

*EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES***Africa****Southern Africa**

In December 1977, the ICRC appealed to governments and National Red Cross Societies for more than 3 million Swiss francs to cover its budget for relief activities in southern Africa in the first four months of 1978 and its operating overheads up to 30 June 1978.

By the end of January 1978 contributions announced had amounted to about 285,000 Swiss francs.

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Delegates visited a number of places of detention in December and January.

In *Rhodesia/Zimbabwe*, in December 1977, ICRC delegates saw 935 detainees in eight places of detention; they talked in private with 615.

In *South Africa*, visits were in two stages: from 8 to 14 December 1977 and from 16 to 24 January 1978. The ICRC delegates and doctors saw 61 detainees under the Internal Security Act in four places of detention, and 419 convicted security prisoners in three places of detention.

An ICRC delegate on 21 December 1977 visited the three Cuban prisoners held in South Africa. The previous visit was in August 1977.

Mozambique

On 2 January 1978 the Government of Mozambique, the Patriotic Front and the ICRC signed an agreement in Maputo for the provision of assistance to amputee victims of the Rhodesian/Zimbabwe conflict. This project was devised following a mission carried out by the head of the ICRC medical division, Dr. R. Russbach, and Mr. Thierry Germond,

delegate, from 2 December 1977 to 2 January 1978. Visits to the hospitals in the provinces of Sofala, Manica and Tete enabled Dr. Russbach to survey the medical situation in Mozambique and to draw up a list of priorities in the assistance which, in close consultation with the Government of Mozambique and the Patriotic Front, the ICRC could provide for victims of the hostilities.

Botswana

Mr. F. Steinemann, ICRC delegate, and Mr. Stanissis, delegate of the League of Red Cross Societies, visited two refugee camps in Botswana from 8 to 14 December 1977. From their findings and their talks with the Botswana authorities and Red Cross, they concluded that the number of refugees would increase and that the National Red Cross would need outside help, particularly from the ICRC, to meet the situation.

East Africa

Ogaden conflict

The ICRC continued its efforts to provide protection and assistance for victims of the Ogaden conflict, especially prisoners and civilian population. Mr. T. Fleiner, a member of the International Committee, and Mr. R. Santschy, in charge of the East Africa Desk at ICRC headquarters in Geneva, were in Addis Ababa from 16 to 25 January 1978. The ICRC regional delegate for East Africa, Mr. U. Bédert, and Mr. J.-F. Pascalis, a delegate specialising in relief supplies, went to Mogadishu in December 1977 and again in January 1978.

In December, the ICRC sent the Somali Red Crescent 140 tons of medical supplies, blankets and foodstuffs. These were forwarded and distributed, in co-operation with ICRC representatives, to the hospitals in the combat areas.

In 1977 the relief supplies sent to Ethiopia and Somalia, plus those being prepared at the end of December, amounted to 499 tons, valued at 2 million Swiss francs.

Eritrea conflict

To check the typhoid epidemic, the ICRC in December sent the Eritrean Red Cross and Red Crescent Society two consignments of medicaments, the first consisting of 50,000 capsules of antibiotics, the second of 20,000 capsules, 3,000 doses of vaccines and 60,000 multi-

vitamin tablets. These consignments were financed by the Norwegian Red Cross.

In 1977, the ICRC sent 602 tons of various supplies, valued at 1.6 million Swiss francs, to Eritrea.

Mauritania

During the second fortnight of December, Mr. Jean de Courten and Mr. Fred Isler, ICRC delegates, were in Nouakchott, the capital of Mauritania, in connection with the ICRC's efforts to help the victims of the Western Sahara conflict.

They were received in audience by His Excellency Mr. Mokhtar Ould Daddah, the Head of State, with whom they discussed the problems encountered by the ICRC in its work of protection and assistance. The two ICRC delegates also met the President of the Mauritanian Red Crescent, Mrs. Sall, and other senior members of the National Society.

Morocco

Mr. de Courten was in Morocco from 20 to 23 December. In Rabat he was received by H.R.H. Princess Lalla Malika, President of the Moroccan Red Crescent, together with her senior colleagues. He also met the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Staff Officers of the Royal Armed Forces in charge of prisoners. He also visited 99 Algerian military prisoners.

Middle East

ICRC President in the Arab Republic of Egypt

At the invitation of the Egyptian Government, the President of the ICRC, Mr. Alexandre Hay, was in Egypt from 16 to 23 December.

He was accompanied by Mr. Louis Jaquinet, head of the ICRC mission in Cairo, and by Mr. Jean Hoefliger, ICRC delegate general for the Middle East.

Mr. Hay conferred with the President of the National Assembly, Mr. Sayed Marei; the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Butros Ghali; the Minister of Health, Dr. Ibrahim Badran; the Minister of Social Affairs, Mrs. Amal Osman; the Vice-Minister for War, Admiral Fuad Zekri; and the Head of the Army Liaison Bureau, Major-General Hassan el Kateb.

He also met Mrs. Jihane Sadat, President of Honour of the Egyptian Red Crescent, and Dr. Mahmud Mahfuz, the National Society President.

Mr. Hay also visited the headquarters of the League of Arab States where he had discussions with Mr. Mahmud Riad, the Secretary-General.

In all his talks, Mr. Hay dwelt on the activities of the ICRC in the Middle East.

Delegate general's mission

The ICRC delegate general for the Middle East, Mr. Jean Hoefliger, carried out a mission in Israel in December 1977, with the purpose of deciding, with the ICRC delegation there, the practical steps to be taken in connection with the recent proposals put forward by the Israeli authorities regarding the new procedure for ICRC visits to security detainees. One of the effects of this procedure (described in the December 1977 issue of *International Review*) will be to increase the tasks of the ICRC delegation in Israel, especially those of the Central Tracing Agency (lists of detainees to be drawn up on the basis of notifications sent practically daily) and those connected with the technical aspects of visits (interviews without witnesses and medical examinations). A permanent medical delegate has now been attached to the delegation.

The ICRC's first visits to detainees under interrogation began on 6 January.

Israel and occupied territories

In December 1977 and January 1978, several operations were organized under ICRC auspices for altogether 976 persons (students, pilgrims and visitors) to cross the United Nations buffer zone in Sinai to go from Cairo to the occupied territories and in the opposite direction.

On 8 December, in a separate operation, the recently discovered mortal remains of three Israel soldiers, killed in action in October 1973, were returned to their relatives by Egypt.

Jordan

Two foreigners who had inadvertently crossed from Israel into Jordan were released on 3 January 1978 and were able to return to Israel under ICRC auspices. While under detention, these two persons were visited by the ICRC delegate in Amman.

Syrian Arab Republic

From October 1976 to 31 December 1977, the ICRC delegation in Damascus, with the Syrian Red Crescent Society and the "Palestinian Red Crescent", carried out 47 distributions of relief supplies to people affected by the events in Lebanon: Lebanese refugees, Palestinian refugees and displaced Syrian nationals who until recently had been living in Lebanon. Over 6,200 persons received altogether about 42 tons of various emergency articles (foodstuffs, medicaments, blankets, clothes, etc.) to a value of about 204,000 Swiss francs.

The distributions were started in October 1976 in regions close to the border with Lebanon (Tartus, around Homs, Zabadani), and later spread to places further inside Syrian territory (the town of Homs, Hama, Damascus and outlying districts). The collaboration of the various local branches of Syria's National Red Crescent Society and of the "Palestinian Red Crescent" was of great help to the ICRC delegation.

Lebanon

Massive distributions of winter relief were made in December 1977 by the ICRC delegation in Lebanon, in co-operation with the Lebanese High Relief Committee.

In 47 villages in the south, ICRC delegates distributed 19,000 sets of children's clothes, 193 tons of food, 22,000 cakes of soap, 13,000 blankets and 40,000 sq.m. of plastic sheeting to replace window panes. About 72,000 persons received assistance.

At the end of December, a further distribution was organized for 7,000 displaced persons living in the Tyre area. They, too, received blankets, children's clothes and plastic sheeting.

In the field of protection, the ICRC delegates in Lebanon arranged for the release of five detainees (three were in the hands of the "conservative" forces and the two others in the hands of the Palestinians). These five persons had been visited by ICRC delegates during their detention in the south of Lebanon.

Latin America

Argentina

Following the mission carried out in December 1977 by the ICRC delegate general for Latin America, Mr. Serge Nessi, ICRC delegates

resumed their visits to places of detention in Argentina. In the second half of December, they visited the "Villa Devoto" prison in Buenos Aires, holding several hundred detainees, and in January 1978, the La Plata prison where they saw several hundred detainees and spoke with many of them without witnesses.

In December, 203 families of detainees received assistance in food and medicaments to a total value of some 4,500 US dollars.

Paraguay

From 1 to 6 December 1977, Mr. Rolf Jenny, ICRC regional delegate for the countries of the "Cono Sur", was in Paraguay, where he had talks with the authorities and the National Red Cross Society.

In Asunción, Mr. Jenny visited two places of detention where he saw eight detainees.

Chile

ICRC protection and assistance activities in Chile were continued in December. The delegates went to five places of detention, containing altogether 69 detainees.

Aid to prisons totalled more than 2,000 dollars in December, while nearly 14,000 dollars worth of aid was distributed to needy persons. In all, 4,112 persons, including many families of detainees, benefited from this aid, in Santiago and elsewhere.

Asia

Thailand

In December 1977, ICRC delegates in Thailand continued their rounds of visits. They went to fourteen police stations in the north-east of the country, where 246 Lao were detained for having entered Thailand illegally. Relief items to a value of about 1,800 Swiss francs were distributed to these detainees.

In the second half of 1977, the ICRC delegation in Thailand made 239 visits to 74 places of detention and saw and distributed relief to over 6,000 persons who had entered the country illegally. The value of the articles distributed amounted to about 33,600 Swiss francs (foodstuffs,

milk powder, mosquito nets, mats, blankets, clothing, toilet articles, soap, detergents, insecticides, etc.).

In addition, the delegation issued 158 ICRC travel documents, enabling 233 refugees to leave Thailand.

Philippines

Two ICRC delegates paid a brief visit to the Philippines, lasting from 2 to 6 January 1978, when Mr. A. Pasquier, who was relinquishing his duties as regional delegate for South East Asia, introduced his successor, Mr. A. Duc, to the authorities and the Philippine Red Cross. The delegates took the opportunity of their stay in Manila to discuss various questions related to the continuation of ICRC protection and assistance activities in the Philippines.

Viet Nam

Throughout 1977 the ICRC delegation in Hanoi was in constant touch with the National Red Cross and with the authorities in Viet Nam concerning outstanding humanitarian problems.

Conflict between Viet Nam and Kampuchea

Following the events along the border between Democratic Kampuchea and Viet Nam, the ICRC, on 6 January, sent both parties a communication in which it expressed its concern for the observance, during hostilities, of the international humanitarian norms in force, especially for the benefit of the civilian population and any members of the armed forces who might be captured or wounded. The ICRC declared, in addition, that it was ready to provide any assistance and protection within the scope of its traditional humanitarian activities.

Having learnt of the capture of members of the armed forces by each of the parties opposing each other, the ICRC sent them a second communication on 30 January. This referred to the ICRC note of 6 January and asked both parties to observe the provisions of the Third Geneva Convention.

Iran

In October 1977, three delegates and two medical delegates of the ICRC carried out a series of visits to Iranian prisons. They went to 17 places of detention in Teheran and elsewhere in Iran, containing

in all 2,424 detainees. They were able to speak freely without witnesses with the detainees of their choice.

The mission followed upon a previous series of visits carried out in the spring of 1977. The ICRC's reports on those visits were transmitted, as customary, to the Iranian authorities.
