

COLLECTION CICR

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**PORTUGUESE RED CROSS
SUMMARY REPORT**

1979 - 1981

BRIEF HISTORY

PRC was established in Lisbon on the 11th. February 1856, being its first Secretary-General one of the participants, in the name of Portugal, on the first International Geneva Conference on 22.8.1864.

Vocated to act in emergency it cooperates with the national authorities rendering assistance to the victims of great accidents or calamities; it cooperates with the authorities on the organisation of sanitary and welfare assistance to the people during certain difficult periods, and it also cooperates, with the ICRC and the League, with the government and with national and international organisation on the rendering of succour and help to the people of foreign countries devastated by any sort of calamity.

In war time or of serious emergency PRC stretch and help the Medical Services of the Armed Forces in what concerns nursing and treatment of patients and wounded, especially when they are prisoners or enemy soldiers.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

The directive staff of Portuguese Red Cross is composed by about 55 members, an Executive Commission, both superintended by the National President of the Society and a Council of Auditor's Committee, this one with the responsibility of control all the administrative actions and the administration accounts.

The National President is designated for a period of 3 years, could being re-elected, but not for more than 9 continuous years of exercise.

The Head-quarters of Portuguese Red Cross is located in Lisbon and it extended its range of operations along the all national territory through its 24 branches.

To a more easiness of connection with the governmental authorities, the delimitation of the branches' area corresponds with the delimitation of the administrative areas.

Though having the power to correspond directly with all the Ministries and with any official or private organisations or entities, Portuguese Red Cross is directly connected to the Prime Minister, through the National Defence Department.

PORTUGUESE RED CROSS ACTIVITIES

DISASTER RELIEF — The coordinator of these activities in Portugal is in charge of the National Civil Protection Service (NCPS) recently created. This Service is dependent from the Prime Minister through the Ministry of Defence. In case of calamity, it coordinates the activities of the Armed Forces, Red Cross, Fire Brigades and even of other organisations which could interfere due to their especial characteristics.

Proceeded from the NCPS it will exist a general plan of Relief in case of emergency, with several specific plans.

PREPAREDNESS — since its foundation as a Society, that Portuguese Red Cross has keeping succour



unities, entirely composed by volunteers, who had their first action already during the 1st. World War.

During the last four years this corp executes exercises for the training and maintenance of its operationality.

DOMESTIC DISASTER RELIEF — from precedent time, it took the responsibility until March 1980, for the lodging and nourishment of about 2.500 refugees from the old portuguese colonies in Africa.

On February 1979, it had actively took part in the Assistance to the victims of the floods. On January 1981 it took part on the assistance to the victims of the earthquake of Azores islands; and it is still cooperating on the works of rebuilding.

PRC also gives its medical-relief support in sportive meetings, massmeetings and political assemblies, fires in forest or urban areas, and support to the posts on the frontier, to the portuguese emigrants or to the tourists.

FIRST-AID — Portuguese Red Cross has a school of First-Aid, officially recognised by the portuguese Government, where are given the courses of :

First-aide
Elementary
Artificial Respiration
Basic
Monitor

The number of firstaiders formed by year is of about 11.000.

NURSING — Portuguese Red Cross has in Lisbon a nursing school where is given a course of 3 years



which includes the general course of nursing, established according to the official programmes and completed by a specific Red Cross preparation. The future nurses received a preparation for emergency nursing in case of catastrophe and a preparation for their cooperation with Succour Unities. The nursing

school foments the dissemination of Geneve Conventions and of International Humanitarian Law, in nursing schools all over the country. It is also the nursing school that prepares the monitors and give courses of homenursing.

SOCIAL SERVICES — these activicties could be integrated in to two great areas :

- a) permanent activities
- b) activities appointed to groups or specific actions.

In the first case, permanent activities of Portuguese Red Cross, it is included the individual attending of people or of families with the most different kind of problems who don't find a resolution near the official services, often by a deficient information. The answer of Portuguese Red Cross is given through the satisfaction of the immediatest needs and the subse- quente guiding for the official services, with which we maintain the best contacts.

The second area includes all the support that the Portuguese Red Cross gives to the refugees from the old portuguese colonies that was a very difficult and



exhausting work for all the members of our society ; the support to handicapes, that includes the direction of home for handicapes, the development of a campaign for the distribution of pushchairs and of prothesis, including an obtainment of funds, and the efforts to obtain the participation of the official services ; and the inclusion of handicape children in vacations camps.

Support to youth, by the distribution of swaddlin- clothes and milk, and organization of vacations



camps, intended to afford to children with more needs, a period near the sea. We can also refer the participation of portuguese children in meetings of painting and hand-made works, organised by sister societies.

Portuguese Red Cross maintain 3 centers for children (kindergarten) pré-and schoolar age, one on the



North of the country, one on the Center and another on the South, all of them created in order to give an occupation during free times of those children.

The support to third age which is represented by the working of Portuguese Red Cross homes for old people and by the assistance given to similar homes belonging to other institutions.

We must also mentioned the support rendered to in-patients in civil or military hospitals and to prisans.



On the field of the housing which is a difficult problem, since many years, and became more urgent in the last 6 years after the arrival of thousands and thousands of refugees from Africa at Portugal, Portuguese Red Cross tried to contribut hardly for the resolution of some cases, considered as very serious. On this field we have to refer the precious help that through the League, we received from some Societies.

TRACING SERVICE — the Tracing Service of Portuguese Red Cross, was established on 1975. It is especially intended for the tracing of disappeared persons, reunion of families, separated either for a catastrophe or for political troubles and also for the tracing and localisation of prisoners and the subsequent realization of efforts to their release. This service colaborates directly with the CTA (ICRC) and practice its activity not only in Portugal, but especially for foreigner countries.

DISSEMINATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW — on the last years, Portuguese Red Cross has tried to make the dissemination of the principles and ideals of Red Cross, of Geneva Conventions and the International Humanitarian Law. In this way we look for the cooperation of mass media and also foment through meetings this diffusion at schools, universities and near Armed Forces.

We are also studing and preparing some specific documentation fo this purpose.

MEMBERS, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION — the total number of Portuguese Red Cross members is of 15.000, a number that is considered as too small, but that we are trying to increase. The

annual regular budget of Portuguese Red Cross is of about 80.000.00 escudos. Its financing proceed from several sources. When we have a situation of emergency we have to proceed to a gathering of funds, or to use especial subcides received for emergencies like the arrival at Portugal, since 1975 till 1980, of refugees from portuguese colonies in Africa ; like the floods in Portugal on 1978 ; and the earthquake in Azores on 1981.

HEALTH ACTIVITIES — beyond the courses of First-Aid, nursing and home nursing, that we have



already mentioned, we also have First-aid posts, all over the country giving assistance to people on the place.

With the strong support of Caloust Gulbenkian Foundation P.R.C. developed in Portugal kidney transplantation, reaching during the first year of working, numbers that can be considered as the highest, when compared with those of other countries where is followed the same programme of transplantation. These operations are made in the hospital of PRC, that also set up a center of haemodialysis, with 16 kidneys.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES — at the end of August the refugee camp of Coloane in Macao, contained about 1.654 vietnam POWS' who are waiting for their final settlement. Nevertheless this number increased at the end of June, with the arrival of more 7.098 refugees. Thanks to the donations received through the League, PRC Macao branch, could give its assistance to «chinese cases» and to Indochina refugees. This help still proceed with the distribution of clothes given to the Red Cross, by local population and several factories.

PRC in cooperation with Portuguese CARITAS, also took part on the help to Algeria, after earthquake, sending a plane with succours.