 1982.

The ICRC presented to this meeting a brief report on its current humanitarian activities and a summary of its plans and objectives for 1983. The document ends with an appeal to donor countries to put some 22 million Swiss francs (or around 11.6 million dollars) at the disposal of the ICRC. This is the amount needed by the ICRC to continue the humanitarian mission assigned to it in this region of south-east Asia.

Viet Nam

During his mission in Asia in November-December, the ICRC delegate general, Mr Jean de Courten, visited Hanoi where he had talks with Mr Ha Van Lau, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, on questions concerning ICRC action in Kampuchea and Viet Nam, the dissemination of the principles of the Red Cross and of international humanitarian law, and the programmes for the repatriation and re-uniting of Taiwanese families.

Philippines

From 26 October to 14 December 1982, two ICRC delegates and one medical delegate made a series of visits to places of detention in the Philippines. They saw a total of 168 detainees in 11 places of detention, of which five had been visited previously. These visits were made according to customary ICRC procedures.

Indonesia/East Timor

The last issue of the *Review* mentioned the survey carried out by four ICRC delegates on East Timor and Atauro, from 25 October to 13 November.

An assessment of the food and medical situation led to the conclusion that the assistance action carried out by the Indonesian Red Cross and the ICRC should continue in 1983. For the some 4,000 displaced persons on Atauro, the programme envisages supplementary distributions to the most needy or the most vulnerable (babies, children from 1 to 6 years of age, pregnant women). On the island of Timor, provisions will be distributed to some 25,000 persons in 10 localities and supplementary distributions will be made in three localities, to about 1,600 persons judged to be more needy.

The ICRC medical action will remain limited: it will be restricted to supporting the activity of Indonesian Red Cross doctors and to financing urgent purchases of medicines.

The programme for re-uniting the members of dispersed families continued and on 16 December six persons rejoined their near relations in Australia.

Also in December, the Portuguese Government officially appointed the ICRC to carry out the programme for re-uniting families and for repatriations.

Middle East

Iraq/Iran conflict

Iran

The talks that Mr J.-P. Hocké, director of ICRC Operational Activities, had with governmental authorities in Teheran at the end of October, in an attempt to resolve the difficulties that the ICRC faces in its work, resulted in a meeting, on 6 November, of ICRC delegates and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Second Military Bureau. A programme of visits to Iraqi prisoners of war was discussed.

The delegation received authorization to use several teams of delegates simultaneously. The authorities requested that priority be given to hospital visits. For this reason, on 19 November, the staff of the delegation was increased by five delegates.

The registering of Iraqi prisoners of war restarted on 13 November in the camps, after several months of interruption. This very lengthy operation will last several weeks. At the end of November, some 24,000 prisoners had been registered.

From 28 November to 1 December delegates visited two hospitals where there were wounded prisoners of war. In a third hospital, the delegates ran into difficulties that necessitated a further meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 8 December. It was not possible to draw up a programme of visits.

A prisoner camp near the Caspian Sea was, however, visited from 15 to 21 December.

On 16 December, the delegation approached the authorities requesting that visits to and registering of prisoners be facilitated and a programme of work fixed. This approach having been unsuccessful, a note was sent on 26 December to the governmental authorities outlining ICRC action and requesting that effective measures be taken to enable the ICRC to accomplish its mission.

Mixed medical commission

Under the terms of the Third Geneva Convention, a mixed medical commission was appointed to examine the cases of severely wounded prisoners, with a view to their repatriation. Two medical delegates represent the ICRC on the commission.

The commission held a single session in December and examined the cases of only 12 wounded prisoners of war who had been selected by the

authorities. The study of more than 300 serious cases on a list drawn up by the ICRC was refused. There was therefore no second meeting of the commission in December.

Distribution of aid to Kurds

An aid convoy crossed the frontier between Turkey and Iran at the end of November with Iraqi Kurd villages in Ziveh, Azarbaijan, as its destination. These villages had benefited from an assistance operation in October. Distributions for the benefit of some 15,000 persons started immediately. Clothes, blankets and provisions were distributed. The Iranian Red Crescent provided tents.

List of missing persons

In December, the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in Geneva, handed over to the ICRC a list of 9,405 civilians and soldiers who had disappeared from the territories previously occupied by the Iraqi forces in the Khorramshahr region and whose absence was discovered after the retreat of the Iraqi armed forces. As is customary, the Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC will open inquiries on these missing persons.

Iraq

A new series of visits to camps holding Iranian prisoners of war began in the middle of November. In accordance with the promise made to Mr Hocké by the authorities during his visit in October-November, the ICRC was authorized to visit the Mosul II camp where it registered new prisoners; the Ramadi, Anbar, Mosul I and Mosul III camps were also visited. The same camps were visited once again in December.

Mixed medical commission

A mixed medical commission was also formed in Iraq to examine the cases of gravely wounded prisoners of war with a view to their repatriation. Two ICRC doctors are members of the commission.

The commission started its work on 9 December. From that date until 2 January, it examined the cases of 487 wounded prisoners and immediately ruled that several tens of cases should be repatriated right away.

Delegates wounded

The hotel where ICRC delegates were staying was damaged during an attack against the Iraqi News Agency in Baghdad on 15 December and three women delegates were slightly wounded.

Meetings of donors

On 10 November, the President of the ICRC was host at the ICRC headquarters in Geneva to the representatives of the principal Western donor countries. He informed them of the deficit (around 6 million Swiss francs) for ICRC action in Iran/Iraq in 1982 and of the budget estimates for 1983.

A similar meeting was held on 25 November for the Arab donor countries.

Lebanon

Severe tension persisted throughout the country during November and December and the general situation did not improve, owing to the presence of foreign armed forces of various origins, repeated armed clashes between different Lebanese factions and attacks. There were also torrential rainfalls.

The Red Cross (i.e. the ICRC delegates and the Lebanese Red Cross, whose voluntary workers showed admirable devotion and courage) have had to face an unbroken series of emergencies.

In November, the ICRC was obliged to make an appeal to all the parties to the conflict asking them to give the ICRC free passage and facilitate its humanitarian mission, as well as to guarantee the security of its personnel and vehicles, especially the ambulances.

Soon afterwards, however, in Tripoli, the theft of ambulances belonging to the Lebanese Red Cross and attempts to get hold of ICRC vehicles seriously hindered activities and forced the ICRC to make a second appeal for the respect of the emblems of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Protection

The ICRC delegates closely followed the development of the situation in Beirut and its southern suburbs, in particular in the Palestinian camps and in the "Palestinian Red Crescent" hospitals.

On 27 and 28 November, the seizure of medicines belonging to the "Palestinian Red Crescent" in the "Gaza" hospital at Beirut necessitated ICRC intervention.

Following particularly violent armed clashes in Tripoli on 9 December, the ICRC intensified its assistance actions and presence in the town.

Since November, the ICRC delegates have made a number of surveys in the mountains because of a sudden deterioration of the situation there and the frequent disruption of communication by the barring of roads. A rumour that the water had been contaminated threw the population into a state close to panic. This anxiety was calmed when analyses proved to be negative.

The ICRC delegates continued to make daily visits to the Insar camp, near Nabatieh (in South Lebanon), where Palestinian, Lebanese and foreign prisoners are being detained by the Israelis. The ICRC negotiated and organized the repatriation of foreign detainees as soon as the announcement of their liberation was made.

By the beginning of November, the ICRC had registered some 8,400 prisoners at Insar, of whom approximately 2,500 had already been freed by that date. Since then, the liberation and in some cases the repatriation of prisoners has continued.

For example, on 17 November, 55 Indian citizens were freed and were taken in an ICRC convoy to the airport at Beirut where they were handed over to a diplomatic representative of India and repatriated. On 2 and 3 December, 417 citizens of Bangladesh were transferred from Insar to Beirut airport, then repatriated to Dhaka in two aeroplanes. At the end of the year, about 5,500 persons were still detained at Insar and more than 3,000 persons had been released.

The ICRC delegates went each day to the Tyre and Sidon camps of Palestinian refugees, where danger to the civilian population remained a cause of concern.

On 11 November, the ICRC arranged the repatriation, via Kuneitra, of five Syrian prisoners of war freed by the Israeli authorities and, on 8 December, another five. Syrian prisoners of war, also liberated by the Israeli authorities, were repatriated under ICRC auspices.

In *Syria*, on 15 November, an ICRC delegate and a medical delegate visited three Israeli prisoners of war. These visits were made according to usual ICRC procedure. Family messages were exchanged. Again, on 6 December, the ICRC delegates visited Israeli prisoners of war in Syria.

In *Israel*, ICRC delegates visited 293 Syrian prisoners of war on 1 December and on 3 December they saw for the fourth time six women captured in Lebanon and at present imprisoned in Israel.

On 20 November, an ICRC delegate and an ICRC doctor visited six Israeli prisoners of war held by the Organization for the Liberation

of Palestine (OLP); interviews without witnesses were not, however, authorized. These prisoners were seen again on 28 December; this time they were interviewed without witnesses.

Assistance

Medical assistance was again on a large scale during this period.

After the destruction of the headquarters of the Israeli troops at Tyre, in November, ICRC and Lebanese Red Cross medical teams helped in the evacuation of the wounded and remained constantly available in an improvised aid centre, in the immediate vicinity of the incident.

Clashes on Mount Lebanon increased the work of the ICRC medical team in that region. Pharmaceutical first aid kits were handed out to dispensaries in Druze and Christian villages during tours by delegates.

Following the incidents that occurred at Tripoli from 9 December, the ICRC organized several emergency transports of wounded to the neighbouring hospitals, to which 118 victims were admitted. It also distributed indispensable medical material to six hospitals and one dispensary in North Lebanon.

In the valley of the Bekaa, where there were also clashes, the surgical team of the Scandinavian Red Cross Societies, working under ICRC auspices, carried out some fifty surgical operations at the Baalbek government hospital. The team also gave 35 consultations to out-patients.

In addition, 6,900 kg of medical aid was handed over to the Ministry of Health, 9,600 kg to the Lebanese Red Cross and 1,000 kg to the "Acca" and "Gaza" "Palestinian Red Crescent" hospitals.

The distributions of food aid were less important in the last two months of 1982, thanks to the increased quantities of provisions that other organizations were distributing in Lebanon. The ICRC decided to diminish little by little its distributions of food and concentrate its efforts on building up reserves of blankets, kitchen utensils and family packages containing an assortment of articles.

Some 11,800 families, however, received food assistance in November and some 6,800 families in December. More than 86,000 blankets, some 19,000 family packages with food rations and more than 3,600 assortments of kitchen utensils were distributed in the course of those two months.

The rain and the onset of winter made it necessary to increase the distribution of blankets.

The ship "Flora" of the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany made two voyages at the beginning of November, bringing 772 tons of various aid from Larnaca (Cyprus) and Ravenna (Italy).

In addition, convoys brought 465 tons of aid to Lebanon (rice, milk powder, blankets, etc.) which had been stored at Damascus.

A hundred "paediatric kits", a gift sent by the Netherlands Red Cross, arrived in Lebanon in November.

All these consignments made it possible for the ICRC to distribute 7,341 tons of aid and medical material in November and December, 3,234 tons went to Beirut, 456 tons to Central Lebanon, 1,666 tons to North Lebanon and the Bekaa valley and 1,985 tons to South Lebanon.

Jordan

The eighth series of visits to places of detention, started on 6 September, continued in November and December. By 15 November, visits had been made to nine places of detention with 1,592 detainees, of whom 122 had been interviewed without witnesses.

Yemen Arab Republic

On mission in the Yemen Arab Republic from 26 October to 10 November, Mr G.-B. Bacchetta, ICRC regional delegate for the Arabian peninsula, visited the Sanaa central prison where he saw 171 detainees, according to standard ICRC procedure.

During his stay, Mr Bacchetta went to the As-Sawwadiyah region where he visited a camp in which there were some 850 persons displaced by the events of 1979.

As a result of this mission, the ICRC decided to provide assistance to the prisons (medicines, disinfectants, books, etc.), to a value of 20,000 Swiss francs and to launch an aid programme (blankets, kitchen utensils, food), to a value of nearly 40,000 francs, for the benefit of the displaced population.

During this mission, Mr Bacchetta met the Minister of the Interior and representatives of the Yemeni Red Crescent.

In addition, 900 tents and a ton of clothing were sent to North Yemen in response to appeals by the League of Red Cross Societies on behalf of victims of the recent earthquake.

Israel and occupied territories

Apart from its work related to the conflict in Lebanon (see above), the ICRC delegation in Israel continued its traditional activities for detainees in November and December. It visited detainees under interrogation and continued its visits to the Toulkarem, Jenin, Neve Tirza, Ramallah and Nafha prisons.

The delegates had talks with many personalities in the occupied territories, in particular with mayors, whether in office or removed from office, and with university staff. These talks enabled the delegation to make a better approach to the various problems facing the population of the occupied territories.

At the beginning of December, the Israeli authorities set up a commission to study the case of the Bedouins, about 500 families, originally from the Sinai, who remained in the Gaza strip after Sinai was returned to Egypt in April 1982. The ICRC is following the work of this commission.

The ICRC is following attentively other problems concerning the population of the occupied territories. In the Gaza strip, following a plan by the authorities to rid public property of "illegal constructions", fifteen houses were destroyed at the end of November and hundreds of other constructions are threatened with destruction. The ICRC delegations in Jerusalem and Gaza have been approached by numerous families on this subject. A High Court order suspended the carrying out of this plan.

In Jericho, refugee camps abandoned in 1967 were also scheduled for destruction.

In Hebron, there is a project to rebuild a new Jewish quarter in the centre of the old city. A High Court order of 13 December suspended the carrying out of this project for 45 days.

Europe

Poland

A further call for funds for Poland, the third since the beginning of the action a year ago, was made at the beginning of December by the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies. The appeal is for 18.3 million Swiss francs and covers the period from 1 November 1982 to 30 June 1983.

Since the imposition of martial law in December 1981, the ICRC and the League have made every endeavour, in collaboration with the Polish Red Cross, to provide protection and assistance to the persons interned and to vulnerable groups of the population having difficulties in procuring essential food and medicines. As from 21 January 1982, the date on which they obtained the necessary authorization, the ICRC delegates have been visiting persons interned under martial law. In the course of the year, 4,851 internees were seen according to customary ICRC procedures, i.e. interviews with the internees, without witnesses, in their usual place of internment, with the possibility of repeating the visits. These visits ended with the suspension of martial law, which became effective on 31 December 1982, bringing with it an end to internment.

Mr Thierry Germond, ICRC headquarters staff member responsible for action in Poland, visited Warsaw from 29 November to 4 December. His mission allowed him to continue discussions with the Polish authorities relating to the ICRC request for access to arrested and condemned persons. Mr Germond had talks with the Vice-Prime Minister, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Health, the Vice-Minister of the Interior and the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs as well as with the President and other senior officials of the Polish Red Cross.
