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THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
PERFORMS ITS FUNCTION

To start the year 1974, we publish a statement which describes under what conditions the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has to operate as a neutral body entrusted with the duty of acting as intermediary during conflict.

Below is an extract from the address sent by Mr. Roger Gallopin, President of the ICRC Executive Board, presenting the report on the ICRC's work to the General Commission of the XXIInd International Conference of the Red Cross at Teheran (November 1973), and read out by Mr. J.-P. Maunoir, a Director of the ICRC.

* * *

Already twenty-four years have elapsed since the last Diplomatic Conference at which the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 were signed. Twenty-four years during which, alas, armed conflicts have steadily increased, with the appearance of evermore lethal weapons. And during this quarter of a century the very nature of the conflicts has changed in that we are confronted by more and more frequent internal conflicts where, in practice and in law, ICRC action is possible only if it is accepted by the parties concerned.

At the beginning of this year, a further Diplomatic Conference will be held to enable all governments to study the additional protocols to the Geneva Conventions which should make it possible to strengthen and extend the protection to be given to war victims in both internal and international conflicts.
However, in addition to the texts which may be adopted - and which we hope to see adopted - there must emerge a conviction and a common willingness which alone will make the commitments undertaken a reality.

For the essential basis of humanitarian action is, of course, the implementation by all the protagonists of the letter and the spirit of the provisions of the Conventions. For the ICRC this means, above all, immediate freedom of access for its delegates to all victims and the possibility of securing for them the protection and help which they need.

However, in fulfilling this function entrusted to it by the international community, the ICRC finds itself all too often knocking at the doors of those who won't hear, the responsible authorities denying that the provisions of the Conventions are applicable and invoking, either implicitly or explicitly, their national laws concerning public order; this in effect produces a conflict between the political and military requirements of the State and the welfare of the human being.

Governments cannot take advantage of the sovereignty of the State to give themselves the right to interpret the Geneva Conventions in their own fashion. They may not require their adversaries to give a wide application to humanitarian law, whereas they hold to a very restricted interpretation of the responsibilities falling to them. The Geneva Conventions are not negotiable. As opposed to commercial treaties, they allow no clause of reciprocity. The humanitarian Conventions are official commitments by which States bind themselves unilaterally, each one vis-à-vis all the others, to respect in all circumstances the principles they have recognized as vital.

It is not acceptable either that, on the basis of that same sovereignty, States try to conceal conflicts within their frontiers so as to elude the obligations they have agreed to; nor may they, under the pretext of military requirements, refuse to give humanitarian assistance to the foe, wounded or held prisoner in their hands. In this case, reasons of State make the defenceless man a hostage and very often an object of political bargaining.

In the context of internal conflicts, States may not interpret the intervention of the ICRC and the assistance it offers them as interference in their internal affairs. The International Committee then appeals to them on the basis of the fundamental principle of the Red Cross, namely the principle of humanity which imposes equal assistance for friend and foe.

Yet the ICRC does not fail to recognize the requirements imposed on the authorities by the maintenance of order and security. It raises its voice against the excesses of State sovereignty when the wounded, the prisoners
and non-combatant civilians are deliberately deprived of Red Cross assistance or when they are subjected to a scarcely disguised form of the law of retaliation.

There is another kind of pressure on the ICRC which makes its position especially difficult: belligerents' efforts to make it bear responsibility to issue protests or denounce violations alleged—moreover often quite justifiably—by a party to the conflict vis-à-vis his adversary.

However, the ICRC, as has already been announced very often, cannot assume the mandate of a judge and still less of a prosecutor of humanity. If it can communicate protests it cannot regard them as its own, otherwise it would lose all credit and authority to exercise its specific function of protecting all those who are in the hands of their enemies, in a spirit of complete neutrality. Active neutrality is a form of taking sides as the ICRC sets humanity against the unavoidable partiality of the belligerents. Its neutrality is a means of action in giving relief which is its sole aim.

On the basis of what has just been said, it can be understood that in the extremely tense situation of a conflict a humane group and its leaders try to attract into their camp all possible forces, including the Red Cross as it also is a force.

However, those who try to make the Red Cross a war ally and not a factor of peace would divide and paralyse it. Those who wish the ICRC to relinquish its impartiality would prevent it from playing its specific role. If it abandoned its neutrality and its independence, it would no longer be in a position to ensure—in all conflicts, of whatever nature—fair assistance for all the victims in the spirit of the Red Cross.

Beyond State sovereignty, there is another sovereignty, namely humanitarian sovereignty, which those who suffer are entitled to claim. It is on the basis of that sovereignty that the ICRC appeals to all States, just as it does to all Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies, to all those who are at war or fight wherever they may be, so that its mission will be understood and so that it can fulfil its vocation of bringing people together, in particular at times when they are separated by conflicts.

All the legal or political obstacles which can be set against the fulfilment of this mission will only succeed in increasing mistrust, tension and hatred between peoples, whereas the work of the Red Cross is a work for peace.
AFRICA

PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

ICRC mission

At the end of December 1973, an ICRC delegate was in the People’s Republic of the Congo, where he met Government authorities and members of the "Congolese Red Cross". He presented the Society with a donation of 4,300 Swiss francs towards the development of its activities. A similar donation was made for the purchase of medicaments, mattresses, beds and kitchen utensils for detainees in the Brazzaville central prison.

During his stay, the ICRC delegate also had contacts with representatives of the People’s Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and visited the Dolisia dispensary. Medicaments to the value of 4,000 Swiss francs were handed over by the delegate.

ZAIRE

Visit to prisoners

In December, two ICRC delegates went to Zaire, where they met Government authorities and members of the Red Cross Society.

The delegates visited two Portuguese prisoners in the hands of the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (GRAE), with whom they were, as usual, able to talk freely. The delegates had contacts with GRAE leaders and visited the Franchetti hospital centre run by the Angola Refugee Assistance Service (SARA).

LATIN AMERICA

CHILE

Visits to places of detention

Continuing the action started in September 1973, ICRC delegates in Chile carried out twenty visits to places of detention in that country, and saw more than 1,700 persons detained owing to the events. As usual, they were able to talk with detainees of their choice without any witnesses.
Concomitantly, the programme of material assistance was pursued with the active co-operation of the Chilean Red Cross relief service. Articles distributed to the prisoners included blankets, mattresses and medicaments. At Christmas time, the ICRC delegates in Santiago, Temuco and Antofagasta handed out parcels to approximately 1,000 detainees who were particularly in need.

Delegates of the Central Tracing Agency who had come from Geneva carried out vital work during the same period. In December, some sixty ICRC travel documents were issued to persons who had permission to leave Chile. Every day the Agency delegates received, both from Chile and from abroad, dozens of enquiries about detainees.

Owing to the volume of humanitarian work to be done, the ICRC delegation in Chile was increased. It is now staffed by twelve persons, including three doctors and two Agency experts. As mentioned in the previous issue of "The ICRC in Action" (No. 206b of 20.12.73), two sub-delegations were opened, one at Antofagasta in the north, and the other at Temuco in the south, each having a delegate and a doctor.

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**ASIA**

**ACTIVITY OF THE RED CROSS IN INDO-CHINA**

**Medical seminar in Indo-China**

A medical seminar sponsored by International Red Cross Assistance in Indo-China (AICR) was held in Vientiane in mid January, allowing a general survey of medical problems in Laos and a discussion of proposed assistance. Medical representatives from the Phnom Penh and Saigon delegations attended the seminar.

**Republic of Vietnam**

Relief distributions are going ahead according to plan in the Republic of Vietnam. The Indo-China Operational Group (IOG) has continued its aid in resettling displaced persons. The Red Cross of the Republic of Vietnam, for its part, has now set up a programme of assistance to victims of recent typhoons, and IOG has contributed 300,000 Swiss francs to the programme.
Democratic Republic of Vietnam

Mr. Olof Stroh, Director of IDG, accompanied by a group of housing experts, was in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in mid-January to discuss the project of prefabricated houses for the homeless. They conferred with the technicians who are to supervise work on the first blocks of houses.

Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG)

During his stay in Hanoi, Mr. Stroh and a medical expert who accompanied him met PRG authorities and conferred with them about hospital equipment priorities.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government has already been sent a sum of 300,000 Swiss francs, through IDG, for the victims of recent typhoons.

Laos

IDG has launched a pilot malaria control campaign among displaced persons. The British medical team which had its base at Paksane, has ended its mission. Although this team is not being replaced, an effort is being made to maintain medical assistance in that area. At Paklay, a second Japanese team has taken over from the first team, which has concluded its mission.

Khmer Republic

With the recrudescence of fighting, thousands of persons have sought refuge in Phnom Penh. IDG delegates, in co-operation with the Khmer Red Cross, have concentrated on distributing emergency relief, constructing temporary shelters and providing medical care.

The medical teams are continuing their activities at Kompong Thom (joint Danish-Norwegian team), Kompong Cham (Swedish team) and Svay Rieng (Belgian team).

The Khmer authorities have agreed that the hospitals in these three towns be declared "neutral zones". The IDG medical teams have the responsibility of ensuring that the rules of neutrality are strictly observed. These zones are marked with the red cross emblem, and all local medical personnel, visitors and patients must leave their weapons at the hospital door. The authorities of the adverse party have been notified of the neutralization of the three hospitals.
Visit to prisoners of war

On 28 December, ICRC delegates provided 162 prisoners of war in Vientiane with relief supplies. As usual, they were able to talk in private with prisoners of their choice.

ICRC ACTIVITIES IN THE ASIAN SUB-CONTINENT

End of registration operations

The registration of applicants for repatriation was concluded by the ICRC in December 1973. It had started in September 1973, under the New Delhi Agreement of 28 August. A total of 470,000 persons were registered, namely 400,000 non-locals in Bangladesh and 70,000 Bengali civilians in Pakistan. The ICRC provides special travel documents and attends to departure formalities. In Pakistan, the Government authorities themselves carried out the registration of Bengali servicemen and their families (52,000 persons), while in Bangladesh ICRC delegates were allowed to register further non-locals held in some seventy civil prisons.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) dealt with transport formalities and established an air lift between the two countries.

The ICRC is co-operating with the Indian authorities in the repatriation of Pakistani prisoners of war and civilian internees in India, providing escorts aboard the trains from the Indian camps to the frontier station and there supervising the crossing into Pakistan.

On 15 January 1974, the number of persons repatriated in the sub-continent was as follows: 81,389 Bengalis from Pakistan to Bangladesh; 38,301 non-locals from Bangladesh to Pakistan; 36,433 Pakistani prisoners of war and 13,181 civilian internees from India to Pakistan.

In the three countries, there are fifty ICRC delegates and more than 350 local employees.
On 21 January 1974, the International Committee of the Red Cross issued the following appeal to the 135 States parties to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949:

"On the resumption of hostilities in the Middle East, the ICRC renewed its offer of services to the States concerned, with a view to the discharge of all the duties assigned it under the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949. In so far as permitted by the competent authorities, it has been able to acquit itself of part of its mandate: several thousand prisoners of war have been visited and repatriated; casualties have been cared for; and civilian victims have been given assistance.

"Yet the ICRC has received from each of the belligerent States numerous allegations of violations of those Conventions. Consequently, on 12 December 1973, it proposed the setting up of joint commissions of enquiry with a view, as far as possible, to establishing the facts and determining how the law should apply.

"However, the ICRC has now unfortunately to point out that it is not only the past but also the present and the future which are at stake. Indeed, in many cases the ICRC is prevented from fully carrying out its activities for the assistance and protection of civilian and military victims as demanded by the full implementation of the Geneva Conventions. The competent authorities all too often make reciprocity a condition for the application, totally or in part, of the Geneva Conventions. This is equivalent, in prevailing circumstances, to the exercise of reprisals. They also make the accomplishment of their humanitarian obligations subject to political and military demands which are alien to the Geneva Conventions. As a result, casualties who should be evacuated are not; families are left without news of their missing kin; prisoners of war whose particulars are not notified by the Detaining Power are neither visited by the delegates of the ICRC nor repatriated; and inhabitants of occupied territories continue to be kept outside the purview of the ICRC's humanitarian action.

"The ICRC had already occasion to draw the attention of the parties to the conflict to a dangerous compounding of politics and of humanitarian action which is thereby fundamentally perverted. The ICRC emphasizes that commitments under the Geneva Conventions are absolute, and that States, each one to all others, bind themselves, solemnly and unilaterally, to observe in all circumstances, even without any reciprocal action by other States, the rules and principles which they have recognized as vital."
"Hence the first article of all four Geneva Conventions, which states: 'The High Contracting Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for the present Convention in all circumstances'.

"On the basis of this provision, and mindful of the forthcoming Diplomatic conference in Geneva on humanitarian law, the ICRC wishes to leave no doubt in the minds of all States Parties to the Geneva Conventions, whether involved or not in the Middle East conflict, regarding the common responsibility which they have assumed. Nothing less than the full discharge of that obligation will permit war victims to receive again the protection of which they are at present deprived.

"For the International Committee of the Red Cross

"Dr Eric Martin, President
Roger Gallopin, President of the Executive Board"

Prisoners of war

Since 22 November 1973, when repatriation operations between the Arab Republic of Egypt and Israel ended, the ICRC has continued its activities and its approaches to the Governments concerned on behalf of prisoners of war.

In Israel, ICRC delegates made several visits - the most recent on 10 January - to some 400 Syrian, Iraqi and Moroccan prisoners of war and to about eighty Egyptian prisoners of war captured since 22 November.

Evacuation of the wounded

Owing to the critical situation in the Suez hospital, the evacuation of the wounded and the sick is still one of the more urgent problems facing the ICRC. Another question which causes concern is the supply of medicaments and medical equipment to the hospital.

During the week from 7 to 13 January, ICRC delegates were able to evacuate two serious cases to Cairo. They furnished the hospital with further relief items: medicaments, oxygen cylinders, blankets and warm clothing.

On 16 January, the ICRC evacuated four wounded Egyptian servicemen from the Kabrit area to Cairo.
Occupied territories

In the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, the ICRC continued to fulfill its duties to the Arab civilian population. It made several approaches to the Israeli authorities regarding the territories which had been occupied following the October 1973 hostilities. So far the ICRC delegates have been authorized to proceed to newly occupied Egyptian territory (on the west bank of the Suez Canal), but have not been allowed to carry out their activities in newly occupied Syrian territory.

West bank of the Suez Canal: Three delegates, including a doctor, recently visited this newly occupied territory. They met the inhabitants of various villages and were able to talk privately with them about their situation. The doctor-delegate enquired regarding the health of the population.

Territories occupied since 1967: In the course of their twenty-seventh round of visits to places of detention in Israel and territories occupied since 1967, the ICRC delegates saw about 2,400 Arab civilian detainees in about a dozen prisons. As usual, they were able to talk to detainees of their choice without witnesses.

The ICRC continued to provide free bus transport for detainees' families (a facility enjoyed by more than 2,000 persons a month), and a monthly distribution of parcels containing supplementary food to about 500 detainees who had received no family visit for over three months.
Geneva, 22 February 1974  
No. 208b

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THE ICRC IN 1973 - SOME STATISTICS

Concomitantly with its large-scale operations in 1973, the International Committee of the Red Cross continued its less extensive actions in Africa, Latin America, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. The few figures below give a glimpse of the volume of work involved in the traditional ICRC functions of visiting places of detention, distributing relief supplies, and seeking the missing and reuniting dispersed families through its Central Tracing Agency.

Visiting prisoners of war, civilian internees and political detainees is the ICRC's main activity. In 1973 its delegates paid 723 visits to 375 places of detention in thirty-seven countries. They saw nearly 270,000 persons deprived of freedom, including 120,000 prisoners of war in nine countries.

The geographic distribution of these visits was: Africa (twelve countries, 17,700 civilian detainees); Latin America (eight countries, 65,700 civilian detainees); Asia (ten countries, 169,300 prisoners of war, civilian internees and detainees); Europe (one country, 1,200 civilian detainees); and Middle East (six countries, 13,500 prisoners of war and civilian detainees).

Relief supplies despatched by the ICRC from Geneva amounted to some 1,500 tons of various goods to a value of nearly four million francs. These consignments comprised mainly foodstuffs, medicaments, medical equipment, tents and vehicles for detainees, National Red Cross Societies, and liberation movements. Regional distribution was as follows: Africa: 628 tons (Fr. 1.4 million) to nineteen countries; Latin America: 100 tons (over Fr. 900,000) to twelve countries; Asia: nearly 36 tons (Fr. 495,000)* to ten countries; Middle East: 725 tons (over Fr. 1.1 million)** to seven countries.

* exclusive of IDG assistance
** not including assistance during the October 1973 fighting
The work of the Central Tracing Agency showed a marked increase in several parts of the world. The highest figures were from Asia, where, in the Asian sub-continent, eleven million letters were exchanged between Pakistani prisoners of war in India and their families, 700,000 family messages were forwarded between Bangladesh and Pakistan, and the Agency offices at Islamabad and Dacca registered some 400,000 persons. In Indochina the offices opened jointly with the National Societies of the Republic of Vietnam, the Khmer Republic and Laos handled thousands of requests for enquiries to trace missing persons. In the Middle East, Agency offices were busy at the ICRC delegations in Israel, the occupied territories, Jordan, the Lebanon, the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic; they had to have reinforcements after the October conflict. The work consisted essentially of processing requests for enquiries into the disappearance of military personnel during or after the fighting. More than a thousand cases were reported by the ICRC to all the governments concerned. In Latin America, it was in Chile that, from September onwards, the Agency was busiest. The two specialists from Geneva handled about fifty requests for news of detainees, and forwarded thousands of family messages each month to the prisons. They also maintained a card-index of detainees visited and of the 500 "travel documents" which by the end of 1973 had been issued to refugees allowed to leave the country but having no identity papers.

AFRICA

Transfer of ICRC regional delegations

In 1970, the ICRC opened two regional delegations in Africa, one at Yaoundé (Cameroon) for West and Central Africa, and the other at Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) for East Africa. In both countries, the ICRC permanent delegates enjoyed throughout their mission the full support of the authorities and the co-operation of their National Red Cross Societies.

In February 1974, the ICRC moved its regional delegations from Yaoundé to Lomé (Togo), and from Addis Ababa to Nairobi (Kenya). The ICRC wishes, by carrying out such transfers from one capital to another, to develop the particularly close links that are forged by the setting up of a regional delegation.
Visits to places of detention

From 21 January to 12 February 1974, two ICRC delegates and a doctor visited several Mozambican places of detention. They went to the following prisons and camps: Machava (22, 23 and 26 January), Ponta Mahone (24 January), Tete 2 (28 and 29 January), Tete 1 (30 and 31 January), Vila Cabral (1 February), Porto Amelia (2 February), Ibo (3 February), Nampula (6 and 7 February), Quelimane (8 February) and Nicoadala (9 February).

They saw about 1,900 persons detained for reasons or offences of a political nature, and were able to talk privately with prisoners of their choice.

Following this round of visits, the delegates conveyed their observations and suggestions to officers of the General Directorate of Security. The distribution of material assistance in the places of detention visited totalled 20,000 Swiss francs.

Members of local delegations of the Portuguese Red Cross received the delegates and helped them with transport arrangements. As usual, reports on the visits will be sent to the Portuguese authorities along with the ICRC's remarks and recommendations.

LATIN AMERICA

Mission of delegate-general

On 24 January, Mr. Serge Nessi, ICRC delegate-general for Latin America, left Geneva on a mission to Latin America which was to last several weeks.

Mr. Nessi first proceeded to Honduras where, from 29 January to 1 February, he attended the VIth Meeting of Presidents and Technical Seminars of National Societies of Central and North America, jointly organized by the Honduran Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies. The ICRC delegate-general made a statement on the ICRC's activities.

During his stay in Honduras, Mr. Nessi visited the Tegucigalpa penitentiary and there saw more than 2,400 detainees. After stopovers in Costa Rica and Panama, the ICRC delegate-general arrived in Chile on 10 February.
ICRC delegation activities

In January, the ICRC delegates in Chile visited more than 4,000 detainees in 49 places of detention, namely 23 in the central area, 14 in the north and 12 in the south. During the same month, the following relief supplies were distributed to detainees: 25 batches of medicaments in 25 places of detention; 1,500 blankets and 6 tons of powdered milk in six places of detention; toilet items for 600 detainees in five different prisons; and, lastly, medical supplies and various articles in four places of detention. From September to December 1973, ICRC material assistance to Chile, thanks to the contributions made by various Red Cross Societies and Governments, reached a total of more than half a million Swiss francs, representing 5 tons of medicaments, 30 tons of powdered milk, 21 tons of medical supplies and equipment, 5,000 blankets and several hundred mattresses.

In January, the Central Tracing Agency delegates issued 95 "travel documents" for refugees who would leave the country but had no papers. This brings the total number of documents issued by the ICRC since the beginning of its action in Chile to around 600.

ASIA

ACTIVITY OF THE RED CROSS IN INDO-CHINA

Khmer Republic

With the recrudescence of fighting round Phnom Penh, thousands of persons living on the outskirts have sought refuge in the centre of the city. Delegates of International Red Cross Assistance in Indo-China (AICR) have met the emergency by distributing plasma and medicaments to hospitals and organizing the distribution of essential relief supplies. The construction of provisional shelters is contemplated.

The medical team furnished by the Swedish Red Cross has been transferred from Kompong Cham to Kompong Chhnang, where the 300,000 local population has been increased by over 40,000 displaced persons. To ensure more aid for the victims of fighting, the Belgian Red Cross has strengthened its surgical team at Svay Rieng by an additional surgeon and two nurses.
Democratic Republic of Vietnam

A first batch of prefabricated houses, to provide accommodation for 17,200 families, arrived in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam from Japan in January 1974. Some units have already been erected on a site prepared for the purpose at Haiphong. Other prefabricated units, from Finland and the Federal Republic of Germany, are due to reach the Democratic Republic of Vietnam shortly.

Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG)

In January, IDG received further contributions designed to equip the 250-bed hospital provided for the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG). The Polish Red Cross supplied dispensary equipment to the value of 350,000 Swiss francs, while the Austrian Government and Red Cross Youth contributed a sum of about 620,000 Swiss francs, which will cover the purchase of the bulk of the supplies for a hospital ward. Equipment for the surgical polyclinic is due to arrive in Haiphong on 15 February.

For the entire project, IDG has received donations amounting to 5.8 million Swiss francs (including those mentioned above), in cash and in kind, from the National Societies of Finland, the German Democratic Republic, Japan, Norway and Sweden. This covers two-thirds of the total budget.

Republic of Vietnam

Assistance to victims of the recent typhoons is a priority in the Republic of Vietnam. The two medical teams sent by the Federal Republic of Germany are pursuing their activities in the provinces of Binh Tuy and Lam Dong, while the IDG team is at work in Phu Bon.

ICRC ACTIVITIES IN THE ASIAN SUB-CENTINENT

A further stage is covered

From September 1973 to the beginning of February 1974, some 200,000 persons in the Asian sub-continent were repatriated: 45,000 prisoners of war and 15,000 civilian internees from India to Pakistan; 91,000 Bengalis from Pakistan to Bangladesh, and 47,000 non-locals from Bangladesh to Pakistan.

In this vast operation, the ICRC's activities consisted mainly in registering applicants for repatriation, in Pakistan and Bangladesh, and providing them with the requisite travel documents once they had secured an entry vise from the authorities of the country of refuge. By 12 February 1974 the
work was almost concluded, 125,000 persons having been registered in Pakistan and 535,000 in Bangladesh. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), for its part, is providing transport between Pakistan and Bangladesh by means of an air lift. Released Pakistanis, who are being repatriated from India by rail, are escorted by ICRC delegates.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Release of prisoners

At the request of the Red Cross Society of China, on 31 January an ICRC delegate proceeded to Shum Chun, a town on the border between Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China, to take over five wounded South Vietnamese servicemen captured during the incidents on the Paracel Islands and released by the Chinese authorities.

On 17 February, a second operation took place whereby a further 43 Vietnamese prisoners were released and repatriated, in the presence of the ICRC.

MIDDLE EAST

ISRAELO-ARAB CONFLICT

Prisoners of war

During January and February 1974, the ICRC pursued its activities and approaches on behalf of prisoners of war.

In Israel, ICRC delegates several times visited some 400 Syrian, Iraqi and Moroccan prisoners of war and about ninety new Egyptian prisoners of war captured since 22 November 1973.

Repatriation of prisoners of war

On 14 February, the ICRC repatriated on the El Qantara road fifteen Egyptian prisoners of war who had been captured on 22 November 1973 and released by the Israeli authorities.

Six wounded Egyptian prisoners of war had already been repatriated on 24 January.
Evacuation of wounded and sick

On 23 January, 250 wounded and sick were evacuated from the Suez hospital under the auspices of the ICRC. They were transported in about twenty buses converted into ambulances and with United Nations drivers. This operation brings the total number of the wounded and sick whom the ICRC has evacuated from the Suez hospital to 1,635.

On 27 January, the ICRC arranged for the evacuation of a seriously wounded Egyptian soldier from the Kabrit area, on the east bank of the Suez Canal, to Cairo.

Mortal remains repatriated

The search for and repatriation of bodies of Egyptian and Israeli servicemen, which had been suspended at the end of November 1973, were resumed on 23 January 1974. Search operations are conducted by the parties concerned while ICRC delegates arrange for the mortal remains to be returned to the respective countries.

Thus the bodies of nineteen Israeli and twenty-seven Egyptian soldiers were repatriated on the El Qantara road, on 5 February, in the presence of the ICRC. The mortal remains of twenty-seven Egyptians and seventeen Israelis were repatriated on 12 February, and those of twenty-seven Egyptians and eighteen Israelis on 19 February.

Occupied territories

The ICRC has continued to fulfil its duties to the Arab civilian population in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967. The ICRC has made several approaches to the Israeli authorities regarding the territories occupied since the October 1973 conflict. So far, delegates have been authorized to proceed to the newly occupied Egyptian territory on the west bank of the Suez Canal. Visits were made in January and February to Kabrit, Fanara, Faed and Abu Sultan, where the delegates were able to talk with the inhabitants about their various problems, without any witness.

On the other hand, ICRC delegates were not allowed to carry out their activities in newly occupied Syrian territory, on the Golan Heights.
Mauritanian President visits the ICRC

On the occasion of his visit to Switzerland in connection with the Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law, which is taking place from 20 February to 29 March 1974, H.E. Mr. Moktar Ould Daddah, President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, called at ICRC headquarters on 19 February.

President Moktar Ould Daddah was accompanied by Madame Ould Daddah, Honorary President of the Mauritanian Red Crescent, Madame Abdul Aziz Sall, the Society's active President, and several high government officials. He was received by Dr. Eric Martin, President of the ICRC, Mr. Roger Gallopin, President of the Executive Board, and members of the Directorate.

Having signed the golden book, the Mauritanian Head of State conferred with the ICRC officials about the institution's activities throughout the world and more particularly on the African continent.

List of legal books published by the ICRC

On the occasion of the Diplomatic Conference, we give below an extract from the list of ICRC legal publications. Where books are published in the three official languages (French, English and Spanish), no special mention is made to this effect. The languages are specified only where one or two are used.

Orders may be addressed to the ICRC Documentation and Dissemination Division, 7, Avenue de la Paix, 1211 Geneva.

Basic texts and commentaries

Sw. Fr.

The Geneva Conventions of 1949 10.-

Commentary [a detailed legal study of the four Geneva Conventions], French and English

Vol. I, paper-back, Fr. 35.-; Vol. II, Fr. 30.-;
Vol. III, Fr. 50.-; Vol. IV, Fr. 45.- (each bound volume costs an additional Fr. 10.-)

International Red Cross Handbook, eleventh edition, 1971* 40.-

* Published jointly with the League of Red Cross Societies.
Commentary on the Outline of a Course on International Humanitarian Law 5. -

Course of Five Lessons on the Geneva Conventions, by H. Coursier 8. -

*Le Droit humanitaire et la protection des victimes de la guerre*, by J. Pictet (Henry Dunant Institute), French 25. -

Index of the Geneva Conventions for the Protection of War Victims of 12 August 1949, by J. Toman (Henry Dunant Institute), English 48. -

**Popularized publications**

The Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, Summary for Members of the Armed Forces and the General Public 2. -

Soldier's Manual (illustrated handbook for troops) 1. -

Rights and Duties of Nurses under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 2. -

**Monographs**

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DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE ON HUMANITARIAN LAW

The Diplomatic Conference on the Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, convened by the Swiss Government as the depositary State of the Geneva Conventions, closed on 29 March 1974. This first session brought together in Geneva, for more than five weeks, plenipotentiary delegates from 125 States, representatives of ten national liberation movements recognized by the Arab League and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and observers from thirty-five inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations. The 1949 Diplomatic Conference was attended by delegates from only sixty-three States. Mr. Pierre Graber, Federal Councillor, Vice-President of the Federal Council and Head of the Swiss Federal Political Department, was elected President of the Conference.

During the initial plenary meetings, which were held from 5 to 11 March, the Conference held a general discussion, constituted its working committees and adopted the rules of procedure. The following committees were set up: Committee I, chaired by Mr. E. Hambro (Norway), on general provisions and provisions relating to the application of humanitarian law; Committee II, chaired by Mr. T. Mallik (Poland), on the wounded and the sick, medical transport and relief; Committee III, chaired by Mr. H. Sultan (Arab Republic of Egypt), on the protection of the civilian population, methods and means of combat and the status of combatants. The ad hoc Committee on Conventional Weapons was chaired by Mr. D. Garces (Colombia). The Conference also appointed a Drafting Committee (Chairman: Mr. A.S. Chowdhury, Bangladesh) and a Credentials Committee (Chairman: Mr. D. Sanson-Roman, Nicaragua).

The general discussion enabled heads of delegation to express the views of their respective countries on the subjects that were to be dealt with. Generally speaking, representatives felt that the draft Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, which the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had drawn up to supplement humanitarian law in view of the development of warfare, were an effective working basis.
Committee I studied with special care Article 1 of draft Protocol I, applicable in international armed conflicts. The Committee adopted an amendment to the effect that people's struggles against colonial domination, foreign occupation and racist regimes, in the exercise of their right to self-determination, as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, were to be considered as international armed conflicts.

The Committee also discussed other important articles on definitions, the circumstances surrounding the application of law, and lastly the appointment of Protecting Powers and of their substitute (Article 5). This article is intended to strengthen the international machinery provided by the Geneva Conventions with a view to ensuring the impartial supervision of their application.

Committee II discussed at length the question of definitions (one which was not dealt with in the 1949 Geneva Conventions) and adopted an article defining the wounded, the sick and the shipwrecked. The fundamental idea of respect for the wounded and the sick, whatever the circumstances, was accepted.

A technical sub-committee, chaired by Mr. H.A. Kieffer (Switzerland), submitted to Committee II proposals on the adoption of an internationally recognized distinctive civil defence service emblem (blue triangle on orange background), the issue of a special identity card for civilian medical personnel (similar to that now issued for military medical personnel), and improving the visibility of the signs of the red cross, red crescent and red lion and sun.

The technical sub-committee covered its programme relating to medical means of transport. It proposed the adoption of distinctive light signals (flashing blue light), radioelectric and radar signals for the identification of medical vehicles.

Committee III took up the first part of its programme, namely the protection of the civilian population, a subject very incompletely dealt with by existing law. It worked simultaneously on the articles of draft Protocols I and II relating, respectively, to international and non-international armed conflicts. The fundamental rule of protection for civilian population against the consequences of hostilities, and the definition of that population, were adopted by the Committee. The experts also studied an article specifying the cases in which the provisions for the protection of civilians should be applied.

Pursuant to a resolution adopted by the XXIInd International Conference of the Red Cross (Teheran, November 1973) and the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Diplomatic Conference set up an ad hoc Committee on Conventional Weapons, which proceeded to a general discussion of the various categories of weapons "that may cause unnecessary
suffering or have indiscriminate effects". Those weapons, which were described in an ICRC report following a meeting of experts in 1973, are mainly incendiary weapons and small-calibre projectiles with high muzzle velocity, fragmentation bombs, delayed-action weapons, and certain new weapons now the subject of research.

The discussion - the first to be held at governmental level for about forty years - showed a general wish to study those weapons and the urgent need for a limitation or perhaps prohibition of their use. The ad hoc Committee welcomed the announcement that a Conference of Government Experts would be convened by the ICRC at an early date provided finance were ensured by governments.

At its final plenary meetings, the Diplomatic Conference noted the reports of Committees I, II and III, and adopted the report of the Credentials Committee. A resolution calling upon the participating Governments to submit to the Swiss Government, by the autumn of 1974, amendments to the draft Additional Protocols, so as to facilitate the work of the second session of the Conference, was adopted by a consensus.

At the closing meeting, Mr. Pierre Graber, President of the Conference, delivered an address in which he said that the Swiss Government would convene a second session of the Conference to open on 3 February 1975 and to last about three months. Professor Eric Martin, President of the ICRC, thanked the assembly for the support which the international community had lent the Red Cross in its work, and expressed the hope for a speedy conclusion of work in the sphere of international humanitarian law. Lastly, Professor H. Sultan (Arab Republic of Egypt) thanked the Swiss Government on behalf of the Bureau of the Conference for convening the Conference.

At the end of the first session, it would be wrong to draw up a purely quantitative balance-sheet based on the number of articles of the draft Protocols studied or adopted. The size of the task assigned to the Conference and the universal nature of participation, coupled with the fact that the rules proposed did not, as in 1949, relate to a world war which had ended but to existing conflicts, made it necessary to start with carefully defined directions. These various factors show the effort made and the effort which remains to be made in coming years, to ensure the adoption and application of renovated humanitarian law.
ICRC missions

ICRC regional delegates in West and Central Africa have over the past few weeks visited places of detention in four countries. Everywhere, they established contact with the government authorities and leaders of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

First of all, two delegates were in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania from 11 to 13 February, on an initial visit to places of detention. At Nouakchott, they saw some twenty detainees held in the Ksar prison for reasons or offences of a political nature. The delegates spoke to them without witnesses and provided them with relief supplies.

In March, two delegates in Liberia visited the Monrovia prison before proceeding to the Gambia, where they visited two prisons.

Finally they spent a few days in Senegal. At Ziguinchor, the delegates visited the hospital run by the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands), where they were able to see the use that was being made of recent ICRC donations of medicaments and an ambulance to a value of 40,000 Swiss francs.

Regional delegation

The ICRC recently installed at the office of its regional delegation for West and Central Africa, at Lomé, (Togo), a radio station which established its first contact with Geneva at the end of March.

The station was set up with the agreement of the Togolese Government. It is part of the emergency world network established with National Societies and operating on special frequencies. Similar stations already operate at the Caracas headquarters of the ICRC regional delegation for Latin America and in the National Societies of about a dozen countries in Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America.
Mission of delegate-general

Mr. S. Nessi, ICRC delegate-general for Latin America, has completed the mission which started on 24 January 1974 (see "ICRC en Action" No. 208b).

In Chile, where he arrived on 10 February, the delegate-general conferred with the Minister of Defence, the Minister of the Interior and other government authorities about the ICRC's activities in Chile since September 1973, and more particularly about certain fundamental humanitarian problems confronting the ICRC. Mr. Nessi also had talks with Chilean Red Cross leaders, who have lent invaluable support to the ICRC action.

At the close of his mission to Chile, towards the end of February, the delegate-general spent a few days in Bolivia, where he had talks with the Minister of the Interior and the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, and then in Peru, where he met the senior officials of the National Society.

ICRC activities

In February and March 1974, the ICRC delegation in Chile, which was composed of twelve delegates, including three doctors and two Agency experts, continued its visits to places of detention and its assistance to detainees and their families. During that period, more than 3,500 detainees were visited in about forty places of detention. Certain barracks (regimientos) and interrogation centres are, however, still closed to the ICRC delegates.

In the sphere of relief, the delegates have continued to provide in the places of detention visited, considerable material aid mainly in the form of blankets, mattresses, food and medicaments.

Lastly, at the end of January, the ICRC delegation in Chile initiated a programme of assistance to needy families of detainees. By the end of February, about a hundred families had received clothing, powdered milk, baby foods and other food items. In view of the great need, the ICRC assigned 100,000 Swiss francs for the continuance and development of the action conducted jointly with the Chilean Red Cross.
BOLIVIA

Visits to places of detention

During the second half of March, the ICRC regional delegate for South America visited seven places of detention in Bolivia and met more than 200 persons detained for offences or reasons of a political nature. In co-operation with the Bolivian Red Cross, he distributed relief supplies, mainly blankets, mattresses and medicaments, to a value of 5,000 Swiss francs.

During his stay in La Paz, the ICRC delegate had numerous contacts with Government authorities and leaders of the National Society.

ASIA

INDO-CHINA

Internal reorganization

With the imminent prospect of a cease-fire in Indo-China in December 1972, the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies established an Indo-China Operational Group (IOG) with Mr. Olof Stroh, Secretary General of the Swedish Red Cross, as director.

Being unable to carry out his functions both in IOG and the Swedish Red Cross, Mr. Stroh asked to be relieved of his office as Director of IOG on 31 March 1974. Responsibility for Red Cross relief activities in Indo-China was therefore taken over as from 1 April by ICRC and League Directors of Operations J.-P. Hocké and J.-P. Robert-Tissot. The Indo-China Operational Group will continue to work for these two institutions in Geneva.

Republic of Vietnam

International Red Cross assistance in the Republic of Vietnam consists essentially of medical care and the distribution of relief supplies to displaced persons.

Besides this, several teams are at work in the Republic of Vietnam.
Democratic Republic of Vietnam

Components of prefabricated dwellings are being regularly supplied to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG)

Medical and surgical equipment is being provided for the 250-bed hospital in the area controlled by the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG).

Laos

Three medical teams are working in Laos. A Japanese Red Cross team is based at Pak Lay (about 150 km west of Vientiane) while a mobile team sent by the Swiss Red Cross is at work at Luang Prabang (180km north of Vientiane). The third team, supplied by the French Red Cross and which also is mobile, is co-operating with the Laotian Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO) in a malaria control campaign covering some 160,000 persons in an area north of Vientiane.

Relief operations consist mainly in the distribution of clothing, mats, medicaments and food in areas with a high concentration of displaced persons.

Pathet Lao

In February, the ICRC delegate in charge of international Red Cross assistance in Laos stayed three days at Sam Neua with leaders of the Lao Patriotic Front (LPF). He was received by H.H. Prince Souphanouvong, President of the Central Committee of the LPF. He also conferred with a Foreign Affairs representative of the Central Committee and with officers of the Health Services and the "Pathet Lao Red Cross". The talks dealt with the Red Cross assistance programme and treaty activities, and the work of the Tracing Agency.

Following this visit and in line with the assistance which the Red Cross has for a number of years been rendering the LPF, a 1.5 ton relief consignment (including 5,000 blankets, 3,000 articles of clothing, medicaments and medical equipment) was presented to Colonel Soth Phetrasay, a Pathet Lao representative, in Vientiane on 9 March 1974.

Khmer Republic

Continued hostilities call for intensified Red Cross medical action, while relief distributions in the Khmer Republic are being reduced for logistic reasons.
A Swedish Red Cross surgical team is at work at Kompong Chhnang. A joint team provided by the Danish and Norwegian Societies is at Kompong Thom. Finally a third team, supplied by the Belgian Red Cross, is at Svay Rieng. These teams tend the civilian population and the wounded.

At Phnom-Penh, two teams are busy in refugee camps while a third team, sent by the Swiss Red Cross, is working in the university pediatric hospital.

Red Cross relief activities have been intensified following the influx of new refugees to Phnom-Penh. In the provinces, despite transport difficulties, the Khmer Red Cross and AICR delegates assisted some 60,000 families or 300,000 persons in 1973.

**ICRC ACTIVITIES IN THE ASIAN SUB-CONTINENT**

The prisoner-of-war repatriation operation and the transfer of civilians, conducted jointly by the ICRC and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, allowed the repatriation of 116,514 Bengalis to Pakistan and of 68,535 Pakistanis to Bangladesh up to 4 April 1974. The repatriation from India of Pakistani prisoners of war and internees should be completed by the end of April. So far 80,417 persons have been repatriated.

In Bangladesh, the ICRC has turned its relief programmes - food distribution, dispensaries, schools and the construction of shelters - over to the Government and to welfare organizations such as CONCERN, CORR and the Mennonites Central Committee.

Two of these programmes have yielded the following results: the three anti-scabies centres opened by the ICRC in 1973 for non-local communities treated 53,000 patients in one year. The plan for the construction of shelters resulted, in fourteen months, in the housing of 15,700 families (more than 93,000 persons). In addition, twenty-two schools and eleven mosques were built; 5.6 km of drain pipes were laid and 400 latrines installed. One thousand volunteers took part in the action, so that it was possible to use 98 per cent of the funds available (US $193,000) for the purchase of basic materials.

Lastly, the Central Tracing Agency transmitted altogether 16.4 million family messages among the three countries from the beginning of the action.
Missions of regional delegate

During the first quarter of 1974 the ICRC regional delegate for South-East Asia visited places of detention in Singapore and the Philippines.

In a Singapore prison he saw thirteen detainees held for offences or reasons of a political nature.

Accompanied by another delegate, the regional delegate visited more than 2,700 detainees in twenty-one places of detention in the Philippines. About six of the camps in the south were being visited for the first time. Relief supplies to a value of 5,000 Swiss francs were distributed to the detainees, in co-operation with the National Society.

Middle East

Israelо-Аrab conflict

Prisoners of war

The ICRC continued its activities on behalf of prisoners of war during February and March 1974.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, on 1 March 1974, ICRC delegates made their first visit to sixty-five Israeli prisoners of war, two of whom were wounded. A second visit was made at the end of March.

In Israel, ICRC delegates continued their regular visits to about 400 Syrian, Iraqi and Moroccan prisoners of war. The ninety Egyptian prisoners of war captured after 22 November 1973 were all repatriated in January and February 1974.

Occupied territories

When the October 1973 conflict came to an end, the ICRC resumed its work for the benefit of the Arab civilian population in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967. Further, as from November 1973, its delegates were able to proceed to newly occupied Egyptian territory on the western bank of the Suez Canal. In the course of several visits the delegates discussed with the inhabitants of that region the problems with which they had to contend.

The ICRC delegates were for the first time authorized to go into newly occupied Syrian territory on the Golan Heights early in March. Three visits to that area have been made since then.
Resumed family reuniting operations

Between the territories occupied by Israel and the Arab Republic of Egypt, the ICRC has resumed its operations for the reuniting of dispersed families. Those operations were interrupted by the October 1973 conflict.

On 20 March 1974, the first operation took place on the El Qantara road, and civilians stranded by the war were able to return home; 153 returned to Gaza and the Sinai, and fifty-eight to Cairo. A further operation took place on 27 March, when seventy-three persons left the Arab Republic of Egypt for occupied Gaza-Sinai territory, and forty-eight went the opposite way.

Student travel

In March the ICRC also resumed its trans-canal passages for Palestinian students from Gaza who wanted to go to Cairo for their university studies. Two such operations enabled 392 students to go from one bank of the Suez Canal to the other.

During the same month, fifty-two students left Gaza for Algeria, at the invitation of the Algerian Government. They passed through Jordan.

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

In January 1974, an ICRC delegate visited the Radah and "La Citadelle" prisons at Sanaa, and the Shabaka prison at Taiz. Altogether he saw more than 800 detainees.
Geneva, 10 May 1974
No 210b

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Tribute to Mr. Pierre Boissier,
Member of the ICRC and Director
of the Henry Dunant Institute

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Now that the repatriation of Pakistani prisoners of war and civilian internees in India has been completed, and the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Bangladesh and Pakistan has reached the final stage, the Central Tracing Agency (CTA) is reducing the activities of the bureaux which it set up in the field in August 1971. As we shall see, however, work is going on at CTA headquarters in Geneva.

"Ten persons are still at work in the card-index section covering the December 1971 Indo-Pakistan conflict, and our records are completely up to date, so that when the Indian and Bangladesh Red Cross Societies and the Pakistan Red Crescent take over, we shall be in a position to give them speedy and efficient co-operation in tracing the missing". This is what we have been told by Miss M. Katz, Deputy Director of the ICRC Central Tracing Agency.

What at first glance might seem obvious is, in fact, extremely important: an incomplete or poorly recorded card-index would be of no use whatever to a family in quest of news about one of its members. Precision is a prerequisite for the work which CTA will henceforth carry out in close co-operation with the National Societies.

"During or immediately after a conflict, the Agency is the only link which exists between separated families", added Miss Katz, "but it is also the "notary" of captivity, for in its archives it keeps minutely recorded information on the persons protected by the Geneva Conventions".
For the Indo-Pakistan conflict alone, the Agency has 630,000 cards relating, on the one hand, to Pakistani and Indian prisoners of war and civilian internees and, on the other, to Bengalis and Pakistanis transferred to their country of origin. The large number of index-cards can be explained by the fact that there may be several documents for one person. Thus, for a prisoner of war there will be the capture card which was completed on his arrival in the camp, the official notification from the detaining authorities, a possible notification of transfer or death, and, lastly, the repatriation card. Moreover, the documents drawn up at the time of the visits made to the camps are brought back to Geneva. An individual medical card-index established by ICRC doctor-delegates may therefore prove invaluable at some future date.

"It often happens", explained Miss Katz, "that long after a prisoner's return we receive a request for a certificate of captivity or death, in order that compensation or a pension may be secured".

With the end of repatriation, too, the Agency may receive a number of inquiries from families distressed because they have not managed to find a relative who, they thought, was a prisoner or internee; and in the case of deceased captives, their heirs may apply to the Agency months or even years later.

Hence the importance of the card-index system: it should allow any item of information to be ascertained at any time.

The problem is sometimes complex because of the language, phonetic spelling or homonyms. In the case of the Asian sub-continent, the names of captives in India and Pakistan were recorded phonetically rather than alphabetically. Army registration numbers were also recorded with a view to sorting out homonyms. For Pakistanis, 7,700 cards were found to bear the name Mohamed Siddiqi, and in the case of Indians, one-third bore the same Singh!

Yet the Agency team has meanwhile gained considerable experience in this sphere. There can be no doubt that the archives, which were useful during the period of captivity, will continue to be useful for many years to come.
ICRC activities

During April 1974, the ICRC delegation in Chile continued its activities on behalf of detainees and their families.

ICRC delegates and doctors visited some twenty places of detention and saw more than 2,600 detainees. As in previous months, the ICRC provided the detainees with material relief consisting mainly of medicaments, blankets, mattresses and working implements.

For the needy families of detainees, the ICRC is developing the plan of assistance which was launched in January and to which a sum of 100,000 Swiss francs has been assigned. About 2,000 families (or more than 8,000 persons) are thus supplied with food, clothing, blankets and various other relief items.

URUGUAY

Visits to places of detention

From 25 March to 10 April 1974, the ICRC regional delegate for Latin America, accompanied by a delegate, made a stay in Uruguay and there met the Ministers of Defence and the Interior, the Director-General of Prisons and various civilian and military authorities.

The two ICRC delegates visited four civilian prisons in Montevideo, where they saw more than 2,500 detainees, including about a hundred who were being held for offences or reasons of a political nature. In two prisons, the delegates provided medicaments.

The ICRC delegates also had contacts with leaders of the National Red Cross Society during their stay in Montevideo.
Republic of Vietnam

Owing to the fighting in the Khmer Republic, some ten thousand Cambodians took refuge in the Republic of Vietnam, in the Ha Tien area. Faced with such a situation, the Vietnamese Red Cross requested the co-operation of International Red Cross Assistance (AICR) in setting up an aid programme including relief distribution and medical care.

The action is due to start on 15 May and will be carried out jointly by a medical team of the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Vietnamese National Society.

Two further medical teams are continuing their activities in the Republic of Vietnam. One of them, which is also from the Federal Republic of Germany, is based in Binh Tuy, while the other, composed of French doctors, provides treatment for the Montagnard population in the Phu Bon area. With the further influx of refugees and the needs ascertained, the team's work will need to be extended by a further three months, up to the end of July.

Laos

The chemo-prophylactic malaria control programme conducted by a French Red Cross mobile team, in co-operation with the Laotian Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO), is in its final stage. The programme, which started in the Long Xien area at the beginning of the year, has covered about 160,000 persons.

The other two medical teams are continuing their activities. The Japanese Red Cross team is at work at Pak Lay while the mobile team of the Swiss Red Cross has moved from Luang Prabang to Muong Nam (a few tens of kilometres away) and there launched a preventive campaign for vaccination against cholera and smallpox.

Khmer Republic

Following the recent fighting in the Kampot area, an ICG delegate and doctor went there to consider the feasibility of installing a surgical team in that town. The result of the mission was positive, and preparations are under way for a Canadian Red Cross team to be sent out at the end of the month.
Two surgical teams of the Swedish and Belgian Red Cross Societies, based at Kompong Chhnang and Svay Rieng respectively, have ended their mission and been replaced by two new teams from the same countries.

Stop-Press News

Owing to the aggravation of the medical situation at Kampot, with about forty wounded a day, the IOG delegation at Phnom Penh has formed a temporary emergency surgical team composed of a surgeon from the French Red Cross, an anaesthetist from the Belgian Red Cross and a locally recruited nurse. The team was installed at Kampot on 7 May and will work until the arrival of the Canadian Red Cross team.

ASIAN SUB-CONTINENT

CORRIGENDUM

The ICRC in Action, No. 209b, page 6

Under the heading "ICRC activities in the Asian Sub-Continent", the first paragraph should read:

The prisoner-of-war repatriation operation and the transfer of civilians, conducted jointly by the ICRC and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, allowed the repatriation of 116,514 Bengalis from Pakistan and of 66,535 Pakistanis from Bangladesh up to 4 April 1974. The repatriation from India of Pakistani prisoners of war and internees should be completed by the end of April. So far 80,417 persons have been repatriated.

End of repatriations between India and Pakistan

The repatriation of Pakistani prisoners of war and civilian internees in India, which began under the auspices of the ICRC on 28 September 1973, following the New Delhi Agreement, was completed on 30 April 1974. During that time, 105 special trains conveyed 72,795 Pakistani prisoners of war and 17,186 civilian internees. Since February 1972, ICRC delegates have paid 424 visits to some fifty Indian internment camps, and the ICRC Central Tracing Agency has transmitted 15 million Red Cross messages between prisoners and their families.
With the end of repatriation operations between India and Pakistan, the ICRC delegations in those two countries have been reduced. As from 30 April, each is composed of five persons, whereas the New Delhi and Islamabad delegations comprised up to fifteen and twenty-one respectively (apart from local personnel).

In Bangladesh, the ICRC is maintaining its present force of sixteen delegates as the transfer operations between Pakistan and Bangladesh, conducted jointly with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), have not yet ended. On 30 April, 83,931 Pakistanis returned to Pakistan, while 117,514 Bengalis left Pakistan for Bangladesh. These operations are continuing at the rate of two flights a week.

Mission of CTA Deputy Director

From 24 March to 25 April 1974, Mr. N. Vecsey, Deputy Director of the ICRC Central Tracing Agency, went to the three countries of the Asian sub-continent to prepare for the winding up of the bureaux of the ICRC Agency when their activities come to an end.

First in Pakistan and then in Bangladesh and India, Mr. Vecsey met officers of the Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies and conferred with them on various problems connected with the taking over of the Agency bureaux by those National Societies.

MIDDLE EAST

ISRAELO-ARAB CONFLICT

Prisoners of war

During April 1974, the ICRC continued its approaches and activities on behalf of prisoners of war.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, the authorities notified the ICRC delegation of an Israeli prisoner of war whose plane had been brought down on 20 April. The man, who is wounded, is receiving care in a hospital.

On 21 April, ICRC delegates visited two wounded Israeli prisoners of war in Damascus hospital, and on 1 May sixty-three more Israeli prisoners of war. Family parcels were transmitted to them by the ICRC.
In Lebanon, on 16 April ICRC delegates made a first visit to Israeli prisoners of war who had been captured on 10 April.

Lastly, in Israel, two camps holding some 400 Arab prisoners of war of Syrian, Iraqi and Moroccan nationality, were visited on 3 and 10 April respectively.

The ICRC was notified by the authorities of the capture of two Syrian soldiers, on 7 and 29 April.

Israel and occupied territories

Twenty-eighth round of prison visits

During March 1974, ICRC delegates visited nationals of occupied territories and various Arab countries imprisoned in Israel and the occupied territories. The twenty-eighth round of visits covered thirteen prisons (seven in Israel and six in the territories on the West Bank and in Gaza-Sinai), and approximately 2,500 civilian detainees.

The ICRC is authorized, usually one month after arrest, to see the so-called security cases (persons sentenced, charged or in preventive detention) and those sentenced or charged under ordinary law. It will be recalled that ICRC delegates do not visit Arab detainees of Israeli nationality as the Fourth Geneva Convention does not protect that category.

During their visits, delegates interview prisoners without witnesses. There is a monthly distribution of parcels containing extra food for prisoners who have had no family visit for more than three months. Lastly, the ICRC arranges for bus transport, also once a month, for the benefit of needy families who want to visit a relative in one of the places of detention.

Student transfer

On 29 April, ICRC delegates organized the transfer of seventy-six young people from Gaza to Cairo, by the El Qantara road, for study purposes.

Family reuniting operations

Under the auspices of the ICRC, a family reuniting operation took place on 10 April. Sixty-two persons went to Gaza-Sinai occupied territory while forty-five crossed over to the west bank of the Suez Canal.
Tribute to Mr. Pierre Boissier, member of the ICRC and Director of the Henry Dunant Institute

It was with a shocked dismay that the ICRC learnt of the accidental death, on 26 April 1974, of Mr. Pierre Boissier, Director of the Henry Dunant Institute and since 1973 a member of the ICRC.

Mr. Boissier, who was born in Geneva in 1920 and who there studied law, joined the ICRC in 1946, and was a delegate in Paris until 1963. He went on many field missions: Cyprus (1964), Israel (1967), Lebanon (1971) and India (1972). He carried out those missions, which were often difficult, with exemplary wisdom, humanity and courage.

As Director of the Henry Dunant Institute since its foundation in 1966, Mr. Boissier launched into the venture with enthusiasm, worked out study programmes, promoted collection drives, held courses in various European university towns, and organized seminars. For several years he was in charge of ICRC delegate training, in which he showed exceptional gifts.

Besides this, Mr. Boissier was a perceptive writer and also a historian. In L'épée et la balance, published in 1953, he condensed his experience in Paris where, as an ICRC delegate, he had devoted himself to the legal defence of prisoners of war. It was the historiographer who wrote De Solferino à Tsushima, published in 1963 for the Red Cross centenary.

How great a loss is Pierre Boissier's death for the Red Cross as a whole, and how faithfully and gratefully will the International Committee remember his radiant personality and his work!
Geneva, 12 June 1974
No 211b

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A TRAINING COURSE IN HUMANITARIAN LAW AT THE ICRC FOR SIX AFRICAN OFFICERS

From 29 April to 10 May 1974, a group of six officers from Dahomey, the Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal and Zaire attended a training course organized jointly by the Swiss army and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in Geneva.

The purpose of the training course, the first of its kind, was to enable officers to disseminate the principles of the Red Cross and of international humanitarian law among the armed forces of their respective countries.

To start with, the officers attended a course on humanitarian law for Swiss army officers in the Geneva barracks. In the second week, visits were made to the ICRC and its Central Tracing Agency (CTA), and numerous talks were held with members of the ICRC and its Directorate. The trainees also visited the headquarters of the League of Red Cross Societies.

At the end of their stay in Geneva, we asked the six officers to give us their impressions.

"We all feel that this course has been most useful" said Major C.J. Duncan of the Ivory Coast. "We have learned a great deal in a short time, and we shall be able to pass it on when we return home where we shall be required to instruct our fellow soldiers".

Major Duncan is director of the Ivory Coast Red Cross, so that he was not entirely a novice. "Of course, humanitarian law was not unknown to me, but the course in Geneva gave me a much deeper insight and I shall be able to introduce courses on the law of Geneva to our National Society's first aiders and also interest the press in the subject".
Major K. Makelole, who is an instructor in law in the Zaire military centres, said it was important for the troops to be aware of humanitarian principles if they were to conduct themselves accordingly. For that purpose, the Lingala version of "Soldier's Manual" usefully contributed to the work which had been going on for several years.

In Mali, the Red Cross is working for the drought victims. "The population knows the Red Cross, of course", said Lt. Djungeray-Toure, "but it does not know it is divided into a number of sections with its own specialized field. I think it is important to impress on soldiers that the protection provided by treaties applies not only to the population but also to whatever is necessary for their survival, and to cultural objects".

Captain A. Ould Minnih, of Mauritania, felt that the work facing the recently formed Red Crescent Society in his country would be facilitated by the introduction of a course on humanitarian law.

"The course which I shall be required to give will be mainly for the medical corps of the Senegalese Army" said Major J.E. Bocandé, who is a doctor. "In our country, humanitarian law is included in the course on the legal aspects of medicine, but it should be developed and made better known to members of the medical profession."

Lieutenant P.S. Couhouvi Essou, of Dahomey, said that it was proposed to introduced the new course into schools for non-commissioned officers. "The course has helped me to add to what I know about humanitarian law. Above all, it has shown me the fundamental differences between the law of Geneva and the law of the Hague, on the one hand, and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, on the other. Besides this, our contact with the ICRC delegates has proved invaluable, for the experiences they have related have been a living illustration of the abstract legal principles we have studied".

At the end of their stay in Geneva, the six officers have not merely left with documents and reports. They have also taken away with them the fruits of the talks and the interchange of ideas which will constitute the essential elements of living and effective teaching. "There is only one thing we can wish for", concluded Major Duncan on behalf of his fellow officers, "and that is that other African trainees - French speaking and English speaking - may benefit from such training courses".

That is a wish which the ICRC hopes to fulfil on as wide a scale as possible, having regard to the necessary financial commitments that must be shared by the institution and the Governments concerned.

*Illustrated summary of the Geneva Conventions, published by the ICRC and available in 53 languages.*
Visits to places of detention

From 8 to 23 May 1974, the ICRC delegate-general for Africa, accompanied by two other delegates - one of them a doctor - visited the 330 persons detained in Rhodesia under the emergency regulations. The three ICRC delegates went to places of detention at Salisbury, Chikurubi, Marandellas, Wankie, Que Que, Wha Wha, Gwelo, Hokonui Ranch, Sengwe and Buffalo Range. As usual, they talked freely and without witnesses with detainees of their choice. The delegates provided the detainees with relief supplies.

Following the visits, the delegate-general and his fellow delegates met the Minister of Justice, with whom they discussed conditions of detention, and the question of charged or sentenced prisoners whom the ICRC was not allowed to visit in Rhodesia. The ICRC delegates also had contacts with the Rhodesian section of the Red Cross and conferred with the Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs.

Republic of Vietnam

Three medical teams and one mobile team are now at work in the Republic of Vietnam.

As mentioned in our last issue, an operation was launched for ten thousand Cambodians who had sought refuge in the Ha Tien area. A team of the German Red Cross of the Federal Republic of Germany has started work in co-operation with the Vietnamese National Society. The other West German team which was working in the Binh Tuy area has been replaced by another, again from the Federal Republic of Germany.

At Phu Bon, a French doctor is pursuing his activities for the Montagnard population and new refugees.
Lastly, a mobile team composed of two male nurse-technicians from the Federal Republic of Germany and the Norwegian medical adviser of the International Red Cross Assistance (IRCA) is carrying out a project for the boring of wells and the inspection of drinking water in refugee resettlement areas.

Visit to prisoners of war

On 17 and 18 May, ICRC delegates in the Republic of Vietnam visited prisoner-of-war camps at Can Tho, where they saw some 700 prisoners captured since the ceasefire.

Democratic Republic of Vietnam

Prefabricated dwellings are continuing to be set up in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, to house several thousand homeless. At Haiphong, for instance, fifty are going up for 300 families. These dwellings, which are supplied by Japan and specially intended for local climatic conditions, are assembled in a few days. A communal kitchen and bathroom unit is provided for every two houses. Workmen have been provided by the local administration. Ox-drawn carts, the traditional form of transport, are used for carrying particularly heavy items.

Laos

The Japanese team has concluded its mission at Pak Lay and is not being replaced. The clinical and prophylactic work will be carried on by the Laotian personnel.

The malaria prevention campaign, conducted by a mobile French Red Cross team in co-operation with the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO) in the Long Xien area, south of Luang Prabang, has been prolonged by a general systematic insecticide spraying operation.

Khmer Republic

After the flare-up of fighting in the Khmer Republic, particularly in the Kampot area, a Canadian Red Cross mobile medico-surgical team moved into the town's hospital at the end of May. In addition to caring for the wounded, it deals with numerous victims of the recent cholera outbreak.

The other teams, working at Kompong Thom, Kompong Chhnang and Svay Rieng, are also faced with an influx of wounded as a result of intensified fighting in past weeks.
ASIAN SUB-CONTINENT

Transfer of civilians between Bangladesh and Pakistan

The transfer of civilians between Bangladesh and Pakistan is proceeding at the rate of several flights daily (and not two flights weekly as stated in error in our last issue). The ICRC continues to look after the formalities for those who wish to return to their country of origin, while the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for the airlift between the two countries.

By 31 May, 63,850 Bengali civilians and 53,879 Bengali servicemen and their families had left Pakistan for Bangladesh, while 95,737 non-Bengalis had gone to Pakistan.

EUROPE

Mission of delegate-general

The ICRC delegate-general for Europe and North America was on a mission to England, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland from 30 April to 20 May 1974.

In London he met the Cabinet Minister for Northern Ireland and his principal officers, and then proceeded to Northern Ireland with an ICRC doctor, on a sixth round of visits to places of detention. They saw some 700 persons in preventive custody in Maze Prison and in the women's prison at Armagh. As usual, the ICRC delegates were able to talk to detainees of their choice without witnesses.

Lastly, the ICRC delegate-general went to the Republic of Ireland for talks on subjects of mutual interest with Irish Red Cross officers and government authorities.

PORTUGAL

Visit to Cuban detainee

The ICRC delegate-general for Latin America went to Portugal in the middle of May and there visited a Cuban captain who had for several years been detained by the Portuguese armed forces and was undergoing treatment in the main military hospital in Lisbon.
Prisoners of war

During May 1974, the ICRC continued its activities on behalf of prisoners of war.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, ICRC delegates visited 65 Israeli prisoners of war. Of the 63 able-bodied prisoners, two men whose condition called for further treatment were transferred to hospital after the ICRC visit of 1 May. One of the two wounded prisoners of war who were in hospital from the time they had been captured was discharged. There were thus three wounded prisoners of war visited in hospital on 19 May.

In Lebanon, Israeli prisoners of war were visited by the ICRC on 8 and 29 May 1974.

In Israel, ICRC delegates visited on 7 May some 400 Arab prisoners of war of Syrian, Iraqi and Moroccan nationality. A Syrian prisoner captured on 30 April was visited for the first time on 5 May.

Israel and occupied territories

Visit to Lebanese prisoners

On 1 May 1974, ICRC delegates in Israel and the occupied territories visited 12 Lebanese civilians held by the Israelis since 12 April.

Occupied territories

A further visit was made on 20 May 1974 by ICRC delegates to that part of Syrian territory occupied by Israel since October 1974. During a temporary cease-fire, delegates from the two sides met and exchanged parcels for Israeli and Syrian prisoners of war.

Family reuniting operations and movements

Under the auspices of the ICRC, a family reuniting operation took place on 20 May 1974 at a point on the El Qantara Road. Twenty-six Egyptian civilian detainees released by the Israeli authorities, and 27 other persons (8 families) were allowed to leave Gaza-Sinai occupied territory for the Nile Valley.
A similar operation took place at the same point on 22 May, when 139 persons went westwards to the Nile Valley, while 75 persons travelled in the opposite direction to Gaza-Sinai territory.

Stop press news .... stop press news ... stop press news ... stop press news

Repatriation of Syrian and Israeli prisoners of war

At the request of the Israel and Syrian Governments, the ICRC, on 1 and 6 June 1974, repatriated wounded and able-bodied prisoners of war of both countries. The Swiss Government made three aircraft available for the operations.

On 1 June, thirty-eight wounded prisoners of war returned to their respective countries in two aircraft which took off simultaneously from Tel Aviv and Damascus. One aircraft, a DC-6, brought twenty-five Syrian prisoners of war and one Moroccan back to Syria. The other, a Fokker Friendship normally operating for the United Nations, took twelve Israeli prisoners of war back to Israel. The wounded were escorted by two ICRC teams, each composed of a doctor, a delegate and a nurse.

On 6 June, the ICRC proceeded to the second phase of the operation and repatriated a total of 438 able-bodied prisoners of war by means of three aircraft.

Two aircraft, a Boeing 747 "Jumbo Jet" and the Fokker Friendship, took off from Tel Aviv for Damascus, with 345 and thirty-seven passengers respectively, i.e. a total of 382 prisoners of war (367 Syrians, ten Iraqis and five Moroccans). At the same time, a third aircraft, a DC-6, left Damascus for Israel with fifty-six Israeli prisoners of war. Each aircraft carried a delegate and a doctor.
GENERAL AFFAIRS

ICRC President in Poland

From 10 to 15 May 1974, Dr. Eric Martin, ICRC president, attended the Sixth National Congress of the Polish Red Cross in Warsaw. The Congress is convened every five years and one of its functions is to elect the members of its Steering Committee.

At the opening session, addresses were delivered by Dr Jan Rutkiwicz, president of the Polish Red Cross, and by the president of the ICRC.

Dr. Ryszard Brzozowski, Vice-Minister of Health, was elected Chairman of the new Steering Committee. On 14 May, Dr. Brzozowski presented the Polish Red Cross Medal of Honour to Dr. E. Martin and to Miss F. Perret, ICRC delegate, who accompanied the ICRC president to the Congress.

During his stay in Warsaw, Dr. Martin met the Minister of Health, the vice-president of the Polish State Council and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The talks centred mainly on ICRC activities throughout the world and on the development of international humanitarian law.

Disaster Relief Training Course

From 22 to 28 April 1974, a Disaster Relief Training Course was jointly organized at Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) by the Malaysian Red Cross Society and the League of Red Cross Societies.

The ICRC was represented by Mr. A. Tschiffeli, regional delegate for South East Asia, and Mr. F. Schmidt, head of the Logistics Division, both of whom spoke on ICRC activities and the tasks of the Central Tracing Agency.

Various subjects were included in the course. In addition to practical exercises carried out in the open, discussions were held on such topics as co-ordination of governmental relief organizations, the United Nations and voluntary aid agencies, the organization of emergency operations, and various aspects of medical assistance.
ICRC convenes a Conference of Government Experts on Weapons

The ICRC is organizing a Conference of government experts on weapons that may cause unnecessary suffering or have indiscriminate effects. The Conference is scheduled to be held at Lucerne from 24 September to 18 October 1974. By calling the meeting, the ICRC is complying with a resolution of the XXIIInd International Conference of the Red Cross at Teheran last November. The Conference programme of work has been approved by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Diplomatic Conference on Reaffirmation and Development of International Humanitarian Law Applicable in Armed Conflicts, the first session of which was held in Geneva from 20 February to 29 March 1974.

The main documentary material for the Lucerne Conference consists of a report, drawn up in 1973 by an international group of experts under ICRC auspices, entitled "Weapons that may cause Unnecessary Suffering or have Indiscriminate Effects", and various reports by the United Nations Secretary-General on napalm and other incendiary weapons.

The ICRC has asked Governments and national liberation movements which were invited to the first session of the Diplomatic Conference, the UN Secretary-General and specialized agencies to delegate experts. In addition, some National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies, and some non-governmental organizations will appoint observers.

Having received a number of requests to admit exports from various governments and bodies which did not attend the Diplomatic Conference - including the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG) - the ICRC has asked the governments which did attend the Diplomatic Conference to inform it before 31 July 1974 whether or not they are in favour of participation by such governments and bodies. At the same time, the ICRC stated that it will accept the majority view as being decisive.
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In a few days time, on 12 August, the 1949 Geneva Conventions will be 25 years old. On the anniversary of that memorable occasion, Mr. Jean Pictet, Vice-President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Chairman of the Legal Commission, describes how those treaties were drawn up and how important they are for the victims of armed conflicts.

August 12, 1949, was an important date in world history. It was on that day that the plenipotentiaries of some sixty States signed the fundamental charters of humanity which are known as the four Geneva Conventions, and which protect the victims of armed conflicts: the first, the military wounded and sick; the second, the victims of war at sea; the third, the prisoners of war; and the fourth - which was entirely new - civilians. After the suffering of the population in occupied countries during the Second World War, such a treaty appeared to be vitally necessary and urgent. As Max Huber said, the development towards total war has made danger and hardship equal for armies and population.

The 1949 Conventions now in force are the modern version of what is called international humanitarian law, which has known successive stages. It started with the first Geneva Convention of 1864, after Henry Dunant's successful appeal for efforts to improve the plight of the war wounded.

The 1949 Geneva Conventions, a monumental work of more than four hundred articles, are primordial tenets of humanity and progress. They are the expression of the very ideal of the Red Cross and, as a spiritual protest against unbridled violence, they are a pressing appeal to the world for peace. If the world should again be unfortunate enough to see nations pitted against nations, they will undoubtedly be the last rampart of civilization.
The great breakthrough in 1949 was on several fronts: this law was made applicable to all armed conflicts, and not only to formally declared war; its essential principles were extended to civil wars which previously were outside the purview of the law; supervision of application was reinforced; prisoner-of-war status was extended to members of resistance movements provided they fulfilled certain conditions; and all civilians deprived of their freedom for any reason whatsoever were entitled to treatment equal at least to that of prisoners of war and to visits from delegates of the Protecting Power or of the ICRC.

The law of Geneva may be summarized in a single principle, namely: persons placed hors de combat and those taking no direct part in hostilities shall be respected, protected and humanely treated.

After four years of preparation by the ICRC with the help of government experts, the 1949 Geneva Conventions were concluded by a Diplomatic Conference convened, in keeping with tradition, by the Government of Switzerland, the depositary State. Throughout the conference, which lasted four and a half months, the delegates of the Powers worked intensely in an obviously sincere desire for conciliation and with a humanitarian spirit. A horror of war's evils and an ardent wish to mitigate them were constantly discernible throughout the proceedings. The resultant Conventions are worthy of their great tradition. They are also realistic, and applicable by every country with no sacrifice of sovereignty or prerogatives.

For them to be fully effective, they must be known to those who must apply them. The ICRC has therefore supported the authorities and National Societies of all countries in their efforts to disseminate knowledge of the Geneva Conventions.

The Geneva Conventions were elaborated with extreme care, and have become universal. Over the last twenty-five years, every State has become a party to them by ratification, accession or declaration of continuity. After five years, forty-six countries were bound by the Conventions; after ten years, seventy-seven; and today there are 137 nations parties to them, not counting those bound by the previous accession of States to which they have succeeded. That too is a major success, and is even unprecedented in international law.

Since 1949, the Conventions have rendered invaluable service in the all too numerous conflicts which have raged over the last quarter-century. But they do not cover all human suffering, and experience has revealed their loopholes and deficiencies. They protect civilian populations against, for instance, the arbitrary actions of the enemy but not against the effects of hostilities and weapons, which is the province of the law of The Hague,
which dates back to 1907. In addition, Article 3, which is common to the four Conventions and applicable in civil war, is quite inadequate; the arrangements for supervision leave room for improvement; and the immunity of medical aircraft from attack is sorely in need of development.

Consequently, as is well known, the ICRC launched out into a new phase of humanitarian law development, on the strength of a mandate received from the International Conference of the Red Cross. The Swiss Government, for its part, has convened a diplomatic conference, the first session of which met this year, the second being scheduled for next year. This highly important conference should produce legislative provisions essential for the survival of the human race.

Nevertheless, we must make it clear that these efforts in no way discredit the 1949 Conventions, which, when properly applied, effectively protect conflict victims. The aim is not, therefore, to recast the Conventions, or even revise them in detail, but to supplement them and make some admittedly important parts of them more precise by means of two Protocols.

The Geneva Conventions will, then, by this operation, be enlarged, modernized and better adapted to achieve their purpose, namely, to prevent avoidable suffering, to promote the rule of law and to check violence, and thereby make life more worth living.
Visit to prisoners held by the MPLA

On 14 and 15 May 1974, an ICRC regional delegate for West and Central Africa visited five Portuguese prisoners who were captured on 24 and 25 March of this year in the territory of Cabinda and held in two places in the People's Republic of the Congo by the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola. The delegate talked in private with the prisoners whom he provided with toilet requisites.

Following these visits, the ICRC delegate conferred with officials of the MPLA to whom he made certain comments and suggestions.

Visit to detainees

Whilst in the People's Republic of the Congo, the ICRC regional delegate visited the Maison d'Arrêt in Brazzaville, where he talked without witnesses with detainees of his choice. Medicaments, mattresses and soap, to a value of 2,400 Swiss francs, were provided for the benefit of the detainees.

The ICRC delegate then reported his observations to the penitentiary authorities.

Visit to Portuguese prisoners

An ICRC delegate for West and Central Africa was in Zaire in May. He visited two Portuguese military prisoners held by the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (GRAE) at Kinkuzu, and he was able to talk with the prisoners in private.

Mission du Burundi and Rwanda

An ICRC regional delegate for East and Central Africa completed a mission in Burundi and Rwanda on 19 May 1974.
In Burundi, he had several talks with the Minister of Justice.

In Ruanda, his mission was essentially to visit places of detention, namely: Kigali (6 May), Gitarama and Nyanza (7 May), Gikongoro and Butare (8 May), Kibungo and Byumba (9 May), Kibuye (13 May), Gisenyi and Ruhengeri (14 May) and Cyangugu (15 May). In all he saw more 5,300 prisoners. He was able to talk in private with the detainees of his choice whether they had been arrested for penal law offences or for political reasons.

After his tour of the prisons, the delegate conveyed his observations and suggestions to the Minister of Justice and the Director of the Penitentiary Services.

SOUTH AFRICA

Visits to places of detention

From 23 May to 5 June, the ICRC delegate-general for Africa, accompanied by three delegates, one of whom was a doctor, visited three prisons in South Africa. The delegates saw 336 political prisoners in the prisons of Barbeton (24 May), Pretoria Local (27 May) and Robben Island (from 28 May to 1 June). As usual, the delegates talked in private with detainees of their choice.

Before and after the visits, the ICRC delegates had discussions with the new Minister of Justice, Prisons and Police, and with the General Commissioner for Prisons and his senior staff.

MOZAMBIQUE

Repatriation of a little girl

On 12 June 1974, a five-year old girl was repatriated from Tanzania to Mozambique under the auspices of the ICRC. The little girl had been taken away and cared for by the FRELIMO (the Mozambique Liberation Front) following fighting which occurred on 8 January 1974 at Porto Amelia (Cabo Delgado district in the north east of Mozambique).
ICRC mission

The ICRC delegate-general for Latin America went to Chile in mid-June in order to review jointly with the authorities the activities of the ICRC delegation in Santiago, and to smooth out certain difficulties which had occurred in the previous few weeks. He had discussions with the Head of the State, General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte, and with the Ministers of the Interior, Defence and Foreign Affairs and with the Government Secretary-General.

Subsequently, visits to places of detention, which had been discontinued on 1 May, were again authorized. The programme of visits enables ICRC delegates to go again into all detention camps administered by the armed forces and into the civilian prisons.

Whilst in the Chilean capital, the delegate-general also met members of the Chilean Red Cross Executive Committee. He also reorganized the ICRC delegation the better to enable it to carry out its mission. Five new delegates arrived in Santiago at the end of June and in the next few weeks ten more will go there.

Several visits to places of detention took place in Santiago between 20 and 29 June ("Casa correctional de mujeres", "Tres Alamos", the military hospital and the FACH hospital) and to detainees who had been transferred in May from Dawson Island to places of detention outside Santiago.

Assistance to detainees and to their needy families continued. In May and June, mattresses, blankets, foodstuffs and medicaments, to a value of 72,000 Swiss francs, were distributed by the ICRC delegates.

Chile was struck by devastating floods at the end of June and the ICRC delegation in Santiago, at the request of the Chilean Red Cross, drew upon its emergency stocks to provide 200 mattresses, 5 tons of tinned meat, one ton of powdered milk, medicaments, disinfectants and toilet articles for the flood victims, for distribution by the National Society and the Ministry of the Interior’s "Oficina de Emergencia". In addition, ICRC headquarters sent its delegation in Chile 50,000 Swiss francs towards the financing of a longer term relief programme.
URUGUAY

Dispatch of medicaments for prisons

Following a mission in Uruguay towards the end of March 1974, by the ICRC regional delegate for Latin America, the ICRC, at the beginning of July, sent a consignment of medicaments to the prisons he had visited. The total value was 42,500 Swiss francs.

ASIA

Mission by the delegate-general

From 5 May to 17 June 1974, the ICRC delegate general for Asia and Oceania carried out a mission which took him to Laos, the Republic of Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Khmer Republic, Indonesia and Malaysia. The trip enabled him to survey the work carried out by the various ICRC delegations in the region and also to make high level contacts with government authorities and the leaders of National Red Cross Societies in the countries which he visited.

In Laos, where he stayed from 6 - 11 May, the delegate-general met the Ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs and also representatives of the Lao Patriotic Front (LPF). He then went to the Republic of Vietnam where he conferred with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Vice-Minister of Defence before leaving on 17 May.

In the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, from 22 to 25 May, he was received by several senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of the National Red Cross Society. While in Hanoi, the delega-general contacted representatives of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG) and that organization's Red Cross.

In the Khmer Republic, the delegate-general had discussions with the Prime Minister, the Ministers of the Interior, Defence and Health, and with the Head of the Army Staff. The Prime Minister authorized the ICRC to visit prisoners of war.

In Indonesia, between 9 and 13 June, the delega-general met several senior government officials. During the last stage of his mission, in Malaysia, he contacted the National Red Cross Society, as he had done in all the other countries he had visited.
**INDOCHINA**

**Red Cross appeal for continued action**

The ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies have just launched a pressing appeal to Governments and National Societies to help finance a further protection and assistance programme to war victims in Indochina which amounts to approximately 20 million Swiss francs.

Despite the Paris Agreement of January 1973, fighting is continuing with undiminished intensity in some areas. In others, the havoc caused by years of warfare has left the population in dire need.

In its broad aspects, the new programme includes continued material aid to displaced persons or to those now being resettled, as well as the maintenance of a dozen medical teams in the Republic of Vietnam, the Khmer Republic and the Kingdom of Laos. A sum is also to be set aside for the needs of war victims in areas controlled by the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia.

In the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Red Cross must, on the one hand, complete its programme of prefabricated housing for some 30,000 persons, and, on the other, meet new requests for relief. As the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam is being supplied with equipment for a 250-bed hospital, additional material and surgical supplies will be needed.

**Khmer Republic**

ICRC delegates on 21 June 1974 visited prisoners of war in the central prison of Phnom-Penhs. Visits to prisoners of war in the Khmer Republic will continue in July.

**ASIAN SUB-CONTINENT**

**End of the Pakistan - Bangladesh airlift**

The airlift between Pakistan and Bangladesh, which was started in September 1973 by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR) came to end on 1 July 1974. The operation enabled 168,727 Pakistanis to leave Bangladesh for their own country and 118,070 Bangladeshis in Pakistan to go to Bangladesh.

In both countries the ICRC's mission was to register applicants for repatriation and issue them with a travel document upon their departure.
MALAYSIA

Visit to places of detention

The ICRC regional delegate for South East Asia, accompanied by another delegate, visited six places of detention in western Malaysia and the Sultanate of Sarawak between 1 and 9 June 1974. In all they saw some 900 detainees and were able to speak with detainees of their choice freely and without witnesses.

SRI LANKA

An ICRC mission

From 27 June to 2 July 1974, a number of places of detention were visited in the Island of Sri Lanka. The ICRC regional delegate for South East Asia and another delegate visited some 1,400 detainees in nine "rehabilitation" centres. With the co-operation of the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society, they distributed locally purchased relief supplies to a value of 40,000 Swiss francs. The delegates were able to talk in private with the detainees of their choice. The previous round of visits took place in April 1973.

MIDDLE EAST

ISRAELO-ARAB CONFLICT

Family reuniting operations and movements

Two transfer operations and a family reuniting operation took place under ICRC auspices between the occupied territory of Gaza-Sinai and the Arab Republic of Egypt. They took place in the United Nations buffer zone on the Qantara Road.

On 3 June, 14 Egyptians, released from detention by the Israeli authorities, and the families of four of them (15 persons) returned to the Nile Valley. On 17 June, another 20 persons (12 detainees and families) also left the occupied territory of Gaza-Sinai for the Arab Republic of Egypt.

On 3 July, the ICRC conducted a family reuniting operation to enable 170 persons to go to the Nile Valley. In the other direction, 290 persons joined their families in occupied territory, some of them just for a visit.
The King and Queen of Belgium at the ICRC

On the occasion of their visit to the Belgian community in Geneva, Their Majesties the King and Queen of Belgium called on 6 June 1974 at the headquarters of the ICRC.

King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola were greeted on their arrival by ICRC President Mr. Eric Martin, the President of the Executive Board, Mr. Roger Gallopin, accompanied by Mrs. Gallopin, Mr. Max Petitpierre, member of the ICRC and former President of the Swiss Federal Council, by several members of the ICRC Assembly, Executive Board and Directorate, and by Mr. Henrik Beer, Secretary General of the League of Red Cross Societies.

In his address of welcome, President Martin spoke of the ICRC's ties with Belgium and its National Red Cross Society which is celebrating its 110th anniversary this year. He mentioned how important the National Society's work had been for the relief of civilian and military victims of the First and Second World Wars.

After signing the VIP's book, the Belgian King and Queen were shown various documents in the Belgian section of the Central Tracing Agency.

ICRC silver medal to Dr. Roland Marti

The President of the ICRC, Dr. Eric Martin, on 3 July, presented the ICRC's Silver Medal to Dr. Roland Marti, who is leaving the ICRC after many years of service.

Dr. Roland Marti, who was born in Moutier in 1909, joined the ICRC in 1936. His first mission was in Spain from 1936 to 1940 during the civil war. He then was appointed head of the ICRC delegation in Germany during the Second World War. With Dr. Marcel Junod and a large team of delegates, he organized, inter alia, the distribution of parcels to some 2 million prisoners of war for a period of five years and to an overall value of 3 thousand million Swiss francs. In 1952, Dr. Marti was appointed head of Services for UNICEF in Africa, an office which he held for several years. He returned to the ICRC in 1970 as its medical adviser and from then on he undertook many missions in Asia, the Middle East and Africa.
THE ICRC IN ACTION
information notes

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE RED CROSS

Geneva, 15 August 1974
No. 213 b

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FAMAGUSTA, A TOWN UNDER SIEGE

Since 22 July, 1974, delegates of the International Committee of the Red Cross have been in Cyprus (see pages 4 to 6 of this bulletin). One of the members of the delegation describes here how, on 29 July, 1974, he escorted the first truck carrying relief supplies to the besieged Turkish Cypriot inhabitants of the town of Famagusta.

In Famagusta, a little mediaeval town about forty miles from Nicosia, the Cyprus crisis has imposed on the inhabitants a form of suffering well-known in the Middle Ages: inside the massive 15th century ramparts, ten thousand Turkish Cypriots (including three thousand refugees) are in a state of total siege.

The new town, Varosha, which encircles the old town, is almost entirely Greek. Today, Famagusta is torn between two seemingly irreconcilable worlds - a week of savage fighting has underlined the fact. Here more than anywhere else, civilians on both sides have been the main victims.

Calm, albeit relative, seems now to have returned. But anxiety remains acute among the people crowded within the ancient walls: how long will food and medical supplies last if the siege continues?

"We cannot hold out for long on our own supplies", said Dr. Ali Atlun, the Turkish Cypriot doctor in charge of the hospital. "We are already short of flour and medicaments".

I at once reported the situation to the ICRC delegation at Nicosia. The decision was immediate, to send next day a ton of emergency supplies from the ICRC stores. Blankets, powdered milk, baby food and antibiotics were loaded on to a truck that evening.
Communications between the opposing lines existed in theory, but it was no simple matter to get inside the thick walls of the Turkish town. The red crosses painted on the truck helped to smooth the way, and I passed through the Greek district without hindrance. After that I had to drive outside the walls towards the sea. Sixty feet above me, Turkish sentries patrolled the ramparts; facing them, in the Greek positions, guards also kept vigilant watch. I could sense their field-glasses trained on me.

As if in mediaeval times, I had to request entry at one of the gates of the town - but the sight of the sentries' machine-guns quickly recalled the 20th century. The truck was allowed to enter without difficulty and I drove towards the hospital, where the need was most urgent. A few minutes later, when the lorry was being unloaded at record speed, a crowd gathered round and on everybody's lips the question was: what was happening outside the town.

I was virtually the only link between these people and the rest of the world. I distributed Red Cross message forms, which the ICRC would pass on to their relatives and friends, in other parts of Cyprus or elsewhere, and on which a reply could be written. Before leaving, I was given another list of emergency necessities. Soon I will be returning with a convoy of trucks. The Red Cross is all that still links the inhabitants of the besieged town with the outside world.

AFRICA

GUINEA BISSAU

Visit to prisoners of war

On 31 July an ICRC delegate and a doctor-delegate visited, on the Ilha das Galinhas, 33 members of the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde) to whom the Portuguese Government had granted prisoner-of-war status. The following day, the delegates went to see a sick prisoner being treated at the hospital in Bissau.

Before and after these visits, the ICRC delegates had talks with the Minister of Defence and the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Lisbon, and with the head of the Portuguese armed forces in Guinea. They also conferred with the Portuguese Red Cross in Lisbon and Bissau.
LATIN AMERICA

CHILE

Summary of activities in the first half of 1974

During the first six months of 1974 three teams of ICRC delegates visited 113 places of detention and saw 11,500 detainees. No visit took place from 1 May to 20 June, due to the fact that the authorities did not renew the authorizations which expired on 30 April.

The material assistance which the ICRC provided for detainees, to a value of 823,000 Swiss francs, consisted mainly of medicaments, powdered milk, blankets, mattresses, toilet necessities, tools, games and books.

In addition, some 3,000 families of detainees, more than 15,000 people, received the benefit of ICRC assistance from February onwards. The value of that assistance amounted in cash terms to almost 500,000 Swiss francs.

Visits to places of detention

After renewal of authorization to visit detainees, ICRC delegates went to more than a score of places of detention where, between 2 and 25 July, they saw about 2,500 detainees.

ASIA

KHMER REPUBLIC

Visits to places of detention

Continuing their visits to places of detention, the ICRC delegates in the Khmer Republic went on 10 and 11 July to the Kompong-Cham and Svay-Rieng prisons and to the cells of the National Police at Phnom Penh. In the three places of detention, they saw nearly 200 detainees.
Following the ICRC approaches on 20 July to the parties to the conflict raging in Cyprus, constructive responses were received on 22 July.

In its messages, the ICRC had offered the belligerents its services and stated that it relied on their full and strict application of the 1949 Geneva Conventions. It reminded them that the Conventions required them to observe at all times the distinction between combatants and civilians, to treat wounded, sick, prisoners of war and civilians humanely, and to respect medical establishments and units.

The parties to the conflict asked for ICRC help in providing relief to victims. A DC-9, lent to the ICRC by the Swiss Government, left Geneva on 22 July and landed at the British base at Akrotiri with fourteen delegates - three of them doctors - and 3½ tons of medicaments, including blood plasma and other emergency supplies.

**Forwarding of relief supplies**

The following day, the ICRC aircraft flew to Beirut and brought back to Akrotiri nine tons of emergency medical supplies from the ICRC's warehouse in the Lebanese capital.

Two days later, the ICRC chartered a second aircraft, a DC-8 which was in the Middle East. From 25 to 27 July, it made three trips to Beirut and Tel Aviv, picking up from the latter 5 tons of medical supplies provided by the Magen David Adom. From 22 to 27 July the ICRC delivered 42 tons of relief goods to Cyprus.

These consignments comprised mainly medicaments and emergency medical equipment, blood plasma and substitutes, blankets, tents, powdered milk, baby food, etc. Much of them came from the ICRC but also from the League of Red Cross Societies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Finland, France, Israel (Magen David Adom), Lebanon (Lebanese Red Cross and "Palestinian Red Crescent"), Netherlands, Sweden and Yugoslavia, and from UNICEF and UNRWA.

So great were the needs, that the ICRC on 21 and 26 July launched appeals to National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies for material and financial support.
Personnel in the field

In addition to its fourteen-man team in Cyprus, the ICRC sent a delegate to Ankara; he was shortly followed by a doctor and a specialist from the Central Tracing Agency.

On 5 August the ICRC had eighteen delegates in Cyprus, including doctors, specialists in relief and logistics, and experts from the Central Tracing Agency. It had three delegates in Ankara, one of whom, the Central Tracing Agency specialist, returned to Geneva on 3 August after helping the Turkish Red Crescent to set up a national information office in accordance with article 122 of the Third Geneva Convention. In addition, the ICRC strengthened its delegation in Beirut, where it has a warehouse, by the addition of a specialist in logistics and a radio operator.

Relief operations

Upon arrival in Cyprus, the ICRC delegates and doctors started their assessment of the situation and needs in the Greek and Turkish zones of the island. All hospitals were visited and several tons of medical supplies, blankets and food were distributed. For the time being, needs in hospitals seem to have been covered.

However, delegates, wherever they go, are continually finding that the population is in need. According to initial estimates, 10,000 to 15,000 people are utterly destitute, without even a roof over their heads because their houses have been destroyed or had to be abandoned. In addition, there are 3,000 people in need of some assistance in one form or another.

By 30 July, in more that a score of places, the ICRC had distributed more than twenty tons of foodstuffs and medical supplies.

Evacuation of wounded

On 1 August, the ICRC's DC-6 flew from Akrotiri to Athens with 28 seriously wounded Greek Cypriots who required treatment which the island's hospitals could not provide. They were escorted by two doctors and an ICRC delegate. On their arrival in Athens, the Hellenic Red Cross took them into its care.

The same aircraft, the previous day, flew from Switzerland to Akrotiri via Beirut with thirteen tons of relief goods.

Military and civilian prisoners

Cyprus: Immediately on arrival, the ICRC delegates began visiting military and civilian Turkish Cypriots and Turks held prisoner by the Greek Cypriots in camps at Limassol, Larnaca, Famagusta, Morphou, Pharos, Polis and Yerioskypos; they saw some 3,000 detainees.
In the "Saraj" prison in the Turkish zone of Nicosia, the ICRC delegates saw nearly 130 military and civilian Greek Cypriots and Greeks in Turkish hands.

Turkey: Between 3 and 5 August, ICRC delegates visited 385 Greek Cypriot and Greek prisoners of war held at Adana in the south of Turkey.

According to the declaration issued by the Greek, Turkish and United Kingdom Ministers of Foreign Affairs, in Geneva on 30 July 1974, military personnel and civilians detained as a consequence of the recent hostilities were to be exchanged or released under the supervision of the International Committee of the Red Cross as soon as possible.

The ICRC confirmed that it was prepared to undertake this mission and had instructed its delegates in Turkey and in the Greek and Turkish sectors of Cyprus to stand by to co-operate with the authorities for that purpose.

Central Tracing Agency

From the outset of the events in Cyprus, the Central Tracing Agency has been overwhelmed with enquiries about missing persons. More than a thousand each day, they come from many countries: Australia, Austria, Canada, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Rhodesia, South Africa, Switzerland and the United Kingdom to mention but a few.

National Red Cross Societies, particularly the Hellenic Red Cross, have also sent many enquiries to the ICRC.

Such enquiries are generally sent by telex or telegram. Some contain the names of more than 2,000 missing persons. They are sent immediately to the Agency's delegates in the field. By 5 August, more than 12,000 enquiries had been transmitted to the Agency's office which had been set up in Nicosia with the help of the Cyprus Red Cross. The Agency in Geneva transmitted more than a thousand replies to reassure families in various countries.

Another phase of these operations concerns detainees. The ICRC has already received from the authorities the names of about 3,000 civilian and military Turkish Cypriot prisoners and about 400 Greek Cypriot prisoners.

MIDDLE EAST

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE ARAB COUNTRIES

Student travel

In the last few weeks, several thousand Palestinian students registered with Egyptian universities have returned under ICRC auspices to Gaza and the Jamii
for their summer vacation with their families. From 10 July to 5 August, in thirteen operations in the middle of the United Nations buffer zone on the Qantara road, 3,145 students returned to the occupied territories.

A similar operation took place on the Golan Heights on 15 July when ICRC delegates sponsored the transfer towards Gaza of 85 Palestinian students registered in Syrian universities.

Family reuniting

On 31 July a family reuniting operation took place under ICRC auspices on the Golan Heights. Twenty-six persons returned to the occupied territory and a ten year old child was repatriated to Syria.

GENERAL AFFAIRS

Turkish Foreign Minister at ICRC

The Turkish minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Mr. Turan Gunes, accompanied by H.E. Ambassador A. Coskun Kirca, Permanent Representative of Turkey in Geneva, visited the ICRC on 31 July 1974. Mr. Gunes was received by Mr. Roger Gallopin, President of the Executive Board, and by other senior officials.

The Minister expressed the hope that the ICRC would fully accomplish its humanitarian mission in Cyprus. He promised the Turkish Government's support, particularly for the tasks which the ICRC will be required to carry out for prisoners of war and civilian internees, in accordance with the joint Declaration by the Foreign Ministers of Greece, Turkey and the United Kingdom, signed at the Tripartite Conference on Cyprus in Geneva.
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The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which has been operational in Cyprus since 22 July 1974, has over the past two months developed its humanitarian activities on behalf of victims of the conflict, particularly in three spheres: assistance to civilian victims of the events; protection for civilian and military prisoners, whether wounded or able-bodied; tracing the missing, and transmitting news between families who have been separated.

To carry out these tasks, devolving upon it by virtue of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, an extensive system was instituted.

In Cyprus, forty-eight delegates, including eleven members of four medical teams supplied by the Finnish and Danish Red Cross Societies, were assigned to the Greek area and to territory controlled by the Turkish armed forces; four delegates were sent to Turkey to concern themselves more particularly with prisoners.

On its arrival in Cyprus and Turkey, the ICRC received the full support and effective co-operation of the respective authorities.

The ICRC took part in talks between President Glafkos Clerides and Vice-President Rauf Denktash, representing the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus, held in Ledra Palace Hotel, Nicosia, in the presence of representatives of the United Nations. The ICRC put forward practical proposals regarding the release and repatriation of prisoners. It also made proposals regarding assistance to Greek civilians who had remained in the northern area.

The active part played by the ICRC in negotiations on matters purely of a humanitarian nature allowed rapid headway to be made in the talks and even led to an agreement between the two Parties. This was the case in regard to prisoners, and some 2,000 men belonging to certain categories were repatriated by the ICRC between 16 September and 3 October 1974.

As from July, there was excellent co-operation between the ICRC and the United Nations, in the field and in Geneva, in rendering assistance to civilians who had been cut off, in the transport of the sick and the wounded, and in the transmission of family messages.
That co-operation was increased when, with the resumption of hostilities, arrangements had to be made to cope with the problem of more than 200,000 displaced persons, including the majority of the Greek Cypriots who had fled south, the remainder being Turkish Cypriots who had left their villages.

In co-operation with an ad hoc governmental committee and with the aid of the Cyprus Red Cross in the days immediately following the fighting, the ICRC launched an emergency operation for the refugees until such time as other bodies might take over.

Working meetings were subsequently held in Cyprus by representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and ICRC delegates. Regular contacts allowed a survey and the planning of early or long-term aid to displaced persons.

The ICRC, which was able to act in the emergency owing to the fact that it was present at the time of the events, is now contemplating a gradual reduction of those activities and focussing its efforts on Greek and Turkish communities who are cut off.

To obtain the material and financial resources required for its operations, towards the end of August the ICRC made a further appeal for funds to Governments and National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies.

By 30 September 1974, the financial situation was as follows: sixteen Governments, the National Societies of thirty-two countries and about ten other donors had announced contributions totalling more than 18 million Swiss francs, namely 12.2 million in kind and 5.9 million in cash. The ICRC has already received 4 million Swiss francs.

* * *

Civilian population

The aid rendered as from 22 July to civilian victims of the conflict, whether Greek Cypriots who remained in the northern area or who fled to the south, or Turkish Cypriots isolated in their villages, was considerably extended owing to the new situation created by the resumption of hostilities.
Displaced persons

The main effort concentrated on displaced persons who, fleeing before the advance of the Turkish army, surged southward in their thousands. An immediate census taken of those refugees showed that about 200,000 Greek Cypriots left the area now under the control of the Turkish armed forces. The ICRC co-operated very closely in the emergency relief action organized by the ad hoc governmental committee, in co-operation with the Cyprus Red Cross and Civil Defence. The aid rendered by the ICRC was essentially in the form of tents, camp-beds and blankets, food and medicines.

It would appear that by the end of September about half the displaced persons found provisional shelter with relatives or friends, or else in houses under construction or in tents. As the emergency phase has now ended and the ad hoc governmental committee supported by the United Nations is meeting needs out of the island's resources and relief supplies imported, the ICRC is considering gradually ending its relief action for this category. It will nevertheless continue, through government channel, to send donations announced or en route, and certain quantities of food having a high protein content.

Turkish minority

Since the beginning of the conflict, the ICRC has made regular visits to Turkish communities in the districts of Limassol and Paphos, in the southern part of Cyprus, which are cut off from the outside. ICRC assistance has been mainly in the form of medical care and additional food supplies. In this respect, there has been close co-operation with the United Nations, whose patrols have carried out the distributions in the more inaccessible villages.

The ICRC has also sent relief supplies to Turkish Cypriot refugees in the Episkopi and Parameli camps, in the territory of the British base at Akrotiri.

Area under Turkish army control

The ICRC was faced with an emergency situation in Greek villages abandoned by all save some small groups, most of them aged, who were in great distress. They were gradually taken to camps, particularly at Voni, Marathovouno, Gypsos and Morphou. Immediate arrangements were made for medical emergency action and food distribution. The ICRC also prepared a plan for provisioning some 400 civilians interned in the Dome Hotel, Kyrenia, and the Greek population of Karpas Peninsula (about 9,000) and it reminded the Turkish authorities of their

Medical situation

Four medical teams, provided for the ICRC by the Danish and Finnish Red Cross Societies and composed of a doctor and a nurse each, have been at work in Cyprus since 24 August 1974.

The teams were first assigned to the Limassol, Larnaca and Paphos districts. Three of them were later sent north, where medical needs were more pressing. While in the south, their work consisted in a thorough survey of the health conditions prevailing in the Turkish communities isolated since the events and totally lacking any medical service. In close co-operation with the United Nations doctors, the teams treated a number of special cases, evacuated the sick and the wounded, attended to about a hundred persons a day, and distributed medicines.

When transferred to the area under the control of the Turkish armed forces, the medical teams applied themselves to ensuring the survival of the Greek Cypriot population (about two thousand, including many old people), who, for days and even weeks, had been left without care or any means of subsistence.

In view of the gravity of the situation, a small hospital was opened at Gypsos, and some eighty out-patients were treated daily, with the help of locally recruited auxiliary medical personnel.

The three doctor-delegates sent out from Switzerland have continued their rounds of the island's hospitals to ensure that the medical situation there is under control. They have also concerned themselves with the living conditions of displaced persons in the south.

However greatly population movements have hampered any survey in depth, the doctor-delegates have nevertheless noted that the situation has on the whole become more normal, thanks to the work being done by a number of Greek Cypriot medical teams.

Prisoners

As from July 1974, ICRC delegates in Cyprus and Turkey have made regular visits to soldiers and civilians who have been granted prisoner-of-war status by the authorities on either side. On the eve of resumed hostilities, they were distributed as follows : 3,268
Turkish Cypriots interned in eight camps in Cyprus; 63 Greek Cypriots in Saray prison, in the Turkish part of Nicosia, and 385 Greek Cypriots in a camp in Turkey.

Under the tripartite declaration of 30 July, several repatriation operations involving small groups of prisoners were carried out under the auspices of the ICRC.

As fighting in August resulted in further captures, the ICRC requested permission to visit existing and new prisoners on either side. Visits were made to 3,366 Turkish Cypriot prisoners in four camps in the south. Greek Cypriot prisoners, now totalling 2,432, were first visited in transit camps in Cyprus, and then in three camps in Turkey.

Under the agreement reached by Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denktash in Nicosia on 20 September, the ICRC arranged for the exchange of some 1,200 Turkish Cypriots and more than 880 Greek Cypriots up to 3 October. The prisoners included categories such as wounded and sick, students and teachers.

Tracing Agency

When hostilities again broke out on 14 August, the ICRC opened two new tracing bureaux - at Limassol and Larnaca - in addition to those already operating in the Greek and Turkish sectors in Nicosia. Bureaux were also set up in the south-east, which has the largest concentration of displaced persons.

Five ICRC delegates who are Agency experts are at work there, with about eighty local employees and volunteers to help them.

By 30 September, 130,000 messages had been exchanged between separated families (including prisoners); 35,000 requests to trace missing persons had been registered, 15,000 of which received a positive reply.

As regards prisoners, the Agency has been notified that there are 3,368 Turkish Cypriots and nineteen Turks in Greek Cypriot hands, and 1,938 Greek Cypriots and six Greeks in Turkish hands.

Relief

From the beginning of hostilities until 30 September, the ICRC sent out more than 36 tons of medicaments and medical equipment valued at approximately one million Swiss francs, more than 1,200 tons of equipment (tents, blankets, and so forth) totalling 16.5 million Swiss francs, and around 300 tons of food amounting to 1.9 million Swiss francs.
By the same date, the following relief supplies had been distributed:

(a) in the Greek area: powdered milk, 15.2 tons; baby-foods, 1.7 tons; protein-enriched foods, 146.6 tons; medicines, 16.8 tons; 119,124 blankets; 5,290 tents; 9,138 camp-beds; 1,155 jerry-cans for drinking water.

(b) in the northern area: powdered milk, 12.2 tons; baby-foods, 763 kg; protein-enriched food, 21.4 tons; medicines, 4.1 tons; 6,558 blankets; 109 tents; 2,107 camp-beds, and bedding.

Financing

On 30 September 1974, the donations received were as follows: 10,476,990 Swiss francs, namely 4,918,200 Swiss francs in kind and 5,558,790 Swiss francs in cash, from the following sixteen Governments: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States of America.

Donations from Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies amounted to 3,772,230 Swiss francs, namely 3,397,830 Swiss francs in kind and 374,400 Swiss francs in cash, from the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Greece, Hungary, India, Israel (Magen David Adom), Lebanon (Lebanese Red Cross and "Palestinian Red Crescent"), Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mauritania, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, USSR and Yugoslavia.

Donations in kind and in cash amounting to approximately four million Swiss francs were also received by the ICRC from the League of Red Cross Societies, UNICEF, UNRWA, US Aid, the European Economic Community (EEC), the Pontifical Mission and the Greek Cypriot Community in Beirut, and, lastly, Nestlé Liban.
AFRICA

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Emergency relief for Mozambique
Following recent unrest in Lourenço Marques (Mozambique), at the request of the Portuguese Red Cross, the ICRC regional delegate for Southern Africa, based in Rhodesia, took part in an emergency relief action which consisted in the despatch from Salisbury to Lourenço Marques, on 12 September 1974, of 700 kg of medicines and blood plasma, valued at 50,000 Swiss francs, for the principal hospital in that town.

On the same day, the regional delegate attended the first meeting between the Portuguese Red Cross, the Portuguese authorities and FRELIMO, with a view to organizing food supplies for the town and its suburbs.

On his return to Salisbury, the ICRC regional delegate, with the aid of the Rhodesia Red Cross, despatched relief in the form of additional food supplies donated by that Society.

EAST AFRICA

ETHIOPIA

ICRC mission
From 19 August to 10 September 1974, two ICRC teams, each composed of two delegates and one doctor, visited nineteen places of detention in Ethiopia, and saw some 17,000 prisoners of all categories. The delegates were able to talk with prisoners of their choice without witnesses, except in the fort of Akaki prison, near Addis Ababa, which is to be visited at a later date.

The following places were visited: Addis Ababa (Akaki prison), Asela, Asmara (Sembel prison, Tsetserat prison and a women's prison), Arba Minch, Awasa, Debre Behran, Debre Markos, Dessie, Goba, Gondar, Harrar, Jimma, Makale, Metu, Nazareth, Nekempt and Robi.
In all the places visited, the ICRC supplied material assistance totalling almost 300,000 Swiss francs, principally in the form of medicine, disinfectants, soap, utensils and containers, and teaching materials. The delegates also organized the distribution of 10,000 blankets donated by the Netherlands Red Cross.

When the round of visits was completed, the delegates' comments and suggestions were submitted to the authorities in the Ministry of the Interior and the Prison Administration. The ICRC reports will, as usual, be sent to the detaining authorities.

LATIN AMERICA

CHILE

ICRC activities

During the last two months, the ICRC delegation in Chile pursued its activities by visiting places of detention and assisting detainees and their needy families.

In August, the ICRC delegates and doctors began a series of visits to places of detention. They saw in all nearly 3,000 detainees in thirty-five prisons and camps (eleven in the north, eleven in the centre and thirteen in the south). Relief supplies were distributed at each visit. Further, more than three thousand families received ICRC aid.

Total relief expenditure amounted to more than 100,000 Swiss francs during those two months.
Mission of delegate-general
From 10 August to 29 September 1974, Mr. J. Ott, ICRC delegate-general for Asia and Oceania, carried out a mission which took him to Indonesia, the Republic of Vietnam, Laos and the Khmer Republic. In each country he conferred with Red Cross leaders and government authorities.

Mr. Ott also made a stay in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, where he met H.E. Nguyen Van Luu, Director of the Department of International Organizations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On his way back, he stopped over in Sri Lanka and contacted the National Society.

ICRC mission
Three ICRC teams, consisting of one delegate and one doctor each, visited 19,656 political detainees in thirty-six places of detention in Indonesia (including Buru Island) between 22 August and 24 September.

The delegates had private interviews with the detainees chosen by them in all places of detention.

The ICRC reports will, as usual, be sent to the detaining authorities alone.
ICRC President in Bulgaria and the USSR
Dr Eric Martin, President of the ICRC, was in Bulgaria from 6 to 12 September, and in the USSR from 13 to 21 September, at the invitation of the two National Societies.

With Mr. Borsinger, ICRC delegate-general for Europe and North America, Dr Martin first went to Sofia, where he was welcomed by Dr. Kiril Ignatov, President of the Bulgarian Red Cross, and leading members of that Society. He had an opportunity to acquaint himself more closely with the Society's activities, particularly in the medico-social sphere, on a visit to the Varna and Plovdiv committees. The ICRC President also conferred with H.E. Mr. Stanko Todorov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and H.E. Mr. Petur Mladenov, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In the USSR, President Martin and Mr. Borsinger were joined by Mr. P. Gaillard, ICRC Deputy Director.

Accompanied by Dr. Nadejda V. Troyan, President of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the USSR, and by leading members, the ICRC delegation went to Kiev and Leningrad, and there visited committees of the National Society. Lastly, they had an interview with H.E. Mr. K.A. Khalilov, Vice-Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, and members of the Presidium.

ROMANIA

Visit to National Red Cross Society
Mr. P. Gaillard, ICRC Deputy Director, was in Romania from 21 to 25 September 1974.

In Bucarest, Mr. Gaillard was received by General M. Burca, President, and leading members of the National Society, with whom he conferred on matters of mutual interest. Mr. Gaillard also visited a school and a hospital where Red Cross teams were at work.
Student travel
As it had done in previous years, the ICRC arranged for Gaza students attending university courses in Cairo and Damascus to go home for the summer holidays. In the course of thirteen operations carried out on the El Qantara road in July and August, 3,145 students returned from Cairo to their families in Gaza. About a hundred students returned to occupied territory from Damascus.

From the end of August until the beginning of October, similar operations in reverse enabled the students to return to their studies.

Family reuniting
During the past two months, several family reuniting operations have taken place on the El Qantara road, between occupied Gaza-Sinai territory and the Arab Republic of Egypt.

In August, three operations enabled 529 persons to proceed to occupied territory, and 269 to reach the Nile Valley.

In September, in the course of three operations, 526 persons crossed over into occupied territory, and 74 to Cairo.

Release of three Druses
On 3 October 1974, the ICRC arranged for three civilians of Druse origin to return to their families in the occupied territory of the Golan Heights. The men had been captured on the Israeli-Lebanese frontier on 6 August.

Eight Lebanese civilians released
In southern Lebanon, Israel armed forces captured six Lebanese civilians on 7 August and two on 1 September. The prisoners, who during their detention were visited by the ICRC, were released on 6 October 1974.

Release of prisoner of war
On 2 October, the ICRC repatriated a Syrian prisoner of war who had been captured by Israel armed forces in the occupied territory of the Golan Heights on 16 August. During detention, he was visited by the ICRC several times.
Conference of Government Experts on Weapons

The Conference of Government Experts on Weapons that may Cause Unnecessary Suffering or have Indiscriminate Effects opened at Lucerne (Switzerland) on 24 September 1974, under the auspices of the ICRC. The Conference, attended by more than 150 experts from some fifty countries, will continue until 18 October.

Dr. Eric Martin, President of the ICRC, addressed the opening session of the Conference and expressed hope for its success. Welcoming speeches were made by spokesmen for the Lucerne authorities.

The study of the use of the weapons in question had already been the subject of a preliminary meeting in Geneva, in the context of work directed towards the further development of international humanitarian law.

The purpose of the Lucerne Conference of Government Experts is to prepare for governments a report defining weapons that cause particular suffering, in order that their use may be restricted or forbidden.
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The regional delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for Southern Africa was in Angola from 9 to 26 October 1974. He was received by Vice-Admiral Antonio Rosa Coutinho, president of the Angolan Military Junta, and General Altino de Magalhães, chief military commander.

The ICRC representative visited and was able to talk privately with eighteen prisoners of war of the Front for the National Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and thirteen of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), who were held in a military camp at Salazar and also in the Luanda central prison, military camp and army hospital. Following the visits, the prisoners were released under agreements concluded between the Portuguese Government and the MPLA, on the one hand, and the FNLA, on the other.

The delegate also visited fifty-four civilian detainees in São Nicolau camp (Bentiaba) and talked with them without witnesses. After the visit, the camp was closed down by order of the Ministry of Justice and the detainees were transferred to Luanda. The delegate further visited four political detainees in the prison of Pereira d'Ega (Cunene district) and spoke with them without witnesses. He also inquired about the material conditions under which Ovambo refugees were living in the Pereira d'Ega area, a matter which he discussed with Vice-Admiral Rosa Coutinho and General Altino de Magalhães.

Lastly, at Belize in the Cabinda district, the last four Portuguese prisoners of war held by the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola were released under the auspices of the ICRC, on 5 November.

The ICRC regional delegate for West Africa, who had visited the prisoners on 14 May last, was present at their release which the parties hailed as historic.
**Rhodesia**

***Visit to places of detention***

From 29 October to 12 November 1974, the ICRC regional delegate for Southern Africa and a medical delegate visited the 356 persons at present detained in Rhodesia under the emergency regulations. The places of detention visited were Marandellas, Chikurubi, Salisbury, Buffalo Range, Gatooma, Que Que, Gwelo, Wha Wha, Hokonui Ranch and Wankie. The delegates were able to speak with detainees of their own choice without any witnesses. They handed the detainees relief supplies.

Following their visits, the ICRC delegates met the Director of Prisons and the Minister of Justice and discussed with them material conditions of detention. They also raised the matter of the "60-day detainees" whom the ICRC was not allowed to visit in Rhodesia.

**WEST AFRICA**

**Zaire**

On 17 November 1974, the ICRC regional delegate for West and Central Africa visited four Portuguese prisoners of war held by the FNLA at Kinkuzu (Zaire).

The delegate was able to talk privately with the prisoners of war.

**LATIN AMERICA**

**CHILE**

The ICRC delegates in Chile have continued their visits to places of detention. In October they went to twelve places of detention, holding more than 1,000 detainees, and in November to sixteen where there were 1,200 detainees.

In October, relief supplies amounting to more than 5,000 dollars were distributed in eighteen places of detention. Family assistance rendered to some 2,500 families amounted to about 20,000 dollars.
PARAGUAY

The ICRC regional delegate for South America was in Paraguay from 19 to 30 September. He was received by officers of the Paraguayan Red Cross and conferred with the Minister of the Interior and the Director-General of Prisons.

The regional delegate visited two places of detention at Asuncion holding a total of 1,500 detainees.

During a further stay in Paraguay, on 18 and 19 November, he went to five places of detention and handed the detainees individual parcels.

ECUADOR

From 15 to 20 October, the regional delegate stayed in Ecuador, where he had talks with Ecuadorian Red Cross leaders. He also met the Vice-Minister of the Interior and the Director of Prisons.

He visited three places of detention at Quito, where he saw altogether 702 detainees and distributed relief supplies in the form of medicines, blankets and mattresses.

BOLIVIA

The regional delegate carried out a mission to Bolivia from 1 to 12 October. He visited six places of detention at La Paz, Viacha and Chonchocorro. Altogether he saw about fifty detainees, to whom he distributed individual parcels. Prisoners' families received material aid amounting to 2,000 dollars.

ICRC PRESIDENT'S MISSION TO LATIN AMERICA

From 13 to 16 November 1974, Professor Eric Martin, President of the ICRC, accompanied by the delegate-general for Latin America, made a stay in Brazil. He was welcomed by Mr. T. W. Sloper, the new president of the Brazilian Red Cross, and visited the Society's Curitiba and São Paulo chapters.

On 17 November, the President of the ICRC left on an official visit to Paraguay. Accompanied by the ICRC delegate-general for Latin America and the regional delegate for South America, he took part in the Tenth Inter-American Red Cross Conference, at Asuncion from 19 to 23 November.
Professor Martin was received by General Alfred Stroessner, Head of State. He also conferred with the Ministers of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Justice, Education, the Interior and Health.

On 22 November, the ICRC President arrived in Peru, the last stage in his mission to Latin America.

EUROPE

CYPRUS

During October and November, the ICRC continued its activities for civilian and military victims of the Cyprus conflict. It maintained a staff of about fifty, including twelve delegates, eight experts from the Central Tracing Agency and two doctors. Seven medical teams were made available to the ICRC by the Red Cross Societies of Finland, Denmark, Sweden, the Federal Republic of Germany and Ireland.

Civilians

Thanks to the support received from twenty-nine National Societies, seventeen Governments and various institutions and organizations, the ICRC was able to carry out a programme of assistance to the civilian population which by the end of October amounted to 5 million dollars in kind and 2 million in cash.

In the north, the ICRC delegates concerned themselves with Greek Cypriot communities, some 15,000 persons who had remained in that part of the island under the control of the Turkish armed forces. On the one hand, there were old people and children who stayed in their own villages, and on the other, civilians whom the Turkish army transferred to Morphou, Voni, Gypsos and Vitsadha. All were regularly visited by delegates of one of the four mobile medical teams, who provided them with food and medicine. Following an agreement between the leaders of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus, the ICRC made arrangements for the gradual transfer of such civilians to the south by means of transport facilities provided by the United Nations.

The ICRC also supplied the Greek Cypriot population in the Karpas Peninsula with food. Responsibility for such provisioning operations was taken over by UNFICYP (United Nations Forces in Cyprus) a few weeks ago.

In the south, the ICRC continued to render assistance to the Turkish Cypriot communities isolated in the Greek zone. Its delegates went several times to some sixty villages and urban areas in the districts of Larnaca, Limassol and Paphos. Food was also distributed in villages inhabited only by old people. In October, 7 tons of provisions, mainly food with a high protein content, were supplied to the Turkish area of Limassol.
In the medical field, the two mobile ICRC teams assigned to the southern area have been working in close co-operation with UNFICYP.

Lastly, the ICRC have repeatedly visited camps for displaced persons resettled in the districts of Limassol and Paphos and in the Troodos mountain range. ICRC assistance has consisted in providing the Greek Cypriot authorities with large quantities of relief supplies.

Prisoners of war

On 28 October 1974, the last prisoner-of-war release and repatriation operation took place in Cyprus under the auspices of the ICRC, enabling 261 Turkish Cypriots and 279 Greek Cypriots to join their families.

With this operation, a total of 5,980 persons, including nine Greek and nineteen Turkish citizens, have been repatriated by the ICRC, by virtue of the mandate entrusted to it under the agreements of 13 and 20 September 1974, signed by President Glafkos Clerides and Vice-President Rauf Denktas.

All repatriation operations took place in the presence of the relevant authorities and with technical assistance from UNFICYP.

Central Tracing Agency

The Central Tracing Agency's activities mainly consist in the transmission of family messages and the tracing of missing persons. Eight ICRC Agency experts are at work in the field with some 120 employees and local volunteers provided by the Cyprus Red Cross and authorities. Agency bureaux are operating in the Greek and Turkish sectors of Nicosia and also at Limassol, Larnaca, Paphos and Ormidia.

By the end of October, 140,000 family messages had been transmitted by the Agency. The 35,000 tracing requests sent to the different bureaux have so far elicited 15,000 favourable replies.

Owing to the volume of the Agency's work on behalf of victims of the Cyprus conflict, a special service manned by about twenty has had to be set up in Geneva.
MIDDLE EAST

ISRAELO-ARAB CONFLICT

Family reuniting and student travel

From 14 October to 5 November, eight family reuniting and student travel operations were carried out under the auspices of the ICRC, enabling 930 persons to return to occupied territory and 3,617, including students and visitors, to go to the Nile Valley.

LEGAL AFFAIRS

END OF CONFERENCE OF GOVERNMENT EXPERTS ON WEAPONS

The Conference of Government Experts on Weapons that may Cause Unnecessary Suffering or have Indiscriminate Effects, convened in Lucerne (Switzerland) under the auspices of the ICRC on 24 September 1974, closed on 18 October.

It was attended by about 150 experts from some fifty countries, representatives of national liberation movements and of organizations such as the United Nations, the World Health Organization (WHO), National Red Cross Societies, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the International Confederation of Former Prisoners of War (ICFPW), and the NGO Special Committee on Disarmament.

The purpose of the Conference, the first of its kind to be held at inter-governmental level since World War Two, was to prepare a report for governments on the technical, operational and legal possibilities of limiting the use of certain weapons.

The experts drew up a list of incendiary weapons (including napalm and white phosphorus), small-calibre and high-velocity projectiles, blast and fragmentation weapons, time-delay weapons, and other weapons some of them still at the experimental stage.

Discussion of each type of weapon focussed on a description of its military use (and the danger it represents for civilians and combatants alike), and in the medical sphere, of its affects on the human body (particularly the nature of the wounds inflicted and the degree of suffering caused).

The Conference documents and the views exchanged should enable governments to pronounce on the advisability of prohibiting or limiting the use of such weapons.
The ICRC will send a report on the Conference to governments and to the United Nations. The majority of the experts expressed a wish that a further conference on weapons be held next year.

**GENERAL AFFAIRS**

**1977 INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS CONFERENCE IN BUCHAREST**

The Standing Commission of the International Red Cross, in its one-day meeting held on 21 October 1974 at ICRC Headquarters in Geneva, accepted the invitation of the Red Cross of the Socialist Republic of Romania to hold the XXIIIrd Session of the International Conference of the Red Cross in Bucharest during the second half of 1977. The last International Conference, which meets every four years, was held in Teheran (Iran) in 1973.

Sir Geoffrey Newman-Morris (Australia) is Chairman of the nine-member Standing Commission which, as a general rule, meets in ordinary session twice a year.

The agency included the review of a progress report from the Study for the Reappraisal of the Role of the Red Cross; information on the Conference of Government Experts on Weapons which may Cause Unnecessary Suffering or have Indiscriminate Effects, and reports on the activities of the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies.

**THE GRAND ULEMAS OF SAUDI ARABIA AT RED CROSS HEADQUARTERS**

In the course of a tour of Europe devoted to the subject of human rights, the Grand Ulemas of Saudi Arabia, Muslim theologians versed in the interpretation of the Muslim legal system, visited in Geneva, on 29 October 1974, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the League of Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies (LORCS) and the Henry Dunant Institute.
The Saudi religious leaders, accompanied by a number of French notables, were received at ICRC headquarters by Dr. Eric Martin, President, and Mr. Roger Gallopin, President of the Executive Board, together with other ICRC officials. At the League of Red Cross Societies, they were welcomed by Mr. Henrik Beer, Secretary General, and Mr. Bertil Pettersson, Deputy Secretary General, with representatives of different League Departments.

The visits underlined the relationship between the teachings of the Koran and the fundamental principles of the Red Cross, and the unity of thought and action that characterized the Red Cross movement under the diversity of its three different emblems.
Geneva, 20 December 1974
No. 216b

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AFRICA

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Rhodesia

ICRC Mission

From 19 to 26 November 1974, the ICRC regional delegate for Southern Africa and a medical delegate visited the Khami and Salisbury prisons, which hold a total of some 3,300 prisoners of different categories. As usual, they were able to talk with inmates of their choice.

Following the visits, the ICRC delegates conveyed their findings and suggestions to the director of the Prison Department. The ICRC report will be sent to the Minister of Justice from Geneva.

Mauritania

ICRC Mission

From 18 to 25 November 1974, an ICRC regional delegate for West and Central Africa made a stay in Mauritania. On 22 and 23 November he visited the Ksar prison, at Nouakchott, and there saw about thirty persons detained for reasons or offences of a political nature. The delegate was able to talk with detainees of his choice without witnesses. At the close of the visit, with the aid of the Mauritanian Red Crescent, relief supplies were distributed to the prisoners.

The delegate's suggestions and recommendations were transmitted to the Minister of the Interior, and the report of the ICRC will, as usual, be sent to the detaining authorities.

WEST AFRICA

People's Republic of the Congo

On 29 November 1974, the ICRC regional delegate for West and Central Africa visited seventeen Portuguese soldiers interned at Pointe Noire.

As usual, the ICRC delegate spoke with the prisoners without any witnesses and provided them with toilet items and cigarettes.
EAST AFRICA

Ethiopia

Visits to places of detention

Between December 11 and 13, the delegate-general for Africa of the ICRC, accompanied by the two regional delegates for East Africa and a medical delegate, visited some 200 persons arrested in Ethiopia since 27 April 1974 for political motives or crimes.

They met the deposed Emperor in the house where he is at present detained, in the grounds of the Menelik Second Palace, and other detainees within the compound of the 4th Division, in the Menelik Second Palace and two police stations.

They also visited 21 members of the ex-Emperor's family who are kept under protective custody in the Duke of Harrar's villa and in the house of the commander of the bodyguard.

Throughout their visits the ICRC delegates were able to speak in private with all detainees of their choice.

Following their visits, the delegates presented their conclusions and recommendations to the competent authorities of the Dergue. Among other points, it was agreed that such visits would be repeated in the future, if necessary.

LATIN AMERICA

BOLIVIA

ICRC Mission

An ICRC delegate was in Bolivia from 12 November to 3 December 1974 and there met leaders of the Red Cross Society and government authorities.

On this mission, the ICRC delegate visited six places of detention, between 19 and 23 November, at La Paz, Chonchocorro, Santa Cruz and Cochabamba. Altogether he saw 91 political detainees. Medicines from the ICRC stocks and various relief items purchased locally, valued at around 4,000 Swiss francs, were distributed to the detainees during those visits. In addition, the delegate bought food supplies, on the basis of an ICRC credit of 18,000 Swiss francs, for a programme of material assistance to detainees' families. Distributions will be carried out by the Bolivian Red Cross.
CHILE

ICRC activity

Pursuing their activities (see "ICRC in Action" No. 215b of 2 December 1974), ICRC delegates in Chile visited eleven places of detention between 19 and 28 November, and saw some 500 detainees. This brings the number of prisons and persons visited during the month of November 1974 up to twenty-nine and 1,700 respectively.

The ICRC has extended its assistance programme to detainees and their families. In November, various relief supplies valued at 21,000 US dollars were distributed to detainees' 2,900 needy families and also in the places of detention visited.

ASIA

BURMA

Visit of regional delegate

From 9 to 12 November 1974, the ICRC regional delegate for South-East Asia was in Burma, where he met Burma Red Cross leaders.

On that occasion, the regional delegate was informed of the use made of the 10 tons of powdered milk donated by the ICRC last March. It was distributed in schools in the central area.
The ICRC is continuing its Cyprus activities of protection for and assistance to victims of the conflict on either side. About thirty persons, including delegates, Central Tracing Agency experts and a medical co-ordinator, are at work there, plus thirteen members of six medical teams supplied by the Red Cross Societies of Denmark, Finland, Ireland, the Federal Republic of Germany and Sweden, and the ICRC.

Civilians

The ICRC is concerned about the welfare of civilian minorities in Cyprus, whether Turkish communities isolated in the south or Greek communities in the northern area now controlled by the Turkish armed forces.

The ICRC delegates and the mobile medical teams make regular visits to the villages in which those people live, render them material aid and provide medical care. Emergency cases that require hospitalization are transferred from one zone to another, in co-operation with UNFICYP (United Nations Forces in Cyprus).

In the north, in the area under Turkish military control, by the end of November the ICRC had completed the transfer to the southern area of Greek Cypriots (most of them very old and sick) who had remained at Voni (around 400 persons) and Gypsos (1,200 persons).

In the south, a number of sick or aged persons in need of care have also been transferred in recent weeks. The ICRC has reopened the Turkish Hospital at Larnaca and the Rural Health Centre in the Turkish village of Kophinou, under the supervision of an ICRC mobile medical team.

Prisoners of war

On 28 November 1974, the ICRC handed over to the Turkish authorities in Nicosia nine Turkish soldiers who had lost their way in the southern area and been captured on that same day by forces of the Greek Cypriot National Guard.

A few days earlier, on 19 November, three Turkish Cypriot prisoners of war were released and transferred to the northern area, under the auspices of the ICRC.
Central Tracing Agency (CTA)

With the resumption of school programmes, the offices of the Central Tracing Agency, which in July had been installed in Lycaenithos school, Nicosia, were transferred to another Greek district of the town. Seven experts from Geneva are at present working there with seventy-four local employees. In addition, twenty-two persons are at work in the five sub-agencies located in the Turkish part of Nicosia, and at Limmassol, Larnaca, Paphos and Omridha, in the south.

The main activities of the various Agency bureaux still consist in tracing the missing, registering requests for transfer from one area to the other, and, lastly, the transmission of family messages. Around half a million have been exchanged since the beginning of the conflict, and mail now reaches a daily figure of almost 6,000 units.

Relief

From the beginning of the operation up to the end of November 1974, the ICRC distributed the following supplies: 19.1 tons of medicines, 48.3 tons of powdered milk, 22 tons of baby foods, 160 tons of protein-enriched food, 25.6 tons of clothing, 132,000 blankets, 9,671 tents, 13,200 camp-beds, more than 2,000 jerricans and more than 800 bedding items.

Financial situation

On 6 December 1974, contributions made to the ICRC action in Cyprus, in kind and in cash, were as follows: 10,322,090 Swiss francs in kind (including the cost of the medical teams of five National Societies) and 7,511,733 Swiss francs in cash, namely a total of more than 17.5 million Swiss francs. Government contributions in response to ICRC appeals reached 12.5 million Swiss francs (6.3 million in kind and 6.3 million in cash) from the following countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States of America.

On 13 December, the ICRC received a further donation of 30 million yen (approximately 374,000 Swiss francs) from the Japanese Government.

The ICRC received donations amounting to 3.3 million Swiss francs (including 3 million in kind) from the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the following countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, German Democratic Republic, Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mauritania,
Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, USSR and Yugoslavia.

Lastly, more than 1.6 million Swiss francs, mainly in cash, were provided by other donors, including the League of Red Cross Societies, UNICEF, UNRWA, UNHCR, EEC, the Council of Europe and Caritas.

M I D D L E E A S T

ISRAELI-ARAB CONFLICT

Family reuniting and student travel

Several family reuniting and student travel operations took place under ICRC auspices in recent weeks, between occupied Gaza-Sinai territory and the Arab Republic of Egypt. They were carried out on the El Qantara road, in the United Nations buffer zone.

On 12 November 1974, eighty-five persons proceeded from the Arab Republic of Egypt to occupied territory, while 254 (including thirty-three students) crossed over into the Nile Valley. In a second operation, carried out on 28 November, 195 persons went into occupied territory, and 336 (including eleven students) returned to Cairo.

Lastly, on 11 December, a third operation enabled ninety-six persons to go from the Nile Valley to Gaza and Sinai. Conversely, 265 (170 of whom were pilgrims) crossed over into the Nile Valley.

Israel and occupied territories

Twenty-ninth round of visits to prisons

During the second half of 1974, the ICRC delegates carried out a twenty-ninth round of visits to prisons in Israel and the occupied territories. In thirteen places of detention, they saw some 2,800 civilian detainees from various Arab countries or occupied territories.

It will be recalled that the ICRC is allowed, usually a month after their arrest, to see co-called "security" prisoners (sentenced, awaiting trial or in administrative detention) and penal law prisoners (sentenced or awaiting trial). ICRC delegates do not visit Arab detainees of Israeli nationality because they do not come into the category of persons protected by the Fourth Geneva Convention.
During the visits, the delegates spoke with prisoners without witnesses. Monthly distributions of parcels containing additional food and toilet items are made to detainees who have had no family visit for over three months. Lastly, the ICRC arranges for free bus transport once a month in order that detainees' needy families may be able to visit places of detention.

Food for St. Catherine Monastery

On 10 December 1974, the ICRC sent food supplies to the St. Catherine Monastery, in the southern part of the Sinai.

GENERAL AFFAIRS

Two new Arabic publications

The ICRC catalogue of publications in Arabic has been enriched by two further books: "Course of Five Lessons on the Geneva Conventions" by Henri Coursier, translated by the Saudi Arabian Red Crescent Society, and an illustrated booklet "The ICRC in the Arab World", by R. Chalaby, about the institution's activities in that part of the world. The two books are on sale at 10.- and 4.- Swiss francs respectively.

In order to make the humanitarian principles and the activities of the Red Cross movement better known in the Arab world, the ICRC Documentation and Dissemination Division, co-operating with National Red Crescent Societies, has issued various publications, about fifteen so far. The ICRC has also produced two sets of posters and a calendar for 1975 which illustrate the Geneva Conventions, with an Arabic text.

All these publications and material may be ordered from:

International Committee of the Red Cross
Documentation and Dissemination Division
17, avenue de la Paix
1211 GENEVA (Switzerland).