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Communication to the press No. 90/1
4 January 1990

ICRC PROTECTION ACTIVITIES IN ROMANIA

Geneva (ICRC) - A mission from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), led by Thierry Germond, Delegate General for Europe, went to Bucharest on 2 and 3 January 1990.

The members of the mission met Mr. Dimitru Mazilu, First Vice President of the National Salvation Front, General Nicolai Militaru, Minister of Defence, the Minister of External Trade, in charge of co-ordinating assistance to Romania, and the President of the Romanian Red Cross.

Mr. Mazilu and General Militaru confirmed that the Prime Minister had agreed to allow the ICRC to visit persons detained because of the recent events. The ICRC delegation in Bucharest is currently establishing practical procedures for the visits with the appropriate authorities.

The Minister of External Trade and the President of the Romanian Red Cross stressed that the international solidarity shown by all the relief goods arriving in Romania should now be channelled towards medium and long-term projects, as the most urgent needs had been met.

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Communication to the press No. 90/2
6 February 1990

POLISH PRESIDENT VISITS ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - On 5 February, the President of the Republic of Poland, Mr. Wojciech Jaruzelski, visited the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), where he was received by ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga, members of the Committee and senior staff of the institution. President Jaruzelski was accompanied by Mr. Jozef Czyrek, Minister of State and former Foreign Minister, the Polish ambassadors to Berne and Geneva and a political adviser.

In his welcoming address President Sommaruga recalled the significant phases of ICRC activity in Poland, emphasizing the co-operation between the institution and the Polish Red Cross. President Jaruzelski paid tribute to the ICRC for the assistance and protection it brings to the victims of war throughout the world and for the active role it plays in promoting international humanitarian law.

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Communication to the press No. 90/3
16 February 1990

Visit to Panamanian POWs interned in the United States of America

Geneva (ICRC) - In response to questions raised by the press, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) informs that two ICRC delegates among whom a medical doctor today visited General Manuel Antonio Noriega and three others prisoners at the Metropolitan Correctional Centre in Miami (Florida), by virtue of the mandate conferred on it by the Third Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war (POWs). Such visits are standard procedure following international armed conflicts in which POWs have been taken. As part of its activities in connection with the US intervention in Panama, ICRC delegates have had access to the POWs captured during the events.

Following their visits to POWs, the ICRC delegates' findings are presented in confidential reports to the concerned authorities.

COMMUNICATION TO THE PRESS

24 FEBRUARY 1990 N'EXISTE PAS

Communication to the press No. 90/5
6 March 1990

Elio and Emanuel - Five months in captivity

Geneva (ICRC) - Today, five months after the abduction in Sidon of Emanuel Christen and Elio Erriquez, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) again appeals for the immediate release of its two orthopaedic technicians.

At a press conference in Beirut Mr. Angelo Gnaedinger, ICRC Delegate General for the Middle East and North Africa, spoke of the grim events in Lebanon, particularly over the past twelve months: violent clashes in the south of the country, indiscriminate shelling of the capital and the entire surrounding area and, lately, fierce fighting in east Beirut. The heaviest casualties have been among the civilian population, despite repeated ICRC appeals to the belligerents to spare them. ICRC delegates have been braving the most difficult conditions to alleviate their suffering, distributing food and emergency medical supplies, visiting prisoners and forwarding family messages.

Their tireless endeavours demonstrate the need for the ICRC's humanitarian work for all victims of the conflict in Lebanon. They render the continuing captivity of Elio and Emanuel even more flagrantly unjust.

Five months after their abduction, Angelo Gnaedinger has now reaffirmed the ICRC's determination to do everything possible to obtain the release of its two delegates. He again called upon the parties to the conflict, and other leading figures who have assured the ICRC of their backing, to give tangible form to their support.

COMMUNICATION TO THE PRESS

10 MARCH 1990 N'EXISTE PAS

COMMUNICATION TO THE PRESS

30 MARCH 1990 N'EXISTE PAS

Communication to the press No. 90/8
6 April 1990

ELIO AND EMANUEL: SIX MONTHS IN CAPTIVITY

Geneva (ICRC) - Emanuel Christen and Elio Erriquez, orthopaedic technicians of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), have today, 6 April 1990, been held hostage in Lebanon for six months.

To mark this date, the entire staff at ICRC headquarters are assembling to show their anger and their condemnation of this odious act and to protest at the prolonged anxiety caused by the kidnapers' continuing silence.

This demonstration by Elio and Emanuel's colleagues of their moral support is intended as an encouragement to the two families to stand firm in their hopes for an early end to this cruel ordeal.

There are also various expressions of solidarity in Lebanon where, on the initiative of Lebanese action groups, new posters demanding the two hostages' release are to be put up. Another 74.000 messages of support collected in Switzerland since January will be forwarded to Lebanon by the ICRC in the next few days and deposited at the orthopaedic centre in Sidon.

On 5 April, the Christen and Erriquez families were received in Bern by Swiss Federal Councillor René Felber. Afterwards they met members of the respective task forces of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the ICRC who, working in close co-operation, are doing their utmost to bring about the two hostages' release.

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Communication to the press No 90/9
6 April 1990

**ICRC delegates held hostage in Lebanon
Renewed threats**

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been informed that a telephone message containing demands and threats against its two delegates held hostage in Lebanon has again been received by a press agency in Nicosia.

The ICRC is carefully analysing this message. It has not found any proof that the caller is linked in any way with the kidnappers of Elio Erriquez and Emanuel Christen, nor has any tangible evidence such as photographs, written messages or video tapes been provided to corroborate the authenticity of the caller's claims. The ICRC's present efforts are concentrated on obtaining a sign of life from its two delegates so that it can enter into a dialogue.

Without neglecting even the slightest indication, the ICRC will continue its endeavours, in co-operation with the task force of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, to bring about the release of Elio Erriquez and Emanuel Christen.

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Press release No. 90/10
21 May 1990

**VIOLENCE FLARES IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES
THE ICRC HELPS THE VICTIMS**

Geneva (ICRC) - Clashes on 20 May 1990 in the territories occupied by Israel reached an extremely serious level of violence, requiring the increased presence of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the field.

Delegates attended first to the injured, helping to evacuate them and making sure that the ambulances could get through. ICRC doctors and nurses visited the casualties in the various hospitals and established contact with the families. Hospital needs were ascertained and emergency aid has already been provided.

The ICRC notes that for the second time in less than a month the occupied territories, in particular the Gaza Strip, have been the scene of violence and repression in which hundreds of people have been injured and dozens have died. In view of the situation, the ICRC voices its acute concern about the persistence and aggravation of this conflict, which is causing daily suffering to the residents of the occupied territories. It urges the occupying power to do everything it possibly can to ensure that the life and physical integrity of the civilian population are respected.

Communication to the press no. 90/11
30 July 1990

THE ICRC CALLS FOR RESPECT OF CIVILIANS IN LIBERIA

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) calls on all parties to the conflict in Liberia to respect the physical and mental integrity of the population. The ICRC is extremely concerned at the serious exactions committed against civilians in Monrovia, the Liberian capital, where its delegates are no longer able to carry out their mission.

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Communication to the press No. 90/12
9 August 1990

Geneva (ICRC) - Emanuel Christen, the delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) freed in Beirut on 8 August, is expected to arrive in Zurich from Damascus later this afternoon.

He will be travelling aboard an aircraft chartered for the purpose by the ICRC and will be met by his family, ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga and Federal Councillor René Felber, Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

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Communication to the press No. 90/13
19 August 1990

REPATRIATION OF PRISONERS OF WAR BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

Geneva (ICRC) - A plane chartered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) left Geneva-Cointrin airport for Tehran on 19 August at 12.45 p.m., carrying 24 delegates as additional staff for the ICRC delegation in Iran. They have been sent out to help with the comprehensive repatriation of prisoners of war between Iran and Iraq.

To handle the operation in Iraq, the ICRC has likewise made arrangements since 20 August to increase its delegates in Baghdad.

As requested by both parties, the ICRC wishes to proceed with the speedy repatriation of all prisoners of war held in Iran and Iraq, working in accordance with its operational principles and procedures.

Since 17 August, when the operation began, the ICRC has supervised the return to their countries of 4,989 Iranian and Iraqi prisoners of war.

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Communication to the press No. 90/14
20 August 1990

MEETING OPENS TO REVIEW WARTIME IDENTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Geneva (ICRC) - Over 120 government experts representing more than 70 States party to the Geneva Conventions began a meeting in Geneva today, to review the regulations on identification and communications in wartime. These regulations are laid down in Annex 1 of Protocol I additional to the Conventions. It is the first time such a meeting has been held since Protocols I and II were adopted in 1977.

The meeting was opened by ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga who stressed that "beyond the impersonal codes that you will discuss, there are lives to be saved".

The five-day meeting was called by the ICRC and aims to draw up propositions to be presented to a full diplomatic conference, to adapt the regulations to the methods and means of warfare used in today's conflicts.

The ICRC has constantly contributed to the revision and extension of international humanitarian law over the years, in an attempt to keep it up to date with developments in conflicts around the world.

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Communication to the press No. 90/15
24 August 1990

JOINT JORDANIAN RED CRESCENT/ICRC OPERATION IN JORDAN

Geneva (ICRC) - Tomorrow 25 August the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will dispatch water tanks, sanitary equipment, tents and blankets by air to Jordan. These supplies are being sent as part of a joint Jordanian Red Crescent/ICRC operation to assist people crossing through the country.

A reception and first-aid centre opened today in Ruweished. Two further centres will be set up in the next few days in Trabil and Azrak.

The operation is being organized at the request of the Jordanian authorities and will focus initially on setting up sanitary installations and facilities to distribute drinking water and on providing emergency medical assistance.

At present the ICRC has six delegates in Jordan. They will be joined by three others tomorrow. The team will work in close conjunction with doctors and nurses of the Jordanian Red Crescent.

The ICRC is ready to meet any needs observed by its representatives in connection with this situation.

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Communication to the press No. 90/16
27 August 1990

ICRC MISSION TO THE FALKLAND/MALVINAS ISLANDS

Geneva (ICRC) - At the joint request of the British and Argentine governments, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in its capacity as a neutral humanitarian institution, is carrying out a mission to the Falkland/Malvinas Islands from 26 to 30 August.

The purpose of the mission is to study practical arrangements for visits by Argentine families to the graves of members of the armed forces buried there - the two governments intend to entrust this mandate to the ICRC.

In a joint press release issued on 15 February in Madrid the two governments, in fact, expressed their wish for the visits to take place under ICRC auspices.

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Communication to the press No. 90/17
29 August 1990

ICRC PRESIDENT TO GO TO BAGHDAD

Geneva (ICRC) - Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), will meet Mr. Tariq Aziz, Iraqi Minister of Foreign Affairs, in Baghdad on Sunday, 2 September 1990 to discuss all problems of humanitarian concern related to the Gulf crisis.

Since the crisis began, the ICRC has approached all parties concerned in order to bring help to the many people affected by the situation.

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Communication to the press No. 90/18

September 1st, 1990

ICRC SENDS MORE SUPPLIES TO JORDAN

Geneva (ICRC) - On August 31st, 1990, in the evening, an aircraft chartered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) left Geneva for Amman with 40 tonnes of relief supplies on board. A second consignment of 150 tonnes will be flown to Jordan early next week.

In view of the growing numbers of people transiting through Jordan, the country's authorities have decided to open a transit camp in Azrak, 100 kilometres east of Amman. The camp will be run jointly by the Jordan National Red Crescent Society and the ICRC.

The relief supplies flown in should meet essential needs of 30,000 people.

The aid includes tents, water storage and distribution systems, medicines, cooking utensils, hygiene articles and basic foodstuffs.

An initial consignment was dispatched by the ICRC on 25 August, to provide reception facilities and first aid for people in transit at Ruweished.

Communication to the press No. 90/19
5 September 1990

ICRC OPERATION IN JORDAN: THE CURRENT SITUATION

Geneva (ICRC) - The tragic plight of the people transiting through Jordan is a matter of grave concern to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which has increased the number of its staff there in order to share more actively in the humanitarian effort deployed in Jordan.

Twenty-five ICRC delegates are now working in the three transit centres in Sha'lan, Ruweished and Azrak.

In Sha'lan, the reception and emergency care centre set up in co-operation with the Jordan National Red Crescent Society is providing more than 500 medical consultations a day. The approximately 35,000 people stranded there are being supplied with water from 70,000-litre tanks, regularly filled by tankers.

Since the Sha'lan centre is located in a particularly arid region, the ICRC has been focusing its efforts on setting up a transit camp with all the necessary facilities in the Azrak area.

After carrying out a further technical survey, the Jordanian authorities requested the ICRC to change the location originally planned for the transit camp because of the potentially adverse effects on the area's ground water. The new site is 16 km from the initial location and 100 km from Amman. The camp will accommodate between 20,000 and 30,000 people and the ICRC will cover basic food, water and medical requirements.

The camp will be able to store approximately 200,000 litres of water, and there will be one medical unit per 5,000 people.

The ICRC's operation is being organized in close co-operation with the Jordan Red Crescent Society, the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and various National Societies.

The ICRC stresses that all the measures taken to help the people transiting through Jordan are temporary and that the top priority remains the return of these people to their home countries. It is encouraging all efforts made in this direction.

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Communication to the press No. 90/20
12 September 1990

ICRC OPERATION IN JORDAN: CAMP OPENED NEAR AZRAQ

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) today started admitting several thousand people to a transit camp near Azraq, 85 km east of Amman. They are coming from the Sha'alan I border site on transport provided by the Jordanian authorities.

Work on this camp began on 6 September, three days after the site initially selected was found unsuitable owing to the risk of contaminating the area's ground water. The camp, which will have a total capacity of 20,000 to 30,000 people, is made up of units with facilities for 5,000 people. The units are arranged in squares of tents, each square intended to house 500. The water supply system consists of seven tanks, with a total capacity of 390,000 litres, and 180 standpipes throughout the camp. There are also sanitary and refuse disposal facilities. The camp is ready to receive about 12,000 people and should be able to take 20,000 by the end of the week.

The ICRC is providing food and covering the cost of the medicines needed by the Jordan National Red Crescent Society, which is in charge of medical activities in the camp.

The layout of the transit camp will make it possible for people of the same nationality to be grouped together, and this will facilitate the administrative procedures necessary for their repatriation.

The ICRC and the Jordan Red Crescent will continue working at Sha'alan I, which will be reorganized to provide medical assistance to people in transit and arrange for their onward journey. Water will continue to be supplied by the ICRC.

Communication to the press No. 90/21
10 December 1990

LIBYAN PRISONERS IN CHAD: ICRC'S POSITION

Geneva (ICRC) - Following the recent events in Chad, a number of prisoners of war have been transferred or repatriated. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has not been able to carry out protection work on their behalf as it would have wished. In particular, it was unable to interview the prisoners before their departure.

Since the outbreak of hostilities between Chad and Libya, the ICRC has been concerned about the plight of prisoners held by both sides. In spite of many oral and written representations, the previous government of Chad, in breach of the Third Geneva Convention, never allowed the ICRC to visit the prisoners it was holding. Only 53 of them were registered.

The ICRC trusts that in the near future it will be able to interview these prisoners without witnesses to ensure that their will was respected.

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Communication to the press No. 90/22
20 December 1990

ICRC REPATRIATES UGANDANS FROM RWANDA

ICRC (Geneva) - the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has repatriated 214 Ugandan nationals, including 52 children, from Rwanda, in agreement with the authorities of both countries. The convoy of six trucks belonging to the ICRC delegation in Kampala left Kigali on 17 December and arrived in the Ugandan capital two days later. Accommodation for the overnight stops was provided by the Uganda Red Cross.

All the people involved, who had been unable to leave Rwanda since the October disturbances, returned to Uganda on their own decision.

The ICRC has been in Kigali since early October and makes regular visits, in accordance with its customary working procedures, to people arrested in connection with the events.

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