

Mr. Sommaruga outlined the main activities of the ICRC in South Africa, especially the assistance programmes carried out in collaboration with the South African Red Cross for thousands of victims of the violence in Natal province.

- Mr. *Tadeusz Mazowiecki*, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Poland, and Mr. *Salim Ahmed Salim*, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), were received at ICRC headquarters on 12 June.

Missions by the President

From late May to July 1990, the President of the ICRC, Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga, carried out missions to Liechtenstein, Czechoslovakia, Belgium and Iceland.

- **Principality of Liechtenstein**

At the official invitation of Mr. Hans Brunhart, Liechtenstein's Head of Government, and Princess Marie of Liechtenstein, President of the Liechtenstein Red Cross, the ICRC President, accompanied by Mr. Claudio Caratsch, ICRC Vice-President, went to Vaduz on 28 and 29 May 1990.

Mr. Sommaruga expressed his deep gratitude to the Principality for its generous contribution to the ICRC budget and voiced the hope that the Liechtenstein government and Red Cross would in future also be able to contribute to the institution's operational activities.

The National Society's General Assembly took place in the presence of the Reigning Prince Hans Adam and the Head of Government. The ICRC President addressed the Assembly, speaking mainly on the subject of humanitarian mobilization.

- **Czechoslovakia**

President Sommaruga was in Prague from 11 to 13 June to attend a symposium, organized by the League of Red Cross and Red Cres-

cent Societies in co-operation with the Czechoslovak Red Cross, on "Europe in transition — the humanitarian perspective" (see the report on this symposium on p. 357).

While at the symposium Mr. Sommaruga and Mr. Pär Stenbäck, League Secretary General, met Ms. Caslauska, adviser for humanitarian affairs of the President of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Mr. Vaclav Havel, to discuss problems confronting the Czechoslovak Red Cross. They also met Mr. Alexander Dubcek, Speaker of Czechoslovakia's Federal Assembly, who thanked the ICRC for its intervention in behalf of Czechoslovak hostages captured by UNITA in 1983.

Mr. Sommaruga also had meetings with representatives of many National Societies attending the symposium. These included the new leaders of the eastern European Societies such as Ms. Landman, Vice-President of the German Red Cross of the German Democratic Republic, Dr. Vaclav Burian, President of the Czechoslovak Red Cross and Mr. Reszo Sztuchlik, President of the Executive Committee of the Hungarian Red Cross.

● **Belgium**

On 20 June, Mr. Sommaruga went to Brussels at the invitation of the Belgian parliament. He was first received by Mr. Swaelen, President of the Senate, and the Directors General of the Belgian Red Cross. He then gave a talk on the ICRC's mandate, activities and financial needs to the members of the Chamber of Representatives' Foreign Relations Commission and the Senate's Health and Environment Commission. In the discussion that followed, many questions were asked about various aspects of the ICRC's present and past activities and what the Belgian parliament could do to support the institution.

President Sommaruga was accompanied to Belgium by Mr. Michel Convers, Head of the ICRC's Operational Support Department.

● **Iceland**

At the invitation of the government of the Republic of Iceland and the Icelandic Red Cross, the ICRC President, accompanied by Mr. Jurg Bischoff, his assistant, and Ms. Sophie Graven from the Division for Principles and Relations with the Movement, made an official visit to Reykjavik from 1 to 4 July. The purpose of the visit was to consider with the Icelandic government the possibility of increased financial support for the ICRC budget and to strengthen the ICRC's relations with the Icelandic Red Cross.

During his talks with Mr. Steingrímur Hermannsson, the Icelandic Prime Minister, and Mr. Jón Baldvín Hannibalsson, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Mr. Sommaruga thanked the Icelandic government for its financial support and reviewed the ICRC's activities throughout the world, then placed particular emphasis on national legislation to implement international humanitarian law, the dissemination of that law, the international community's collective responsibility in the event of violations of humanitarian law and the need to continue humanitarian assistance to the Third World. He furthermore asked for Iceland's support in the ICRC's endeavour to have the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions ratified by a greater number of States.

Mr. Sommaruga was also received by Mrs. Vigdis Finnbogadóttir, President of the Republic of Iceland and patroness of the National Society.

The ICRC representatives were welcomed at the Icelandic Red Cross headquarters by Mr. Gudjon Magnusson, President of the National Society and Vice-President of the League. He gave them an account of several of the Society's main activities, including a workshop that produces appliances for the disabled, a shelter for young people suffering from psychological and social problems and a centre for people undergoing medical treatment. Leading officials of the National Society expressed their desire to be more active abroad, in particular by increasing the number of medical staff placed at the ICRC's disposal.

Lastly, Mr. Sommaruga gave a lecture at the University of Reykjavik.
