

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

September-October 1984

Africa

Missions by the delegate-general

From 5 to 11 September, Mr. Jean-Marc Bornet, the ICRC delegate-general for Africa carried out a mission to *Kenya*. He had discussions in Nairobi with the heads of the ICRC delegations in Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, the Sudan, and Uganda, in order to set the objectives of ICRC activities in the countries of the Horn of Africa for 1985.

Taking advantage of the fact that he was in the region, Mr. Bornet made a brief visit to *Uganda* from 12 to 15 September. He met, among others, the Prime Minister, Mr. Alimadi, the Minister of the Interior, Mr. Kirunda, and the First Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Ayume. In their discussions, they took stock of ICRC activities in Uganda.

The delegate-general for Africa also undertook a mission to *Angola* (3-9 October) where he met a number of government representatives and the President of the "Angolan Red Cross".

Southern Africa

On 8 September, 25 persons detained by UNITA (including 11 priests and nuns) were released and handed over to the ICRC which transported them to Johannesburg on an aircraft chartered for the purpose. The detainees consisted of 14 Portuguese, 5 Mexican women, 3 Spaniards, an Angolan, a Colombian and a woman national of Cape Verde, all of whom were handed over to their respective consular authorities.

Angola

Despite a number of logistic problems (lack of aircraft fuel, poor condition of runways), the ICRC delegation in Angola completed preparations for assistance programmes in favour of displaced persons and set up stocks of relief supplies in various places in the provinces of Huambo, Bie and Benguela. As a result, by 31 October 3,200 tonnes of relief goods (mainly foodstuffs but also tents, blankets and clothing) were in storage in a dozen places in the Planalto.

While the preparations were in progress, ICRC delegates provided assistance on a large scale (230 tonnes of food) to the most vulnerable groups of displaced persons in the provinces of Huambo, Bie and Benguela.

Following the reopening of the therapeutic feeding centre in Kuito (Bie Province) at the beginning of September, seven other such feeding centres were set up in Huambo province in October. About 400 severely undernourished children receive milk and two meals per day at each of these centres.

The ICRC medical teams gave some 14,000 consultations during evaluation tours undertaken in Bailundo, Katchiungo, Cuima, E Cunha, Alto Hama, Huambo (Huambo Province), Hanha de Norte, Santa Cruz, Cubal, Ganda, Alto Liro and Catumbela (Benguela Province). They also took about 60 sick or injured people to hospitals.

Stocks at the orthopaedic centre in Bomba Alta, which were destroyed in a fire in September, were replenished in October, so that ICRC prosthetists and their local assistants could resume production of artificial limbs at the normal rate.

At the end of October, the ICRC delegation in Angola consisted of 82 persons, 15 of whom had been made available by the National Red Cross Societies of Belgium, Canada, Ireland, Portugal, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom and Switzerland.

Republic of South Africa

The ICRC delegation in Pretoria continued its programme of assistance to detainees and the needy families of detainees. In September and October the cost of the assistance (food parcels, travelling expenses for people visiting their detained relatives, various other items) was about 112,000 Swiss francs.

On 22 and 23 October, ICRC delegates carried out a mission to the region of Ganzankulu to evaluate the needs of displaced civilians who had come there from Mozambique. The delegates distributed 200 blankets.

Namibia/South-West Africa

ICRC delegates visited 10 security detainees in Windhoek prison and a sick detainee in Rundu prison. The ICRC Tracing Agency worked on the cases of 12 missing persons and organized the exchange of 61 family messages.

In September and October the assistance provided to detainees and their families in the form of food parcels, blankets and travelling expenses for persons visiting their relatives in detention cost almost 21,500 Swiss francs.

During tours undertaken to evaluate the situation in Kavango, Damaraland and Opuwo, ICRC delegates distributed 1.2 tonnes of foodstuffs for people, mainly children, suffering from malnutrition.

Ethiopia

In October there was a marked increase in ICRC relief activities in Ethiopia in response to the worsening hunger among displaced persons, the serious shortage of foodstuffs caused by the drought, and the increasing number of people attracted to the distribution centres in their quest for food. In the joint ICRC-Ethiopian Red Cross operation, 2,194 tonnes of relief supplies (including 2,184 tonnes of food) were distributed to 250,600 people. This constitutes an increase of 100% over the amount distributed in May 1984.

Although the ICRC used all its means of transport (17 lorries with trailers), it was unable to transport food in sufficient quantities to the 20 or so distribution points established in the provinces of Eritrea, Tigre, Gondar, Hararge and Wollo. The ICRC therefore chartered a cargo plane which, in the ten days from 21 to 31 October, transported 356 tonnes of foodstuffs and medicines from Addis Ababa and Asmara to Axum, Adwa, Mekele and Lalibela.

A number of medical missions were carried out in Eritrea, Tigre, Wollo and Hararge; medicines and medical material were distributed to hospitals and medical centres in Afabet, Barentu and Rama (Eritrea).

The therapeutic feeding centre at Mekele, run by two ICRC nurses, continued to care for some 900 persons, most of whom were children suffering from malnutrition.

The two prosthesis workshops in Asmara and Harar continued to produce artificial limbs. Eight ICRC prosthetists are employed in these workshops, where they also give training courses to Ethiopian personnel.

*

The ICRC was deeply grieved at the death of one of its delegates in a car accident in Ethiopia on 28 October. An employee of the Ethiopian Red Cross travelling in the same vehicle was injured. The ICRC expressed its sympathy to the families.

Somalia

In September and October ICRC delegates supplied 6.5 tonnes of relief goods (foodstuffs, powdered milk, cigarettes) worth 32,500 Swiss francs to the prisoners of war at Gezira camp (208 Ethiopians and 1 Cuban). They also supplied beds, mattresses and blankets to the camp infirmary.

The tracing service of the ICRC delegation in Mogadishu initiated 31 searches for persons reported missing and forwarded 42 family messages.

An ICRC delegate and a representative of the Somali Red Crescent visited several branches of the National Society and organized information lectures on the Red Cross for about 4,000 schoolchildren. In addition, two talks on ICRC activities were given to an audience of 900 at a youth camp.

Sudan

In September and October, the tracing service of the ICRC delegation in Khartoum received 74 requests to seek missing persons and transmitted 182 family messages.

The ICRC supplied 5.4 tonnes of sugar, 2.7 tonnes of tea and 2,000 blankets to Sudanese repatriated from Chad.

Uganda

Red Cross relief activities in favour of the displaced civilians in the area known as the "triangle" (Mpigi, Mubende and Lowero

districts) to the north of Kampala were broken off at the end of July because of the dangerous conditions prevailing. They had not been resumed by the end of October.

The ICRC nevertheless continued to visit places of detention (prisons and police stations), to supply relief to the detainees, and to process requests to trace missing persons (53 requests dealt with and 741 family messages transmitted between the detainees and their families). In co-operation with the Ugandan authorities, the ICRC also organized six operations to transfer 105 displaced persons.

The ICRC medical teams had to limit their movements to a few areas and to the transit camps at Nakazi, Kibizi and Busunju. They gave 2,400 vaccinations and 730 individual consultations.

In September and October, the ICRC distributed 610 tonnes of relief supplies, including 600 tonnes of food and over 2,800 blankets.

Chad

Following negotiations with all the interested parties, the ICRC organized the repatriation, on 2 October, of 121 Sudanese detained in Chad. On 8 and 9 October, ICRC delegates visited 20 other Sudanese prisoners at the house of arrest in Biltine.

In September and October, 47 tonnes of relief supplies, consisting mainly of food, were delivered to the detainees at N'Djamena prison. The state of health of the detainees was examined by an ICRC doctor, who vaccinated them all against tetanus. A mission was carried out to assess the situation at the Baptist mission hospital and at Kumra medical centre, where treatment was given to injured civilians.

The ICRC Tracing Agency office transmitted 46 family messages.

An ICRC delegate gave a talk to an audience of 150 during a seminar for workers of the Chad Red Cross.

Zaire

ICRC delegates continued to visit places of detention in Kinshasa and in the regions of Shaba (Lubumbashi, Likasi and Kipushi) and Haut-Zaire (Kisangani). In September they saw 232 detainees and in October 90; 33 and 25 respectively came within the ICRC's mandate. Food and medicines were given to the detainees and their families, in all 573 persons.

Latin America

Mission by the President

Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the ICRC, carried out a mission to Nicaragua, from 10 to 13 October. He was accompanied by Mr. Jean-Pierre Hocké, Director for Operational Activities, and Mr. André Pasquier, delegate-general for Latin America and the Caribbean.

In discussions with, among others, Mr. Daniel Ortega, Co-ordinator of the Government Junta of National Reconstruction, Mr. Miguel d'Escoto, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Tefel, Minister of Social Affairs, and Mrs. Lea Guido, Minister of Health, stock was taken of the different aspects of ICRC activities in the country. In addition, an agreement relating to ICRC co-operation with the government Aldo Chavarria Orthopaedic Centre was signed.

The ICRC presented six ambulances to the Nicaraguan Red Cross, the senior officials of which were also met during this mission.

El Salvador

In September, the ICRC delegates carried out 146 visits to places of detention under the authority of the Ministries of Justice and Defence. During the visits, they registered 141 new detainees held for security reasons, whom they interviewed without witnesses. In October, 165 new detainees were seen and registered during 171 visits.

In carrying out its mission of protection, the ICRC intervened also in two other circumstances. First, on 10 October, 15 wounded members of guerrilla movements were handed over to ICRC delegates, who evacuated them to countries offering asylum. An officer of the Salvadoran army was also handed over to delegates in the department of Chalatenango. This evacuation of sick and wounded formed the final phase of an operation started on 29 August under the auspices of the ICRC. It resulted in the evacuation of 60 wounded guerrillas to countries where they would receive medical treatment. The opposition forces released four officers of the Salvadoran army. ICRC delegates supervised the release of four other officers held by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the simultaneous release of four members of the opposition held by the National Police.

Secondly, for the meeting between the Salvadoran authorities and members of the opposition, which was held at La Palma on 15 October, the ICRC responded to a request from both parties to transport the representatives of the opposition, under the protection of the Red Cross emblem, between San Salvador airport and the place of the meeting. In collaboration with the Salvadoran Red Cross, four first-aid posts and a radio relay system were set up along the route taken by the convoy.

The ICRC Tracing Agency offices in San Salvador, San Miguel and Santa Ana registered 358 enquiries, 267 of which concerned persons reported missing or presumed to be in captivity. The ICRC delegates succeeded in tracing 125 of the persons reported missing, 99 of whom were in detention.

During September and October, the ICRC supplied 1,384 tonnes of food aid to displaced persons, 418 tonnes of which went to 75,800 persons in the central zone while the other 966 tonnes went to 85,400 beneficiaries in the eastern zone.

The mobile medical teams based in San Salvador and San Miguel gave 16,938 consultations (including 2,220 dental check-ups) during their field trips. Medicaments and medical material to the value of 106,000 Swiss francs were supplied to hospitals, first-aid posts, displaced persons camps and branches of the National Red Cross Society.

For the dissemination of knowledge of the Red Cross principles and the basic rules of humanitarian law, a lecture was delivered to members of the civil defence at Teotepeque, and four talks were given to local chapters of the Salvadoran Red Cross, the audiences totalling 250 persons.

Nicaragua

In September, ICRC delegates visited the prisons of Matagalpa, Chinandega, Esteli, Granada and Juigalpa, holding in all 1,970 detainees. In October, a new series of visits was undertaken to the "Zona Franca" prison at Managua, where 493 detainees were seen in accordance with the traditional criteria of the ICRC. Medical delegates treated 256 detainees.

During these visits, almost 44 tonnes of aid (food, toiletries, leisure items, medicines and medical material) worth 152,000 Swiss francs were delivered to the detainees visited and to those in Tipitapa prison. In addition, the ICRC delegation provided 43 tonnes of relief

supplies (to the value of 75,000 Swiss francs) to some 1,300 needy families of detainees, and also paid travelling expenses to enable 26 families to visit their detained relatives.

In co-operation with the Nicaraguan Red Cross, the ICRC continued its programme of assistance to the displaced persons, mainly Miskito Indians in areas along the Atlantic coast. In September, 35.2 tonnes of relief supplies (food, blankets, kitchen utensils and basic medicaments) were transported by boat and distributed to 5,900 beneficiaries in the province of Zelaya Norte and the region of the Laguna de Perlas. In October, 32.5 tonnes of relief supplies were distributed to 3,700 persons. A second boat chartered by the ICRC and the Nicaraguan Red Cross made two runs to the southern region of the Atlantic coast in October, transporting 28.8 tonnes of relief to some 3,300 displaced Miskito Indians.

The ICRC also supplied 42 tonnes of relief (mainly food) to displaced persons in the provinces of Chontales, Matagalpa, Nueva Segovia, Rio San Juan and the northern provinces. The distribution was carried out by the National Society in co-operation with the Nicaraguan Ministry of Social Affairs.

The ICRC Tracing Agency office in Managua exchanged 1,455 family messages, mostly between Nicaraguan refugees in Honduras and their families remaining in Nicaragua.

Honduras

On 28 October, the ICRC delegate based in Tegucigalpa went to the region inhabited by Miskito Indian refugees in order to distribute and collect family messages coming from or intended for families remaining in Nicaragua.

Talks on the basic rules of humanitarian law and the Red Cross principles were given at two military colleges and to members of the National Red Cross Society.

Visits to places of detention

In *Chile*, the ICRC delegates carried out a new series of visits from 25 September to 15 October, when they went to 17 places of detention and saw 223 detainees, including 31 women.

Between 10 October and 2 November, a new series of visits was undertaken in *Columbia*. From 10 to 18 October, the ICRC delegates visited 3 places of detention in the capital, holding 37 detainees. From

22 October to 2 November, they had access to 5 places of detention in the provinces, where they saw 50 detainees.

In *Paraguay*, an ICRC delegate visited 23 detainees in four places of detention from 3 to 8 September.

In *Peru*, in September and October, the ICRC delegates visited 9 places of detention in Lima and the surrounding area, some of them several times. They saw 348 persons in all.

Asia—Pacific

Mission by the Vice-President of the ICRC

On 25 October, Mr. Maurice Aubert, Vice-President of the ICRC, accompanied by Mr. Jean de Courten, delegate-general for Asia and Oceania, went on a mission to the *Republic of Korea*, at the invitation of the National Red Cross Society. In a meeting held at Seoul with Mr. Chang Soon Yoo, President of the Red Cross Society of the Republic of Korea, the ICRC representatives took stock of various humanitarian problems. They also had talks with the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Reunification.

On his return journey, Mr. Aubert stopped in *Thailand* from 30 October to 2 November for talks with the ICRC delegation in Bangkok. In the border area, he went to the ICRC sub-delegation at Aranyaprathet and several refugee camps. In Bangkok, he visited Mr. Kashetra Snidvongs, Honorary Secretary-General of the Thai Red Cross.

Missions by the delegate-general

Mr. Jean de Courten, ICRC delegate-general for Asia and Oceania, accompanied by the ICRC regional delegate in Jakarta, was in *Malaysia* from 12 to 14 September. In Kuala-Lumpur, he met the Vice Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior and discussed problems relating to protection.

After his stay in Malaysia, the delegate-general went on to *Thailand*. In Bangkok, from 18 to 20 September, he discussed the 1985 objectives of ICRC action in Thailand, Kampuchea and Viet Nam with the heads of the ICRC delegations in these three countries.

In October, after having accompanied the ICRC Vice-President on his mission to the Republic of Korea, Mr. de Courten went to

Japan. On 1 and 2 November, he had discussions in Tokyo with representatives of the Japanese Red Cross and with officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

From 3 to 9 November, he was in the *People's Republic of China*. In Beijing, he had working sessions with the leaders of the Chinese Red Cross and a meeting at the Foreign Ministry. The main topics discussed were the ICRC's activities in Asia and the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law.

Conflict in Afghanistan

The ICRC delegation in Pakistan continued its medical assistance programme for Afghans, victims of the fighting in their country.

In September and October, 276 wounded were admitted to the ICRC hospital at Peshawar; the medical teams performed 433 surgical operations and treated 1,807 out-patients. During the same period, the ICRC hospital at Quetta admitted 120 wounded, carried out 340 surgical operations and treated 614 out-patients.

In the same period, the Pakistan Red Crescent mobile first-aid teams based at Parachinar, Miram Shah, Wana, Badini and Shanon (receiving regular supplies of medicaments from the ICRC) gave assistance to 196 wounded who had crossed the border and evacuated 107 of them to the ICRC hospitals at Peshawar and Quetta for surgery. As was the case at this time last year, the team based at Badini will have to suspend its activities for the winter, since snowfalls are making it impossible to carry out any activities in the field.

In September and October, 44 new patients were admitted to the Peshawar paraplegic centre, bringing to 302 the number of persons admitted to the centre since 1 September 1981. In addition, 18 amputees and one paraplegic were transferred from Quetta to the ICRC orthopaedic and paraplegic centres at Peshawar for special treatment.

Finally, 31 persons attended the 24th and 25th first-aid courses given by ICRC personnel. Since the programme was launched in 1982, 427 Afghans have been taught first-aid.

Kampuchea

The ICRC continued its assistance programme for the three Phnom Penh hospitals ("17 April", "7 January" and "Revolution")

and for the provincial hospitals of Kandal, Battambang, Kampot and Kompong Speu. In addition, aid (in the form of serum) was granted to the Phnom Penh blood bank (cost of the programme: 275,000 Swiss francs).

The ICRC also continued its programme of assistance to the orphanages of Kompong Cham, Kompong Chhnang, Kompong Speu, Kampot and Battambang. The programme includes the provision of house-building materials, cooking utensils and leisure articles worth 80,000 Swiss francs.

The ICRC continued to provide logistic support for the medical teams of the French, Swedish and Swiss Red Cross Societies based respectively at Phnom Penh, Kompong Chhnang and Kompong Cham.

In September and October, the ICRC sent by air almost 4 tonnes of medicaments and relief supplies from Ho Chi Minh City to Phnom Penh and, by sea, 7.5 tonnes of standard medical kits from Singapore to Kampuchea.

Thailand

In September and October, activities continued normally in the ICRC hospitals at Khao-I-Dang and Kab Cherng. During this period, the Khao-I-Dang hospital admitted 327 new patients (including 63 war casualties) and the Kab Cherng hospital 176 (including 22 war casualties). The activities of the medical teams working at these two hospitals and including staff seconded by the National Red Cross Societies of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, are co-ordinated by the ICRC. The Australian and Japanese Red Cross Societies contributed respectively 400 and 100 units of fresh blood per month to the ICRC blood bank at Khao-I-Dang.

The value of the relief supplies (mainly paramedical supplies such as toiletries and cleaning material, bedding, cooking utensils and clothing) distributed by ICRC delegates in refugee camps along the Khmer-Thai border and in the Aranyaprathet prison, amounted to 120,000 Swiss francs.

Protection activities continued in September; the ICRC delegates visited, in accordance with ICRC standard procedures, 35 persons detained at the prison of Ban Sangae camp.

The ICRC Tracing Agency arranged for the transmission of 4,181 letters between refugees and their families living either in camps

along the Khmer-Thai border or abroad. In addition, it handled 1,263 tracing requests, transferred 295 persons and registered 515 new Vietnamese refugees (including 22 newborn children) at Dongrek camp.

Furthermore, the Thai Red Cross (with financial support from the ICRC) continued its activities in aid of Khmer refugees and Thai civilians in the border areas. In September and October, the six first-aid teams working at the Khao-I-Dang dispensary and at Aranyaprathet camp gave first-aid to some 25,000 Khmers and 10,000 Thais. In addition, the Tracing and Mailing Service (TMS) of the Thai Red Cross, which deals mainly with the Vietnamese "boat people", handled 95 requests for news, instituted 86 tracing enquiries and transmitted 2,093 letters.

Refugees in South-East Asia

From 12 October to 5 November, the delegate in charge of the Geneva section of the Central Tracing Agency, dealing with the problem of Vietnamese "boat people", carried out a mission to Hongkong, Malaysia and Indonesia. The purpose of her mission was to train the newly appointed heads of the Tracing and Mailing Service network set up by the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of these countries.

She also visited "boat people" camps; their number is more or less the same as last year, any departures being offset by new arrivals.

The Tracing and Mailing Service network was created in 1979 within the National Societies of the countries where the "boat people" first seek asylum; the ICRC continues to finance all tracing and mailing activities and acts as a co-ordinator between the tracing services of the various National Societies.

Indonesia/East Timor

From 12 September to 2 October, ICRC delegates implemented the third phase of the series of visits to detainees of East Timor. First, they visited 13 detainees (including a woman) in two places of detention close to Jakarta. Then, they went to four places of detention on East Timor, where they had access to 315 detainees (including 88 on probation). They distributed relief to all the detainees they visited.

As part of the ICRC programme for family reuniting, 2 persons were transferred on 7 October, from East Timor to Portugal.

Philippines

In July, two ICRC teams started a new series of visits to places of detention in the Philippines, both in Manila and in the provinces. By 12 October, they had visited 333 prisoners in 38 places of detention.

Nepal

From 28 October to 3 November, the ICRC regional delegate for the Indian sub-continent, based at New Delhi, carried out a mission to Nepal where he met representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, of Defence and of Justice and officials from the Nepalese Red Cross. The purpose of the mission was twofold: to encourage the Nepalese authorities to ratify the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions and to seek the support of the National Society in launching a campaign for the dissemination of knowledge of the fundamental rules of humanitarian law and of the principles of the Red Cross.

Middle East

Conflict between Iran and Iraq

The ICRC continued to visit prisoner-of-war camps both in Iraq and Iran. In the latter country, however, visits were discontinued by the Iranian authorities on 10 October following an incident at a Gorgan camp, in which several prisoners died.

In *Iraq*, ICRC delegates have had regular access to prisoner-of-war camps and by 31 October they had registered 8,243 Iranian prisoners of war since the beginning of the conflict in September 1980. From 6 to 8 October, in accordance with the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war, the ICRC delegates visited Al-Tash camp, which accommodates 4,693 displaced Iranian families, 21,852 persons in all.

In *Iran*, the series of visits to prisoner-of-war camps for Iraqi prisoners continued in September. In October, when the visits were extended to camps in the provinces, the ICRC delegates gained access to Manjil camp where, on 2 and 3 October, they saw 1,478 prisoners of war, registering 110 new ones. On 9 October the visit to Gorgan

camp, which holds about 3,500 prisoners of war, was started, but had to be broken off the following day when extremely violent clashes between Iraqi prisoners of war occurred and the Iranian guards opened fire. According to the Iranian authorities, six prisoners of war were killed and about 50 wounded.

On the basis of Article 121 of the Third Geneva Convention, the ICRC asked the Iranian authorities to hold an inquiry into this incident. Visits to prisoner-of-war camps were discontinued and Iran suspended all ICRC activities on its territory.

In the wake of these events, the ICRC issued on 23 November 1984 the following press release:

“The grave threat which hangs over some 50,000 Iraqi prisoners of war held captive in the Islamic Republic of Iran has caused the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to issue an appeal by its President, Mr. Alexandre Hay, to the Community of States to help it make international humanitarian law respected. This appeal was given on 23 November 1984 to the diplomatic representatives of the States signatory to the Geneva Conventions, gathered at ICRC headquarters.

For several weeks, the highest Iranian authorities have not hesitated to deliver extremely grave public attacks against the ICRC and its representatives in Iran; attacks which are quite clearly without any foundation.

This campaign of calumnies follows the tragic events which took place in the Gorgan prisoner-of-war camp, where ICRC delegates were the witnesses of an incident that caused the deaths of several prisoners. Since that day, 10 October 1984, Iran has suspended all ICRC activity on its soil.

The ICRC, in its resolve to use all means to ensure the respect for international humanitarian law in the conflict between Iraq and Iran, has already approached the international community in order to denounce violations of the Geneva Conventions, and this in two memoranda dated 7 May 1983 and 10 February 1984, which only had a temporary positive effect on the behaviour of the Iranian authorities.

Now, Alexandre Hay precised, there is at risk the physical and mental survival of thousands of men, and the future of the respect for the Geneva Conventions as applicable to armed conflicts. The grave and repeated violations by Iran of these Conventions are the reflection of a policy which has as its principal characteristic the turning of Iraqi prisoners of war against their own Government. Already this policy has divided the camps into antagonistic groups that frequently fight each

other, and occasionally kill each other, with the risk, patently, of armed intervention by Iranian soldiers responsible for guarding them. Thus, Gorgan was not an isolated incident. Unfortunately, there have been several precedents that the ICRC has established beyond any doubt.

Thus, the states signatory to the Geneva Conventions, who have undertaken to ensure that countries at war respect these Conventions, hold in their hands the fate of these threatened people, whom the ICRC alone is unable to save."

Repatriation

Two repatriations of sick and wounded prisoners of war and civilian internees took place between Iraq and Iran under the auspices of the ICRC acting as a neutral intermediary between the belligerent parties.

In the first operation, on 20 October, 100 Iranian prisoners of war and interned civilians were handed over to the ICRC by representatives of the Iraqi authorities at Ankara airport (Turkey). The ICRC then handed the prisoners and civilians over to representatives of the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who repatriated them.

The second operation was carried out on 25 October, also at Ankara airport, and involved the handing over to the ICRC by representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran of 72 sick and wounded Iraqi prisoners of war. The ICRC then handed these prisoners over to representatives of the Republic of Iraq for repatriation.

The Iranian prisoners of war and interned civilians and the Iraqi prisoners of war were interviewed before release, individually and without witnesses, by ICRC delegates and doctors, who then accompanied them to their respective countries.

For both groups, the reception and medical facilities at Ankara were provided by the Turkish authorities and the Turkish Red Crescent.

The repatriation of seriously sick or wounded members of enemy armed forces is, of course, one of the important obligations laid down by the Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war, to which both Iraq and Iran are party.

In September, the ICRC, again acting as a neutral intermediary, organized the repatriation of the passengers of two Iranian airliners which had been diverted to Baghdad. On 4 and 15 September respectively, 189 passengers and 11 crew members of one aircraft and

57 passengers and 8 crew members of the other were repatriated by aircraft chartered by the ICRC. Beforehand, the passengers and crews talked without witnesses to ICRC delegates and doctors.

Lebanon

Following the clashes which occurred in September in Tripoli and the Iklim el-Kharroub sector (Chouf), the ICRC delegates did the rounds of the hospitals and dispensaries in the regions affected by the fighting to assess conditions. They distributed medical material in accordance with needs. The major items supplied were two ambulances donated by the Norwegian Red Cross; one of these vehicles was given to the Lebanese Red Cross centre in Tripoli, the other to the dispensary in the Tebbane quarter (Tripoli) within the combat zone.

During September and October, the ICRC distributed 61 standard medical kits and other items (wheelchairs, crutches, ambulance equipment), in all worth 44,000 Swiss francs, to 20 hospitals and 52 dispensaries throughout Lebanon. In addition, 2,380 units of blood, 500 units of plasma and 600 transfusion kits, donated by the National Red Cross Societies of Finland and Norway, were supplied to the Lebanese Red Cross, which continued to receive financial support from the ICRC for its two medico-social centres in Mreige (southern Beirut) and Beiteddine (Chouf).

Relatively small amounts (36 tonnes) of relief supplies were distributed in September and October. As in July and August, the ICRC delegates worked on the reorganization of stocks and gave to various humanitarian and charity organizations the perishables which had not been distributed during the relief operations. They also supplied blankets and clothing to the families of detainees held at Ansar and Atlit.

The ICRC continued to make full visits to Ansar camp once per month and weekly visits to register new prisoners. On 31 October, 1,006 persons were being held at the camp.

The ICRC delegates also saw and registered twenty persons detained by the Israeli armed forces in three other centres in southern Lebanon. They continued their efforts to extend their protection activities to the civilian population of southern Lebanon, in accordance with the Fourth Geneva Convention, and they made regular visits to the Palestinian camps in the vicinity of Saida and Tyre.

On 24 September, a new visit was carried out to 121 prisoners held at Atlit prison in Israel (119 of these prisoners should have been released on 24 November 1983 when Ansar camp was temporarily closed). This visit was the fourth occasion on which the ICRC had had access to these prisoners since July 1984.

The ICRC delegates have made repeated visits to persons detained by various factions involved in the Lebanon conflict and have brought family messages to these persons.

Activities at the ICRC Tracing Agency offices in Lebanon were stepped up in response both to the increased number of prisoners at Ansar camp and to the communication difficulties between the north and south of the country. In September and October 38,530 family messages were exchanged, mainly between the detainees and their families. Ten families were reunited and two persons were transferred from Tyre to Beirut.
