

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES

Africa

Visit to prisoners held by the MPLA

On 14 and 15 May 1974, an ICRC regional delegate for West and Central Africa visited five Portuguese prisoners who were captured on 24 and 25 March of this year in the territory of Cabinda and held in two places in the People's Republic of the Congo by the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola. The delegate talked in private with the prisoners whom he provided with toilet requisites.

Following these visits, the ICRC delegate conferred with officials of the MPLA to whom he made certain comments and suggestions.

Visit to detainees in the People's Republic of the Congo

Whilst in the People's Republic of the Congo, the ICRC regional delegate visited the *Maison d'Arrêt* in Brazzaville, where he talked without witnesses with detainees of his choice. Medicaments, mattresses and soap, to a value of 2,400 Swiss francs, were provided for the benefit of the detainees.

The ICRC delegate then reported his observations to the penitentiary authorities.

Visit to Portuguese prisoners in Zaire

An ICRC delegate for West and Central Africa was in Zaire in May. He visited two Portuguese military prisoners held by the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (GRAE) at Kinkuzu, and he was able to talk with the prisoners in private.

Mission to Burundi and Rwanda

An ICRC regional delegate for East and Central Africa completed a mission in Burundi and Rwanda on 19 May 1974.

In Burundi, he had several talks with the Minister of Justice.

In Rwanda, his mission was essentially to visit places of detention, namely: Kigali (6 May), Gitarama and Nyanza (7 May), Gikongoro and Butare (8 May), Kibungo and Byumba (9 May), Kibuye (13 May), Gisenyi and Ruhengeri (14 May) and Cyangugu (15 May). In all he saw more than 5,300 prisoners. He was able to talk in private with the detainees of his choice whether they had been arrested for penal law offences or for political reasons. The delegate conveyed his observations and suggestions to the Minister of Justice and the Director of the Penitentiary Services.

Visits to places of detention in South Africa

From 23 May to 5 June, the ICRC delegate-general for Africa, accompanied by three delegates, one of whom was a doctor, visited three prisons in South Africa. The delegates saw 336 political prisoners in the prisons of Barbeton (24 May), Pretoria Local (27 May) and Robben Island (from 28 May to 1 June). As usual, the delegates talked in private with detainees of their choice.

Before and after the visits, the ICRC delegates had discussions with the new Minister of Justice, Prisons and Police, and with the General Commissioner for Prisons and his senior staff.

Latin America

Chile

The ICRC delegate-general for Latin America went to Chile in mid-June in order to review jointly with the authorities the activities of the ICRC delegation in Santiago, and to smooth out

certain difficulties which had occurred in the previous few weeks. He had discussions with the Head of State, General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, and with the Ministers of the Interior, Defence and Foreign Affairs and with the Government Secretary-General.

Subsequently, visits to places of detention, which had been discontinued on 1 May, were again authorized. The programme of visits enables ICRC delegates to go again into all detention camps administered by the armed forces and into the civilian prisons.

Whilst in the Chilean capital, the delegate-general also met members of the Chilean Red Cross Executive Committee. He also reorganized the ICRC delegation the better to enable it to carry out its mission. Five new delegates arrived in Santiago at the end of June, and in the next few weeks ten more will go there.

Visits to places of detention in Santiago were resumed from 20 June (Casa correccional de mujeres, Tres Alamos camp, Cárcel Pública, Penitenciaría, the Military Hospital and the Fach Hospital). Some of the detainees, who were transferred in May from Dawson Island, were visited in places near Santiago and Valparaiso. A new round of visits has been launched in the north, and ICRC delegates, after having been received by the Commander of the Martial Law Zone and the Chief of the Province, visited places of detention in Iquique.

Assistance to detainees and to their needy families continued. In May, 1,500 tons of powdered milk, a gift from the EEC and ICRC, were received in Valparaiso. In May and June, 1,600 blankets, 6 tons of tinned meat, medicaments and other relief items, to a value of 72,000 Swiss francs, were distributed by the ICRC delegates.

Chile was struck by devastating floods at the end of June and the ICRC delegation in Santiago, at the request of the Chilean Red Cross, drew upon its emergency stocks to provide 200 mattresses, 5 tons of tinned meat, one ton of powdered milk, medicaments, disinfectants and toilet articles for the flood victims, for distribution by the National Society and the Ministry of the Interior's "Oficina de Emergencia". In addition, ICRC headquarters sent its delegation in Chile 50,000 Swiss francs towards the financing of a longer term relief programme.

Uruguay

Following a mission in Uruguay towards the end of March 1974 by the ICRC regional delegate for Latin America, the ICRC, at the beginning of July, sent a consignment of medicaments to the prisons he had visited. The total value was 42,000 Swiss francs.

Asia

Mission by the delegate-general

From 5 May to 17 June 1974, the ICRC delegate general for Asia and Oceania carried out a mission which took him to Laos, the Republic of Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Khmer Republic, Indonesia and Malaysia. The trip enabled him to survey the work carried out by the various ICRC delegations in the region and also to make high level contacts with government authorities and the leaders of National Red Cross Societies in the countries which he visited.

In Laos, where he stayed from 6-11 May, the delegate-general met the Ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs and also representatives of the Lao Patriotic Front (LPF). He then went to the Republic of Vietnam where he conferred with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Vice-Minister of Defence before leaving on 17 May.

In the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, from 22 to 25 May, he was received by several senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of the National Red Cross Society. While in Hanoi, he contacted representatives of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG) and that organization's Red Cross.

In the Khmer Republic, the delegate-general had discussions with the Prime Minister, the Ministers of the Interior, Defence and Health, and with the Head of the Army Staff. The Prime Minister authorized the ICRC to visit prisoners of war.

In Indonesia, between 9 and 13 June, he met several senior government officials. During the last stage of his mission, in *Malaysia*, he contacted the National Red Cross Society, as he had done in all the other countries he had visited.

Khmer Republic

ICRC delegates on 21 June 1974 visited prisoners of war in the central prison of Phnom Penh. Visits to prisoners of war in the Khmer Republic will continue in July.

Asian Sub-Continent

The airlift between Pakistan and Bangladesh, which was started in September 1973 by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees came to an end on 1 July 1974. The operation enabled 108,727 Pakistanis to leave Bangladesh for their own country and 118,070 Bengalis in Pakistan to go to Bangladesh.

In both countries the ICRC's mission was to register applicants for repatriation and issue them with a travel document upon their departure, as published in the April 1974 issue of the *International Review*.

Malaysia

The ICRC regional delegate for South-East Asia, accompanied by another delegate, visited six places of detention in western Malaysia and the Sultanate of Sarawak between 1 and 9 June 1974. In all they saw some 900 detainees and were able to speak with detainees of their choice freely and without witnesses.

Sri Lanka

From 27 June to 2 July 1974, a number of places of detention were visited in the Island of Sri Lanka. The ICRC regional delegate for South-East Asia and another delegate visited some 1,400 detainees in nine "rehabilitation" centres. With the co-operation of the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society, they distributed locally pur-

chased relief supplies to a value of 40,000 Swiss francs. The delegates were able to talk in private with the detainees of their choice.

Middle East

Two transfer operations and a family reuniting operation took place under ICRC auspices between the occupied territory of Gaza-Sinai and the Arab Republic of Egypt. They took place in the United Nations buffer zone on the El Qantara Road.

On 3 June, 14 Egyptians, released from detention by the Israeli authorities, and the families of four of them (15 persons) returned to the Nile Valley. On 17 June, another 20 persons (12 detainees and families) also left the occupied territory of Gaza-Sinai for the Arab Republic of Egypt.

On 3 July, the ICRC conducted a family reuniting operation to enable 170 persons to go to the Nile Valley. In the other direction, 290 persons joined their families in occupied territory.