PRESS RELEASE

Press release No. 1480
15 February 1984

CONFLICT BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ AND BREACHES OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW : A RENEWED ICRC APPEAL.

Geneva (ICRC) - In view of the repeated and serious breaches of international humanitarian law by the Republic of Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) appealed on 9 May 1983 to all the States party to the Geneva Conventions to take steps to ensure that the Conventions were respected.

Over nine months after that first appeal, ICRC delegates report continuing grave breaches which not only endanger the life and freedom of the tens of thousands of victims of the conflict but flout the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law.

The ICRC wishes the States to take in their dealings with the two belligerents the humanitarian issues it has brought to their attention, and to that effect it submitted a new memorandum to the States party to the Geneva Convention on 13 February 1984.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the ICRC, following the first memorandum, was able to carry out some visits to prisoner-of-war camps and register about 10,000 new prisoners of war. However, its activities for the Iraqi prisoners of war were again stopped on 27 July 1983, leaving 50,000 prisoners without protection. The ICRC does not at present know the number of prisoners or their whereabouts, identity or state of health; it cannot draw up lists of prisoners for repatriation on medical grounds; nor can it supervise the distribution of Red Cross messages to families and prisoners.
Numerous observations and concordant information have led the ICRC to be concerned about the plight of the prisoners and the true motives for the authorities' prevention of ICRC activities. In particular, the ICRC has observed that specific categories of prisoners, such as senior officers, are systematically hidden from it. Some of the prisoners have been dealt harsh sentences of which the ICRC was not informed and which remain unexplained. Some of the camps have been the scene of serious incidents, and some Iraqi prisoners of war registered and visited on several occasions in the camps by ICRC delegates in the Islamic Republic of Iran have later been reported "killed in action".

In general, ideological and political pressure, the use of intimidation in a "re-education" process, and affronts to the honour and dignity of the prisoners of war have been continuous and indeed seem to be increasing, with the aim of turning the prisoners against their own government and of obstructing the work of ICRC delegates. The ICRC has made the renewal of its activities conditional on the cessation of such practices, and to that end has frequently approached the highest authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran with detailed arguments. At present, the ICRC has not received a satisfactory response.

ICRC attempts to provide Iraqi civilian refugees in Iran, in particular Iraqi Kurds, with relief supplies have met with failure, yet the ICRC knows that these refugees are in need of food and medical relief.

In the Republic of Iraq ICRC delegates have visited each month the 7,300 Iranian prisoners of war in conformity with the rules of the Third Geneva Convention. In principle, captured prisoners are registered by the ICRC within a reasonable period of time. As a rule, albeit at times considerable delays, the system for exchanging Red Cross messages between prisoners and families functions smoothly. In the prisoner-of-war camps, the ICRC has observed improvements in the material conditions of internment and in disciplinary treatment. On 29 January 1984, 190 Iranian prisoners of war, 87 of them seriously wounded or gravely ill, were repatriated.

However, a large number of prisoners, some of whom have been in captivity since the beginning of the conflict, are still hidden from the ICRC, detained in secret and deprived of their most basic rights. Lists bearing their names and attesting to their existence have been regularly submitted to the authorities by the ICRC. A few score of them were finally visited by the ICRC and registered, but the problem remains and a satisfactory solution must be urgently found.

Tens of thousands of Iranian civilians from Khuzestan and Kurdistan have been displaced during the conflict to Iraqi territory. The Iraqi authorities recently allowed regular ICRC visits to these civilians, and considerable effort has been made to improve the conditions in which they live.
Over one thousand civilians, including elderly persons and women, have been registered by the ICRC since the beginning of the conflict in prisoner-of-war camps. Several hundred have been successively repatriated, but an overall solution to the problem still remains to be found.

In violation of the laws and customs of war, and in particular of the essential principle that military targets must be distinguished from civilian persons and objects, the Iraqi armed forces have continued to bomb Iranian civilian zones. The result was loss of human life on a large scale, and widespread destruction of strictly civilian objects.

The ICRC has requested the States to actively support its efforts in the interests exclusively of the victims of the conflict. It is convinced that the States, conscious of what is at stake, will have the desire and determination to action in accordance with the commitment they made of their own volition to respect and ensure respect for the Geneva Conventions.

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release no 1481
Geneva, 7 March 1984

ICRC APPEALS OVER WOUNDED IN IRAN/IRAQ CONFLICT

Geneva (ICRC) - A medical team of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the Islamic Republic of Iran, surveying the needs caused by the latest clashes at the Iran-Iraq war front, was confronted on 6 March, during visits to several hospitals at Tehran, with 160 cases of wounded combatants who presented a disquieting clinical picture, whose nature leads to the presumption of the recent use of substances prohibited by international law.

The common symptoms found by the ICRC doctor among all the wounded - extensive superficial burns (first and second degree), serious respiratory problems, keratoconjunctivitis - appear to be responding favourably to treatment. However, the clinical progress of some patients is marked, eight days after exposure, by severe problems of the blood crisis, accompanied by a major drop in the number of white corpuscles (leukopenia). These problems, linked to respiratory and renal difficulties, have led to the deaths of several patients, two of them dying during the ICRC delegates' visit.

Parallel to the steps it is undertaking with the parties concerned, the ICRC strenuously recalls that the use on the battlefield of toxic substances is incompatible with the respect of the principle of humanity and constitutes a violation of customary and codified rules of the law of war.

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release No 1482
Geneva, March 15, 1984

RECOGNITION OF NEW NATIONAL SOCIETY

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has recognised the Red Cross Society of Belize.

This recognition, which took effect today March 15, 1984, brings to 132 the number of National Societies which are members of the International Red Cross.

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Press release

Joint press release
April 11, 1984

SIXTY-THIRD DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME FROM
THE EMPRESS SHÔKEN FUND

Geneva (ICRC-League) - The Joint Commission responsible for distributing the income from the Empress Shôken Fund met on 6 April 1984 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Maurice Aubert, vice-president of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Chairman of the Joint Commission of the Empress Shôken Fund. H.E. Mr. Kazuo Chiba, Ambassador of Japan, was present.

The Empress Shôken Fund was set up in 1912 by a gift from Her Imperial Majesty of Japan, for the purpose of encouraging the development of humanitarian activities among National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Since then, the Fund has received several gifts from the Imperial Family of Japan, the Japanese Government and the Japanese Red Cross Society.

The income distributed during the current year will enable eleven National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Latin America, Africa and Asia to improve their equipment, to carry out blood transfusion and first aid activities and to take part in the forthcoming leadership training seminar organized by the Henry-Dunant Institute for National Societies.

The Joint Commission thanked the Japanese Red Cross and, through it, the Imperial Family of Japan and the Japanese Government for the help given towards the development of many National Societies all over the world. In the name of the ICRC and the League, the Joint Commission expressed to the Japanese Government and the Japanese Red Cross the sincere gratitude felt by all members of the Red Cross movement.

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The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the League of Red Cross Societies form with the national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies the International Red Cross.

The ICRC, founder body of the Red Cross, is a neutral intermediary in times of armed conflict and strife. It tries to ensure, on its own initiative or on the basis of the Geneva Conventions, protection and assistance to victims of international and civil wars and of internal strife and tension.

The League's function is to contribute to the development of the humanitarian activities of National Societies, to co-ordinate their relief operations for victims of natural disaster, to care for refugees outside areas of conflict.
Press release No. 1484
Geneva, 18 April 1984

TWO NEW ICRC MEMBERS

Geneva (ICRC) - The Assembly of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has welcomed to its ranks two new members, Mr. Pierre Keller and Mr. Raymond Probst, bringing to 21 the number of persons on the institution's supreme body.

Born in 1927 in Zurich, Mr. Keller studied law at the University of Geneva and went on to obtain a Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy in international relations at Yale University. He started his banking career in New York, then spent several years in the Swiss Diplomatic Service, where he was assigned to the Office of the Swiss Observer to the United Nations in New York. He then worked for the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in Berne and was finally assigned to the Swiss delegation to the European Free Trade Association in Geneva. He joined Lombard, Odier & Cie in 1961 and is currently a partner and vice-president of the bank's Board of General Management. Mr. Keller is also a member of the Board of the Swiss Bankers' Association, of the International Centre for Monetary and Banking Studies and the "Institut International d'Etudes Bancaires".

Mr. Probst, a citizen of Langnau, Berne, was born in Geneva in 1919. He received his doctorate in law from the University of Berne. In 1942, he entered the services of the Federal Political Department in Berne, where he was assigned to the Foreign Affairs Division, then to the Press Service. At the end of 1947, he was transferred to the Swiss legation in Athens, and in 1952 to the economic service of the Swiss legation in Washington. He returned to Berne in 1956, where he was assigned to first the Legal then the Political Service of the Federal Political Department. In September 1966, the Federal Council named him delegate for trade agreements and conferred on him the title of Minister Plenipotentiary. In January 1968, he was named Ambassador Plenipotentiary. From 1976 to 1980 he served as Swiss Ambassador to the United States of America, and from 1980 until March 1984, was Secretary of State at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in Berne.

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Press release No 1485
Geneva, April 30, 1984

VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA VISITS ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - Justice M. Hidayatullah, Vice-President of the Republic of India and President of the Indian Red Cross Society, today visited the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva. He was greeted by the President of the ICRC, Mr. Alexandre Hay.

Mr. Hidayatullah and the members of his entourage discussed various humanitarian issues during private talks with Mr. Hay and members of the Committee and the ICRC Directorate.

The Indian Vice-President was accompanied by the Indian Ambassador in Geneva, Mr. Muchkund Dubey, and by a representative of the Permanent Mission of India in Geneva.

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RED CROSS PRESIDENTS EXAMINE MOVEMENT'S PEACE ROLE IN WORLD DAY MESSAGE

Geneva (ICRC) - The spirit of humanity fostered by Red Cross action is "the only force that may, one day, succeed in driving away the threat of annihilation facing the human race" according to President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Alexandre Hay and League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies President Enrique de la Mata. In a joint message to the International Red Cross community issued for World Red Cross and Red Crescent day - tomorrow 8 May - the leaders of the two Geneva based Institutions examine this year's theme "through humanity to peace" and voice their belief that the movement with over 230 million members can make a real contribution to world peace.

For the two Presidents the world solidarity embodied in Red Cross aid creates a spirit of peace that can build and protect peace as the movement sees it: "not just the absence of war but a dynamic process of cooperation among people".

Most of the 132 National Societies members of the International Red Cross are expected to mark the day with programmes focusing on this year's peace theme. World Red Cross and Red Crescent day is observed annually each 8 May, birthday of Red Cross founder Henry Dunant.

The Red Cross movement will continue to examine its role as a factor of peace at the Second World Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on Peace, to be held on the Aaland Islands, Finland and in Stockholm, Sweden 2 - 7 September.

Message for World Red Cross and Red Crescent day

The seeking, shaping and maintaining of peace is achieved in part by man's spirit of humanity - the only force that may, one day, succeed in driving away the threat of annihilation facing the human race.
"Through humanity to peace" is the theme of this year's World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day, on 8 May. Our movement helps to build a more peaceful world by encouraging a spirit of peace, reducing obvious causes of tension and fighting the suffering caused by war.

The Red Cross speaks with one voice on peace. Its 250 million members in over 130 countries address one and the same message to their fellow men.

The world solidarity that Red Cross action demonstrates pays no regard to ideologies, religions, races or beliefs. The practice of such solidarity is also a contribution to peace. Within nations and among States the Red Cross spirit of peace can reduce the fear and mistrust that lead to violence.

The Red Cross sees peace as not just the absence of war but a dynamic process of co-operation among peoples. Its contribution to the development of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, assistance to victims of natural catastrophes and the provision of medical and social services are all ways of expressing worldwide solidarity and are a real factor of peace.

When young people take part in Red Cross activities they develop ties of friendship and understanding and join forces against the prejudices born of ignorance.

Red Cross action, conceived on a battlefield, creates an oasis of peace in the very heat of conflict. Its story is one of millions of lives saved through its intervention.

In time of conflict the trust placed in the Red Cross, thanks to its neutral and impartial action sometimes enables it to promote the renewal of contacts between hostile parties.

Finally, by contributing to the reduction of tensions the Red Cross endeavours to create a favourable atmosphere for disarmament. Even though it is up to governments to decide how to disarm, it does appeal to them with all its moral force to accept general, total and controlled disarmament as their ultimate goal.

THROUGH HUMANITY TO PEACE is the message that each and every member of the Red Cross movement wants to convey this year on 8 May anniversary of the birth of Red Cross founder Henry Dunant.

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END OF INTERNMENT IN SWITZERLAND OF THREE SOVIET SOLDIERS

Geneva (ICRC) - The first three Soviet soldiers transferred to Switzerland by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on the 28 May 1982 have reached the end of the two-year period of internment agreed upon by the parties concerned.

One of them, having maintained his willingness to be transferred to his country of origin, left today on a flight for the USSR.

The two other soldiers have confirmed to the Swiss authorities their wish not to return to their country. Their status will be re-defined by the Swiss authorities according to existing legislation.

Seven Soviet soldiers remain interned on Swiss territory.

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release No 1488
Geneva, May 20, 1984

VICTIMS OF THE AFGHAN CONFLICT: POSITION OF THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - Since 1979, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has made every effort to provide protection and assistance to the civilian and military victims of the armed conflict in Afghanistan, in accordance with the mandate conferred upon it in the Geneva Conventions and the statutes of the International Red Cross. On several occasions, it has reminded the parties whose armed forces are engaged in the conflict of their obligations under international humanitarian law. However, in spite of repeated offers of services to the Afghan government and representations to the government of the USSR, the ICRC has only on two occasions - during brief missions in 1980 and 1982 - been authorized to act inside Afghanistan. Consequently, the ICRC has to date been able to carry out very few of the assistance and protection activities urgently needed by the numerous victims of the conflict on Afghan territory.

Due to the serious consequences of the situation in Afghanistan, the ICRC decided in 1980 to undertake protection and assistance activities in Pakistan. It opened two surgical hospitals for Afghan war wounded, the first in Peshawar, the second, in July 1983, in Quetta.

In addition, being deeply concerned by the plight of persons captured by the Afghan opposition movements and by information to the effect that several such persons had been executed, the ICRC tried to find a way of protecting the lives of both Afghan and Soviet captured persons.
Negotiations carried out by the ICRC with, successively, the USSR, the Afghan opposition movements, Pakistan and Switzerland led to partial success. The parties agreed to the transfer and internment in a neutral country of Soviet soldiers detained by the Afghan opposition movements, in application, by analogy, of the Third Geneva Convention, relative to the treatment of prisoners of war.

On the basis of this agreement, the ICRC has had access to some of the Soviet prisoners in the hands of the Afghan movements and has informed them, in the course of interviews without witness, of the possibility for transfer by the ICRC to Switzerland, where they would spend two years under the responsibility and watch of the Swiss government before returning to their country of origin.

The ICRC made this proposal to the Soviet prisoners on the basis of the principle worked out at the 1949 Diplomatic Conference and stipulated in the Geneva Conventions, i.e. that repatriation of a prisoner of war signifies the return to a normal situation and is in the best interests of the prisoner. The above-mentioned procedure therefore applies only to Soviet soldiers who consider themselves to be in a situation comparable to that of a prisoner of war in enemy hands. Consequently, the entire operation is based on respect for the principle according to which the ICRC never acts against the wishes of the person it is assisting.

To date, eleven Soviet soldiers have accepted the proposal. The first three were transferred to Switzerland on 28 May 1982. Eight others arrived in August and October 1982, January and October 1983, and February and April 1984. One of them escaped to the Federal Republic of Germany in July 1983.

The first three Soviet soldiers reach the end of their period of internment on 27 May 1984. In conformity with the spirit of the provisions of international humanitarian law in this respect, the Swiss authorities, under whose responsibility the soldiers are, have taken the measures necessary to repatriate those internees still wishing to return to their country of origin.

The ICRC's main concern since the beginning of the conflict has been the unacceptable restriction of its humanitarian activities. In view of the situation, which has inflicted so much suffering on the Afghan population for over four years, the ICRC expects all the parties to the conflict to enable it by all means possible to protect and assist in all places all of the victims of that conflict, and thereby fully respect international humanitarian law and its principles.

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Press release No 1489
Geneva, June 7, 1984

BOMBING OF IRAQI AND IRANIAN CITIES

Geneva (ICRC) - On 5 June, the Iranian town of Baneh was bombed. Hundreds of civilians were killed or injured. This murderous raid with its tragic consequences has provoked a spiral of reprisals and counter-reprisals against the inhabitants of Iraqi and Iranian towns.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has already publicly appealed against similar tragic acts in the war between Iran and Iraq, but its previous appeals have been without effect on the belligerents. In face of the new acts of violence deliberately aimed at civilian objectives, the ICRC calls upon Iran and Iraq to cease immediately their current bombardment of defenceless civilians.

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Press release No 1490
Geneva, 12 June 1984

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA VISITS ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - Mr. Luis Alberto Monge, President of the Republic of Costa Rica, today visited the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), where he was received by the ICRC President, Mr. Alexandre Hay.

Mr. Monge discussed various humanitarian issues during a conversation with Mr. Hay.

The President of Costa Rica was accompanied by Mr. Guillermo Sandoval, Minister of Labour, Dr. Hugo Muñoz, Minister of Justice and the Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the UN Office in Geneva, Ambassador Elias Soley Soler.

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release No 1491
28 June 1984

RELEASE OF ISRAELI AND SYRIAN PRISONERS

Geneva (ICRC) - On 28 June 1984, via Kuneitra, Israeli and Syrian prisoners of war, interned civilians and mortal remains of soldiers killed in Lebanon in 1982 were repatriated under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The Syrian authorities handed over six Israeli prisoners of war and the bodies of five Israelis to the ICRC delegates. The Israeli authorities released 291 Syrian prisoners of war and 72 bodies to the ICRC. In addition, seven Syrian civilian internees were returned to Damascus and 13 others to their homes on the Golan Heights.

This repatriation operation was the outcome of months of negotiation conducted through the ICRC.

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Press release no 1492
28 June 1984

MR. ALEXANDRE HAY RE-ELECTED FOR A THIRD TERM IN OFFICE AS PRESIDENT OF THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - The Assembly of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which met at the Institution's Geneva headquarters on 27 and 28 June, has re-elected Mr. Alexandre Hay to the Presidency of the ICRC for a third term of four years beginning on 1 January 1985.

Mr. Alexandre Hay, who was born in 1919, has been a member of the International Committee since 1975 and its President since 1 July 1976. He will be embarking on his third term at a time when the ICRC has not been active on so many fronts at once since the Second World War. Owing to the armed conflicts and other disturbances in the world, the ICRC has in fact permanent delegations in 36 countries today (compared with 18 in 1978), to which are attached some 400 delegates and about a thousand local employees. The ICRC headquarters in Geneva has a staff of about 500, most of whom are engaged in work with a direct bearing on the humanitarian activities carried out in the field.

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Joint Press release  
ICRC No 1493 / League No 28/84  
Geneva, August 27, 1984

SECOND WORLD RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT  
CONFERENCE ON PEACE

Geneva (ICRC/League) - The Second World Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on Peace will take place in Aaland, Finland, from September 2 to 7. While the opening ceremony and the work of the Conference will be in Mariehamn (Aaland), the closing ceremony is scheduled for September 7 in Stockholm, Sweden. The First World Red Cross Conference on Peace took place in 1975 in Belgrade on June 11 to 13.

Some 300 delegates representing 132 National Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent are expected in Aaland. The two international institutions of the Red Cross - the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross - as well as the Henry-Dunant Institute will also take part in the work of the Conference.

The aim of the Conference is to examine, appraise, develop and demonstrate the contribution of the Red Cross to a real peace in the world. To this end, the gathering will proceed with an exchange of views on the application of "The Programme of Action of the Red Cross as a Factor of Peace" of 1975 and adopted in 1977 by the 23rd International Red Cross Conference. On the basis of these exchanges, the conduct and future activities of the Red Cross in favour of peace will be considered.

The Conference itself is organised by the "Commission on the Red Cross and Peace", presided over by Mr Harald Huber (former Vice-President of the ICRC), in cooperation with the president of the Permanent Commission of the International Red Cross and the two host National Societies, the Finnish and Swedish Red Cross.

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release No 1494
Geneva, 30 August 1984

RECOGNITION OF THREE NEW NATIONAL SOCIETIES

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has recognised the National Red Cross Societies of Western Samoa and Barbados and the Red Crescent Society of the People's Republic of Yemen.

These recognitions which take effect today, August 30, 1984, bring to 135 the number of member National Societies in the International Red Cross.

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PRESS RELEASE

SECOND WORLD RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT CONFERENCE
ON PEACE IN AALAND

The Second World Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on Peace opened today, Sunday 2 September, on the island of Aaland (Finland).

The six day conference, which will run until 7 September, is being attended by some 300 delegates from 105 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. It will be chaired by a former Chief Justice of Switzerland, Member of the ICRC Harald Huber.

The opening ceremony of the conference took place in the provincial parliament house of Aaland. The key note address was delivered by Dr Ahmed Abu Goura (Jordan), Chairman of the Standing Commission of the International Red Cross. "The greatest majority of our troubles are man-made", Dr Abu Goura told the assembly. "Wars are spreading in each and every corner of this troubled world. People are suffering bitterly from their consequences .... our efforts should be oriented towards protecting people against war."

In his address on behalf of the hosts - the Finnish and Swedish Red Cross Societies - Dr Kauko Sipponon, Chairman of the Finnish Red Cross, said that realism has always been one of the greatest strengths of the movement.

"Several courses of direct action are open to us", he went on. These included the strengthening and development of humanitarian law, an increased role for the Red Cross as a mediator between parties to conflict, and promoting solidarity between nations through assistance and development to remove some of the causes of inequality.

The Speaker of the Aaland Provincial Parliament, Sune Carlsson, hoped that the work of the Conference would result in making more nations and their leaders realise that international conflicts need not be solved through wars or threats of such.
The three hundred Red Cross and Red Crescent delegates from all over the world also heard a written message from the President of Finland, Mauno Koivisto.

The Conference will meet in plenary session tomorrow, Monday. It will be addressed by the President of the ICRC, Mr Alexandre Hay.

Mariehamn, September 2, 1984
SUCCESS OF THE "SECOND WORLD RED CROSS
AND RED CRESCENT CONFERENCE ON PEACE"

The Second World Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on Peace ended today Friday 7 September. The five-day meeting, held on the Island of Aaland (Finland) was attended by some 300 delegates and experts from 102 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The closing ceremony was held in Stockholm in the presence of their Majesties the King and Queen of Sweden and members of the diplomatic corps.

In addition to the reports from two commissions that studied the Movement's contribution to peace in wartime and peacetime the Conference adopted by consensus "Fundamental guidelines for the contribution of the Red Cross and Red Cross Crescent movement to a true peace in the world." These guidelines are designed to promote and direct the movement's work for a true and lasting peace in the world and to facilitate the implementation of "The programme of Action of the Red Cross as a Factor of Peace", drawn up by the first Red Cross Conference on Peace in Belgrade in 1975 and adopted by the XXIII International Conference of the Red Cross in Bucharest in 1977.
The guidelines state:

"By their humanitarian action, the National Societies, the ICRC and the League constantly further the cause of peace. Through consistent, patient and all-encompassing effort, each component of the Movement contributes to this dynamic process of co-operation, which is to build such future of humanity to which we all aspire. Whereas war is most often the consequence of a long process of increasing tension, the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement contributes to reducing tensions and defusing the causes of conflicts. In this way it works constantly - within the limits of its competence - for true peace."

"This long-term action is guaranteed by respect for the Fundamental Principles, which are an inspiration and a guide for all the Movement's humanitarian activities and which give it its unity, its strength, its orientation and its staying power."

The Conference also adopted by consensus a Message to the World Community, in which it expressed the Movement's deep concern about the tension, violence, racial discrimination and violation of human rights in many parts of the world.

The Message recognizes that inequitable social and economic factors are major causes of unrest and notes "with grief" that there are today over 30 conflicts and civil wars fought with conventional weapons. In many of these wars, its points out, no distinction is made between combatants and civilians, and the latter are, too often, the target of deadly weapons. This lack of differentiation, it states, violates the fundamentals of International Humanitarian Law. The movement, it goes on, is "particularly alarmed" by the continuing production of weapons of all types, including nuclear, chemical and space weapons.

In this appeal to the world community the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement "entreats governments to ratify the existing humanitarian Conventions, to respect them and to ensure their respect". It pledges itself to "continue to pursue the development and wide dissemination of International Humanitarian Law".

The message exhorts all governments to work unceasingly for gradual and controlled disarmament - both of conventional weapons and of all weapons of mass destruction, which threaten the very existence of mankind. It ends by appealing to all adults and young people "to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to promoting the dignity of man and to respect humanitarian values, so making a personal commitment to true peace worldwide.

Stockholm, September 7, 1984
REPATRIATION OF PRISONERS BETWEEN IRAQ AND IRAN

Geneva (ICRC) - 100 Iranian prisoners and civilian internees have been handed over by representatives of the Iraqi authorities to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on 20 October 1984 at Ankara airport (Turkey). Acting as the neutral intermediary between the belligerent parties, the ICRC has delivered the prisoners (among whom 55 were registered as civilian internees, 24 were aged 60 or more, and 80 have been held in captivity since 1980) to representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who have repatriated them. This operation follows the repatriation of 190 Iranian prisoners returned to Iran by the intermediary of the ICRC on 29 January 1984.

The 100 Iranian prisoners freed at this time, before being handed over to representatives of their government, have all been seen during interviews without witness, and have been accompanied to Tehran by ICRC delegates and doctors.

The reception and the medical infrastructure at Ankara was organised by the Turkish authorities and the Turkish Red Crescent Society.

Already, the Iraqi authorities have announced their intention of proceeding with the liberation of several hundred other seriously ill or handicapped Iranian prisoners in the near future.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the ICRC is requesting the authorities to permit the repatriation of all seriously ill or handicapped Iraqi prisoners who have not yet been liberated.

The repatriation of gravely wounded or ill enemy servicemen constitutes one of the most important obligations set out in the Geneva Convention relating to the treatment of prisoners of war, which both Iraq and Iran have signed.

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REPATRIATION OF PRISONERS BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

Geneva (ICRC) - 72 wounded and sick Iraqi prisoners of war have been handed over on 25 October 1984 by representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) at Ankara airport (Turkey). Acting as the neutral intermediary between the belligerent parties, the ICRC has delivered the prisoners to representatives of the Republic of Iraq for repatriation.

The 72 Iraqi prisoners of war had already been visited individually and without witnesses by delegates and doctors of the ICRC. ICRC doctors and delegates accompanied them from Teheran to Baghdad.

The reception and the medical infrastructure at Ankara was organised by the Turkish authorities and the Turkish Red Crescent Society.

Following this repatriation, the ICRC is waiting to see the Islamic Republic of Iran allow, in the near future, the repatriation of all the seriously sick or disabled Iraqi prisoners of war who have not yet been released, of whom the list has been communicated by the ICRC to the Iranian authorities.

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Press release No. 1497
Geneva, 29 October 1984

ICRC DELEGATE ACCIDENTALLY KILLED IN ETHIOPIA

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has learned with great distress of the sudden death, caused by a road accident on 28 October 1984, of Mr Alain Jossi, Delegate in Ethiopia.

An employee of the Ethiopian Red Cross, Ato Tesfaye Tesera, who was in the same vehicle, was injured.

35-year-old Alain Jossi, unmarried, took the delegate's training course in October 1983. On 17 November of that year, he was sent to the Lebanon, where until 3 June 1984 he performed a delegate's duties. He arrived at his new post in Addis Ababa on 12 June 1984.

His loss is deeply regretted by the whole ICRC, which extends to his parents and friends its deepest sympathy and condolences.

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release No 1498
23 November 1984

THE ICRC APPEALS TO GOVERNMENTS: ITS WORK HALTED IN IRAN

Geneva (ICRC) - The grave threat which hangs over some 50,000 Iraqi prisoners of war held captive in the Islamic Republic of Iran has caused the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to issue an appeal by its President, Mr Alexandre Hay, to the Community of States to help it make international humanitarian law respected. This appeal was given on 23 November 1984 to the diplomatic representatives of the States signatory to the Geneva Conventions, gathered at ICRC headquarters.

For several weeks, the highest Iranian authorities have not hesitated to deliver extremely grave public attacks against the ICRC and its representatives in Iran; attacks which are quite clearly without any foundation.

This campaign of calumnies follows the tragic events which took place in the Gorgan prisoner-of-war camp, where ICRC delegates were the witnesses of an incident that caused the deaths of several prisoners. Since that day, 10 October 1984, Iran has suspended all ICRC activity on its soil.

The ICRC, in its resolve to use all means to ensure the respect for international humanitarian law in the conflict between Iraq and Iran, has already approached the international community in order to denounce violations of the Geneva Conventions, and this in two memoranda dated 7 May 1983 and 10 February 1984, which only had a temporary positive effect on the behaviour of the Iranian authorities.

Now, Alexandre Hay precised, there is at risk the physical and mental survival of thousands of men, and the future of the respect for the Geneva Conventions as applicable to armed conflicts. The grave and repeated violations by Iran of these Conventions are the reflection of a policy which has as its principal characteristic the turning of Iraqi prisoners-of-war against their own Government. Already this policy has divided the camps into antagonistic groups that frequently fight each other, and occasionally kill each other, with the risk, patently, of armed intervention by Iranian soldiers responsible for guarding them. Thus, Gorgan was not an isolated incident. Unfortunately, there have been several precedents that the ICRC has established beyond any doubt.

Thus, the states signatory to the Geneva Conventions, who have undertaken to ensure that countries at war respect these Conventions, hold in their hands the fate of these threatened people, whom the ICRC alone is unable to save.

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