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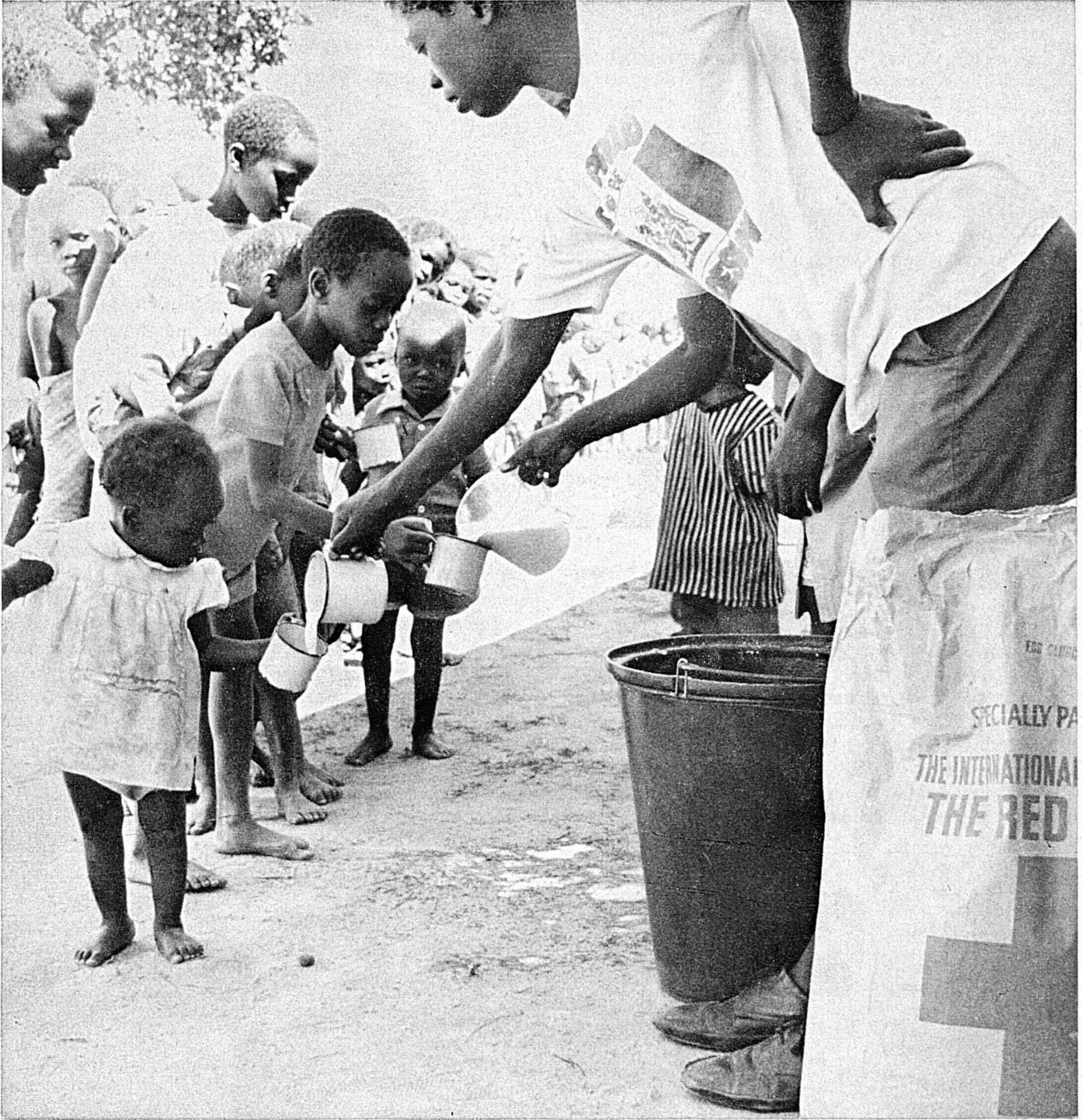
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# I. ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

## AFRICA

### The extension of conflicts

An outstanding fact of 1978 was unquestionably the intensification and multiplication of armed conflicts in Africa, a situation which induced the ICRC to extend its field of intervention and considerably to strengthen its organization on that continent.

At the end of 1977, the ICRC had a dozen delegates in Africa, spread between southern Africa—at Salisbury and Lusaka, offices of the ICRC regional delegation for southern Africa—and the Horn of Africa—at Addis Ababa, at Mogadishu and at Nairobi, headquarters of the ICRC regional delegation for East Africa.

One year later, the ICRC's strength on the African continent had risen to almost 60 delegates supported by one hundred or so African assistants. Indeed, apart from extending its organization in southern Africa—necessitated by the intensification of the war in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, the continued fighting in Namibia/South-West Africa and, to a lesser extent, conflicts in Ogaden and Eritrea, in the Horn of Africa—the ICRC was called upon to intervene in Chad, Zaire, Uganda and Tanzania. It also continued its mission in connexion with the conflict in the Western Sahara.

Accordingly, the ICRC found itself involved in eight conflicts in Africa by the end of 1978. It kept delegates permanently in eleven countries—Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, Chad and Zaire—and regularly carried out itinerant missions in six others: Algeria, Angola, Mauritania, Morocco, Tanzania and Uganda. Altogether, the ICRC took action of one sort or another in some twenty African countries in 1978.

### A new ICRC approach

This extension of the conflicts, the fact that they tended to be interrelated and that most of the problems encountered were common to the majority of them, led the ICRC to reconsider its approach to those governments and National Red Cross Societies which give it material support.

As a result, it decided to regard Africa as a whole and to launch appeals for funds to finance its work throughout all the continent. It also tried to secure more funds not earmarked for specific countries or even for special activities, its sole criterion for intervention being the humanitarian urgency and needs of the victims.

Accordingly, the first worldwide appeal was launched in May, covering the period from 1 May to 31 October 1978 and amounting to more than 20 million Swiss francs. This was followed by a second appeal in November, covering the period from 1 November 1978 to 30 April 1979 and amounting to 15 million Swiss francs. Incidentally, these appeals were

accompanied by overall situation reports giving an account of the programmes of activities and the budgets established by the ICRC for each country in which it was operating. Moreover, several information meetings were organized at ICRC headquarters for representatives of the main donor governments and National Societies.

Following these two appeals, the ICRC had received by 31 December 1978 cash contributions totalling 19,790,185 Swiss francs and several governments had given pledges for payment in 1979. A list of the donors is given in Table VII, pages 78 and 79 of this Report. Besides covering operational expenditure, these contributions—like the gifts in kind received from many governments, National Societies and other organizations—enabled the ICRC to provide major relief for victims of conflicts on the African continent.

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In parallel with its work on behalf of victims of armed conflicts, the ICRC strove to develop its relations with a number of African countries.

For instance, the delegate-general for Africa carried out a mission to Conakry from 13 to 23 March, during which he had lengthy interviews with President Sekou Touré and his Ministers.

The chief aim of this mission was to reopen discussions with the Conakry Government, since no ICRC mission had visited Guinea for eight years.

The discussions covered various subjects such as the accession of the Republic of Guinea to the Geneva Conventions, the creation of a National Red Cross Society and the possibility of visits to "political detainees".

### Southern Africa

ICRC activities in southern Africa were largely dominated by the worsening of the conflict in *Rhodesia/Zimbabwe*, although the ICRC also continued to deal with the situation in *South Africa* and in *Namibia/South-West Africa*, as well as with the *after-effects of the Angolan conflict*.

### Co-ordination meeting of National Societies from southern Africa

Following preliminary discussions at the Twenty-third International Red Cross Conference (Bucharest, 1977), a co-ordination meeting for humanitarian Red Cross assistance to victims of armed conflicts in southern Africa was held at Dar es Salaam from 23 to 27 July 1978. It was organized jointly by the Tanzanian Red Cross and the ICRC and attended by the National Societies of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia. Mozambique, which is in the process of forming its own Red Cross Society, appointed two representatives from the Ministry of Health. A delegation from the League of Red Cross Societies was also present. The

following liberation movements attended a special contact meeting: Patriotic Front (composed of its two wings, ZAPU, Zimbabwe African People's Union, and ZANU, Zimbabwe African National Union), South-West African People's Organization (SWAPO, Namibia), African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress.

The set purpose of the meeting was to find out how the National Societies present could collaborate with the ICRC in its relief action for victims of conflicts in southern Africa. In their conclusions, the participants envisaged stepping up their activities on behalf of victims, particularly in the following respects:

- further assistance to refugees and displaced persons;
- specific action on behalf of the war disabled;
- establishment of offices to trace missing persons;
- dissemination of knowledge of the Geneva Conventions and Red Cross Principles.

### CONFLICT IN RHODESIA/ZIMBABWE

The intensification of the war in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe also had repercussions in the neighbouring countries: in 1978 there was a considerable increase in the number of victims not only in *Rhodesia/Zimbabwe* itself but also in *Botswana*, *Zambia* and *Mozambique*; all of them had to cope with a sizeable influx of refugees.

### Obstacles encountered by the ICRC

The ICRC greatly strengthened its organization in the region so as to adapt to developments in the situation and to cope with the needs engendered by the conflict; however, it ran into serious obstacles—non-application of the fundamental rules of international humanitarian law, ignorance of the role of the ICRC and the guiding principles of its action, failure to respect the red cross emblem—which made its task particularly complex and acted as a brake on the extension of its activities.

On 18 May 1978, for instance, the ICRC was greatly afflicted by the loss of two of its delegates in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, Mr. André Tièche and Mr. Alain Biéri, and of their African colleague Mr. Charles Chatora, who were killed in an ambush while proceeding to the Nyamaropa mission in Inyanga District to evaluate the needs of the civilian population there.

The ICRC requested Mr. Jean-Pierre Hocké, the Director of the Operations Department who happened to be in southern Africa, to invite the highest authorities among the parties to the conflict to shed full light on the circumstances of the tragedy and ask them to do all in their power immediately to ensure absolute respect for the red cross emblem and the safety of ICRC delegates.

The ICRC also made a solemn appeal to all the States signatories to the Geneva Conventions, reminding them that in adhering to them they undertook not only to respect them but also to ensure respect for them.

Lastly, the ICRC took a series of safety precautions directly affecting its delegation in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, the main one being to confine travel within the country essentially to journeys by air.

### Approaches to governments in southern Africa

The ICRC thereafter made a series of special approaches to several governments in southern Africa with a view to overcoming the difficulties encountered and continuing its humanitarian mission. It sought to persuade those governments to use their influence among the parties directly involved in the conflict to try to put a stop to the mounting violence and enable the ICRC to play its proper role. It also sought to persuade them to accede without delay to the Protocols additional to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, the entry into force of which would provide a better legal basis for ICRC action, and to encourage the liberation movements unilaterally to state their intention to apply those Conventions and Protocol I.

On the occasion of the Dar es Salaam meeting in July (see above), Mr. Jacques Moreillon, Director of the ICRC Principles and Law Department, exchanged views on this subject with Mr. Julius Nyerere, President of the Republic of Tanzania. In August, the ICRC sent Mr. Moreillon to Botswana and Zambia, where he was received by the Heads of State of both countries, namely, Sir Seretse Khama and Dr. Kenneth D. Kaunda, respectively. In Zambia, the ICRC envoy also met Mr. Joshua N'Komo, president of ZAPU and co-leader of the Patriotic Front. A similar mission to Mozambique was planned for early 1979.

So far as the application of international humanitarian law by Rhodesia/Zimbabwe was concerned, Mr. Moreillon had already been to Salisbury in April 1978 and the ICRC made many approaches to the interim Government in this respect throughout the year.

### Launching of an information and dissemination campaign

In parallel with these high-level approaches, the ICRC strove to ensure that respect for the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law and the red cross emblem would become a reality among individuals and combatants. In the second half of 1978, therefore, it launched an information and dissemination campaign in the countries of southern Africa with a view to transmitting the message of the Red Cross to every individual and body directly or indirectly involved in the conflict—authorities, combatants and civilian populations on both sides—and extending its action to the operational areas.

The campaign was conducted in close co-operation with African information specialists and made it possible to promote greater knowledge of and understanding for the mission of the Red Cross and its delegates.

The ICRC used the following information media to feed the campaign, with which the local Red Cross Societies were associated: articles in the press, regular radio broadcasts on African networks, printed matter such as cartoon strips and posters, slide shows and films at cinemas, schools, villages and centres for displaced persons, etc. At the same time, action was taken to promote the red cross emblem in schools (supplies of pencils and exercise-books marked with a red cross) and in the camps and housing centres (distribution of tumblers stamped with a red cross).

Three information delegates were sent from Geneva to cover the campaign: one for Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, based at Salisbury;

another to Lusaka, to cover Zambia, Botswana and Tanzania; and the third for producing the dissemination material, at the disposal of Lusaka and Salisbury. Three locally-recruited press attachés joined the team at the end of December.

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### Rhodesia/Zimbabwe

The following were the chief problems and needs with which the ICRC found itself confronted in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe in 1978:

- application of international humanitarian law so as to ensure the protection of innocent civilians and of nationalist combatants captured by the Rhodesian armed forces;
- visits and assistance to persons interned without trial under the Emergency Power Regulations;
- material and medical assistance to persons displaced by the fighting;
- activities within the scope of the Central Tracing Agency.

*APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW.*—In July 1977, the President of the ICRC had addressed a message to the Rhodesian Prime Minister, Mr. Ian Smith, suggesting that the Rhodesian Government should either state its intention to apply the Geneva Conventions and Protocol I or undertake to respect the fundamental principles of international humanitarian law.

In December of the same year, the President of the ICRC sent another letter to the Rhodesian Prime Minister urging a suspension of the execution of all nationalists sentenced to capital punishment.

The Rhodesian Government replied on 11 January 1978, stating in substance that it was not prepared to accord prisoner-of-war status to persons captured in combat, since such persons were Rhodesians and liable to legal prosecution for the crimes they had committed. The Rhodesian Government added that it was in favour of respect for humanitarian principles in armed conflicts and that the above-mentioned reservation did not mean that it was not complying with the principles laid down in article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions.

Following the signing of the Constitutional Agreement on 3 March and the setting up of a Rhodesian Interim Government on 21 March, the ICRC sent Mr. Moreillon, Director of the Principles and Law Department, on mission to Salisbury. The purposes of his mission, which lasted from 16 to 23 April, were:

- to put a stop to the hanging of captured nationalist combatants;
- to secure permission for the ICRC to visit nationalist combatants charged or sentenced;
- to get the code of conduct for combatants (a compilation of the most fundamental rules of international humanitarian law to be respected by troops in all circumstances, drawn up by the ICRC and printed in visiting-card format) distributed among the Rhodesian armed forces.

Although the mission did not achieve the expected results, Mr. Moreillon discussed the different issues with two of the

four members of the Executive Council of the Interim Government, namely, Mr. Muzorewa and Mr. Sithole, and with the two Co-Ministers of Defence and one of the two Co-Ministers of Justice.

In the hope of softening the position of the Rhodesian Interim Government, the ICRC subsequently made repeated approaches at different levels, but with no success.

*PERSONS DETAINED UNDER THE EMERGENCY POWER REGULATIONS.*—Although it has not managed to extend its visits to captured nationalist combatants, the ICRC continued to have access to persons interned without trial under the Emergency Power Regulations. It is noteworthy that over 800 such persons were released during the month following the signing of the Constitutional Agreement on 3 March 1978. Further arrests did, however, take place during the final months of the year, particularly following the proclamation of martial law on 23 September. The ICRC delegates at Salisbury approached the competent authorities with a view to obtaining a list of those newly arrested. They were told that this was not possible so long as the latter were under interrogation but that the ICRC's request would be considered once they became subject to an internment order promulgated under the Emergency Power Regulations.

Altogether, the delegates saw 198 detainees during the two series of visits they made to that category of person in 1978, the first in March and the second in November. The detainees were grouped in two detention centres, Wha Wha and Chikurubi Prisons. The ICRC remitted the confidential official reports on its delegates' findings to the authorities in Salisbury.

The ICRC delegation at Salisbury periodically provided detainees and their families with various relief material. From the end of March onwards, the ICRC also organized a bus service at its own expense to enable families to visit their relatives in detention. Seventy-two journeys had taken place by the end of the year, with 2,561 passengers conveyed to Wha Wha and Chikurubi Prisons. Altogether, material assistance provided by the ICRC in 1978 to detainees in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe and to their families amounted to 137,400 Swiss francs.

*ASSISTANCE TO DISPLACED PERSONS.*—In a country of 6½ million inhabitants, there were roughly one million persons, half of them children, displaced by the fighting by the end of 1978. The ICRC sought to succour them by distributing relief material and providing them with medical assistance and by informing the competent authorities at Salisbury of all cases of ill-treatment reported to its delegates during their journeys in the field. In some cases the authorities informed the ICRC that they had conducted enquiries and taken the necessary steps against those responsible for ill-treatment.

The ICRC was, however, obliged to limit its activities in an effort to adapt constantly to developments or to the limitations imposed on it by the authorities, making its task all the more complicated. More than once it expressed its concern for the civilian population who could not be reached because of the fighting, and for the lack of safeguards for its delegates.

*Rural areas:* The ICRC provided substantial assistance such as supplementary foodstuffs, clothing and blankets for the rural

population grouped by the Salisbury authorities in the "protected villages". In October, it directly or indirectly distributed relief material to some 80 such villages (out of the then total of 270), almost 40 of which were regularly visited by the ICRC delegates.

Following the tragedy at Nyamaropa, the delegates had had, except in rare instances, to journey only aboard the two light aircraft which the ICRC had purchased for the purpose. From then onwards the Salisbury delegation used the commercial networks for forwarding its relief to the beneficiaries, and delegates were able only sporadically to visit several of the distribution points.

The suppression of several dozen "protected villages" in Eastern Mashonaland and parts of Central Mashonaland during the first quarter, and the return of the occupants to their places of origin, raised serious problems from both the material and the safety points of view, thus placing those populations in an even more precarious position.

The ICRC also organized a programme for the distribution of milk and high-vitamin biscuits to some 300,000 children in the "protected villages", missions and clinics (see below).

The Patriotic Front, which was informed of the ICRC's work in the "protected villages", recognized its usefulness to the civilian victims of the conflict.

*In the townships:* The rural population retreated into the townships as the war was stepped up, so in October the ICRC introduced a shelter construction programme for civilians fleeing from the combat zones and seeking refuge in the urban centres. The programme started in the suburbs of Salisbury, where some 150 shelters were completed by the end of the year.

Furthermore, these civilians regularly received food rations, clothing, blankets and medical aid from the ICRC.

*MEDICAL WORK.*—Although compelled by danger to limit its medical assistance work in certain regions, the ICRC was able to set up new projects in others. In March, a medical team consisting of a doctor and a nurse regularly visited 18 clinics in the "protected villages" and two mission hospitals. By December, however, it was possible for the ICRC medical teams to visit only one of those clinics, although there were then two such teams available. On the other hand, 14 new clinics had been opened and four new mission hospitals were receiving regular visits. In May, just prior to the tragedy at Nyamaropa, the medical teams had been visiting about 40 clinics.

The need for constant adaptation to the developing situation led the ICRC to try to create local medical structures capable of operating without ICRC medical teams. Besides Red Cross volunteers trained in first aid by the "Rhodesian Red Cross", the ICRC therefore engaged medical assistants who had received much more thorough training and were capable of working independently. In this way it was able to open new clinics in the operational areas and to keep open old ones which would otherwise have had to be closed.

By the end of 1978, 18 medical assistants and 36 Red Cross volunteers were busy in 25 ICRC-financed clinics, some of which were regularly visited by the ICRC medical teams; where this was not possible, periodic meetings were organized between

the local personnel and the teams or the ICRC medical co-ordinator in safe places. Elsewhere, where the clinics were completely isolated, the ICRC confined its activities to getting medicaments and wages through. It also regularly supplied medicaments to 34 mission hospitals. The population thus covered by ICRC medical activities was estimated at over 600,000 persons.

The ICRC medical co-ordinator and medical teams were engaged in both curative and preventive medicine, spending most of their time in educating the population in health matters, pre-natal controls and vaccinations. They distributed milk and medicaments at the clinics they visited and evacuated patients to hospital. They carried out surgical operations in some mission hospitals and gave classes at the schools for medical assistants. They also ran consulting-rooms in the Salisbury "townships". Between April and December, the ICRC medical teams carried out some 19,000 consultations and 17,000 vaccinations. They were placed at the disposal of the ICRC by the Danish, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish Red Cross Societies.

*OVERALL STATISTICS.*—In 1978 as a whole, the delegation forwarded or distributed to victims 1,365 tons of relief material worth 2,688,100 Swiss francs. This material was made up as follows: 1,291 tons of miscellaneous foodstuffs; blankets, mattresses, building materials and other housing help; medicaments and medical supplies to a value of 257,000 Swiss francs.

*CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY.*—The tracing office at the Salisbury delegation recorded on cards and in files information relating to the detainees visited by the ICRC in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. It also tried to trace missing persons, forwarded family news and dealt with various special cases.

In August and again at the end of the year, the Central Tracing Agency at Geneva sent out two of its specialists to reorganize the Salisbury tracing office technically so that it could take on more work.

*ORGANIZATION.*—The staff of the Salisbury delegation tripled in 1978. From seven members at the end of 1977, it rose to 20 during the year, including the two medical teams—each consisting of a doctor and a nurse—made available by the Scandinavian Red Cross Societies. The ICRC also employed nearly 80 Rhodesian workers.

As early as March, the ICRC had bought a light aircraft, with a view to increasing its volume of activities and improving safety. After the Nyamaropa tragedy it bought a second plane which came into operation in September.

## Botswana

*THE REFUGEE PROBLEM.*—With the intensification of the war in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, there was a considerable increase in the number of persons pouring into Botswana in search of refuge. From a few thousand at the beginning of the year, the number of refugees in the transit camps at Francistown and Selebi Pikwe and the reception camp at Dukwe had risen to 17,000 by the end of the year. Whereas the first two had already been in existence in 1977, the tent camp at Dukwe was

opened in April 1978 to accommodate the women and children transferred to it.

Built to house 500-1,000 persons, these camps soon became overpopulated and living conditions in them became very difficult, particularly from the health point of view.

During 1977, the ICRC had confined itself to providing material assistance to the refugees through the Botswana Red Cross which had taken the initiative of instituting emergency action on their behalf. In view of the worsening situation the ICRC decided, following surveys carried out in the camps early in 1978 by its regional delegate and later by its chief physician and the head of the "Southern African Task Force" at headquarters, to intensify its assistance and take direct action on behalf of the refugees.

In co-ordination with the authorities and with the Botswana Red Cross, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and other aid bodies, it was agreed that the ICRC should be responsible first and foremost for medical assistance at the camps, as well as for supplying relief material such as tents, blankets, children's clothing, baby garments, first-aid kits, toiletries and foodstuffs.

**MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.**—An ICRC medical team—consisting of one doctor and a nurse, later joined by a second nurse—started work at the reception camp at the end of April. Clinics were opened in all the camps and the ICRC team was backed up by six nurses and medical assistants engaged locally. It set about co-ordinating and fostering the local medical structures thus created, giving basic treatment, evacuating the seriously ill to hospitals in Botswana, supplying medicaments and medical equipment and organizing vaccination campaigns (against meningitis and measles).

More than once, the ICRC had to draw the attention of the Botswana authorities and those of the Patriotic Front (ZAPU) to the poor conditions of hygiene and the inadequate sanitary installations in the camps.

Following his mission to the camps in Zambia (see below), in December the ICRC sent to Botswana the seconded WHO sanitary engineer to evaluate health conditions in the camps and make practical recommendations. Among other things, the specialist was able to discuss the matter with the Botswana Minister of Health.

Then again, following that mission and at the request of the Botswana Government, the ICRC took over the organization and financing of a vaccination campaign against typhoid fever at Dukwe camp; this began at the end of December and the entire camp population of 8,000 was vaccinated.

**MATERIAL ASSISTANCE.**—In 1978, the ICRC forwarded to Botswana or purchased there roughly 90 tons of relief material worth 565,000 Swiss francs for the refugees. For the most part, this consisted of 50 tons of powdered milk; medicaments, vaccines and medical supplies to a value of 64,000 francs; 5,767 blankets; 401 tents, including 400 for families of 8-10 persons and one for 50 persons to be used as a dispensary at Dukwe camp; one ambulance; clothing and baby garments, and sundry toiletries. The Red Cross Societies of the German

Democratic Republic, the United Kingdom, Canada and Sweden contributed to this work by supplying vitamins, some of the tents, clothing and baby garments. The German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany gave the ambulance and the European Economic Community the powdered milk. The ICRC itself provided almost all the medicaments and medical supplies, some of the tents, and the blankets and toiletries.

**CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY.**—By the end of September 1978, the ICRC had secured permission from Mr. N'Komo, the president of ZAPU, to register all children under 16 years of age in the reception and transit camps in Botswana and to sound them out concerning their possible return to Rhodesia/Zimbabwe.

To this end the ICRC sent out two delegates, one a specialist from the Central Tracing Agency. With the help of 26 locally recruited workers, during the first half of November they registered some 3,000 children, most of them at Dukwe.

The ICRC delegates returned to the camps in December to register a hundred or so new arrivals, and this work was to be pursued regularly thereafter.

**VISITS TO PLACES OF DETENTION.**—During one of his trips to Gaborone early in 1978, the regional delegate obtained permission for the ICRC to visit all aliens without diplomatic protection detained in Botswana prisons and police stations. Accordingly, in February and again in March, the regional delegate visited five prisons (located in Gaborone (2), Francistown, Selebi Pikwe and Maun) where about 30 such persons were being detained.

**ORGANIZATION.**—Whereas the previous year Botswana had been covered by the ICRC regional delegate based at Lusaka (Zambia), by the end of 1978 the ICRC had five persons permanently in the country, namely, a delegate, a co-ordinator-administrator, a physician and two nurses, all of whom, however, came under the regional delegation at Lusaka. The New Zealand, Finnish and Netherlands Red Cross Societies made available to the ICRC the medical teams which went consecutively to Botswana.

### **Zambia**

**REFUGEEES.**—As in Botswana, the number of refugees in the camps of the Patriotic Front (ZAPU) in Zambia sharply increased in 1978 and was estimated at about 40,000 by the end of the year.

The ICRC regional delegate at Lusaka was authorized to visit four of the camps for the first time in January 1978. He immediately asked headquarters in Geneva for tents to improve accommodation in those camps, in which there were women and children under 16 years. His initial visit was followed by several others, including medical surveys (by the same medical team which had visited Botswana at the end of April). In July the ICRC's chief physician also went to these camps. All confirmed the need for aid, particularly in the health field.

The following projects were contemplated during discussions at the end of July between the chief physician, the regional delegate and the president of ZAPU:

(1) A "public health" project, the problems of hygienic and living conditions in general taking priority. To this end the ICRC was to place a public health specialist at ZAPU's disposal, although ZAPU was to implement the project.

(2) A "first aid" project for training personnel in public health and first aid. This was to be a ZAPU-Zambia Red Cross venture, the role of the ICRC being confined to the supply of teaching material.

(3) A "medicaments" project, whereby the ICRC would supply some specific medicaments which were lacking in Zambia.

(4) A "prosthesis" project, which consisted in sending groups of amputees to government centres for treatment.

As will be seen later, the first three projects either got under way or were completed during the second half of 1978. By the end of the year, the last-mentioned project was still in the blueprint stage.

Following the attacks which the Rhodesian armed forces started making on the camps in October, the delegates immediately stepped in to distribute emergency medical relief for the wounded, assess requirements and meet them as far as possible. Among other things they provided tents which were used for accommodating wounded and convalescent persons.

The Zambia Red Cross Society made available the emergency relief material needed at the University Hospital, Lusaka.

*Medical assistance:* From mid-October to early December, the ICRC sent to Zambia a sanitary engineer placed at its disposal by the World Health Organization (WHO). The purpose of his mission was to propose to the ZAPU leaders practical measures for improving sanitary conditions in four refugee camps (Freedom, Moyo, Victory and Nampundwe Camps) and to give basic training in public health matters to a few ZAPU volunteers.

During his mission the sanitary engineer had many fruitful meetings with the ZAPU authorities. He also gave a course in public health to seven refugees selected in the camps. The ICRC supplied building equipment for improving the sanitary installations, in particular for providing latrines in the refugee camps.

The ICRC also co-operated with the Zambian Red Cross in training twenty refugees as first-aid monitors. It provided the necessary teaching material, transported the participants from the camps to the headquarters of the National Society at Lusaka and met the food bill.

*Material assistance:* During 1978, the ICRC forwarded to or purchased locally for the refugees in Zambia some 310 tons of relief material worth 532,000 francs. This consisted of about 1,000 tents, 15,000 blankets, medicaments to a value of 57,000 francs, building material for sanitary installations, soap, clothing and baby garments. Many other consignments were on the way by the end of the year, including 50 tons of powdered milk donated by the EEC. The Canadian and Swedish Red Cross Societies contributed to this relief operation by supplying baby garments and tents.

*PROTECTION.*—As part of its traditional activities, the ICRC also approached ZAPU with a view to persuading it to distribute the "code of conduct" (see above, page 11) to its combatants and to grant the ICRC delegates access to any members of the

Rhodesian armed forces captured during the attacks on the camps. By the end of the year, neither aim had been achieved.

*REGIONAL DELEGATION.*—The ICRC regional delegate at Lusaka pursued his mission of liaison with the governmental authorities in Zambia and Botswana, the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and officials of the liberation movements represented in those two countries, with a view to planning operations to assist victims of the conflict in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. His contacts with the authorities and with the liberation movements were also designed to promote respect and application of the principles of international humanitarian law.

The regional delegate also maintained contact with the Tanzanian Government and Red Cross Society, and with the OAU Liberation Committee at Dar es Salaam, on matters relating to the conflicts in southern Africa.

In view of the increase in the workload of the regional delegation, the ICRC had to strengthen its staff at Lusaka by sending out six additional delegates. Consequently, by the end of 1978 the Lusaka delegation consisted of seven persons: the regional delegate, an administrator, a co-ordinator for supervising the medical and relief projects for refugees in both Botswana and Zambia (since the ICRC personnel working in Botswana came under the regional delegation at Lusaka), two information delegates, one Agency delegate and a radio operator. They were joined by 16 African employees engaged locally.

At the end of the year the ICRC opened in its Lusaka delegation a regional office of the Central Tracing Agency to cover Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana and Malawi. It has the following tasks: seeking missing persons, transmitting family news, issuing travel documents, handling repatriation, etc.

#### **Mozambique**

*REFUGEES.*—As in Botswana and Zambia, the ICRC concerned itself with those victims of the conflict in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe who had found refuge in Mozambique.

At the end of 1977, following a survey by the ICRC senior physician, an agreement had been signed at Maputo between the Mozambique Government, the Patriotic Front (ZANU) and the ICRC, whereby the ICRC would participate financially in treating and supplying prostheses for ZANU personnel who had lost limbs in the war. Another project aimed at increasing the capacity of the hospitals at Chimoio, Tete and Songo by making available to the Ministry of Health of Mozambique tents, beds, mattresses and blankets to help it cope with emergency situations.

The project for amputees actually got under way on 21 April 1978 and some 30 patients had been fitted by the end of the year. It was planned to continue this work in 1979.

With regard to the equipment for the hospitals at Chimoio, Tete and Songo, large consignments were sent as early as January and February by both sea and air, the ICRC having chartered an aircraft for the purpose.

At about the same time, the ICRC sent a delegate to Maputo to maintain contacts with the Mozambique authorities and ZANU officials and to ensure the proper running of the projects in hand.

During a further medical survey in August, the ICRC medical delegate found that the material assistance provided by the ICRC had brought about a noticeable improvement in the conditions under which the wounded and sick were transported to and accommodated in hospital. He therefore proposed that this form of assistance should be extended to the hospital at Chokwe, located in another province which was also having to deal with an inflow of wounded persons. It was also planned to co-operate in matters of medicine and hygiene at the Doroï refugee camp. Lastly, the Mozambique authorities requested the ICRC to study the possibility of setting up an artificial limb workshop to produce prostheses for Mozambicans disabled during the war of liberation.

As a result of this mission the ICRC drew up three new assistance programmes which, at the end of the year, were being studied by the Mozambique Ministry of Health.

In 1978, the ICRC forwarded to Mozambique almost 52 tons of relief material worth 545,500 francs. This material consisted of the following: medicaments and medical supplies in the form of sundry equipment for the centre for rehabilitating disabled ZANU personnel, several hundred first-aid kits, stretchers, bandages, medical kits for the dispensaries at the front; three ambulances, and a Toyota minibus for transporting amputees from their homes to the treatment centre; 300 hospital beds, 310 mattresses, 850 sheets, 620 blankets and four 50-person tents; clothing, and 10 tons of cheese. The German Red Cross Society in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Finnish and Swedish Red Cross Societies and the Swiss Confederation made donations in kind towards this relief action.

*APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW.*—As he did to all the parties involved in the conflict in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, the ICRC delegate at Maputo made several approaches to the Mozambique authorities and officials of the Patriotic Front (ZANU), particularly Mr. Robert Mugabe, president of ZANU, with a view to promoting respect for and the application of the principles of international humanitarian law. One of the main aims was to arrange for the distribution of the “code of conduct” (see above, pages 11 and 14) drawn up by the ICRC and intended for combatants, but this had not been achieved by the end of 1978.

The ICRC also referred to the Patriotic Front (ZANU) the cases of several Rhodesian civilians who were missing and presumed to be in the hands of the Front; it sought to obtain confirmation of their capture and, if received, to visit them. No results were achieved in this respect in 1978 and none of the cases recorded by the Central Tracing Agency had been solved in Mozambique.

## SOUTH AFRICA

### NAMIBIA/SOUTH-WEST AFRICA

In South Africa, the ICRC followed the pattern of work of previous years, i.e. it continued to concern itself with:

- persons imprisoned because of the internal situation;
- Cuban prisoners of war held at Pretoria following the conflict in Angola;
- Angolan refugees in Namibia/South-West Africa.

The delegate-general for Africa made several missions to South Africa in 1978 to deal with the various problems on the spot and negotiate the opening of a regional delegation at Pretoria.

Because of its location, the Republic of South Africa offered satisfactory conditions for serving the ICRC as a logistic base for its work in relation to the conflict in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. After obtaining all the necessary authorizations, the ICRC opened a regional delegation at Pretoria, run by one delegate, in November 1978.

*PERSONS IMPRISONED BECAUSE OF THE INTERNAL SITUATION.*—The ICRC made two further series of visits to security prisoners sentenced in South Africa. The first took place in January and the second in September, when access was also granted to persons held in preventive detention under section 10 of the *Internal Security Amendment Act*. The ICRC visited nine places of detention altogether, where there were 439 sentenced security prisoners and 44 persons detained under the Internal Security Amendment Act. Various forms of relief were sent to the detainees following these visits (see Table, page 50).

It should be mentioned that, despite the steps taken over several years, the ICRC has no access to persons detained under the *Terrorism Act* or other security laws.

*CUBAN PRISONERS OF WAR.*—The ICRC also revisited the three Cuban prisoners of war captured by the South African armed forces in Angola early in 1976. These prisoners, and eight South African prisoners of war held at Luanda, were released in September 1978 (see below).

*ANGOLAN REFUGEES IN NAMIBIA/SOUTH-WEST AFRICA.*—The ICRC supported the South African Red Cross in its programme for supplying tents, blankets, foodstuffs and other relief material for the Angolan refugees at the transit camps in northern Namibia/South-West Africa (see Table, page 50).

## ANGOLA

### NAMIBIA/SOUTH-WEST AFRICA

The ICRC secured closer contacts with the authorities, as well as with the officials of the Red Cross Society being formed in Angola where it carried out activities related to:

- the aftermath of the Angolan conflict of 1975-1976;
- and the military operations along the frontier between Angola and Namibia/South-West Africa, involving the South African armed forces and combatants of SWAPO (South West African People's Organization).

The ICRC delegate at Maputo (Mozambique) went to Angola several times in 1978, on one occasion accompanied by the Chief Medical Officer of the ICRC (see below).

The ICRC delegate was received at Luanda by Mr. Agostinho Neto, President of the People's Republic of Angola, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Health. Besides matters relating to ICRC activities in Angola, the delegate raised—as part of his mission to the Heads of State of the Front Line

States—the general problem of the application of international humanitarian law in the conflicts in southern Africa and, in particular, the question of Angola's accession to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 1977 Protocols.

**SOUTH AFRICAN PRISONERS OF WAR IN ANGOLAN HANDS.**—On 2 September 1978, the People's Republic of Angola and the Republic of South Africa repatriated eight South African prisoners of war held at Luanda and three Cuban prisoners of war held at Pretoria. This operation took place at N'giwa, in Angola, near the border with Namibia/South-West Africa, in the presence of two ICRC delegates.

Since their capture in 1976, the ICRC had approached the South African and Angolan authorities with a view to visiting these prisoners in accordance with its traditional activities.

Having obtained agreement from the South African authorities, the ICRC made nine visits to the three Cuban prisoners at Pretoria: four in 1976, four in 1977 and one in 1978. It also transmitted to them, through its Central Tracing Agency (CTA) at Geneva, messages from their families as well as cassettes and several parcels.

Despite repeated approaches to the Angolan authorities, the ICRC was not permitted to visit the eight South African prisoners of war held at Luanda, although it was able to transmit mail, and the CTA transmitted 231 family messages and several parcels from the families to the prisoners.

**SOUTH AFRICAN PRISONER OF WAR IN THE HANDS OF SWAPO.**—The ICRC delegate was also in Angola at the beginning of September, when he was able for the first time to visit a member of the South African armed forces captured by SWAPO in February 1978.

**ASSISTANCE TO NAMIBIAN REFUGEES IN ANGOLA.**—The ICRC intensified its medical assistance to Namibian refugees in Angola in view of the increasing toll of civilians particularly, caused by the military operations on the border between Angola and Namibia/South-West Africa; it also received several appeals for aid from both the Angolan authorities and SWAPO.

Accordingly, in May it sent a large consignment of emergency medical supplies for the victims of attacks by South African armed forces at Cassinga (Angola).

Late August, the ICRC Chief Medical officer visited Luanda to discuss this action with the Angolan Minister of Health, the "Angolan Red Cross" and the person in charge of the SWAPO health service. On this occasion two assistance projects were examined, one for aiding Angolans and Namibians who had lost limbs in the war and were now in the Huambo region, and the other for creating a stock of emergency medical supplies for the "Angolan Red Cross", to enable it to meet any further arrivals of casualties.

Altogether, the ICRC forwarded to Angola in 1978 some 4½ tons of medicaments and medical supplies worth roughly 80,000 Swiss francs and intended partly for the SWAPO health service and partly for the "Angolan Red Cross".

**CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY.**—Besides the mail from relatives to the South African prisoners of war (see above), the

ICRC Central Tracing Agency (CTA) forwarded a number of messages to Portuguese nationals through the "Angolan Red Cross". In co-operation with the latter it also opened several enquiries with a view to answering requests for news about Portuguese nationals and about persons missing after the troubles in Shaba (Zaire).

At the request of the "Angolan Red Cross", a CTA specialist carried out a mission to Luanda in November to collaborate in setting up a tracing agency office of the developing Society.

## **East Africa**

### **A trouble area : the Horn of Africa**

In view of the situation in the Horn of Africa in 1978—continuation of the conflict in Ogaden during the first quarter, followed by a flare-up in the fighting in Eritrea at the end of April—the ICRC concentrated its efforts on three countries: *Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan.*

Accordingly, the *ICRC regional delegation for East Africa*, based at Nairobi (Kenya), had to suspend many of its usual activities. Until he was relieved by the arrival of a head of delegation in November, the regional delegate had in fact been detached to Addis Ababa. He then returned to his post in Nairobi, whence he travelled shortly after to *Uganda* in connection with the border conflict between that country and *Tanzania.*

### **Difficulties encountered by the ICRC in the accomplishment of its humanitarian mission**

When fighting broke out in Ogaden in August 1977, the ICRC approached all the parties involved in the armed conflict and invited them to respect, and ensure that their combatants respected, the rules of international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts. It also intervened quickly in the field, sending in delegates and providing relief material for the civilian and military victims on both sides of the front.

The action which the ICRC wished to take on behalf of those victims was, however, hampered by the political stands taken by the parties to the conflict.

The Ethiopian Government regarded the fighting in Ogaden as an international armed conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia, which meant that the four Geneva Conventions were applicable.

On the other hand, the Somali Government informed the ICRC that it did not consider itself legally involved in the armed conflict; it therefore refused to discuss the ensuing humanitarian implications with the ICRC, although it agreed to allow the latter to operate in co-operation with the Somali Red Crescent Society.

In view of these divergent political positions, the ICRC pointed out that its objectives were purely humanitarian and that it was not within its competence to qualify the political nature of a conflict.

Confining itself to consideration for the victims, the ICRC continued to approach all whose ability and duty it was to ensure respect for human beings in this conflict so that, regardless of the political circumstances, they might facilitate its humanitarian mission.

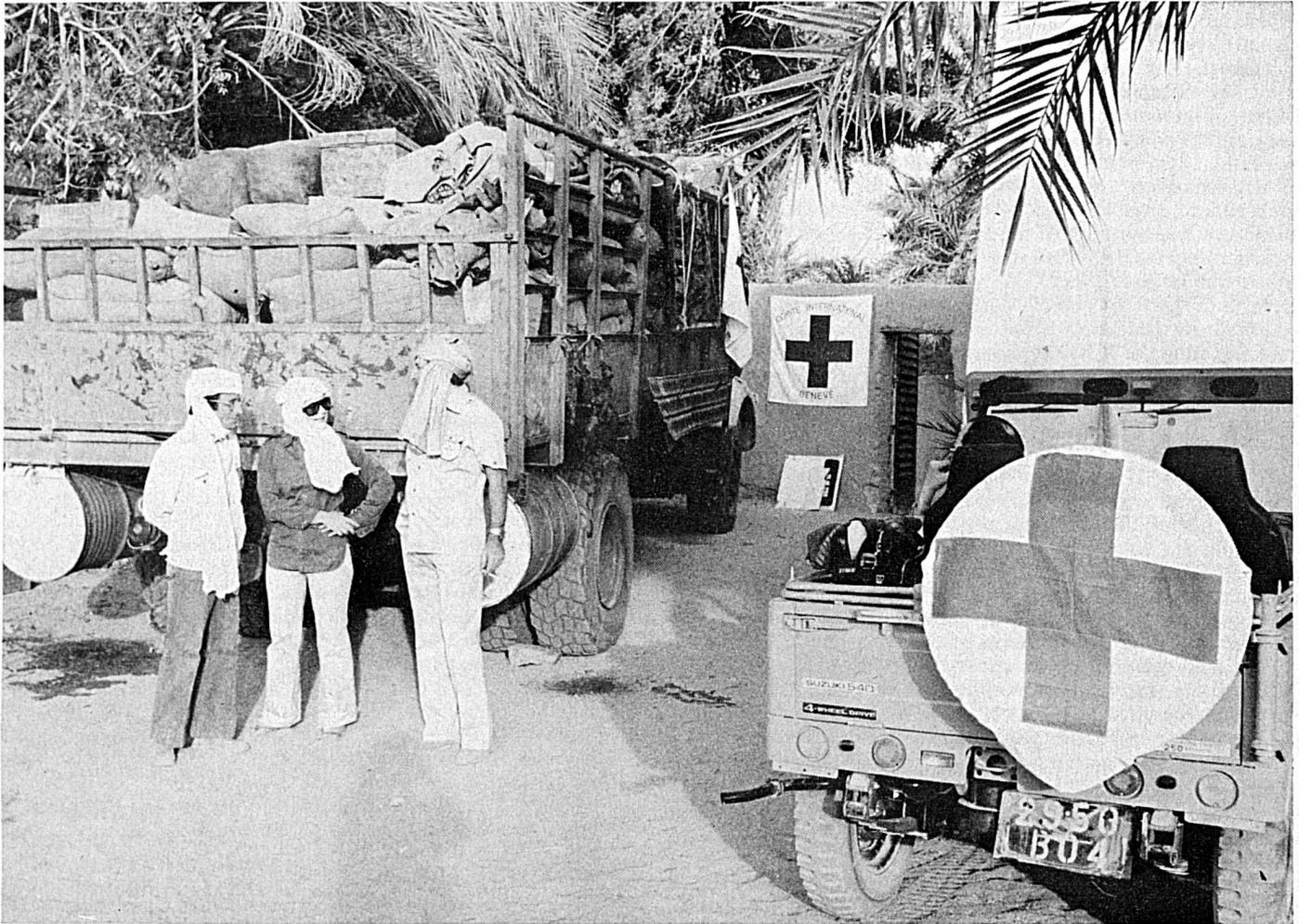
Following the surveys it succeeded in carrying out in both Ethiopia and Somalia, the ICRC intensified its material and medical assistance to the victims on both sides. Relief programmes were drawn up and several appeals for funds were made on their behalf: a restricted initial appeal in respect of Ogaden was made early in April to the National Societies and governments of a dozen countries. Subsequently these programmes were integrated within the two general appeals for Africa launched by the ICRC in May and November 1978.

On the other hand, little progress was recorded with regard to protection, particularly with reference to visits to prisoners of war.

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The ICRC considered that article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 did apply in the case of the conflict affecting the province of Eritrea. Accordingly it repeated its approaches to the Ethiopian Government with a view to carrying out its traditional tasks on behalf of all the victims of the conflict, wherever they might be.

Although it was able to develop a programme of assistance on the Ethiopian side for the wounded and displaced in the towns of Asmara and Mekele, it was unable to cross from Ethiopian territory to the other side of the front. In order to aid victims on the Eritrean side, therefore, the ICRC continued to send relief material via Sudan to the assistance bodies of the Eritrean movements.



## ETHIOPIA

### Ogaden

During the first half of 1978, several high-level missions went to Addis Ababa to continue negotiations with the Ethiopian authorities.

Mr. Thomas Fleiner, a member of the ICRC Executive Board, was from 16 to 26 January in Addis Ababa where he had discussions with, *inter alia*, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Health, the Commissioner for the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC)—a governmental body responsible for the distribution of relief material—the Ethiopian Red Cross and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Whereas assistance work had suffered a decline in the final months of 1977, this mission led to an agreement with the RRC. It was agreed that the relief material supplied by the ICRC in collaboration with the Ethiopian Red Cross would be distributed by the RRC, but that the ICRC would be able to take part in the distribution work. The RRC also affirmed its readiness to assess requirements in co-ordination with the Ethiopian Red Cross and the ICRC.

Thereafter, ICRC delegates and Ethiopian Red Cross workers were able to make periodic visits to the Harrarghe, Bale and Sidamo regions for the purposes of evaluating requirements, forwarding relief material and participating in distribution work.

Mr. Jean-Pierre Hocké, Director of the ICRC Operations Department, went on mission to Ethiopia in April to determine the extent and duration of the ICRC's relief action from Addis Ababa following the withdrawal from Ogaden of troops belonging to the adverse party. He was joined there by Dr. Rémi Russbach, the ICRC Chief Medical Officer who had been sent to assess the medical situation and define priorities with a view to completing the ICRC programme of medical assistance.

Mr. Hocké returned to Addis Ababa again in June to continue his discussions with the Ethiopian authorities on the role and activities of the ICRC, particularly in the conflict in Eritrea (see below).

**PROTECTION.**—Throughout the year the ICRC delegates sought permission from the competent authorities to visit combatants of the adverse party captured by the Ethiopian armed forces.

On 16 March, during a journey in Harrarghe province, the regional delegate visited 17 Somali prisoners of war interned in a military camp at Harrar. The delegate was given a list of the prisoners, to whom sundry relief material was given.

This visit was the subject of a report which was sent by the ICRC to the detaining Power and to the prisoners' own government but, despite their efforts, the ICRC delegates at Addis Ababa were not allowed to make further visits in 1978.

**ASSISTANCE.**—The ICRC, acting in co-operation with the Ethiopian Red Cross and the RRC, provided assistance—consisting mainly of foodstuffs, besides tents, blankets, cooking utensils, cloth and sewing machines—to tens of thousands of persons displaced as a result of the conflict.

After the cessation of hostilities, the ICRC selected those regions of the three provinces of Harrarghe, Bale and Sidamo which had been worst affected by the fighting: the farming

population there included some 150,000 displaced persons whose houses had been damaged and who could expect no crops in the immediate future since they had been unable to sow. The basic aim of the programme set up by the ICRC was to help them until the next harvest, when other organizations, particularly the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), would become operational in the area (October).

Priority as regards medicine was given to supplying certain hospitals near the combat areas with medicaments and dressings for the treatment of persons wounded on the battlefield.

The ICRC also concentrated on medical activities directly concerning the Ethiopian Red Cross, namely, transport of the wounded and the management of two blood-banks, at Addis Ababa and Harrar. As a result, two ambulances were donated to the Society, as well as sundry equipment for its blood-banks.

The consignments sent in 1978, together with local purchases, amounted in all to 294 tons of goods—191 tons of foodstuffs, 30,485 blankets, 128 tents, soap, medicaments and medical supplies to a value of 497,862 francs, plus sundry relief material—altogether worth 1,229,623 francs.

**WAR DISABLED.**—The ICRC also gave its attention to amputees; the Chief Medical Officer of the ICRC, a physiotherapist and an orthopaedist each made successive surveys in 1978 at the centre for the war disabled at Debre Zeit, near Addis Ababa, where the Ethiopian Government had gathered some 1,200 amputees. The ICRC undertook to set up there a prosthesis and physiotherapy centre, which was expected to start its activities in February 1979. In view of the large number of amputees, it was decided to provide each of them with a makeshift provisional prosthesis to enable them to walk as soon as possible and thus strengthen their muscles. At the same time permanent prostheses were to be made from local materials and Ethiopians were to be trained in their manufacture.

**CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY.**—The ICRC and the National Society received scores of requests to trace persons missing in Ethiopia; a number of them were found.

### Eritrea

**RELIEF CONSIGNMENTS.**—After lengthy negotiations with the Ethiopian authorities and despite major difficulties in forwarding relief material, the ICRC delegates at Addis Ababa were, from June onwards, able to send large consignments of relief material for the wounded and displaced persons at Asmara and Mekele through the Eritrean Regional Affairs Special Commission (ERASC), an official body responsible for distributing relief material to the victims of the Eritrean conflict, in collaboration with the Churches. Such consignments continued until the end of the year; they included 412 tons of goods consisting of 376 tons of foodstuffs, 10,190 blankets, 9 tents, soap and medicaments, to a value of 512,165 francs. The medicaments alone cost 242,531 Swiss francs.

An ICRC delegation was able to visit Asmara from time to time to attend some distribution operations.

### Delegation

As stated in the general introduction to this chapter, the ICRC regional delegate for East Africa was for most of the year based

at Addis Ababa. He was supported by a relief delegate. The ICRC had placed a mechanic at the disposal of the Ethiopian Red Cross to maintain its fleet of vehicles. In November, the regional delegate was relieved by a head of delegation and the relief delegate returned to Geneva.

## SOMALIA

In parallel with its efforts in Ethiopia, the ICRC started the year by repeating to the competent authorities at Mogadishu its offers to visit prisoners of war, tend the wounded and sick and provide aid for the civilian population affected by the hostilities.

Moreover, in mid-February, while the fighting was still raging in Ogaden, the ICRC sent the Somali Red Crescent Society a letter requesting it to draw the attention of the competent authorities to the provisions of the Geneva Conventions on the use of the protective emblem for medical vehicles and units (including civilian hospitals) and on the categories of persons and vehicles which should be protected in all circumstances. An identical communication was sent at the same time to the Ethiopian Red Cross Society.

Shortly after the hostilities ended in March, the ICRC sent its Chief Medical Officer to Mogadishu. Besides making a survey of medical needs and of assistance required by refugees and displaced persons, his mission was to discuss protection matters with both the competent authorities and the local delegate.

Mr. Richard Pestalozzi, special assistant to the President and a member of the ICRC Executive Board, also visited Mogadishu from 20 to 23 August, when he was received, *inter alia*, by Mr. Siad Barré, the President of the Republic. This provided an occasion for an exchange of views with President Barré concerning the role of the ICRC in the Horn of Africa and to explore the possibility of visiting Ethiopian prisoners.

**PROTECTION.**—Despite its efforts, the ICRC failed in 1978 fully to carry out its mission of protection in Somalia, namely, that of visiting the Ethiopian prisoners of war. Although, in October 1977, it had gained access to 150 of them, it did not succeed in visiting them a second time, nor was access granted to other persons captured since then.

**CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY.**—Some 150 cases of persons to be sought in Somalia as a result of the conflict in Ogaden were submitted to the Central Tracing Agency; despite several approaches, however, no results were achieved.

**ASSISTANCE.**—From the beginning of the year the ICRC, in close collaboration with the Somali Red Crescent Society, continued its distributions of relief material for victims of the conflict. As on the Ethiopian side, it concentrated on aiding displaced persons in the combat areas and on supplying medicaments and medical supplies to hospitals and dispensaries near the front which had to cope with large numbers of wounded persons. ICRC delegates were authorized to make regular visits to the areas affected by the fighting in order to forward and distribute relief material.

When, after the cessation of hostilities, assistance to the refugees was taken over by UNHCR in co-operation with the

Somali Red Crescent Society, the ICRC wound up its distribution of relief material in June and concentrated on specific medical projects (see below).

During 1978, the ICRC forwarded to Somalia or bought locally a total of 25 tons of relief material worth 464,800 Swiss francs. Most of this consisted of medicaments and medical supplies and also included a lorry supplied to the Somali Red Crescent Society for conveyance of goods to the victims. Foodstuffs had already been supplied to the displaced persons by the end of 1977.

**SPECIFIC MEDICAL PROJECTS.**—At the request of the Somali Red Crescent Society and pursuant to the surveys carried out by its Chief Medical Officer in March and July, the ICRC sent a specialist in maxillo-facial surgery to Mogadishu from late April to the end of September 1978. He treated 22 persons wounded in the face and carried out some 50 operations at one of Mogadishu's main hospitals. He also found time to train local personnel including a surgeon who took over after his departure. The ICRC continued to supply the necessary equipment for these operations.

At the same time, the ICRC sent to Mogadishu two physiotherapists and a nurse specialized in the treatment of paraplegics and amputees. By the end of 1978, when the ICRC halted its action, spectacular progress had been made in the state of some 20 paraplegics. Here, too, the ICRC was careful to train Somali personnel who continued the treatment after the ICRC's departure.

**STAFF.**—The ICRC had two delegates in Somalia at the beginning of the year. Once hostilities in Ogaden were ended only one delegate was kept on, in addition to the medical staff mentioned above.

## SUDAN

### Repercussions of the Eritrean conflict

Since it was unable to visit from Addis Ababa the territories controlled by the Eritrean movements, the ICRC, in its concern to aid victims of the conflict on both sides of the front, continued to send consignments of relief material via Sudan. In 1978, for instance, it purchased locally or dispatched 1,856 tons of relief material—1,697.5 tons of foodstuffs, 137.7 tons of medicaments, 100 tents, 4,000 blankets and 3 Land Rovers, altogether worth 3,724,700 Swiss francs—for the civilian populations and Ethiopian prisoners of war in the hands of the Eritrean movements. Half of this material was sent to the Eritrean Relief Association (ERA), the assistance body of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), and half to the "Eritrean Red Cross and Crescent Society" (ERCCS), the assistance body of the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF).

In February, April, May and August, the ICRC dispatched delegates to Khartoum and Port Sudan to take stock of the situation with the Sudanese authorities, the Eritrean movements and their assistance bodies, supervise the arrival of relief consignments and check on the conditions in which they were stored and routed to Eritrea.

Following the further flare-up of fighting in the middle of 1978, which caused an increase in the number of persons dis-

placed within Eritrea and an influx of refugees into Sudan, the ICRC gained permission from the Sudanese authorities to open an office in Khartoum; this it did in early October. The office is run by one delegate who, during the first few weeks, was assisted by two specialists from the ICRC Relief Division. The task at that time was to draw up feasible assistance programmes with ERA and ERCCS and organize the transport of goods from Port Sudan to the Eritrean frontier in such a way that they could be collected there by the two organizations mentioned and taken into the interior of Eritrea.

By the end of the year the ICRC was also preparing a programme of medical assistance for Eritrean refugees in Sudan, in co-operation with the authorities and the Sudanese Red Crescent Society.

## **CONFLICT BETWEEN UGANDA AND TANZANIA**

When fighting broke out between Uganda and Tanzania in October 1978, the ICRC reminded both parties of their treaty obligations and offered them its services through their respective National Societies.

### **Tanzania**

The ICRC delegate based in Mozambique was dispatched to Dar es Salaam on 22 November, the Tanzania Red Cross having called for ICRC intervention. After contacting the Tanzanian authorities and National Society to find out what the victims needed, he received permission to travel to the north of the country where he visited several thousand people displaced by the conflict.

On the basis of its delegate's report, the ICRC decided to take action to assist the 15,000 displaced persons; its action complemented that undertaken by the Government through the National Society.

It accordingly sent to Tanzania 11 tons of powdered milk (5 tons of which were donated by the Swiss Confederation), 10,000 blankets, soap and 2,000 sets of cooking utensils, altogether worth 178,000 Swiss francs. At the same time, it sent out a relief delegate to inspect the goods on arrival in Tanzania, organize their transportation to the affected areas and their distribution to the displaced persons.

### **Uganda**

On 11 December, the regional delegate for East Africa went to Kampala, where he had discussions with the Ugandan authorities and the National Society and learned that no ICRC aid was needed for the time being. The authorities, and later the National Society, had still to carry out evaluation missions among the population displaced in the south of the country, after which, if its own means were insufficient, the Uganda Red Cross Society would appeal to the ICRC.

## **Other conflicts**

### **CHAD**

ICRC action in Chad is particularly interesting in two respects. On the one hand, the internal conflict there was

recognized as such by both parties who invited the ICRC to carry out its traditional humanitarian activities. Moreover, it had found the parties prepared to do their best to ensure that the victims of the conflict were treated as humanely as possible, despite the extremely difficult conditions prevailing in the country.

On the other hand, the ICRC was itself confronted by major logistic difficulties: the geographical location of Chad within Africa, the remoteness of the region from sources of supply, and the enormous distances to be covered between each of the various places where prisoners were being held.

Furthermore, ICRC action necessitated a considerable number of delegates who frequently had to be relieved on account of the trying living conditions.

The fighting which had been going on for years between the Chad national army (ANT) and forces of the Chad National Liberation Front (FROLINAT) in the provinces of Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti (BET, the northern part of the country) was intensified during the second half of 1977 and at the beginning of 1978.

The number of victims, casualties and prisoners rose considerably when FROLINAT took a series of fortified places and localities, including Bardai, Fada and Faya-Largeau.

As a result, FROLINAT applied to the ICRC for help in evacuating women, children and wounded military personnel from the combat areas, particularly in the region of Bardai. Moreover, it undertook to treat its prisoners in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Conventions.

The Government of the Republic of Chad also undertook to respect the humanitarian principles and offered the ICRC all the necessary facilities for accomplishing its mission.

### **Opening of an ICRC delegation**

Consequently, early in February 1978 the ICRC dispatched to N'Djamena a team of delegates to organize action for the benefit of the victims of the conflict.

At the end of February the ICRC delegates travelled to Faya-Largeau to discuss with representatives of FROLINAT the possibilities and terms of ICRC intervention in the BET. A delegation was opened there and given the task of visiting and aiding the 1,500 or so prisoners of war and an equivalent number of members of their families.

By mid-March the ICRC had set up its local organization. This included six persons at N'Djamena and—without counting the aircraft crew members—a further seven split into two teams up-country, one based at Faya-Largeau and the other travelling to the prison camps.

### **Initiating the ICRC action**

The discussions with FROLINAT and the surveys carried out by the delegates revealed the need for ICRC assistance.

This ICRC action was imperative in view of the very limited resources of the territory under FROLINAT control; it was also additional to the traditional tasks of visiting the prisoners, dealing with requests to trace missing persons and transmitting news between prisoners and their families living in the southern part of the country. Detailed figures for this action appear later in this Report.

**PROTECTION AND THE CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY.**—Upon arriving at Faya-Largeau the ICRC delegates organized the transfer of five seriously wounded persons to the capital; such transfer operations were to continue throughout the year (see Statistics).

It was then a matter of visiting the prisoners in the hands of FROLINAT, who were spread over numerous camps scattered throughout the BET.

Systematic visits to the prison camps were begun in mid-March; capture cards were made out in respect of each prisoner and lists of all the prisoners found were drawn up.

The delegates also started exchanging family messages between the prisoners in the north and their families in the south, as well as between members of families separated as a result of the fighting.

At the end of the year the ICRC was given permission to visit FROLINAT combatants who had fallen into the hands of the Chad army.

**ASSISTANCE.**—One of the first tasks of the ICRC was to organize the forwarding of relief (food and medicaments) to provide for the needs of the prisoners in the BET, where the very harsh conditions had led FROLINAT to request ICRC support in this respect.

From mid-March onwards, regular flights were being made from N'Djamena or Abeche to transport the necessary relief materials to Faya-Largeau. The delegation in the BET was then responsible for forwarding them to the different prison camps.

The mobile ICRC team made regular medical visits to the camps and was thus able to assess the requirements for medicaments and medical supplies, organize their distribution and give appropriate treatment to those detained there.

This medical team accomplished the same tasks in the dispensaries and at the garrison hospital at Faya-Largeau and, in August 1978, helped to organize a first-aid training course at the same hospital. The Chad Red Cross organized such a course at N'Djamena at the end of December.

#### **Logistical problems**

At the outset, the ICRC had been confronted by certain logistical problems which added to the difficulty of its tasks of protection and assistance in the BET. Relief material (food and medicaments) had to be sent from N'Djamena to Faya-Largeau. Throughout 1978 the ICRC relied for this on airlines from which it chartered the aircraft needed (a DC-4, a DC-3 and a Hercules).

In order to visit the prison camps—and in view of ground conditions in the BET—the ICRC chartered a smaller aircraft, a Piper Aztec, which carried the visitor delegates and food for the prisoners and their families whenever it was impossible to transport them overland. Moreover, this aircraft made it possible to maintain regular contact between the delegation at Faya-Largeau and the one at N'Djamena, as well as to relieve delegates.

These logistical problems became more complicated in mid-April, when fighting between government forces and FROLINAT combatants was stepped up again, and they considerably slowed down ICRC action.

As has been explained, the ICRC relied largely on direct flights between the capital and Faya-Largeau for the forwarding of relief material and relief of delegates, but FROLINAT, for military and security reasons, asked the ICRC to stop those flights.

Alternative solutions therefore had to be found, both to enable the ICRC action to continue and to restore physical contact with the delegation at Faya-Largeau.

It was immediately apparent that an airport had to be found not far from the BET to enable the ICRC to supply Faya-Largeau by air from a third country. The ICRC therefore made the necessary approaches in some of the countries bordering the BET.

When informed of this intention, the N'Djamena authorities notified the ICRC that they still had the right of inspection over all their territory and that flights to the BET from a foreign base could therefore not be authorized.

The discussions with the competent authorities at N'Djamena nonetheless led to a compromise whereby the ICRC was authorized to carry out revictualing flights via a third country provided they started from N'Djamena.

Three flights were thus made on 5 and 29 May and 27 July and, with the agreement of the Algerian and Sudanese authorities, were routed via Tamanrasset and El Geneina.

Meanwhile, the ICRC had been trying to persuade FROLINAT to reverse its decision in the priority interest of the protected persons and, with the agreement of the movement's leaders, direct flights from N'Djamena to Faya-Largeau were resumed in mid-August and continued regularly to the end of the year.

During this period the Faya-Largeau delegation continued its protection work on behalf of the prisoners of war by visiting the different camps. So far as actual assistance work was concerned, it could only be continued when stocks of relief materials were available.

**ORGANIZATION.**—For the success of its mission, the ICRC set up at both N'Djamena and Faya-Largeau a sizable organization which was modified in keeping with the scale and feasibility of the action. A total of 55 ICRC workers went to Chad in 1978 (heads of delegation; delegates for visiting, relief work, tasks related to the Central Tracing Agency and administration; doctors, nurses and technical personnel), not counting aircrews and locally engaged staff. This large number was due to the frequent need to relieve delegates working in the BET, since working and living conditions in that area are especially difficult.

#### **Statistics**

**PROTECTION.**—Visits to prisoners of war:

— *in the hands of FROLINAT:* ICRC delegates made 47 visits to 23 prison camps and 4 hospitals, during which they visited almost 1,550 prisoners of war.

— *in the hands of the Chad authorities:* in December 1978, 11 FROLINAT prisoners in the hands of the Chad authorities were visited by the ICRC at N'Djamena.

**Evacuation of detainees released by FROLINAT:** After taking over the oasis and garrison at Bardai in June 1977, FROLINAT had requested the ICRC to take steps to evacuate some families

of prisoners of war and a number of public servants from the combat area.

Many technical problems such as the length of the runway at Bardai airport, its altitude, the nature of the ground and the difficulties of finding a suitable aircraft, combined with the resumption of hostilities on the ground, delayed the mounting of this operation, which did not get under way until 5 December 1978 when 43 persons (including 22 children and 15 wives of prisoners) were able to leave Bardai on a specially chartered aircraft for N'Djamena.

*Transfer of wounded and family reuniting*: Repatriation operations organized by the ICRC delegates enabled 23 persons to leave the north of the country in 1978 for N'Djamena and Abeche, either to rejoin their families or for necessary medical treatment.

**ASSISTANCE.**—In 1978 the ICRC distributed 395 tons of assorted relief material (mainly food) worth 1,046,414 Swiss francs, including 364,114 francs' worth of medicaments (8,760 kg).

This assistance reached about 3,200 persons, prisoners of war and their families, held in 23 camps in the BET.

**CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY.**—When it first entered Chad, the ICRC set up a tracing office within its delegation at N'Djamena; a second office was opened at Faya-Largeau in August 1978.

The Faya-Largeau office concentrated on systematically registering, during each visit to the camps, the population protected in the BET, its aim being to get the truest possible picture of the number and location of prisoners of war and their families. The N'Djamena office assumed the traditional tasks of the Agency and, *inter alia*, produced regular lists of prisoners for the information of enquirers.

The tracing offices in Chad opened 376 enquiries in 1978 and exchanged 27,900 family messages between the south and the north of the country.

#### **WESTERN SAHARA**

At the end of 1975 the ICRC had offered its services to the various parties to the conflict in the Western Sahara with a view to exercising its traditional functions on behalf of victims, particularly by visiting all prisoners on both sides.

Despite repeated efforts, only scant results had been achieved two years later. In December 1975, ICRC delegates visited 12 prisoners held by the Polisario Front and, in September 1976, 2 French nationals and 57 Moroccan and Mauritanian prisoners (out of an unspecified total) with whom they were able to talk in private. Since then, no more Moroccan or Mauritanian prisoners have been visited. In Morocco, the delegates had had access on four occasions since February 1976 to 99 Algerian military prisoners interned at Rabat, and had been able to interview them without witnesses. On the other hand, they had had no access to any combatant of the Polisario Front captured by the Royal Moroccan armed forces. In Mauritania, in January 1976, the delegate had seen 63 combatants of the Polisario Front captured by the Mauritanian armed forces; and in January 1977 they had seen 126. They had not been permitted to take note of their identities or interview them without witnesses.

#### **Mission by the President of the ICRC**

Disturbed by the many humanitarian problems engendered by the conflict and the difficulties encountered by delegates in carrying out their tasks, Mr. Alexandre Hay, President of the ICRC, took the initiative of going to North Africa in April and May 1978 to meet the top authorities of all the parties involved.

Mr. Hay, accompanied by the Director of the Operations Department and the regional delegate, visited *Algeria* from 3 to 5 April. He was received by H. E. Mr. Houari Boumediene, President of the Republic. He also met representatives of the Polisario Front in Algiers and secured authorization in principle for the ICRC to visit prisoners captured by the Front. As will be seen later, however, further obstacles arose and no visits were carried out in 1978.

In *Morocco*, the President of the ICRC and the regional delegate were received on 6 April by H. M. King Hassan II who agreed that the ICRC could continue its visits to the 99 Algerian military personnel captured by the Moroccan armed forces. The ICRC was also authorized to meet without witnesses the combatants of the Polisario Front captured since the start of the conflict, whether still in detention or not.

On 4 May, the President of the ICRC went to *Mauritania* for a meeting with H. E. Mr. Moktar Ould Daddah, the President of the Republic, who authorized the ICRC to visit the combatants of the Polisario Front captured by the Mauritanian armed forces and to interview them without witnesses.

#### **Prisoners in Moroccan hands**

*Algerian prisoners*: Immediately after the mission by the President of the ICRC, in April, two delegates made a further visit to the 99 Algerian military prisoners detained at the Rabat camp. As usual, the report drawn up after the visit was sent by the ICRC to both the detaining Power and the prisoners' own government.

The ICRC Central Tracing Agency (CTA) also ensured the transmission of correspondence between the prisoners and their families in Algeria; 4,700 family messages thus passed from one side to the other, the ICRC acting in close collaboration with the Moroccan and Algerian Red Crescent Societies in this connection. Some 200 parcels were transmitted to the prisoners in accordance with the same procedure, together with a sum of 14,553 Swiss francs placed at their disposal by the Algerian Red Crescent.

*Combatants of the Polisario Front*: The ICRC delegates then went to Laayoune, Smara and Boujdor, where they met altogether 75 combatants or members of the Polisario Front captured by the Moroccan armed forces since the beginning of the conflict. Eighteen of their number, with whom the delegates were able to talk without witnesses, were being detained at the royal gendarmerie barracks at Laayoune. The other 57, no longer in detention, were visited at Laayoune (40), Boujdor (16) and Smara (1) and also interviewed in private.

Finally, the delegates took advantage of their stay in these three localities to contact families separated by the conflict. They made out applications for tracing enquiries for about 300 separated families without news of their kin in Algeria. These

enquiries were transmitted to those in charge of the camps at Tindouf during one of the missions carried out by ICRC delegates to Algeria.

#### **Prisoners in Mauritanian hands**

The 205 Polisario Front combatants captured by the Mauritanian armed forces were visited during the second half of May. The delegates were able to conduct private interviews with the prisoners, who were detained at a military camp, except for a few who were being treated in hospital in the capital.

One delegate and a medical delegate returned to Mauritania in mid-November to establish contact with the new authorities and examine with them all the humanitarian aspects of the conflict in the Western Sahara. The delegates had meetings with the Ministers of Defence, Health and Foreign Affairs, as well as with officials of the Mauritanian Red Crescent and the Ministry of Social Affairs. Among other things they were authorized to revisit the combatants of the Polisario Front, on behalf of whom an assistance operation, complementary to the work being done by the detaining authorities, was organized in collaboration with the Mauritanian Red Crescent Society.

#### **Prisoners in the hands of the Polisario Front**

Further to the agreement reached in principle during the mission to Algiers by the President of the ICRC, a team of ICRC delegates travelled immediately to the Tindouf area to start visiting the Moroccan and Mauritanian prisoners in the hands of the Polisario Front. No visits could take place, however, since differences had arisen as to how they should be conducted: the ICRC, in accordance with standard practice, wanted access to all the prisoners and to interview them privately. The Polisario Front was prepared to let the ICRC visit a hundred or so Moroccan and Mauritanian prisoners but would not let the delegates talk to them without witnesses; nor would they specify the total number of the remaining prisoners.

There were numerous contacts throughout 1978 with Sahrawi officials at Geneva, as well as at Algiers, Tindouf and New York; the aim was to reach agreement, since the Polisario Front had undertaken at the start of the conflict to respect the Geneva Conventions. Officials of the Front agreed in principle to the ICRC visiting, in successive stages, all the Moroccan and Mauritanian prisoners; they would not agree to talks without witnesses, however, nor would they commit themselves to a time-table or specify the total number of prisoners they held.

The ICRC did not feel qualified to conduct visits under those conditions, particularly since it had never received a complete list of the prisoners.

The CTA transmitted to the "Sahrawi Red Crescent", through delegates, 124 family messages from prisoners or from separated Sahrawi families to relatives in the Tindouf region (Algeria).

It also transmitted 40 family messages to Moroccan and Mauritanian prisoners in the hands of the Polisario Front.

## **ZAIRE**

On 11 May 1978, the town of Kolwezi in Shaba province was beleaguered by forces of the National Liberation Front of the Congo (FLNC).

#### **First steps taken by the ICRC**

Being anxious from the outset of the fighting about the fate of the civilian population at Kolwezi, the ICRC took the following measures:

- it sent a delegate to Brussels to contact the FLNC representatives there and negotiate relief action on behalf of the civilian population; this approach proved pointless, however, since Kolwezi was retaken while talks were still in progress;
- it decided to dispatch to Zaire, without delay, its regional delegate based in Zambia.

The latter arrived at Lubumbashi, the chief town of Shaba province, on 19 May. After contacting both civilian and military authorities locally, as well as the Red Cross Society of Zaire, he got through to Kolwezi on 22 May, when final combats were still taking place.

One of the delegate's first tasks was, with the support of local Red Cross volunteers, to bury the corpses. Some 800 bodies, which filled the streets, were thus given decent burial.

After negotiations with the Zaire military authorities, it was agreed that patients from Kolwezi hospital, who had been forced to evacuate their rooms during the events, should be allowed to return to them.

Since all the shops had been looted, the delegate started an emergency relief action: on 24 May he travelled to Likasi to take delivery of a stock of 125 tons of foodstuffs (flour, milk, sugar, dried beans), made available to the ICRC free of charge by the Gécamines Company for the population at Kolwezi. With the aid of the Zaire Red Cross he organized the transportation of these goods, aboard trains marked with the red cross emblem, to Kolwezi, where they were distributed without delay to some 80,000 needy persons.

In view of the number of missing persons and dispersed families, the delegate set up a rudimentary tracing office in collaboration with the National Society.

On 1 June, the regional delegate went to Kinshasa for discussions with Government officials and to request authorization for the ICRC to visit all civilians and military personnel arrested in connection with the events in Shaba.

Based on its delegate's initial findings, the ICRC on that same day wrote to some twenty National Societies to inform them of what it was doing and request their material support.

#### **Consolidation of the action**

There were still many needs to be met, particularly in the medical field, as most of the hospitals and dispensaries had been looted. Accordingly, since the Zaire authorities had asked it to continue its relief work at Kolwezi and even to extend it to neighbouring localities, the ICRC established a programme providing for:

- the supply of food to some 80,000 persons who had been unable to benefit from the first distribution, as well as to hospitals and other benevolent institutions;

- special distributions of milk to 12,000 children;
- the supply of blankets and clothing to the hospitals and other institutions mentioned above;
- the provision of medicaments and basic medical supplies to the dispensaries and hospitals.

At the same time, it intended to intensify its efforts to trace missing persons and make further attempts to gain access to those detained in connection with the events.

To do so, it had to strengthen its organization; this it did by sending out a head of delegation to take over from the regional delegate, and three other delegates, one of them a doctor.

**ASSISTANCE.**—The first relief material, sent by air, arrived at destination in mid-June.

Other consignments followed until August, when the ICRC wound up its relief operation except for a few distributions of medical supplies.

In total, and not counting the foodstuffs made available by the Gécamines Company, the ICRC forwarded to Shaba 272 tons of relief material consisting of 250 tons of assorted food (including 22 tons of powdered milk made available by the Swiss Confederation), medicaments and medical supplies to a value of 153,000 francs, clothing, 5,000 blankets and plastic shrouds, altogether worth roughly 800,000 Swiss francs, including transport costs. The Swiss Red Cross participated in this action by supplying the clothing and some of the blankets.

It is worth noting that this action enabled some 25 medical centres to start working again.

**CENTRAL TRACING AGENCY.**—In June, the Assistant Director of the Central Tracing Agency (CTA) went to Zaire for a few weeks to set up, in collaboration with and under the auspices of the National Society, a Red Cross message service to help trace missing persons and exchange family news following the events in Shaba.

The ICRC medical delegate in Shaba participated in operations led by a Belgian doctor to exhume and rebury some 800 corpses buried after the fighting; the aim was to make a further attempt at identification. This action, which took place in September, permitted the identification of about 200 bodies, a list of which was transmitted to the CTA.

**DETAINEES.**—Since the beginning of its intervention, and several times afterwards, the ICRC approached the highest civilian and military authorities at Kinshasa, as well as the local authorities in Shaba, to gain access to all the civilian and military personnel detained in connection with the events.

During their overland travels, the ICRC delegates, and the medical delegate in particular, were able to make a number of visits to prisons in Shaba in July and August, and again in November and December. In this way they visited a dozen places of detention where they found hundreds of detainees. Medicaments were distributed in several of these establishments.

At the end of the year, the ICRC received official permission to visit all the detention centres in Shaba. It pursued its efforts to get this authorization extended to such establishments throughout the country, particularly those in Kinshasa, and to all persons detained in connection with the events.

During the weeks which followed the fighting, the ICRC also contacted the representatives of the FLNC in Europe in order, on the one hand, to offer medical assistance to any wounded persons held by the movement and, on the other, to obtain news of a number of missing persons and visit any prisoners that might be in FLNC hands. No results were achieved by these approaches.

### Disengagement

By the end of 1978, the ICRC had only two delegates left in Zaire. The emergency was over and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was responsible for assisting those who were returning to Shaba after seeking refuge in neighbouring countries. The main task of these two delegates was to carry out ICRC protection work (visiting places of detention) while continuing to evaluate the situation of the civilian population in Shaba with a view to informing the authorities and competent organizations of the requirements and distributing some medical supplies.

## MIDDLE EAST

Because of the continuing conflicts in the Middle East, the ICRC maintained its delegations in the area:

- one delegation in *Lebanon*, to bring help to the victims of the conflict in the country;
- one delegation in Israel and the occupied territories, as well as delegations in Egypt, Jordan and Syria, to carry on its activities in connection with the conflict between *Israel and the Arab countries*.

The entry of Israeli forces into southern Lebanon on 15 March 1978 caused the ICRC delegation in Tel Aviv to become directly involved, for the first time, in events occurring in Lebanon. The delegates, for example, were asked to deal with the following matters, in close collaboration with the ICRC delegation in Lebanon:

- persons captured in southern Lebanon by the Israeli armed forces and taken to Israel;
- Lebanese wounded treated in Israeli hospitals;
- searches for persons reported missing;
- general situation of the civilian population in the territories occupied by the Israeli armed forces, up to the time of their withdrawal on 13 June 1978.

ICRC activities in relation to these problems are dealt with in the chapter entitled Lebanon.

The ICRC delegation in Damascus was also engaged in helping the victims of the Lebanon conflict.

### Lebanon

Although the ICRC continued to perform its tasks throughout the country during the whole of 1978, the bulk of its activities in the first six months were carried out mainly in the south