

ICRC President visits the United States of America

Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga, President of the ICRC, was in Washington from 14 to 17 May 1989, accompanied by Mr. André Pasquier, Director of Operations, and Mr. Jürg Bischoff from the Press Division.

Mr. Sommaruga and Mr. Pasquier were received by the President of the United States, Mr. George Bush, in the presence of Mr. Richard F. Schubert, President of the American Red Cross. The ICRC representatives conveyed their warm thanks for the financial support provided by the American authorities to the ICRC; they also expressed the hope that the contribution would be increased, given the expansion in ICRC operational activities in many parts of the world. There was also an exchange of views as to ratification by the United States Government of the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions, as well as talks on humanitarian mobilization and current ICRC activities. Mr. Bush assured Mr. Sommaruga that he could count on continued diplomatic and financial support from the United States.

At the State Department, Mr. Sommaruga and Mr. Pasquier met Mr. Eagleburger, Deputy Secretary of State, and several Assistant Secretaries of State and discussed with them the financial implications of the ICRC's operational activities.

The ICRC representatives also met Senator Pell, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and four members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, accompanied by several colleagues. They said they were in favour of an increase in the American financial contribution. The meeting also provided an opportunity to describe the mandate and activities of the ICRC.

Mr. Sommaruga and Mr. Pasquier then visited the headquarters of the American Red Cross where they were received by Mr. Al Panico, Manager, International Operations, and member of the Board of Governors, Mr. Schubert and other senior American Red Cross officials.