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ANGLAIS
Press release no 1530
Geneva, January 13, 1987

THE IRAN-IRAQ CONFLICT: BOMBING OF CIVILIAN AREAS

Geneva (ICRC) - In the conflict between Iran and Iraq, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is once again extremely concerned to note an upsurge in the indiscriminate bombing of civilian areas.

The President of the ICRC has expressed his deepest concern to the diplomatic representatives of Iran and Iraq in Geneva.

In the past, during what was then called "the war of the cities", the ICRC already vigorously condemned such practices. The bombing that is again targeting civilians constitutes an extremely grave violation of International Humanitarian Law, and both parties must take direct responsibility for the suffering inflicted upon hundreds of innocent civilians.

The ICRC appeals once again for the belligerents to stop this tragic escalation in the conflict.

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release No 1531
3 February 1987

RESUMPTION OF ICRC ACTIVITIES IN AFGHANISTAN

Geneva (ICRC) - Following an agreement with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was authorized at the end of January to carry out protection and assistance activities in favour of war victims.

Under this agreement, the ICRC will be able to visit all prisoners, in conformity with its customary standards. Visits are to begin in February at the Pul-I-Charki prison, Kabul.

In the assistance field, an agreement was signed with the Afghan Red Crescent in view of developing an orthopaedic programme for war-disabled. This work has already begun in Kabul, where three ICRC specialists will be jointly responsible for the project with the Red Crescent.

In addition, a surgical assistance programme for war-wounded will be set up after an assessment of the needs to be made in the coming weeks by an ICRC doctor in cooperation with the Afghan Red Crescent.

Also, a programme to disseminate international humanitarian law and the principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent will be set up, with priority for the armed forces and security forces.

The resumption of ICRC activities in Afghanistan follows a mission to that country by the ICRC Delegate-General for Asia, during which he could have discussions with the highest Afghan authorities and Red Crescent leaders.

In Pakistan, the ICRC will continue its assistance programmes for victims of the conflict and its efforts aiming to protect persons detained by Afghan opposition movements.

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Press release No. 1532
February 13, 1987

IRAN - IRAQ CONFLICT: THE ICRC SOLEMNLY APPEALS

Geneva (ICRC) - On February 11, 1987, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) made a solemn appeal to the Iranian and Iraqi governments, once again strongly urging them to put an end to the bombing and attacks on civilians.

Simultaneously, the ICRC approached the Member States of the Security Council and the Secretary General of the United Nations to ask them to support its initiative, choosing the means they consider most appropriate.

Moreover, the ICRC informed all of the States Parties to the Geneva Conventions of the steps it had taken.

This solemn appeal is the latest in a series of attempts by the ICRC to remind Iran and Iraq that the bombing and attacks on civilians constitute a grave violation of international humanitarian law and of customary law, which totally prohibit such practices.

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The ICRC informs the members of the Security Council of its current efforts in Iraq and Iran

Geneva (ICRC) – Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), met the representatives in Geneva of the member countries of the United Nations Security Council on Friday morning, 6 March, to inform them about the outcome of the missions which the two members of the ICRC directorate carried out in Iraq and Iran, following the ICRC’s “Solemn Appeal” on 11 February 1987 urging the two belligerents to stop attacks on the civilian population. The purpose of these simultaneous missions conducted during the last week of February by Mr. Jacques Moreillon, Director General, in Baghdad, and by Mr. André Pasquier, Director of Operational Activities, in Teheran, was to solicit a reaction and obtain a response from the Iraqi and Iranian authorities to the ICRC Appeal. In both capitals, the talks were very thorough. On the whole, each of the belligerants expressed the view that such bombings were carried out as reprisals. Considering these official positions, the ICRC representatives reiterated the Committee’s appeal to the belligerants to comply with their obligations under International Humanitarian Law, urging them to make every effort to ensure respect for and the protection of the civilian population.

While informing the member countries of the Security Council, Mr. Hay called upon them to promote by all possible means those solutions of humanity and justice which are within the Council's mandate. He also stated that the ICRC – which had previously informed the United Nations Secretary General of its representations – wished to commend the declaration made by Mr. Perez de Cuellar on 26 February and expressed its hope for the full success of the efforts undertaken by the Secretary General.

At this stage, the ICRC considers that some kind of agreement, whether specific or global, has to be reached between the two countries within appropriate political bodies such as the United Nations. The ICRC initiative may have created a favourable momentum which deserves to be rapidly turned to account. Thousands of men, women and children remain anxious about their fate.

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release no 1534
March 13, 1987

RECOGNITION OF A NEW NATIONAL SOCIETY

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has recognized the Red Cross Society of Grenada.

This recognition, which took effect yesterday, March 12, 1987, brings to 145 the number of National Societies which are members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

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REPATRIERUNG VON KRIEGSGEFANGENEN ZWISCHEN IRAN UND IRAK

Genf (IKRK) - Vertreter der iranischen Behörden übergaben heute in Teheran dem Internationalen Komitee vom Roten Kreuz (IKRK) sechsundsiebzig, kranke und betagte irakische Kriegsgefangene zwecks Heim schaffung in den Irak.

In Begleitung zweier Ärzte, zweier Krankenschwestern und eines Delegierten ver liessen diese Gefangenen Teheran in Richtung Bagdad an Bord eines vom IKRK gecharterten Flugzeugs.

Das IKRK, das bei dieser Heimschaffung als neutraler Vermittler zwischen den kriegführenden Parteien wirkte, übergab die Gefangenen behördenlichen Vertretern der Republik Irak.

Vor der Heimschaffung wurden diese irakischen Kriegsgefangenen einzeln von Delegierten und Ärzten des IKRK besucht, mit denen sie sich ohne Beisein von Zeugen unterhalten konnten.

Bisher konnten 564 irakische Kriegsgefangene (einschliesslich der 76 heute repatriierten) und 613 iranische Kriegsgefangene unter der Aufsicht des IKRK in ihr Heimatland zurückkehren.


Das IKRK hofft, dass alle Schwerverwundeten und Kranken möglichst bald im Einklang mit den abkommensmässigen Pflichten der beiden kriegführenden Parteien heimgeschafft werden können.

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TWO NEW MEMBERS OF THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has just elected two new members - Mrs. Anne Petitpierre and Mr. Paolo Bernasconi. They will take up their posts at the beginning of May 1987.

- Mrs. Anne Petitpierre has a doctorate in law from the University of Geneva. In addition, she has a degree from the School of Translation and Interpretation and from the Graduate Institute of International Studies, both in Geneva. She has been a member of the Geneva Bar Association since 1970 and has carried out much research at the Faculty of Law, is the author of numerous legal publications and has taken part in many learned seminars. She was for nine years a member of the Swiss Committee of the World Wildlife Fund, serving as Chairman for six of those years. She was also a member of the Geneva cantonal parliament ("Grand Conseil").

- Mr. Paolo Bernasconi studied law at the Universities of Berne and Fribourg. He was admitted to the bar in Lugano and also obtained his qualifications as notary public there. In 1969, he joined the Lugano (Canton of Ticino) Public Prosecutor's Office, which he headed from 1971 to 1986. In addition, Mr. Bernasconi is a member of the Pro Juventute Foundation and the Ticino foundation for assistance to drug addicts and founded the Ticino association for aid to people living on the margins of society.

With the election of these two new members, the ICRC, which is composed exclusively of Swiss citizens, now has 21 members.

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Press release no. 1537
April 1, 1987

THE PRIME MINISTER OF MOZAMBIQUE AT THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - The Prime Minister of the People’s Republic of Mozambique, Mr. Mario da Graça Machungo, visited the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) today. Mr. Machungo is in Geneva for the Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance to Mozambique organized by UNDRO (United Nations Disaster Relief Organization).

Mr. Machungo was received by the Vice President of the ICRC, Mr. Maurice Aubert, and by its President-elect, Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga; they discussed all of the humanitarian issues related to the situation in Mozambique.

The ICRC took this opportunity to confirm that it stands ready to pursue and intensify its activities in the field and is determined to bring assistance to those affected by the conflict in this country, in accordance with the mandate conferred upon it by the international community; it hopes to be able to extend its protection and assistance as quickly as possible to the regions hardest hit, in particular the provinces of Zambézia, Sofala, Niassa, Tete, and Nampula.

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Press release

13 April 1987

SIXTY-SIXTH DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME FROM THE EMPRESS SHÔKEN FUND

Geneva (ICRC - LEAGUE) - The Joint Commission ICRC-League entrusted with the distribution of the income of the Empress Shôken Fund met in Geneva under the Chairmanship of Mr. Maurice Aubert, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The new Ambassador of Japan in Geneva, His Excellency Mr. Yoshio Hatano, was present at the meeting. Mr. Hans Hoegh, Secretary General of the League, also participated.

The income available on 1 January 1987, which totals 253,700 Swiss francs, will contribute to the financing of activities in the field of disaster preparedness, health, social welfare, blood transfusion and first aid of nine Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in developing countries.

The grants will finance the following projects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Amount (Swiss francs)</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THE BAHAMAS RED CROSS SOCIETY</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>To purchase an ambulance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JORDAN NATIONAL RED CRESCENT SOCIETY</td>
<td>17,000</td>
<td>To purchase equipment for the emergency department, Red Crescent Hospital, Amman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAKISTAN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>To purchase a vehicle for relief work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL RED CROSS</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>To purchase a 12-passenger van for relief work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RED CROSS SOCIETY OF SAINT LUCIA</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>To purchase a Land Cruiser for training of volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAO-TOME AND PRINCIPE RED CROSS</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>To purchase a Land Cruiser for social services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. SIERRA LEONE RED CROSS SOCIETY 6,500
   To purchase a duplicating machine
   and first-aid kits for Primary
   Health Care Project

8. RED CROSS SOCIETY OF SURINAME 35,000
   To purchase an ambulance for first
   aid training

9. URUGUAYAN RED CROSS 35,000
   To purchase a pick-up for relief work

The Fund commemorates this year its 75th anniversary. It 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.
The Empress Shôken died on 11 April 1914. The Fund has received
repeated gifts from the Imperial Family of Japan, the Japanese
Government and the Japanese Red Cross Society and its capital
stands today at over 4 million Swiss francs.

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release no. 1539
Geneva, 5 May 1987

THE KLAUS BARBIE AFFAIR: THE ICRC SETS THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Geneva (ICRC) – Erroneous information has been published concerning the role played by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the Klaus Barbie affair, and the ICRC would like to recall the following facts:

The ICRC delegation in Genoa (Italy) gave Barbie a travel document under the name Klaus Altmann: this assumed name appeared on temporary travel papers issued by the Allied Forces High Commission in Munich. The Allied pass described "Klaus Altmann" as a mechanic from Kronstadt (Germany).

The ICRC would never have given a travel document to Klaus Barbie if his true identity had been known.

Since 1945, the ICRC has issued some 300,000 travel documents enabling 500,000 displaced or stateless people, often whole families, to travel to countries willing to receive them as refugees. During the years immediately following the Second World War, the vast majority of these people were survivors of concentration camps and refugees from Eastern Europe.

The ICRC travel document is never regarded as an identity card. It is issued under specific conditions: that applicants hold no valid passport but are in possession of a valid visa for the country of destination, as well as an authorisation of safe-conduct from the country of departure. ICRC travel papers become invalid as soon as recipients enter the country willing to receive them.

The ICRC's delegation in Genoa issued 2,259 travel documents in 1951, the year "Klaus Altmann" successfully concealed himself among the refugees. It was impossible for ICRC delegates to verify the statements of those applying for travel documents. The ICRC believes that certain risks had to be accepted in the interests of the vast majority.

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Press release no 1540
7 May 1987

CORNELIO SOMMARUGA TAKES OFFICE AS ICRC PRESIDENT

Geneva (ICRC) - The new President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Cornelio Sommaruga, took office on 7 May, 1987. The official handover took place the previous day during the ICRC's meeting in Assembly.

Twelfth President of the ICRC, Cornelio Sommaruga replaces Alexandre Hay who led the institution from 1 July 1976 to 6 May 1987.

Marking the occasion, the members of the Committee and the Directorate paid tribute to the outgoing President, recalling in particular the profound humanity and determination with which Alexandre Hay carried out his responsibilities throughout a decade fraught with innumerable disasters that struck each and every continent. They were pleased to find that Mr. Hay will remain a member of the Committee; as such he will preside the "Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and Peace."

In his allocution the new President stated that he wants to be guided, in the performance of his duties, by three principles: steadfastness, integrity, humility. Steadfastness: to show the determination that must sustain all members of the institution and prevent them from becoming discouraged. Integrity: particularly in the areas of respect for international humanitarian law, implementation of ICRC doctrine and monitoring the use of funds granted to the institution by governments and National Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. Humility: to illustrate the ICRC's position side by side with National Societies and numerous organizations working, with remarkable results, in their own specific humanitarian domains; and also to recall the constant efforts that the ICRC must make to bring assistance to all victims of conflict.

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Press release No 1541
5 June 1987

HUMANITARIAN LAW : THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS ARE 10 YEARS OLD

Geneva (ICRC) - The two Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions will be 10 years old on 8 June. These texts, which bring international humanitarian law up to date by strengthening the protection of victims of war, were adopted in Geneva on 8 June, 1977. They are the result of four years of work carried out in a Diplomatic Conference with the participation of government delegations.

Protocol I covers situations in international armed conflicts, and aims to improve, strengthen or develop the legal measures by creating a better basis for humanitarian action on behalf of war victims. In particular, it introduces into modern law rules on the protection of the civilian population from the effects of hostilities, such as aerial bombing.

Protocol II considerably strengthens the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts.

Today, 67 States are party to Protocol I and 61 to Protocol II, while 165 States have accepted the Geneva Conventions of 1949, or virtually every member of the international community.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which over the past 10 years has pursued a highly active policy designed to encourage the ratification of the Protocols, is pleased with the result achieved. However, the ICRC will not be completely satisfied until every State has accepted them, thus showing the universality of this law. All of these procedures are part of an agreed effort to bring about better protection for victims of conflicts through respect for international humanitarian law.

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VISIT OF THE ARGENTINE PRESIDENT TO THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - The President of Argentina, Mr. Raul Alfonsin, today visited the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva, where he was received by the ICRC President, Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga, and members of the Committee and Directorate. Several representatives of the City and Canton of Geneva were also present during the visit.

In a welcoming address, Mr. Sommaruga described the Argentine President as a Head of State who stood for the defence and respect of human rights. Mr. Sommaruga recalled the intense collaboration between the ICRC and Argentina during the country's sometimes painful recent history, when the ICRC had provided protection and assistance - the essence of its humanitarian work. It had visited up to 4,000 security detainees, bringing them comfort and putting them in contact with their families.

Mr. Sommaruga also recalled that during the South Atlantic conflict, ICRC delegates had given medical aid and looked after thousands of prisoners until their repatriation. He paid tribute to the example set by Mr. Alfonsin's government, and its recent ratification of the two Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions, which are this month celebrating their tenth anniversary. M. Sommaruga also paid tribute to the work done by the volunteers of the Argentine Red Cross.

In his reply, the Argentine President said he had come to the ICRC headquarters to show Argentina's gratitude to the institution, not only for its actions concerning the excesses committed when the armed forces were in power, but also for its work during the South Atlantic conflict. The magnitude of the ICRC's actions safeguarded man's fundamental values, he said. While it was not always possible to achieve a desired solution, for example to find those who had "disappeared," the ICRC could always count on the support of Argentina in its humanitarian operations.

During his visit to the ICRC, Mr. Alfonsin was accompanied in particular by the Argentine Foreign Minister, Mr. Dante Caputo, and Argentina's permanent representative to the Office of the United Nations in Geneva, Mr. Leopoldo Tettamanti.

Before concluding his visit, the Argentine President held a private meeting with Mr. Sommaruga.

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Press release No. 1543
Geneva, June 16, 1987

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PORTUGAL VISITS THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) – The President of Portugal, Mr. Mario Soares, visited the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva on June 16, 1987. He was received by the ICRC President, Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga, and members of the Committee and Directorate.

Representatives of the City and Canton of Geneva also attended the visit. The League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies was represented by its President, Mr. Enrique de la Mata.

In his speech, the ICRC President welcomed Mr. Soares as a politician who had always fought to defend human dignity, social justice and democracy, and who had endured detention and exile in his struggle.

In his reply, President Soares expressed his admiration and gratitude for the work of the Red Cross, and in particular the ICRC. He recalled the circumstances in which he had come to know and appreciate the activities of the Red Cross, on behalf of prisoners and victims of the conflicts in the former Portuguese colonies in Africa and Asia.

Concerning the invitation made to Portugal by President Sommaruga to ratify the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions soon, Mr. Soares assured the ICRC of his support in bringing this about.

Mr. Soares was accompanied by a number of senior officials, including the Portuguese Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, Mr. Antonio Costa Lobo.

A private meeting between Mr. Soares and Mr. Sommaruga concluded the visit.

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Press communiqué No. 1544

THE PRESIDENT OF THE OAU VISITS THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - The President of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), President Denis SASSOU NGUESSO of the Congo, and Madame SASSOU NGUESSO, today visited the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). They were received by the ICRC President, Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga.

His Excellency SASSOU NGUESSO, accompanied by two members of his government, discussed various humanitarian issues of particular concern to Africa during a private meeting with Mr. Sommaruga and senior ICRC officials.

The OAU's Council of Ministers adopted in July 1986, for the first time in its history, a resolution expressing the support of Africans for the humanitarian work carried out by the ICRC. The resolution called on OAU member states to assist the ICRC in its work by granting it all the necessary means to fulfil its mandate, as defined by the Geneva Conventions.

President Sommaruga emphasised that Africa is at present the main area for ICRC activities, both from the point of view of the number of armed conflicts, internal troubles or tensions requiring its intervention, and the number of people operating in the field.

The ICRC has delegations in 14 African countries, with 176 delegates and several hundred locally-recruited employees.

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Press release No. 1545
Geneva, August 14, 1987

MOZAMBIQUE: ICRC APPEALS FOR CIVILIANS TO BE SPARED

Geneva (ICRC) - Following the massacres in Homoine and Manjacaze, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) strongly appeals to all the combatants in the present conflict in Mozambique to put a stop to such atrocities.

The ICRC reminds those involved in the conflict that one of the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law is that civilians—especially women, children and old people—must be respected, together with hospitals and hospital staff; in short, all those not taking part in the fighting must be spared.

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THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF BANGLADESH VISITS THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - The Vice-President of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, H.E. Mr. Justice A.K.M. Nurul Islam, visited the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva on Monday, 31 August, where he was received by the institution's President, Cornelio Sommaruga.

In a welcoming speech to Mr. Nurul Islam, who is also Justice Minister of Bangladesh and a former president of the National Red Cross Society, the ICRC President paid tribute to him as a special partner in the dissemination of international humanitarian law.

In his reply, Vice-President Nurul Islam spoke of his concern over the situation in his country following the recent serious floods. He also underlined the role played by the ICRC since the independence of Bangladesh, and thanked the institution for its action on behalf of victims.

During his courtesy visit, Mr. Justice A.K.M. Nurul Islam was accompanied by the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations in Geneva, Mr. Ataul Karim. Before concluding their visit, they held a private meeting with Mr. Sommaruga.
PRESS RELEASE

Press release No 1547
Geneva, 4 September 1987

PRIME MINISTER OF CAPE VERDE VISITS THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - H.E. Mr. Pedro Rodrigues Pires, Prime Minister of the Republic of Cape Verde, and his wife today visited the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross. They were welcomed by the ICRC president, Cornelio Sommaruga.

H.E. Mr. Pedro Rodrigues Pires, accompanied by members of his government, and Mr. Sommaruga discussed various humanitarian questions, particularly concerning the African continent. They also talked about ICRC activities in that part of the world, as well as the activities of the young Red Cross Society of Cape Verde.

Recognised by the ICRC in 1985, the national society is one of the most active in Africa. It has 13 local committees which cover all the islands in the territory. As well as organising the usual activities of a national Red Cross society - health programmes, relief work, youth movement - the Red Cross Society of Cape Verde is also involved in literacy programmes, and works closely with the ICRC in the dissemination of international humanitarian law.

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MESSAGE FROM THE ICRC TO THE LEAGUE FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF MR. ENRIQUE DE LA MATA

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has learned with shock and sorrow of the sudden death in Rome, on September 6, of the President of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Mr. Enrique de la Mata.

In a message to the League's nine Vice-Presidents and Secretary-General, the ICRC President, Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga, expressed the ICRC's deep sympathy with Mr. de la Mata's family and with all the League's members, the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

He noted Mr. de la Mata's "personal commitment towards the National Societies; he travelled the world untiring in his desire to see them develop and increase in number".

In his message Mr. Sommaruga also assured the League's Vice-Presidents and Secretary-General of the ICRC's full support at this difficult time.

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release No 1549
Geneva, 2 October 1987

REPATRIATION OF PRISONERS OF WAR BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

Geneva (ICRC) - One hundred and one disabled, sick and elderly Iraqi prisoners of war were handed over in Tehran yesterday by representatives of the Iranian authorities to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for repatriation to Iraq.

The prisoners, escorted by two doctors, two nurses and two ICRC delegates, left Tehran, aboard an aircraft chartered by the ICRC, for Baghdad, where they were handed over to the authorities of the Republic of Iraq.

Before the repatriation was carried out, these Iraqi prisoners were visited individually by ICRC delegates and doctors who interviewed them without witness.

The repatriation of severely wounded and sick prisoners of war, throughout the duration of hostilities, is an obligation for Parties to a conflict, stipulated by the 3rd Geneva Convention of 1949. The ICRC is therefore satisfied with this latest transfer, in which it has participated as a neutral intermediary. It hopes that this operation will be followed by others, so that all sick and wounded prisoners of war who are still detained in the Republic of Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Iran may return to their countries as soon as possible.

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AN ICRC PLANE CRASHES IN CENTRAL ANGOLA

Geneva (ICRC) - A large Hercules transport plane, an L 382-G, chartered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) from the Swiss company Zimex Aviation for its relief operation in Angola, crashed early this morning about 40 kilometres from the town of Kuito, from where it had just taken off. The cause of this disaster has not yet been established.

On board the plane were: a Swiss delegate, an Angolan, and four crew members - two Irish, one Briton, and a New Zealander. At the moment, every effort is being made to reach the wreckage of the plane, located in a very unsafe area because of the conflict. The ICRC has no information available at this stage concerning the fate of the passengers and crew.

The plane, painted white with large red crosses, was transporting relief supplies to civilian populations affected by the conflict on the Angolan Planalto. This air disaster has happened in a country where the ICRC has been carrying out a major relief operation since 1979.

The ICRC delegation in Angola is currently composed of 56 expatriates and several hundred Angolan employees. The action in Angola is one of the most important operations by the ICRC in Africa.

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Press release No 1551
16 October, 1987

ANGOLAN VICTIMS IN THE ICRC AIR DISASTER IN ANGOLA

Geneva (ICRC) - The number of victims in the crash of a plane chartered by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has increased. In addition to the two passengers and four crew members who died, an ICRC rescue team has found the bodies of an Angolan woman and her baby in the debris of a house struck by the wreckage of the plane.

The bodies of all the victims were taken to Kuito yesterday evening. The remains of the passengers and crew of the ICRC plane are being flown to Luanda today, and are to arrive in Geneva on Sunday.

The cause of the disaster is still unknown. A team of Swiss experts from the Federal Office for Civil Aviation arrived in the Angolan capital this morning, to try to establish, with the Angolan authorities, the cause of the tragedy.

The ICRC wishes to express its deep sympathy and sorrow to the families and friends of the victims.

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Press release No. 1552  
Geneva, 19 October 1987

ICRC NURSE KILLED IN A CAR ACCIDENT IN LEBANON

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was shocked to learn of the sudden death of Miss Pernette ZEHNDER, a nurse stationed in Lebanon, in a car accident on 18 October.

Pernette ZEHNDER was 29 and came from the Canton of Vaud, Switzerland. She had been working for the ICRC in Lebanon since 9 October this year.

The ICRC wishes to convey its deepest sympathy to her family and friends.

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THE KING OF SPAIN VISITS THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - His Majesty King Juan Carlos of Spain and Queen Sophia visited the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) today. The royal couple were in Geneva for the presentation of the Nansen Medal, awarded to the King by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The King and Queen of Spain, accompanied by the Spanish Foreign Minister, Francisco Fernández Ordoñez, Government officials, and the President of the Spanish Red Cross, Leocadio Marin, were received by the ICRC President, Cornelio Sommaruga, and members of the Committee and Directorate.

In his speech of welcome, the President of the ICRC paid tribute to his guests as the highest-ranking representatives of the Spanish Red Cross. The National Society, which is under the patronage of the royal family, is one of the oldest and most active in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

President Sommaruga offered his congratulations to King Juan Carlos for the distinction conferred on him in the morning. He also took the opportunity to thank the Spanish Government, Red Cross and people for the moral, diplomatic and financial support they give to the ICRC.

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Press communiqué No 1554
17 November 1987

PRESIDENT OF THE ICRC IN BRASILIA

Geneva (ICRC) - The President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Cornelio Sommaruga, was officially received by the President of Brazil, H.E. Dr. José Sarney, on Monday, 16 November.

The meeting, at the Planalto Palace in Brasilia, covered the question of Brazil's ratification of the Additional Protocols, to which the ICRC gives great importance, the financing of the ICRC, and the dissemination of international humanitarian law.

The ICRC President, accompanied by the President of the Brazilian Red Cross, visited Brasilia the day before the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement began an important series of meetings in Rio de Janeiro, including the General Assembly of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the Council of Delegates. The meetings, from 17-27 November, are hosted by the Brazilian Red Cross, and bring together representatives of all the National Societies, the League, and the ICRC.

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MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT IN RIO DE JANEIRO

Geneve (ICRC) - The Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which brings together the representatives of the 145 recognised Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, the League, which is the world Federation of these Societies, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), met on Friday 27 November 1987, in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), following the close of the General Assembly of the League.

Chaired by Cornelio Sommaruga, President of the ICRC, the Council of Delegates had several points on its agenda which were of interest to all the components of the Movement. These included, in particular, various projects liable to emphasize to the public the contribution to peace made by the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, as well as a project to regulate the use of the emblem, a matter of vital importance to any real protection of the victims of armed conflicts and those who care for them.

In his opening speech, Cornelio Sommaruga, who was addressing the entire Movement for the first time, began by paying tribute to the leaders and voluntary workers who recently lost their lives in the course of their humanitarian mission, including the former President of the League, Enrique de la Mata Gorostizaga, who died suddenly in Rome last September. Mr Sommaruga laid stress on one of the tasks that he feels is of great importance, that of preserving and reinforcing the unity of the Movement, considering that the Fundamental Principles which guide its actions constitute the principal factor of its cohesion and the guarantee of its universality. He also put emphasis on the prevention of violations of the rules of humanity, especially through "humanitarian mobilization", and the dissemination of the Geneva Conventions and the ideals of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent. In addition, Mr Sommaruga underlined the role played by the National Societies "which are the foundation of the Movement and give it its vital strength".

Finally, the Council of Delegates witnessed the presentation of the Henry Dunant Medal, by the President of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Dr Ahmed Abu Goura (Jordan), to eight winners, including two former presidents of the League, Enrique de la Mata Gorostizaga (Spain) and Justice J.A. Adefarasin (Nigeria).

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release No 1556
3 December 1987

ICRC APPEAL : 111 MILLION SWISS FRANCS FOR ETHIOPIA

Geneva (ICRC) - The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will need 111 million Swiss francs in 1988 to assist hundreds of thousands of people facing famine in provinces of northern Ethiopia affected by drought and armed conflict.

This appeal for funds follows the call by ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga on 12 November to "open the roads for survival" and allow relief convoys of humanitarian organizations to reach the population threatened by famine.

The funds are for relief supplies essential for the survival of part of the population in Tigray, Eritrea, Gondar and Wollo. In 1988, up to 800,000 people a month should receive assistance. The ICRC will carry out its humanitarian operation, with the Ethiopian Red Cross, on the basis that it will be independent and without discrimination.

The main expenditure is for 62,000 tonnes of food, 60,000 blankets, 3,000 tonnes of seed, and 30 lorries with trailers. In addition, planes will have to be hired (a Hercules and three Pilatus Porter aircraft), to help take the food from the ports to the main warehouses in the affected provinces. The main part of the relief operations should be carried out by road.

The ICRC delegation in Ethiopia is currently composed of 30 delegates and 452 local employees. The first large distribution of food began 23 November at Wukro, near Mekele, the provincial capital of Tigray. Over 50,000 people have already received individual monthly rations of 18 kilos. Distributions of this kind enable those in need to obtain supplies and return to their villages, avoiding the setting up of camps for the displaced and the serious situation encountered during the famine tragedy of 1984-85.

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Press release No 1557
22 December 1987

NEW MEMBER NOMINATED AT THE ICRC

Geneva (ICRC) - The Assembly of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) welcomed Mrs Liselotte Kraus-Gurny as a new member of the Committee, during its last meeting of the year.

Liselotte Kraus-Gurny is from Zurich. She is a Doctor of Law and worked in the legal division of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva from 1961 to 1972. She devoted the following years to her family, and to her political engagements in the communes and canton of Geneva, where she was active particularly in the fields of education and training.

With the nomination of Mrs Kraus-Gurny, the Committee, which is composed exclusively of Swiss citizens, now has 21 members.

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PRESS RELEASE

Press release No 1558
December 28, 1987

NORTHERN ETHIOPIA: THE ICRC OBTAINS SUPPORT FOR ITS OPERATION AND INCREASES FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Geneva (ICRC) - Following the call by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for a policy of "Open Roads for Survival" to reach millions of victims of drought and conflict in northern Ethiopia, substantial food distributions have started, although the security situation remains precarious. By the end of December, the ICRC will have provided food rations to about 250,000 people threatened by famine, mainly in Tigray. It intends to increase this figure in the New Year, to reach over one million victims a month in the northern provinces by April.

After talks with all sides involved in the fighting, the ICRC now considers it has obtained the assurances it sought. These assurances, in the form of a de facto commitment, should allow food convoys of the ICRC and other humanitarian agencies to travel unhindered in conflict zones and get through to the people facing starvation. Such a commitment was a fundamental part of the appeal made by ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga on November 12.

It is now imperative that large quantities of food reach villages in Eritrea, Tigray, northern Wollo and northern Gondar without further delay. This can only be done by road, with airlifts as a support measure, if a catastrophe similar to 1984-85 is to be avoided.

The ICRC has opened two more distribution centres in Tigray. At Adi Gudom, south of Mekele, Tigray's provincial capital, the ICRC started giving food rations and registering about 7,000 people a day on December 21. More than 100,000 people are expected to benefit from this distribution.

Since December 10, another 7,000 people a day have been receiving food brought in by convoys at Idaga Hamus, north of Mekele, where the total number to be assisted by early January is put at 120,000. The first major distribution, at Wukro, also north of Mekele, ended on December 8, after 78,000 people received a month's food rations and returned to their homes.
ICRC officials in Ethiopia say the current condition of those coming to the distribution points is reasonably good. This indicates that the famine may yet be averted, as long as enough food can continue to arrive. Any interruption of the food pipeline would be disastrous.

ICRC foodstocks in December were 27,000 tonnes. During the first four months of 1988, another 44,000 tonnes are due to be sent to Ethiopia.

Photos: photos taken by an ICRC film crew currently in Ethiopia are available on request.

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