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ICRC WORKING IN MOGADISHU

ICRC (Geneva) - The delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Mogadishu is continuing its work in the Somali capital today, 5 January 1991. Two tonnes of medicines are being distributed to the town's hospitals.

The seven delegates on the spot, with whom the ICRC temporarily lost contact yesterday, are safe and sound. A radio link has been established between Mogadishu and Geneva.

Two Hercules aircraft made available to the ICRC by the Italian government left Nairobi today carrying medical supplies and four additional delegates. The planes will be used to evacuate foreign civilians who wish to leave the Somali capital.

The ICRC has been present in Somalia since 1983, bringing aid to the population affected by the conflict raging in the north of the country. In particular, the institution runs a surgical hospital in Berbera.

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ICRC TEAM EVACUATED FROM MOGADISHU

ICRC (Geneva) - At 0330 GMT, 9 ICRC delegates and 12 Somali Red Crescent workers were evacuated by a French rescue mission from the northern seashore of Mogadishu's Lido district aboard the French warship Jules Verne.

The ICRC expresses its deep gratitude to the French government for its prompt and efficient intervention.

The ICRC team was unable to pursue its operations in Mogadishu, as marauding combatants had robbed most of its vehicles at gunpoint and as relief goods and the delegates personal property had been looted. The team could no longer proceed to Mogadishu airport due to intensive fighting in the area yesterday. Under the circumstances it was decided to evacuate.

Meanwhile ICRC will continue efforts to reach Mogadishu with the Italian airforce planes put at its disposal in order to evacuate several hundred foreign nationals still trapped in the city.

The planes are due to leave Mombasa again today with ICRC representatives and several tonnes of medical material and equipment. Medical personnel of "Médecins sans Frontières" are also due to be aboard.

The evacuated ICRC team is bound to reach Djibouti within three days. From there the Red Cross workers will be transferred to Berbera in North Western Somalia. The ICRC operates a surgical hospital there. Medical personnel and two light aircrafts are ready to reach Mogadishu from Berbera as soon as conditions will improve in the Somali capital.

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ICRC ACTIVITIES IN SOMALIA CONTINUE

ICRC (GENEVA) - AFTER THE THIRD AIRLIFT FROM MOGADISHU ON JANUARY 9, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE EVACUATED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC) FROM THE SOMALI CAPITAL REACHED 573, COMPRISING 28 DIFFERENT NATIONALITIES. THE TWO ITALIAN HERCULES PLANES FLYING UNDER ICRC AUSPICES AND MARKED WITH THE RED CROSS EMBLEM CARRIED OUT SHUTTLE AIRLIFTS FROM MOGADISHU TO MOMBASA ON JANUARY 5, 7 AND 9. EARLY THIS AFTERNOON THE PLANES LEFT FOR A FOURTH EVACUATION ATTEMPT BUT HAD TO RETURN WITHOUT LANDING IN MOGADISHU DUE TO SECURITY REASONS.

IN THE MEANTIME, THE ICRC CONTINUED ITS ACTIVITIES IN THE NORTH-WEST OF THE COUNTRY. A BREAKTHROUGH WAS ACHIEVED WITH THE REALISATION OF A MEDICAL EVACUATION BY AEROPLANE FROM BOSASO, EAST OF BERBERA. SUPPORT WAS ALSO CONTINUED TO THE HOSPITALS IN THE NORTH AT HARGEISA, BOROMA, BURAO AND LAS ANOD. ON JANUARY 10 A REPATRIATION CONVOY OF 520 REFUGEES WAS SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED OUT FROM BOROMA TO BABILE IN ETHIOPIA. THE SURGICAL HOSPITAL IN BERBERA IS CURRENTLY WORKING TO FULL CAPACITY, WITH MORE THAN 80 WAR INJURED PATIENTS.

WHILE WAITING FOR THE SITUATION IN THE CAPITAL TO IMPROVE, THE ICRC HAS SET UP A LOGISTICS BASE IN DJIBOUTI. THIS IS IN ORDER TO BE PREPARED TO RETURN TO MOGADISHU IMMEDIATELY, AS SOON AS CONDITIONS PERMIT. IN DJIBOUTI AND MOMBASA, FOOD, MEDICAL MATERIAL AND TRUCKS ARE ON STANDBY TO BE TRANSPORTED TO MOGADISHU.

THE FRENCH WARSHIP "JULES VERNE", WHICH EVACUATED 9 ICRC DELEGATES AND 12 RED CROSS EMPLOYEES FROM MOGADISHU ON MONDAY, JANUARY 5 IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN DJIBOUTI ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 13 ALONG WITH ANOTHER 70 FOREIGNERS ON BOARD. FROM DJIBOUTI THE ICRC DELEGATES WILL BE TAKEN BY PLANE TO BERBERA TO AWAIT RETURN TO THE CAPITAL ONCE CONDITIONS ALLOW.
GULF CRISIS: ICRC STANDS READY

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), while still hoping for a peaceful solution to the crisis in the Gulf, has recently increased the number of staff in all its delegations in the Middle East. It now has 77 delegates in the region, ready to take action from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel and the occupied territories, Jordan and Syria in the event of a conflict.

Fifty additional delegates are standing by in Geneva, ready to leave within 12 hours, and a third group of 50 can rapidly be mobilized.

Stocks of medical and other relief supplies have already been built up in the Middle East and Europe. Two ICRC aircraft are ready to leave and plans have been made to deploy nine mobile medical teams in a first phase.

Should an armed conflict break out and cause large-scale population movements, the ICRC envisages setting up reception camps with a total capacity of 300,000. The Jordan National Red Crescent, the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the ICRC are already running three camps in Jordan which can accommodate 40,000 people. Three ICRC delegates are currently on the Iranian side of the Iran-Iraq border looking for suitable sites for similar facilities.

All these preparations are being made in close co-operation with the League and the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

At the same time the ICRC is stepping up its representations to the chiefs of staff of the armed forces present in the Gulf, reminding them of their obligations under international humanitarian law. Particular stress is laid on the need for measures ensuring the proper identification of prisoners of war and arrangements for the exchange of news with their families.

On 14 December last the ICRC reminded all 164 States party to the Geneva Conventions of their obligation to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law.

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THE ICRC SENDS SUPPLIES TO THE GULF

Geneva (ICRC) - An aircraft chartered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) left Geneva for Bahrain this evening with six ICRC delegates, one delegate of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and 3.3 tonnes of medical supplies on board. The ICRC has had two representatives in Bahrain since 13 January.

In addition, regular contacts have been established between the ICRC's headquarters in Geneva and its seven delegates in Baghdad. Although the team in the Iraqi capital has not yet been able to evaluate the needs of the civilian population, the ICRC is making every effort to take in medical assistance.
WAR IN THE GULF: FORWARD DEPLOYMENT OF ICRC STAFF

Geneva (ICRC): During the first week of hostilities in the Gulf region, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) fulfilled its mandate in accordance with the 1949 Geneva Conventions wherever it was required and able to do so.

During this period, it redoubled its efforts to have access to those areas most affected by the conflict with a view to meeting, as quickly as possible and in keeping with its principles of independence, neutrality and impartiality, the needs of civilians, prisoners of war, and the wounded and sick.

In the field, advance preparedness posts have been set up near the borders in countries neighbouring on Iraq and Kuwait, i.e. in Jordan, Iran, Syria and Bahrain. The Central Tracing Agency is operational with a network of information and tracing bureaux throughout the region. Their main task is to forward family messages.

The preparations for setting up field hospitals are well under way. An airlift organized by the ICRC from Europe with the help of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the League has been bringing consignments of medical material to the above-mentioned countries since 19 January. Relief material is also arriving for civilians seeking shelter in one of these countries.

All the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which have shown their support from the outset of the conflict in response to the ICRC's request, continue to mobilize the additional human and material resources required for the smooth running of a humanitarian operation of this magnitude.

At present 140 people have been deployed in the region: ICRC, League and National Society delegates. A further 600 National Society staff are standing by to join them in case of need, especially to carry out medical activities and to provide assistance to refugees.

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WAR IN THE GULF: ICRC VISITS PRISONERS OF WAR AND CIVILIAN INTERNEES

Geneva (ICRC) - On 24 January 1991, two delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) based in Saudi Arabia carried out an initial visit to seven Iraqi prisoners of war after the institution was notified by the American authorities of their capture. The visit was conducted without witnesses in accordance with the provisions of the Third Geneva Convention.

A day earlier, ICRC delegates began an initial visit, employing the same procedures, to 61 civilian internees and two prisoners of war held in the United Kingdom.

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Communication to the press No 91/8

31 January 1991

FIRST ICRC CONVOY ENTERS IRAQ

Geneva (ICRC) - With logistic support from the Iranian Red Crescent, a first convoy carrying 19 tonnes of emergency medical and surgical supplies crossed the Iran-Iraq border at noon today local time en route for Baghdad; it was accompanied by four delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Once inside Iraq, the convoy continued on its way with representatives of the Iraqi Red Crescent. The four delegates will join the ICRC team already in Iraq in order to bring assistance to victims of the conflict.

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Communication to the press No. 91/9
7 February 1991

ASSISTANCE FOR CIVILIANS IN IRAQ

Geneva (ICRC) - On 9 February the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will dispatch to Iraq a second convoy carrying emergency medical supplies and equipment to improve conditions of sanitation. Part of this consignment has been donated by the Iranian Red Crescent, which will also provide the ICRC with logistic support as far as the Iran/Iraq border. Other convoys with medicines and food are due to follow next week to build up stocks of emergency supplies in Baghdad for the most vulnerable groups among the civilian population in Iraq and Kuwait. The ICRC delegation in Baghdad, now comprising eight people, will be joined by the delegates accompanying the convoys and will thus be in a better position to meet all its humanitarian obligations.

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ICRC CONCERNED BY PLIGHT OF CIVILIANS IN IRAQ AND KUWAIT

Geneva (ICRC) - Delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Baghdad have noted a steady deterioration in the living conditions of the civilian population. The ICRC is also concerned about the plight of civilians in other parts of Iraq and in Kuwait, to which it has not yet had access.

The nine delegates in Baghdad confirm that there is a shortage of drinking water because of damage to the supply system and lack of fuel and electricity. They will shortly be carrying out surveys in other major urban areas to gain a more comprehensive picture of the situation.

The ICRC, which has already sent in two convoys of medicines and medical supplies, is in contact with the Iraqi Ministry of Health and plans to send sanitary engineers and water purification equipment to help counter the growing risk of epidemics.

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Geneva (ICRC) - Seven delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), including a doctor, a sanitary engineer, a Central Tracing Agency delegate, and a representative of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies arrived in Kuwait City on 1 March 1991.

The team's first task will be to assess medical and sanitation requirements. At the same time it will be providing protection for certain categories of civilians covered by the Fourth Geneva Convention, such as all foreign nationals who do not as yet have diplomatic representation in Kuwait. The Fourth Convention affords protection against any acts of violence or intimidation.

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Communication to the press No. 91/12
4 March 1991

TEN POWS HANDED OVER TO THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - A three-vehicle convoy of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is now on its way to Amman carrying the 10 prisoners of war released this morning by the Iraqi authorities.

The POWs - six American, three British and one Italian - are accompanied by a delegate and a doctor from the ICRC and are expected to arrive tonight in the Jordanian capital, where they will be met by representatives of their respective countries.

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THIRTY-FIVE POWS HANDED OVER TO THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) confirms that 35 POWs, members of the coalition armed forces, were handed over this morning to its delegation in Baghdad.

The 35 POWs - 15 Americans, 9 British, 9 Saudi Arabians, 1 Italian and 1 Kuwaiti - will be flown to Riyadh on an ICRC aircraft as soon as weather conditions permit. They will be accompanied by a delegate and a doctor from the ICRC and will be met in Riyadh by representatives of their respective countries.

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ANGOLA: ICRC DISCLAIMER

Geneva (ICRC) - Most of the operations run by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Angola had to be suspended in December 1990 and the ANGOP press agency recently published allegations that ICRC aircraft had been used to transport military supplies from South Africa.

On 4 March 1991, a high-ranking delegation from the People's Republic of Angola was received at ICRC headquarters and the humanitarian assistance that the ICRC has been bringing to victims of the conflict in Angola for over ten years was reviewed in the light of the recent difficulties in the field.

During the discussions, it was made clear that the humanitarian assistance taken into Angola by air or overland consisted exclusively of emergency foodstuffs. The ICRC representatives again stressed that all consignments transported by the institution could be inspected at any time by either party to the conflict, as had been the case before operations were suspended.

The ICRC hopes that it will be able to resume its vitally important activities in Angola as rapidly as possible.

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Communication to the press 91/15
6 March 1991

REPATRIATION OF POWS

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) confirms that the 35 allied prisoners of war handed over to the ICRC by the Iraqi authorities on 5 March 1991 today left Baghdad for Riyadh on board two aircraft chartered by the ICRC. They were accompanied by a delegate and a doctor.

At the same time, 294 Iraqi prisoners of war arrived in Baghdad from Saudi Arabia on board two ICRC aircraft. They too were accompanied by a delegate and a doctor.

All these prisoners of war had been seen beforehand by ICRC delegates in accordance with the provisions of the Third Geneva Convention.

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TALKS OPEN IN RIYADH UNDER ICRC AUSPICES

Geneva (ICRC) - Talks between the Iraqi and Kuwaiti authorities and representatives of the coalition began this morning under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). They are being held in Riyadh, following an agreement between all the parties concerned and at the invitation of the ICRC. The object of these talks, which are chaired by the ICRC Delegate General for the Middle East, Mr. Angelo Gnaedinger, is to define the procedures for repatriation of all prisoners of war and civilian internees. The Iraqi delegation flew to Riyadh this morning on board an aircraft chartered by the ICRC.

ICRC CONVOY LEAVES FOR BASRA

This morning, five ICRC delegates left Kuwait City for Basra, in Iraq, to assess humanitarian needs there. The team is being followed by an ICRC convoy carrying 3.5 tonnes of medicines and 3 tonnes of foodstuffs and accompanied by four delegates.

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ICRC CLARIFICATION

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is not in a position to confirm statements made by one of its delegates in Safwan (Iraq) to the effect that some of the journalists reported missing and approximately 2,000 Kuwaiti civilian internees were about to be handed over to the institution.

The ICRC regrets that this statement was made, since it is not in possession of all the necessary information to substantiate such a report.

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PRISONERS OF WAR AND JOURNALISTS RELEASED

Geneva (ICRC) - 2 American prisoners of war and 40 journalists were handed over by the Iraqi authorities today to the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Baghdad.

The two prisoners were released into ICRC care under an agreement reached yesterday in Riyadh between all the parties concerned. The agreement, concluded under ICRC auspices, provides for the repatriation of all prisoners of war and civilians detained in connection with the Middle East conflict.

The ICRC was informed of the journalists' disappearance beginning on 4 March over the hot line used by press agencies to alert the institution in such cases.

The ICRC will arrange for those released to be taken to a destination yet to be determined.

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Press release No. 91/19
8 March 1991

ICRC PRESIDENT VISITS WHITE HOUSE

Geneva (ICRC) - On 8 March 1991, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Cornelio Sommaruga, was received by the President of the United States.

During his 30-minute meeting with President Bush, Mr. Sommaruga, accompanied by ICRC Director of Operations Jean de Courten, discussed matters relating to the implementation of international humanitarian law in armed conflicts, focusing on measures required to ensure greater respect for its provisions.

The ICRC President also gave Mr. Bush an overview of humanitarian activities being carried out in the field by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Mr. Sommaruga and Mr. de Courten later had talks with General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

On the previous day, President Sommaruga met with the Secretary-General of the United Nations as well as with leading officials of the American Red Cross and the Society's new President, Mrs. Elisabeth Dole.

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Geneva (ICRC) - A delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Dr. Christian Martin, who had been held since 12 January 1991 by an Afghan opposition faction, has just arrived at the ICRC sub-delegation in Quetta (Pakistan).

The ICRC's satisfaction in learning of Dr. Martin's release is mitigated by concern about the three delegates still detained in Afghanistan. It is pursuing its efforts to ensure that all its staff members are freed as rapidly as possible.

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ICRC STEPS UP ASSISTANCE IN BAGHDAD

Geneva (ICRC) - Two mobile water purification and packaging units and equipment to repair the city sewerage and water supply systems have just arrived in Baghdad from Tehran and Amman on board two convoys of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

In addition, 110 tonnes of food aid will be distributed as a matter of urgency to the most vulnerable population groups in Baghdad, especially patients in civilian hospitals. The ICRC convoys also transported a complete field hospital and more than 600 sets of basic medicines.

Under the assistance operation launched on 17 January 1991 by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and coordinated by the ICRC, eight convoys have so far carried more than 500 tonnes of emergency relief supplies to Iraq.

The ICRC's objectives in Iraq for the coming weeks will be to expand its activities both in Baghdad and in other parts of the country, working in close cooperation with the Iraqi Red Crescent and with the agreement of the Iraqi authorities. The civilian population's needs as regards medical care and sanitation will be given priority, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable groups, such as the sick and wounded, children and the elderly.
Geneva (ICRC) - Families of Argentine servicemen who died in the Falklands-Malvinas conflict travelled to the islands on 18th March under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

At the joint request of the Governments of the United Kingdom and Argentina, and in its capacity as a neutral humanitarian institution, the ICRC arranged for 358 relatives to visit the gravesites.

The visit took place in accordance with the provisions of international humanitarian law which require that access to gravesites by families be facilitated as soon as circumstances allow, and in compliance with the Joint Statements issued in Madrid by the two Governments.

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MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT : ICRC BEGINS PRISON VISITS IN KUWAIT

Geneva (ICRC) - Delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have begun visiting security detainees in Kuwait City, following an agreement with the government of Kuwait. The visits, which started yesterday (23 March) at the city's military prison, are continuing.

In line with usual ICRC procedures, the delegates will register all the detainees and speak to them in private. After the visits a confidential report will be given to the authorities requesting, where necessary, improvements in the detainees' treatment and conditions.

Meanwhile there have been further repatriations of prisoners of war held in Iraq and Saudi Arabia. A group of 997 Iraqis were handed over to representatives of the Baghdad government by the ICRC today at the Saudi/Iraqi border. Yesterday the ICRC brought 1157 Kuwaitis to Saudi Arabia by bus and handed them over to Kuwaiti government officials, who are organising their return home.

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ICRC EMERGENCY ACTION IN MALI

Geneva (ICRC) - A doctor of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) leaves Geneva tonight (25 March) with emergency medical supplies for the west African state of Mali, where the Red Cross has been helping the injured since unrest broke out in the capital, Bamako, last Friday.

Two members of the ICRC's regional delegation in Senegal arrived in Bamako on Saturday morning with a first batch of medical supplies. After consultations with leaders of the Mali Red Cross and the locally-based representative of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, they provided vehicles and equipment to support Mali Red Cross teams who had been assisting the victims since violence erupted.

The ICRC delegates are visiting hospitals, first-aid posts and military medical facilities to assess needs and, where necessary, distribute supplies. Close contacts have been established with the authorities and representatives of the opposition, who have accepted the ICRC's role as coordinator of emergency assistance and have given assurances that the Red Cross, as a neutral and independent body, would be respected.

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ICRC ASSESSES NEEDS IN SOUTHERN IRAQ

Geneva (ICRC) - Delegates, doctors and sanitation specialists of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have begun assessing humanitarian needs in southern Iraq, in cooperation with the Iraqi Red Crescent.

Starting on 21 March they visited the cities of Nassiriye, Basrah, Al Amarrah, Karbala and Najaf where they distributed some medical supplies. It is planned to extend the survey to other Iraqi cities.

The delegates report that water is the most urgent problem: supplies are inadequate and unsafe. As a priority, the ICRC plans to send water purification equipment to the area, in particular Basrah and Nassiriye, to combat the risk of water-borne diseases - a threat which will grow with the start of the warmer weather.

Providing support and medical supplies for the hospitals and dispensaries in most of the cities visited is also a matter of priority for the ICRC. Action is also required to remedy the severe shortage of food.
ICRC DELEGATES HELD IN AFGHANISTAN RETURN TO SWITZERLAND

Geneva (ICRC) - Fereydoun Aalam, Christian Brunner and Yves Giovannoni, the delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) who were released in Afghanistan on 27 March 1991, will be back in Switzerland tomorrow, 3 April.

The three delegates will give a press conference at ICRC headquarters from 10.45 to 11.45 a.m.

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Communication to the press no. 91/28
7 April 1991

MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT : ICRC HELP FOR THE CIVILIAN POPULATION

Geneva (ICRC) - The following efforts are currently being made by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in conjunction with the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to alleviate the present desperate plight of large numbers of civilians in Iraq and the neighbouring countries.

In Iraq: Thanks to the work of the ICRC's teams of sanitation experts, a supply of drinking water just sufficient to cover the vital needs of the population of Baghdad has now been restored. For the past ten days, similar work has been going on in the towns of southern Iraq, in which severe diarrhoea epidemics have developed. Additional sanitation teams and equipment will be dispatched within the next few days. To combat these outbreaks of disease some 200 tonnes of perfusion material, antibiotics and other emergency medicines are now on their way to southern Iraq. The ICRC delegation consists of 76 delegates including 39 members of National Societies.

A survey to assess needs is being carried out in the north of the country by an ICRC team, which is already providing food and other emergency supplies.

In the various parts of the country the ICRC has begun its traditional tracing activities.

In Iran: As soon as the conflict began, facilities to receive refugees were set up along the border in close co-operation with the Iranian Red Crescent Society.

The camps can now accommodate 60,000 people, i.e. 30,000 in Khorramshahr, 10,000 in Bakhtaran and 20,000 in Azerbaijan and Iranian Kurdistan. Additional material to house another 40,000 people has already been mobilized.

On the basis of a survey conducted by ICRC delegates, it is estimated that some 200,000 refugees have already arrived in Iran via Piran Shahr and another 200,000 via Paveh. Thirty tons of food a day are being taken there by the ICRC together with the Iranian Red Crescent, as well as medicines, blankets and tents. Efforts are being considerably stepped up to cope with the drastically deteriorating situation. The ICRC now has 33 delegates in Iran. All camp facilities and equipment are provided by the National Societies.

In Turkey: Four ICRC delegates are currently visiting 1,800 Iraqi military internees. The Deputy Delegate General for Europe left for Turkey today for discussions with representatives of the Turkish Red Crescent Society and the authorities on a possible ICRC emergency operation in the border region, which could supplement the ICRC's two operations in Iraq and Iran to help Kurdish refugees and displaced persons.

In Saudi Arabia: 43 delegates are engaged in the repatriation of prisoners of war, which is taking place under the auspices of the ICRC. Almost 40,000 prisoners of war have been repatriated to date.

In Kuwait: The ICRC team consists of 19 delegates engaged in protection-related activities and tracing work - including visits to detainees in various places of detention.

In order to continue these activities and, where necessary, increase and extend them as conditions become more critical day by day for the region's civilian population, the ICRC will shortly be launching a new fund-raising appeal.

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ICRC RELIEF EFFORT FOR KURDISH REFUGEES

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is mobilizing the resources needed to provide shelter, food and medical care for some 200,000 Kurdish refugees in northern Iran.

As soon as large numbers of Kurdish refugees started arriving in the area, the ICRC, in cooperation with the Iranian Red Crescent, began sending in consignments of tents, food and medicines.

ICRC supplies already stocked in Iran, on the border between Iraq and Syria and in Cyprus are being transferred to the region as a matter of urgency and will initially afford shelter for 120,000 refugees.

The ICRC has asked about 20 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for help in setting up an airlift between Europe and northern Iran. Transport aircraft are currently taking in blankets, food, clothing and medicines.

At the same time, the ICRC has asked the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to send road convoys directly to northern Iran with the largest possible number of units designed to meet the basic needs of a five-member family. Each unit comprises a tent, ten blankets, warm clothing, kitchen utensils, 100 kg of food and a stove.

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Geneva (ICRC) - In view of the serious deterioration in the living conditions of the displaced Kurdish population along the northern border of Iraq, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is expanding its activities in this part of the country.

A few days ago an ICRC team from Iraq made its way to the Dashtan pass on the Turkish border and found that the emergency relief parachuted into this heavily mined area had not proved as effective as planned. To help meet the pressing needs of the population there, the ICRC delegation in Baghdad immediately dispatched a convoy carrying 11,000 blankets, 2,000 kitchen sets, 500 stoves, 100 large tents and 2.5 tonnes of emergency medical supplies.

Yesterday the ICRC team split up into three groups. The first, consisting of a doctor, a nurse and a nutritionist, is setting up a dispensary on the pass. Another group is handling the logistics for relief supplies already on the spot, working out of the town of Dohuk. The third is making its way to the north-east of the country to assess needs there and organize whatever assistance may be required.

The ICRC will now be stepping up its humanitarian work throughout northern Iraq, as other activities continue in the rest of the country.

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THE ICRC RESUMES VISITS TO PRISONERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) started on April the 15th a series of visits to sentenced security and unrest-related prisoners in South Africa. The go-ahead to resume visits was given by the South African Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Kobie Coetsee, on April the 9th.

Ten extra delegates, including three doctors, arrived in South Africa over the weekend to join the eight delegates already on the spot.

The ICRC visited prisoners sentenced for offences against the security of the State in South Africa from 1963 to 1986. The visits were suspended in 1986 to discuss a broader agreement with the South African authorities to include access to unrest-related prisoners sentenced for common-law offences. The present agreement from the Ministry of Justice has given the ICRC this enlarged access.

Discussions are continuing with the Ministry of Law and Order to obtain an authorization to visit security detainees. In the same spirit, the ICRC has approached the African National Congress (ANC) to gain access to detainees held by the organization.

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ICRC STEPS UP OPERATIONAL CAPACITY IN ETHIOPIA

Geneva (ICRC) - Following recent developments in Ethiopia, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is strengthening its capacity to assist victims of the conflict.

Thirteen tonnes of emergency medical supplies flown to Addis Ababa on 24 May have been handed over to the ICRC for distribution to the city's hospitals and dispensaries treating people wounded in the fighting. Special support is being provided for the Balcha hospital, run by the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR, which the ICRC is ready to turn into an emergency surgical hospital if the need arises.

In the rest of the country, three ICRC surgical teams are working in civilian hospitals in Asmara, Bahr Dahr and Dessie. There has recently been a considerable increase in the number of wounded treated by the teams, and the ICRC is doing its utmost to provide them with additional supplies and staff so that they can cope with the emergency.

In accordance with its mandate, the ICRC is also prepared to take all necessary steps to protect any prisoners captured by the various parties to the conflict.

Throughout Ethiopia the ICRC, with 23 staff on the spot, is working in close cooperation with the Ethiopian Red Cross Society, which is in charge of evacuating the wounded and running the blood bank.

The International Committee of the Red Cross renews its appeal to all the parties involved in the conflict to respect all establishments placed under the protection of the red cross emblem and to facilitate the humanitarian activities of their staff, namely volunteer first-aiders from the various branches of the Ethiopian Red Cross, ICRC personnel and staff from the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies involved in programmes to assist displaced persons, refugees and victims of recent droughts.

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ETHIOPIA: ICRC CONVOY TAKES RELIEF TO THREE REMOTE TOWNS

Geneva (ICRC) - A convoy organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Ethiopian Red Cross Society left Addis Ababa on 30 May with a consignment of food and medical equipment. It reached its first destination, Debre-Birhan, the same day and continued on its way to Dessie and Bahr Dar. The hospitals in these three towns are crowded with war casualties and in urgent need of such supplies.

In Addis Ababa the surgical teams sent by the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR to treat patients at the Balcha hospital received 300 wounded and operated on almost 250 of them on 28 and 29 May. Despite the high level of tension in the capital, Ethiopian Red Cross first-aiders and ambulancemen have been working continuously to evacuate the wounded to the Balcha hospital.

After a week's interruption due to the events, on 29 May the two ICRC orthopaedists resumed work at the Debre Zeit orthopaedic centre, where they treat more than 350 amputees and other war disabled per month.
ICRC SENDS ADDITIONAL MEDICAL STAFF TO ETHIOPIA

Geneva (ICRC) - Two surgeons, four nurses and two relief delegates from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) flew today from Geneva to Addis Ababa via Nairobi to strengthen the institution's 23-member team already deployed in Ethiopia.

In late May two convoys carrying medical supplies left Addis Ababa for the towns of Debre Berhan, Dessie (Wollo province) and Bahr Dar (Gojjam), where they arrived on 1 June. Direct contact, interrupted three months ago, was thus restored with the ICRC surgical team stationed in Bahr Dar.

On 2 June, the Ethiopian Red Cross Society and the ICRC sent four trailer trucks with almost 90 tonnes of emergency food and medical aid from Addis Ababa to northern Ethiopia. The consignment, accompanied by ICRC delegates and National Society first-aiders, is intended to meet the immediate needs of some of the displaced people around the town of Mekele (Tigray).

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RED CROSS ACTIVITIES IN ETHIOPIA

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in close cooperation with the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS), has launched a major emergency assistance programme in the northern regions of Tigray, Gondar, Gojjam and Wollo for ex-members of the former government's armed forces.

Priority is being given to providing food rations, blankets and medical care to ex-servicemen still being held, those in the process of being released and those on their way back to their home regions.

Between 8 and 10 June, three US transport aircraft flew 300,000 food rations to Addis Ababa for distribution to the ex-servicemen by the Red Cross. Forty ERCS trucks are now taking these rations to the north of the country, together with 33 tonnes of blankets donated by the Netherlands Red Cross (part of a larger consignment expected from the Netherlands shortly). More than 75 tonnes of dry food rations (wheat, beans, rice and oil) have already been sent to the towns of Dessie, Mekele, Adigrat and Adwa. Seven tanker trucks are also on their way north with supplies of drinking water.

More than 50 ERCS volunteers and ICRC staff are running this assistance programme in the northern regions.

Three surgical teams seconded to the ICRC by National Red Cross Societies are continuing to provide medical care and perform emergency surgery at the Dessie hospital, in cooperation with Ethiopian Ministry of Health staff and ERCS youth volunteers. Since last week, the number of patients being treated there has fallen from 700 to 300.

At present 360 patients are receiving treatment at the Balcha Red Cross hospital in Addis Ababa; 280 major operations have been performed and 850 outpatients seen over the past ten days.

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ICRC SURGICAL TEAM ASKED TO LEAVE ASMARA

Geneva (ICRC) - The surgical team of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) based in the Eritrean city of Asmara arrived in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, today, having been asked to leave Eritrea. The request to evacuate ICRC expatriate staff came from the Eritrean Provisional Government on 26th June.

The team, composed of one Swiss delegate, a surgeon, a theatre nurse and a ward nurse from the Netherlands and the British Red Cross Societies, had been working at the civilian Mekane Hiwot Hospital in Asmara since July last year. Hundreds of operations had been carried out on mainly war-wounded civilians over a 12-month period, with the help of local staff and Red Cross Youth volunteers.

The ICRC had also helped the local Red Cross to provide water for some ten thousand families per week in Asmara and to distribute relief supplies to conflict-affected areas in Eritrea.

The ICRC hopes to resume its dialogue with the authorities in Asmara as soon as possible to establish a new working relationship.

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Communication to the press No. 91/37
3 July 1991

THAILAND/CAMBODIA: FIRST BORDER MEETING

For the first time since 1975, two teams of delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), one travelling from Aranyaprathet, Thailand, and the other from Mongkol Borei, Cambodia, joined up at the Poipet border post on 3 July. Two ICRC ambulances crossed from Thailand into Cambodia, where they will be used by the ICRC medical team working in Mongkol Borei.

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Communication to the press No. 91/38
11 July 1991

DEATH OF TWO ICRC AFGHAN EMPLOYEES

Geneva (ICRC) - Two Afghan employees of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) were killed in an ambush on Tuesday, 9 July 1991.

Rais Khan, a driver, and Mostu Khan, a watchman, both working at a first-aid post in Afghanistan, were driving with an ambulance in Paktia province when they were attacked by unidentified gunmen.

The ICRC deplores these tragic deaths, which occurred in the course of a humanitarian mission.

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Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has evacuated dozens of people wounded in the recent fighting around the Iraqi town of Suleimaniyah, and has visited hundreds of people captured in the region.

ICRC personnel, based in Penjwin, helped evacuate on Thursday night, 18 July, a first group of 29 casualties from Sayid Sadek to a hospital across the border in the Iranian town of Paveh. Sixteen more wounded were transported yesterday from Sayid Sadek to Suleimaniyah, where the team is now evaluating needs.

Extra medical supplies are being prepared at the ICRC delegation in Baghdad, ready to be sent to the north-east of the country if necessary. In Iran, medical material is being transported to the border area by delegates based in Tehran.
YUGOSLAVIA: ICRC STEPS UP ASSISTANCE TO DISPLACED PEOPLE

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has decided to step up its humanitarian activities in Yugoslavia as a result of the continuing tension in the country.

The ICRC's operational priorities are as follows:

- *Ad hoc* assistance in the form of family parcels for some 90,000 displaced people, to be distributed in close cooperation with the Red Cross of Yugoslavia.

- Building up additional stocks of emergency medical supplies and strengthening the country's medical infrastructure, with support from various National Red Cross Societies.

- Ongoing visits to detainees, particularly in areas where tension is running high, such as Slavonia, Banija and Krajina.

- Dissemination campaign in the press and on radio and television to ensure greater respect for the Red Cross emblem and raise public awareness of the Red Cross and its role.

- Additional material assistance to the Red Cross of Yugoslavia and its various components to strengthen their operational capacity, after several months of intense activity.

The ICRC yesterday launched an appeal for 7,800,000 Swiss francs to cover the cost of its operation in Yugoslavia and plans to deploy additional staff in the country.

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ICRC WORK CONTINUES IN CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN SOMALIA

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is pursuing its activities in central and southern Somalia following recent developments in the capital.

Ten ICRC delegates are providing assistance to conflict victims in Mogadishu, Kismayo and Doble and distributing emergency medical supplies. In a situation where virtually all means of communication have been cut off, members of families split up by the events have been able to remain in touch by means of Red Cross messages (RCMs), and the ICRC has arranged many family reunifications. In addition, an ICRC sanitary engineer is supervising a project to provide safe water to the Doble and Kismayo regions.

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ICRC: SIMULTANEOUS REPATRIATION


THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE REMAINS OF SAMIR ASSAD WAS CARRIED OUT IN VIENNA BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL, WITH THE COOPERATION OF THE AUSTRIAN AUTHORITIES AND IN THE PRESENCE OF TWO ICRC DELEGATES. THE DELEGATES ARE PARTICIPATING IN THE REPATRIATION OF THE REMAINS OF SAMIR ASSAD AND WILL ACCOMPANY MR. ALI HILAL BACK TO HIS FAMILY.
Communication to the Press No. 91/44
9 October 1991

ICRC AIDS COMBAT VICTIMS IN NORTHERN IRAQ

Geneva (ICRC) - Following the recent fighting in northern Iraq, delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) evacuated dozens of casualties to the government hospital in Sulaimaniyah and to clinics and dispensaries in the area.

The ICRC surgical hospital in Naopares, south of Penjwin, which opened on 8 October with a capacity of 40 beds, admitted 35 casualties on the first day. Ten of them underwent emergency surgery.

An ICRC convoy carrying 2.5 tonnes of emergency medical supplies reached the Sulaimaniyah hospital from Baghdad on 8 October. Another ICRC medical convoy, accompanied by two nurses, is now heading for the Naopares hospital.

As a neutral intermediary the ICRC is in contact with all the parties concerned. It is also continuing to visit persons detained in the area and is providing them with medical and material assistance.

The ICRC now has 11 delegates in Penjwin, two in Shaklawa and more than 40 delegates and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Society staff in Baghdad.

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Communication to the press No. 91/45
21 October 1991

LEBANESE DETAINES HANDED OVER TO ICRC

Geneva ICRC - The South Lebanon Army today released into the care of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) 14 Lebanese previously detained in Khiam prison in southern Lebanon. The ICRC took five of them to Tyre; they continued their journey to their homes in the north of the country.

The nine others were handed over to the Lebanese Red Cross on the spot, and later joined their families in the "security zone".

A 15th Lebanese detainee was released on the border between Israel and Lebanon and was repatriated by ICRC delegates.

The ICRC has still not been authorized to visit Khiam prison, where an unknown number of Lebanese are being held. It has repeatedly sought to gain access, in accordance with its mandate, to these detainees.

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ICRC TEAM ARRIVES IN DUBROVNIK

Geneva (ICRC) - A team of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) arrived in the Yugoslav port of Dubrovnik this morning, to assess relief needs and the situation of prisoners in the besieged city and surrounding areas.

The team, composed of a delegate, a doctor and an interpreter, has established contacts with the local Red Cross and authorities. An initial evaluation indicates that the population is suffering from the lack of water supplies, electricity, food and blankets.

Six hundred family parcels, containing food, soap and detergent, which were sent by the ICRC to the Red Cross in Dubrovnik at the end of October, have already been distributed. The ICRC is planning to take in further assistance by boat as soon as a more detailed list of needs has been established.

The International Committee has a total of 30 delegates active in Yugoslavia through its missions in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana, and offices in Osijek and Split. Over 2,000 prisoners held by the different parties and groups involved in the conflict have been visited in Croatia, Serbia, Voivodina, Bosnia-Hercegovina and Slovenia since the outbreak of fighting, and more than 1,000 Red Cross messages exchanged between the prisoners and their families.

ICRC medical personnel is also following the situation in hospitals receiving the wounded and providing medical material when necessary. Hospitals in Osijek, Zadar and Sibenik are among those which have benefitted from this assistance.

Local Red Cross offices in the country have registered over 370,000 people displaced as a result of the fighting and distributed aid to around 35,000 displaced families. This programme is coordinated by the ICRC, based on contributions from National Red Cross Societies and governments.
ICRC TAKES PART IN RELEASE OF YUGOSLAV PRISONERS

Geneva (ICRC) - A simultaneous release of prisoners took place today in Bosanski Samac (Bosnia-Herzegovina) under the supervision of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The exchange involved over 700 detainees in Bjelovar, Selska (Zagreb) and Manjaca.

The ICRC interviewed the prisoners without witnesses to check their identity and ensure that they were returning voluntarily: only 19 persons decided not to return. All had been visited by the institution's delegates in September and October.

The release followed the signing on 6 November of a general agreement between the Yugoslav army and the Croatian authorities entrusting the ICRC with the role of neutral intermediary and authorizing it to conduct protection activities for the prisoners.

This latest operation reflects the expansion of the ICRC's programme in Yugoslavia where 40 of its delegates are now working throughout the territory.

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YUGOSLAVIA: TWO ICRC RELIEF SHIPS FOR DUBROVNIK

GENEVE (ICRC) - A first relief ship chartered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the "Rhodos II", reached Dubrovnik on 21 November carrying eight delegates, 7,000 blankets, sanitation equipment, medical sets and a tonne of milk.

The delegates immediately attended to the needs of the wounded and sick in hospitals there and began to organize the distribution of drinking water. Although medical needs seem relatively small, the water shortage is acute. The ICRC will therefore take emergency measures to improve drinking water supplies for hospitals and for Dubrovnik itself. An ICRC sanitary engineer is currently installing provisional facilities.

A second ICRC ship, the freighter "Dimaratos " is due in Dubrovnik tomorrow with more than 265 tonnes of relief supplies on board. Some 130 tonnes of basic foodstuffs, 40,000 litres of milk and more than 27,000 blankets will be distributed to the civilian population, who have been cut off for several weeks.

The ICRC will continue to use the "Rhodos II", and intends in the next few days to check whether help is needed by the people living on islands near Dubrovnik, in particular Mljet and Korcula.

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COMMUNICATION TO THE PRESS

29 NOVEMBER 1991 N'EXISTE PAS
Communication to the press No. 91/50
9 December 1991

YUGOSLAVIA: AGREEMENT TO RELEASE PRISONERS REACHED UNDER ICRC AUSPICES

Geneva (ICRC) - On Sunday 8 December an agreement for the simultaneous release of 1,600 prisoners was reached in Zagreb between the Croatian government and the Federal Army, under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The prisoners are due to be freed tomorrow at Bosanski Samac, Karlovac and Zelenika. The ICRC will supervise the release.

This decision was taken pursuant to a general agreement signed in Zagreb on 6 November by the Yugoslav Federal Army and the Croatian authorities, recognizing the ICRC's role as a neutral intermediary. On 26 and 27 November, plenipotentiary representatives of the Federal Executive Council, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Serbia and the Yugoslav Federal Army, meeting in Geneva at the invitation of the ICRC, pledged to take all necessary steps to ensure the protection of prisoners.

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YUGOSLAVIA: JOINT TRACING COMMISSION MEETS

Geneva (ICRC) - A joint commission set up to trace missing persons and identify the dead met for the first time in Pécs (Hungary) on 16 December 1991, at the invitation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

It was decided to form this commission at the meeting of parties to the conflict in Yugoslavia held at ICRC headquarters in Geneva on 26 and 27 November 1991 to discuss the application of international humanitarian law.

The meeting in Pécs was attended by representatives of the Yugoslav Federal Government, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Serbia and the Popular Yougoslav Army, and by members of the Red Cross and the ICRC.

Tracing procedures and practical arrangements for the exchange of information were finalized and should enable thousands of hitherto unresolved cases to be processed without delay.

The joint commission will meet regularly. Its next meeting will take place before the end of this year.

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Angola: Completion and details of 12-year ICRC food aid programme for victims of the conflict

Between June and September this year, the International Committee of the Red Cross provided more than 6,500 tonnes of food, clothing, seed and farming tools to over 660,000 people suffering the direct consequences of the 16 years of conflict that ravaged Angola. The relief supplies were distributed to civilians in the central part of the country, the Planalto, which comprises the provinces of Benguela, Huambo and Bié, and in south-eastern Angola. Nearly 300 local staff and some 60 ICRC delegates were involved in this operation, and 30 trucks and three light aircraft were needed to reach the widely scattered population of the south-east and the 16 districts of the Planalto where the distributions took place. During the same period, ICRC teams made up of nurses and construction workers repaired 12 health posts in central Angola, provided them with the medicines they needed and trained local nursing staff.

Given the state of disrepair of the Angolan roads, several bridges had to be strengthened by ICRC technical teams so that the relief convoys could get through.

ICRC assistance was provided mainly to people who had been confined within the narrow limits of "security perimeters" for the duration of the war, displaced people being resettled in their villages or totally destitute people coming out of the bush, where they had sought refuge from the fighting. The relief supplies distributed will sustain them for a period of approximately six months, which is the time they need to grow crops from the seed provided and for the other humanitarian agencies working in the country to expand their development programmes.

Now that peace has been restored to Angola, the ICRC, which has completed its last large-scale assistance operation after 12 years of continuous presence, will focus on verifying the release and return home of prisoners captured during the conflict and on orthopaedic activities for the many amputees wounded in the fighting or in mine explosions.

The ICRC will continue its efforts to trace missing persons and to arrange for the exchange of messages between families separated by the conflict. It will also pursue its programme to instruct officers of the new Angolan armed forces in international humanitarian law.

During its 12 years of uninterrupted presence in the country since 1979, the ICRC distributed nearly 68,000 tonnes of food, non-food and medical relief, and its orthopaedic centres in Huambo and Kuito produced more than 11,000 prostheses. The overall expenditure incurred by the institution, for food, agricultural, medical and orthopaedic assistance, local and expatriate staff and logistics, amounted to 379 million Swiss francs.
Yugoslavia: protected zone to be set up under ICRC auspices in Osijek

Geneva (ICRC) - Representatives of the Yugoslav Federal Executive Council, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Serbia and the Federal Secretariat for Defense met on 27 December 1991 in Pécs (Hungary) under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). On 30 December they signed an agreement declaring Osijek hospital and an area around it a protected zone according to the principles of Article 23 of the First Geneva Convention of 1949 and Articles 14 and 15 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The protected zone, placed under ICRC supervision with the agreement of all the parties to the conflict, will afford special protection to the wounded and sick - both civilian and military, to persons aged over 65, children under 15, expectant mothers and mothers of children under seven, and to the hospital's medical and administrative personnel. The ICRC may extend admission to the protected zone to other non-combatants.

The agreement will enter into force on 3 January 1992 at 24.00 hours local time.

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