

Zeitschrift: Annual report / International Committee of the Red Cross
Herausgeber: International Committee of the Red Cross
Band: - (1977)

Rubrik: Indo-China

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 24.08.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

REFUGEE AID. — On this same mission, the ICRC representatives also spoke to the HCR, the “Patriotic Front” and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) representatives about the situation in the refugee camps. The assistant delegate to the International Organizations then visited two camps with the permission of the Mozambique authorities.

This gave him a chance to meet the camp leaders and to assess the requirements of the inmates. This first contact was followed by two further ICRC missions to Mozambique.

The first, from 26 September to 23 October, aimed at planning—together with the Mozambique authorities, the ZANU and various organizations—continued aid for the Rhodesian/Zimbabwean refugees in Mozambique. The ICRC delegate visited the refugee camps at Doroi and Tronga where most of the requirements proved to be for food and medico-social aid. Then, in December, a second mission was carried out by the Head of the ICRC Medical Division and another delegate. Accompanied by members of the Mozambique authorities, they visited five hospitals—at Maputo, Beira, Chimoio, Tete and Songo—and a clinic at Changara.

With the agreement of the Minister of Health, the Refugee Support Committee, the ZANU and the HCR, the ICRC decided to add its help to the more general and long-term aid provided by the HCR. Consequently, during 1977, it sent relief supplies (of food, drugs, clothing, blankets and three ambulances) valued at 834,092 Swiss francs. This amount does not include what was sent by the Swiss Confederation as listed on page 32. In addition to all this, on-the-spot purchases were made to a value of 50,000 Swiss francs.

The ICRC also gave the League of Red Cross Societies 10,000 Swiss francs to help those who had suffered from the floods.

Finally, the ICRC, the Government, the “Patriotic Front” and ZANU signed an agreement under which the ICRC would contribute financially to treatment and provision of artificial limbs for 27 war casualties. At the end of the year, two more plans were being prepared. One was aimed at increasing the capacity of the Chimoio, Tete and Songo hospitals by providing the Mozambique Ministry of Health with tents, beds, mattresses and blankets to help it cope with emergency situations.

The other consisted in supplying equipment to help with a first aid training programme in the refugee camps.

APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW. — The ICRC delegates took the opportunity offered by their missions to Mozambique to raise the question of the application of the Geneva Conventions, the Protocols and the principles of international humanitarian law with those whom they encountered and, in particular, with the Minister of State to the Presidency and the leaders of the ZANU. By the end of 1977, these efforts had still not produced any results.

Indo-China

In January 1977, the Director of the ICRC Department of Operations went on a mission to Viet Nam and Laos, where he was accompanied by the regional delegate of the League, and then to Thailand.

In *Viet Nam*, the two representatives of the International Red Cross met the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Director of the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Health and the President and senior officials of the Viet Nam Red Cross. The talks dealt with the assistance programme carried out by the International Red Cross (IRC) in 1976 and its continuance in 1977. There were also discussions of the problems of foreigners who had lacked diplomatic representation since 30 April 1975 and who wished to return to their countries.

In *Laos*, the two IRC spokesmen had talks with leaders of the Laos Red Cross and with representatives of the Ministries for Foreign Affairs and Public Health. The talks provided the basis for a programme of assistance by the International Red Cross, especially for hospitals in Vientiane.

In *Thailand*, the Director of the ICRC Department of Operations met representatives of the Ministries for Foreign Affairs and the Interior and of the Thai Red Cross, with whom he discussed the activities of the ICRC delegation in Bangkok.

Following this mission, it was decided that the relief action carried out jointly by the ICRC and the League of Red Cross Societies for victims of the conflict in Indo-China would continue in 1977. A change was made however in the structure established on 1 April 1975 known as the “Indo-China Section” (INDSEC). Although the International Red Cross maintained its delegations in Viet Nam and Laos, work for the victims in Thailand of the Indo-China conflict became the exclusive administrative responsibility of the ICRC.

INDSEC sent regular reports to donors (governments, National Societies and other organizations) to inform them of the use made of their gifts and of developing needs.

The financial status of the INDSEC action is shown in Tables IX and X on pages 70-71.

Viet Nam

Hanoi Delegation

During the first half of 1977 the IRC delegation, including two delegates of the ICRC, carried out numerous activities in close co-operation with the Red Cross and the authorities of the

Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (SRVN). Starting in June, however, these tasks were performed by only one ICRC delegate, because of the reorganization of the delegations in Thailand and Laos (see below).

Relief

After talks at the beginning of the year between Vietnamese authorities, the Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC) and representatives of the IRC, the latter undertook to carry out a number of assistance projects:

- to supply the equipment required to set up a main health centre and four branch centres to provide first aid to the population of Ho-Chi-Minh Ville;
- to build dispensaries;
- to provide additional equipment for a hospital;
- to provide equipment for a blood bank;
- to manufacture medicines;
- to assist in developing a Junior Red Cross.

A number of National Societies have financed several of these projects through the intermediary of INDSEC.

Thus, included in the relief supplied by INDSEC in 1977, which totalled 1.5 million Swiss francs, were chemical raw materials for the local manufacture of medicines and 1,000 first aid kits, donated by the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany and the British Red Cross. In addition, the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany financed a project, at an estimated cost of 1 million Swiss francs, for the complete equipment of a first aid centre and four branch centres at Ho-Chi-Minh Ville, including the donation of 21 ambulances.

The Canadian Red Cross contributed 400,000 Swiss francs to equip a blood bank being installed at Ho-Chi-Minh Ville.

In addition, the IRC sent 1,937 tons of rice to Viet Nam which had been donated by the European Economic Community.

Protection of foreigners

After 30 April 1975, a large number of foreigners, who no longer had any diplomatic representatives, appealed to the IRC for help to enable them to return to their countries of origin or to go to a country of asylum. The action of protection begun at that time continued during 1977, especially through contacts with the authorities of the countries whose nationals wished to leave Viet Nam.

REPATRIATIONS. — The Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Hanoi, the VNRC, the Committee of Foreign Affairs at Ho-

Chi-Minh Ville, the ICRC and the various countries of origin continued their co-operation to enable foreigners living in Ho-Chi-Minh Ville, who had no diplomatic representation, to return to their native countries.

Two repatriation operations were accordingly arranged: on 18 and 23 May, two special flights chartered by the ICRC enabled 276 nationals of Taiwan to leave Ho-Chi-Minh Ville and return to their country; on 27 and 29 August and 10 September, three other flights took another 461 Taiwan nationals to go to Taipei.

To organize and carry out these two repatriation operations, an ICRC delegate was permitted to go to Ho-Chi-Minh Ville and remain there until the operations were completed.

Despite numerous requests to Vietnamese authorities, ICRC delegates were not permitted to visit a number of foreigners without diplomatic representatives who were detained in the SRVN.

Thailand

The ICRC delegate-general for Asia visited Thailand in March and in June to discuss with the Bangkok delegation the initial conclusions of the delegates following their mission to evaluate ICRC activities in the country (see below).

These visits to Bangkok also enabled the delegate-general to have interviews with leaders of the Thai Red Cross and with the Ministries for Foreign Affairs and the Interior to discuss among other matters questions concerning ICRC assistance to victims of the Indo-China conflict.

In addition, the Deputy Director of Operations visited Bangkok in December. On this occasion, he discussed in particular the problems of the Central Tracing Agency, with which this delegation is concerned, with regard to the aftermath of the Indo-China conflict—repatriations, reuniting of families, etc.

Action on behalf of victims of the Indo-China conflict

REFUGEES. — Following modifications in the INDSEC structure (see page 19) the Bangkok delegation, consisting of five ICRC delegates undertook during the first half of 1977 an evaluation mission in refugee camps throughout the country—25 visits in 17 refugee camps and 12 visits to two transit camps, having a total of about 80,000 refugees.

In connection with this re-evaluation, the delegates discussed the situation with Thai authorities, leaders of the Thai Red Cross, representatives of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (HCR) and with other specialized international agencies to co-ordinate assistance programmes. It should be recalled that under the agreement in 1975 between the Thai authorities

and the HCR, the HCR has primary responsibility for material assistance to Indo-Chinese refugees. Following the discussions, the ICRC decided to carry out, through the Thai Red Cross, a supplementary relief action for the benefit of women and children in the refugee camps. For this purpose, it sent to the National Society, in 1977, 268 tons of powdered milk, donated by the EEC and the Swiss Confederation, and 28 tons of baby food, donated by the French and Netherlands Red Cross Societies, to a total value of 1,107,030 Swiss francs.

The ICRC also agreed to make a financial contribution to the establishment by the Thai Red Cross of a training programme for nursing personnel recruited in the camps.

PERSONS DETAINED FOR ILLEGAL ENTRY INTO THAILAND. — Before being transferred to refugee camps, persons illegally entering Thailand are detained for a time in frontier police stations. During this period of detention they do not enjoy the protection of the HCR. The ICRC, therefore, intensified its assistance to these persons. In the course of this activity ICRC delegates made 268 visits to 75 police posts during the year. Miscellaneous relief to a total value of about 38,000 Swiss francs was distributed.

OTHER ACTIVITIES. — In addition to its regular work for refugees in camps in Thailand, the Bangkok delegation also assisted throughout the year in arranging the repatriation flights from Viet Nam (see above). Some of the negotiations involved took place at Bangkok, a transit stop for persons leaving Ho-Chi-Minh Ville for Taiwan.

Laos

Until the end of June when a permanent delegation was assigned to Vientiane, the International Red Cross delegation in Laos worked under the direction of the delegation in Hanoi.

Following discussions at Vientiane in January, between representatives of the Lao Red Cross, and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Public Health, and the representatives of the IRC, the "Indo-China Bureau" supplied emergency assistance to three Vientiane hospitals. This consisted primarily of medicines and medical material, to a value of 200,000 Swiss francs, including a contribution of 50,000 Swiss francs by the Vientiane Embassy of the Federal German Republic.

The IRC also supplied, through the intermediary of the Lao Red Cross, 12 tons of salt for displaced persons, as well as blankets and clothing for persons who had lost their possessions in fires. This aid amounted to 7,000 Swiss francs.

In November, two representatives of the League of Red Cross Societies made a second visit to Vientiane where they joined the

ICRC delegates in a discussion of the development and various activities of the National Society with its leaders and with representatives of the Ministries of the Interior and Health.

Democratic Kampuchea

The ICRC was disturbed by reports and evidence it received throughout the year on the situation and needs of the people of Democratic Kampuchea. Unfortunately it was unable to undertake any activity whatsoever to help these people.

Cyprus

During the first half of 1977 the ICRC delegation in Cyprus consisting of three delegates continued its mission on behalf of the Greek Cypriots remaining in the northern sector of the island under Turkish Cypriot control. Their mission consisted in regular visits to the Greek Cypriot villages to ascertain their humanitarian needs and, as required, to intervene with the responsible authorities. The ICRC delegates also attended to exchanges of family messages between these people and their relatives on the southern side of the "Green Line" dividing the island. They also delivered relief to both Greek and Turkish Cypriots on both sides of the line.

In view of the stabilization of the situation in humanitarian terms and a great reduction in the number of persons needing its aid, the ICRC decided to discontinue as of 30 June the activities of the permanent delegation it had opened in July 1974 and to continue its activities thereafter by sending periodic missions from Geneva. The delegate-general for Europe and North America went to Nicosia to inform the Cyprus Government and both the Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot authorities of this decision. He also had talks with the Cypriot Red Cross, and with the special representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, since the United Nations Forces (UNFICYP) had taken over some of the tasks previously carried out by the ICRC. Lastly, he visited Greek communities in Carpasia in the northern part of the island.

The first of the periodic missions to Cyprus took place from 15 to 28 September. On that occasion, the former head of the ICRC delegation at Nicosia visited the villages of Yaloussa, Rizokarpasso, Ayia Trias, Ayios Andronikos, Leonarisso and Trikomo, in the northern sector of the Island, inhabited by Greek Cypriots. He also met the authorities referred to in the previous paragraph.