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# I. ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

## AFRICA

ICRC activities in Africa increased in 1979 owing to the intensification of the armed conflicts which have been raging in that continent for several years, a trend which caused the ICRC to strengthen its field staff even though its area of intervention remained the same as in 1978. The conflicts in Rhodesia and Chad and the one between Uganda and Tanzania were the focal points of ICRC intervention although protective action was also taken in Zaire.

The ICRC kept delegates permanently in the following countries to deal with developments in the situation: Angola, Botswana, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Rhodesia, South Africa, Sudan, Zaire and Zambia. It also opened a delegation in Uganda and closed the one in Somalia. In addition, delegates carried out itinerant missions in Algeria, Congo, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia/South-West Africa, Somalia and Tanzania.

To cover its activities in Africa, the ICRC made a worldwide appeal on 31 May for more than 35 million Swiss francs for the period from 1 June to 31 December 1979. Like its two predecessors in 1978, this appeal was accompanied by overall situation reports giving an account of the programmes under way and the budgets established for continuing them. The attention of donors—governments and National Red Cross Societies—was also drawn to the ICRC's need of funds not specifically earmarked for given countries, to enable it to act swiftly in response to humanitarian emergencies and meet the requirements of victims.

Following this appeal, the ICRC had by 31 December 1979 received contributions totalling 25,554,644 Swiss francs (see Table VII, pages 94-95).

### Southern Africa

ICRC activities in southern Africa centred largely around the Rhodesian conflict, although the ICRC also continued to concern itself with the situations in South Africa, Namibia/South-West Africa and Angola.

In May, Mr. Jacob Burckhardt, a member of the Committee, travelled to South Africa and Rhodesia. In South Africa he attended one of the meetings which the heads of southern African delegations regularly hold to survey ICRC activities and discuss problems encountered. In Rhodesia he had interviews with the authorities and visited one of the many "protected villages" receiving ICRC medical assistance, and Seke camp which the ICRC had fitted out in the outskirts of Salisbury to receive persons displaced from rural areas.

### The Rhodesian conflict

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The name Rhodesia is used in this Report for the sake of simplicity and clarity, the country having changed its name several times in keeping with political developments throughout the year.

Within the context of the conflict in Rhodesia, the ICRC was active in the protection and assistance fields and through the Central Tracing Agency (CTA: see page 65), not only in Rhodesia itself but also in Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia, in which there were many Rhodesian refugees.

Although the main events which marked the political development of the country and therefore of the conflict had no profound impact on ICRC action, they certainly led to frequent changes as regards the people with whom the ICRC had to deal.

### ICRC appeal

The ICRC was keenly concerned about the worsening of the situation in the early months of 1979: guerrilla activity became increasingly widespread in urban as well as rural areas, and both repressive measures and expeditions into neighbouring countries were stepped up accordingly. Martial law was extended throughout almost the entire country except in a few corridors between Salisbury and the major towns. The chief victim of this mounting violence was the civilian population. On 19 March, therefore, the ICRC decided to appeal to all parties to the conflict to remember the basic principles of international humanitarian law and their obligations towards both civilians and captured or wounded combatants.

On the one hand, the appeal denounced the general deterioration in the situation and the widespread intimidation of civilians, stressed the ICRC's concern about the failure to apply the basic principles of international humanitarian law and called for steps to remedy the situation; on the other, it dwelt on the need for the ICRC to be allowed to carry out its protection and assistance activities freely in accordance with the mandate assigned to it by the international community (the Rhodesian authorities having sometimes banned ICRC work in certain regions) and for its personnel to be respected. The appeal included specific requests addressed both to the

Salisbury authorities and to the two "Patriotic Front" liberation movements, namely, the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU).

Besides the main parties concerned, i.e. the Salisbury Government, ZANU and ZAPU, the appeal was addressed to the "front line" countries (Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia), some of which declared their readiness to support ICRC efforts. The appeal was also sent to the United Nations Secretary-General who upheld it in a public statement, to the Chairman of the United Nations Security Council, to the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and to the 145 States signatories to the Geneva Conventions, including Great Britain. It was also the subject of a press conference given in Geneva by the President of the ICRC on 20 March and was widely disseminated by the international media.

The appeal was subsequently handed to the participants at the 22nd Commonwealth Conference, held in Lusaka in August 1979, accompanied by a note to the effect that no specific results had so far been achieved.

### **Safety of delegates and respect for the red cross emblem**

As a result of the worsening situation and the intensification of fighting, particularly guerrilla raids, the ICRC became extremely worried about the safety of delegates and respect for the red cross emblem, a problem raised, inter alia, in the appeal of 19 March. ICRC field activities had to be suspended on several occasions because security conditions were deemed inadequate. Travel outside the urban areas was completely interrupted during the electoral period in April.

The ICRC made several approaches to the authorities in Salisbury and the front line countries and to the Patriotic Front leaders with a view to making life safer for its delegates.

At the practical level, it sought to improve its aircraft marking system and it prepared for the liberation movements maps showing where its medical teams and delegates were operating in Rhodesia. Moreover, all the parties to the conflict were given notice of every ICRC flight.

The Zambian authorities accorded the ICRC the right to notify the Salisbury authorities orally as to where its delegates were heading on their humanitarian missions, and all ICRC clinics in the camps in Botswana were marked with the red cross emblem.

Lastly, and still in connexion with the problem of safety, the ICRC continued the information campaign it had launched in the countries of southern Africa during the second half of 1978 (see Annual Report 1978, p. 10 and, in this Report, the chapter on "Information and Public Relations").

## **Activities in Rhodesia**

### **Protection**

*PROTECTION OF DETAINEES.* — In June and December of 1979, ICRC delegates, including a doctor, visited Wha Wha prison; in June they visited Chikurubi prison where the three detainees interviewed were subsequently released (see below). During their visits, the delegates had private interviews with 234 persons detained without trial under the Emergency Power Regulations, of whom 141 were subsequently released by the Muzorewa Government (138 from Wha Wha and 3 from Chikurubi). Reports on the visits were sent to the authorities.

In spite of repeated approaches to the successive competent authorities in Rhodesia, both by headquarters in Geneva and by the Salisbury delegation, the ICRC was unable to get permission to visit other places or extend its protection work to other categories of person arrested in connexion with the Rhodesian conflict (persons arrested under martial law, nationalist combatants captured during the fighting, persons serving prison sentences for security reasons, etc.).

One such step worthy of special mention was the meeting on 21 August between Mr. Frank Schmidt, the delegate-general for Africa, and Bishop Muzorewa, the Prime Minister in Salisbury to discuss a formal request for access to all persons detained in virtue of the hostilities.

Following the arrival of Lord Soames in Salisbury, the ICRC made contact with various British Government representatives; on 12 December, for instance, the President of the ICRC met the Ambassador of Britain's Permanent Mission at Geneva and a verbal note was handed over summarizing the ICRC's concern as regards protection.

On 27 December, the ICRC delegates at Salisbury took up the same problem with the British Governor who at all times maintained a position of reserve vis-à-vis the ICRC's request to visit all those arrested in connexion with the Rhodesian conflict, contending that it was for the future Salisbury Government to take such a decision.

*PROTECTION OF CIVILIAN POPULATION.* — The ICRC's chief intervention in this respect took the form of an appeal on 19 March urging the parties to the conflict to respect the basic principles of international humanitarian law (see above).

This problem was also raised regularly by the Salisbury delegation during its frequent meetings with the Rhodesian authorities. For instance, it gave them lists of villages that had been burned during military operations and drew their attention to specific instances of ill-treatment. The delegate-general for Africa also discussed the matter with Prime Minister Muzorewa, to whom he handed a copy of the appeal of 19 March.

## Material assistance

**ASSISTANCE TO THE CIVILIAN POPULATION.** — The ICRC continued supplying material assistance to those displaced by the fighting in the provinces of Mashonaland, Manicaland, Matabeleland, the Midlands and Victoria and in Salisbury.

Relief was distributed to the rural population herded into "protected villages" by the Salisbury authorities or crowding into the main townships to flee the fighting. Distributions were made regularly or once only, depending on need and on the situation prevailing in each region. An average of 70,000 persons a month benefited from ICRC material assistance.

The civilian population in rural areas also received relief through missions which the ICRC supplied according to need.

Then again, the ICRC pursued its special programme of assistance to children by distributing milk and proteinized biscuits. Relief materials were also supplied, to a lesser extent, to the local Red Cross and various charity organizations.

With regard to townships, the ICRC, in collaboration with the local authorities, continued to build dry-brick shelters to house needy families at Seke, in the outskirts of Salisbury. By the end of the year, 452 families (i.e. roughly 2,260 persons) selected according to ICRC criteria were installed in the camp.

**ASSISTANCE TO DETAINEES.** — In addition to its protection work, the ICRC brought material assistance to detainees by supplying them periodically with various relief materials (foodstuffs, recreational goods, educational matter, clothing and soap). Since the ICRC had no access to persons detained under martial law, it had aid delivered to them by priests.

The families of detainees were provided with free transport for visiting their relatives in captivity: 5,775 persons were thus able to pay visits to Wha Wha prison thanks to a bus service organized and financed by the ICRC.

In 1979, material assistance (excluding medical supplies) amounted to 3,108 tons (including 2,947 tons of foodstuffs, blankets, household equipment, clothing and soap) worth a total of 2,783,869 Swiss francs.

## Medical assistance

As in 1978, the ICRC continued to play a major role in this field because the worsening of the general situation hit the local medical infrastructure hard, particularly in rural areas. The ICRC developed its medical assistance to the civilian population throughout the country insofar as security conditions permitted.

By the end of the year the ICRC was financially supporting 33 clinics (25 in 1978), most of them in the "protected villages". Medical teams visited the clinics to treat difficult cases, evacuate serious cases to hospital and deliver medicaments. They also visited mission hospitals to distribute medicaments and carry out surgical operations.

In addition, a nutrition specialist seconded from the League conducted a survey mission among the "protected villages"

tended by the ICRC, travelling extensively in southern Manicaland, Victoria Province, Central Mashonaland and Matabeleland, etc., where the nutritional situation was particularly disturbing. Examinations of children between one and nine years revealed that 30 per cent were suffering from a shortage of energy elements. The nutritionist's conclusions and recommendations were transmitted to the authorities. For its own part, the ICRC stepped up its relief supplies to children suffering from malnutrition. A locally-recruited nurse followed up the survey and conducted a second.

Under the responsibility of a medical co-ordinator, the ICRC medical assistance in Rhodesia was dispensed by two teams each consisting of a medical delegate and two nurses, one of whom was engaged locally, and by about 15 medical assistance and 44 volunteers from the local Red Cross. The Red Cross Societies of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden helped in this work by making doctors and nurses available.

Altogether, the ICRC medical teams conducted 24,000 consultations, gave 29,900 vaccinations and performed 771 surgical operations in 1979. 230,456 Swiss francs-worth of medical supplies were distributed during the year.

## Central Tracing Agency

The tracing office within the Salisbury delegation set about registering information on the detainees visited. It also enquired into the whereabouts of missing persons and passed on family news. Some 440 such enquiries were opened in 1979 and, by the end of the year, 261 of them had been completed, including 207 with positive results. In addition, seven repatriation operations took place under ICRC auspices between Rhodesia and the front line countries.

**ORGANIZATION.** — Throughout the year, the ICRC had in Rhodesia some 20 delegates, including medical personnel, plus 185 locally-recruited employees.

Besides its Salisbury delegation, the ICRC had regional offices at Bulawayo, Umtali, Gwelo and Fort Victoria, each managed by a delegate with the assistance of local employees.

The ICRC had the use of three aircraft to enable delegates to travel and relief to be transported: two Piper Cherokees and, from May onwards, an Islander aircraft of greater capacity.

## Activities in Zambia

In Zambia, the ICRC concentrated on medical and material aid to refugees in the camps run by the ZAPU wing of the Patriotic Front. Apart from this regular assistance work, it intervened on behalf of those wounded at the camps following Rhodesian military raids.

## Material assistance

Assistance activities were centred mainly on three camps: the "girls" camp at Lusaka, the "boys" camp of about



10,000 youths which was transferred from Lusaka to Solwezi in the north of the country, and Shilenda camp, formerly the Nampundwe camp, also at Solwezi, where the ICRC delegates had counted about 2,500 people. At the Solwezi "boys" camp, to which no other organization had been providing relief, the ICRC housed almost all the refugees in tents and organized daily deliveries of milk.

Relief was procured on the basis of ZAPU requests after the ICRC delegates had evaluated the needs. ZAPU was usually responsible for distribution, although delegates made frequent inspection calls at the camps.

Emergency relief was also supplied to the University Hospital at Lusaka and to Solwezi hospital which took in ZAPU refugees wounded in Rhodesian attacks, as well as to stricken camps. ZAPU also received bedding for the medical centres at which its sick and handicapped were gathered.

In 1979, 268 tons of relief (i.e. 1,325 tents, 48,620 blankets, 13 tons of clothing, 107 tons of foodstuffs consisting largely of powdered milk and babyfood, and 34 tons of soap) worth 1,335,737 Swiss francs was distributed in Zambia. To this must be added a further 70,303 francs-worth of building materials for improving the sanitation facilities in certain camps. The ICRC also gave the Zambian Red Cross 50,000 Swiss francs-worth of financial backing for the construction and fitting of warehouses. The European Economic Community (EEC) and the Finnish Red Cross gave donations to help the ICRC in its action.

In order to co-ordinate assistance to refugees, the ICRC delegates kept in touch with representatives of other organizations such as the World Lutheran Federation (which maintained a permanent presence at the "boys" camp where it set up a medical team), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Programme (WFP), the EEC, UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and Caritas, etc.

### Medical assistance

The ICRC's role in this respect was to pursue the implementation of public health, first-aid and medicament-distribution projects and to continue studying a "prosthesis" project. These projects had been prepared in July 1978 by Dr. Rémi Russbach, the ICRC's Chief Medical Officer (see Annual Report 1978, p. 14), in agreement with the President of ZAPU and the Zambian authorities.

As part of the public health project, the ICRC financed the construction of latrines and drilling operations to supply the "girls" camp with drinking water. The sanitary engineer made available by WHO, who had already been in Zambia in 1978, carried out another mission to the country for the ICRC to verify the application of the practical recommendations made during his previous visit and advise the refugees and ZAPU officials in matters of hygiene and public health.

The ICRC continued to organize and finance transport for refugees attending the first-aid courses organized by the Zambian Red Cross, provide them with meal allowances and

make teaching material available to the National Society.

Lastly, the ICRC delivered 38,500 Swiss francs-worth of orthopaedic equipment as well as sundry bedding to the Prosthesis Centre at Lusaka University Hospital, where ZAPU amputees were treated.

After Rhodesian attacks on ZAPU camps, ICRC delegates took several emergency measures to deliver medicaments to Lusaka and Solwezi Hospitals and sometimes to help evacuate the wounded. This work was done in close collaboration with the competent authorities and the Zambian Red Cross.

In 1979, the ICRC distributed in Zambia medicaments and medical and paramedical equipment worth 192,095 Swiss francs, as well as supplying an ambulance to Meheba Camp for the evacuation of the Angolan refugees there.

### Central Tracing Agency

The Tracing Office opened in the Lusaka delegation towards the end of 1978 to cover Zambia, Tanzania, Botswana and Malawi set itself to tracing persons missing or separated from their families, usually as a result of the Rhodesian conflict, to passing on family news, issuing travel documents and organizing repatriation to Rhodesia and other countries of the region.

The ICRC received over 279 applications for enquiries or repatriation since December 1978. Of the 118 cases closed by the end of 1979, 82 had been settled satisfactorily.

The ICRC strove to obtain from ZAPU permission to arrange for exchanges of messages between refugees in Zambia and their families left behind in Rhodesia. Late in December, ZAPU for the first time passed on a reply to a family message received from Rhodesia.

### Protection

During their various contacts with the Zambian authorities, the ICRC delegates kept open a dialogue on the possibility of resuming protection work in Zambia (visits to persons arrested for illegal entry into the country and to those detained under article 31 of the Internal Security Act) but no progress had been made in this respect by the end of 1979.

*ORGANIZATION.* — In 1979, the regional delegation at Lusaka had a strength of seven delegates and 13 employees recruited locally.

### Activities in Botswana

The ICRC's activities in Botswana were largely connected with the problem of Rhodesian refugees there. Throughout the year the ICRC maintained a representative at the three camps of Francistown, Dukwe and Selebi Pikwe, which by the end of 1979 had a total population of about 20,000. As in 1978, the assistance given was primarily medical.

In order to carry out its activities, the ICRC kept in close touch with UNHCR, the World Lutheran Federation and WFP—organizations which were also supporting the Botswana Government's efforts on behalf of the refugees—as well as with the Botswana authorities themselves.

### Medical assistance

All three camps had a dispensary built by the Botswana Council for Refugees and were regularly visited once or twice a week by an ICRC medical team (one doctor and two nurses) whose job it was to organize the camp health service and treat difficult cases, medical assistance being provided in the interval by nurses engaged locally by the ICRC (nine persons altogether). In view of the steady rise in the refugee population, emphasis was also placed on hygiene and the prevention of disease: to this end, the medical team trained in each camp a number of refugees (about 50 persons) in first aid and hygiene. During a further mission in April, incidentally, the WHO sanitary engineer (see also page 16) noted that progress had been made as regards sanitation at the Dukwe and Francistown camps; he also indicated what further measures should be taken, particularly as regards supplies of drinking water, and organized a number of courses for the refugees on the basic principles of hygiene and the use of disinfectants.

From the end of March to late December, Francistown Hospital to which refugees requiring in-patient treatment were brought was reinforced by a laboratory assistant provided by the ICRC. Moreover, like the hospital at Selebi Pikwe, it received frequent visits from the ICRC medical delegate.

The ICRC also took action following the appearance of several cases of malnutrition among children, particularly at Dukwe where vitamins were distributed to all youngsters. Towards the end of the year a nutrition specialist made available to the ICRC by the Swedish Red Cross carried out a survey in all three refugee camps and, after thoroughly examining all the children there, found that the situation had improved. Incidentally, the ICRC was not responsible for food aid to the refugees in Botswana.

Medicaments worth 159,282 Swiss francs were distributed among the refugee camps in 1979 and medical equipment donated by UNICEF was supplied to the two hospitals mentioned above.

Lastly, the National Societies of the Netherlands, Australia and the Federal Republic of Germany made medical personnel available to the ICRC.

### Material assistance

Besides medical relief, the ICRC distributed tents, blankets, cloth, baby garments and second-hand clothing, etc. in the three Botswana refugee camps, as well as foodstuffs mainly in the form of powdered milk donated by the EEC. Aid was also given to the reception centre at Bobonang, one of the arrival points for refugees entering Botswana.

During 1979, the ICRC provided 14 tons of relief materials (including medical relief) worth 1,161,263 Swiss francs. Apart

from the EEC and UNICEF, ICRC action was helped by gifts in kind from the Swedish Red Cross, the British High Commissioner, the Netherlands Embassy, the Finnish Refugee Council, the British Council of Churches, the British Government and various local donors.

Lastly, the ICRC gave financial support worth 30,000 Swiss francs to the Botswana Red Cross for the purchase of vehicles intended for its local branches at Francistown and Selebi Pikwe.

### Central Tracing Agency

The CTA delegate based at Lusaka made frequent missions to Botswana, where the Agency's office was permanently attended by a local employee. The office's main activity was to register children aged under 16 years living at Dukwe camp. From the time this action started in November 1978 until the end of 1979, their number had risen to 4,038.

Several approaches were made to try to persuade ZAPU officials to authorize exchanges of family messages between refugee children and their families who had stayed behind in Rhodesia, but these efforts were in vain.

Lastly, the ICRC delegates lent a hand whenever people were transferred between Rhodesia and Zambia.

### Protection

The ICRC continued its protection efforts on behalf of aliens without diplomatic protection being detained in prisons or at police stations. Visits were made to ten places of detention at Gaborone, Lobatse, Francistown, Selebi Pikwe, Kasane, Maun and Ghanzi. The ICRC regularly requested lists of such detainees and received the first one in December.

*ORGANIZATION.* — The ICRC kept two offices in Botswana, one at Gaborone and the other at Francistown, and had on average about half-a-dozen delegates there.

### Activities in Mozambique

In Mozambique, the ICRC was mainly concerned with the fate of victims of the Rhodesian conflict: Rhodesian refugees under ZANU control, wounded ZANU combatants and persons displaced by the fighting. It also granted material support for the Mozambique Government's hospitals to help cope with their increasing tasks arising out of the fighting in the neighbouring country.

To do its job properly, the ICRC maintained close contacts with the Mozambique authorities, particularly the Ministry of Health and the official body responsible for refugees, known as the "Nucleo de apoio aos refugiados e movimentos de libertação" (NARML), as well as with the Patriotic Front (ZANU) and UNHCR which were partly responsible for the distribution of relief.

## **Mission by the Director of the Operations Department**

At the end of February, Mr. Jean-Pierre Hocké, Director of the Operations Department, accompanied by Mr. Michel Veuthey, the delegate to international organizations, carried out a mission to Mozambique to plan and control ICRC action there.

Among other leading figures, Mr. Hocké and Mr. Veuthey met Dr. Helder Martins, the Minister of Health, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Veira, Director of the Central Bank of Mozambique and Mr. Robert Mugabe, the President of ZANU.

This mission made it possible, inter alia, to develop contacts with ZANU and specify the scope of ICRC intervention. The Director of Operations confirmed that the ICRC was prepared to consider, in collaboration with ZANU, a programme of emergency medical aid to civilians and military personnel and another to provide supplementary food aid to the refugees in Mozambique, especially for women and children. Assistance for displaced persons in certain ZANU-controlled areas of Rhodesia was also envisaged, provided that ICRC delegates could assess requirements and control distribution.

An agreement setting out the terms of ICRC-ZANU co-operation was signed at the end of February. It provided for ICRC intervention in four fields:

- continued medical assistance to ZANU war amputees;
- the supply of medicaments according to ZANU requirements;
- assistance in training by making available typewriters and sewing machines to foster the social reintegration of war amputees;
- the granting of material aid for refugees.

For its part, ZANU was required to supply precise information so that these projects could be more thoroughly prepared and implemented, to permit visits locally and provide accurate reports on how the relief was being utilized.

As will emerge later, by the end of 1979 the ICRC had started or was continuing to provide aid in the first three fields; its material assistance to refugees and displaced persons was still confined to a few refugee camps in Mozambique and could not be extended to the ZANU-controlled areas of Rhodesia because ZANU had not submitted any projects to the ICRC.

### **Medical assistance**

The medical action initiated in April 1978 on behalf of ZANU war amputees continued throughout the year. The ICRC not only contributed financially to the treatment and fitting of such persons but also sent prostheses and physio-therapeutic equipment from Geneva. In addition, it provided the Centre housing the amputees with sundry relief including foodstuffs and bedding.

The ICRC also worked out a project for restoring the buildings of the ZANU Invalid Centre at Machava. The work had hardly started when it had to be abandoned because the Mozambique Government decided to transfer all the patients

in the Centre to the refugee camp at Merotte in Nampula Province.

The ICRC then paid three visits to Merotte, delivering medical kits, 145 mattresses, 3 tents, 20 sewing machines and typewriters to the NARML for use in the camp. Zanu amputees were examined by an ICRC medical delegate who made proposals to the authorities concerned for improving health conditions within the camp.

By the end of 1979, some fifty ZANU war amputees had been fitted since the ICRC began its action in 1978.

Two projects were carried out for supplying medicaments and medical equipment: one involved a gift of 12 emergency medical kits to government hospitals at Tete, Chimoio, Chokwe, Beira, Maputo and Gaza, and the other a donation of 30 basic medical kits to ZANU combatants.

The Mozambique Government also received two ambulances and medicaments to combat a cholera epidemic which broke out in February 1979, while ZANU received a gift of 600 first aid kits from the Finnish Red Cross, as well as two vehicles.

In 1979, the ICRC supplied medicaments and medical equipment worth 167,085 Swiss francs.

### **Material assistance**

As mentioned earlier, the beneficiaries of ICRC medical assistance occasionally received non-medical relief, too. In addition, 500 tons of rice and 100 tons of powdered milk from the EEC together with used clothing donated by the Swedish Red Cross and footwear given by the National Red Cross Society of Finland, were distributed among refugees and displaced persons.

Altogether, ICRC assistance, including purchases and donations, amounted to roughly 650 tons of relief (medicaments, foodstuffs, clothing, tents, mattresses, vehicles and sundry mechanical equipment) worth a total of 1,188,633 Swiss francs.

### **Protection**

The ICRC continued to refer to ZANU cases of mostly Rhodesian civilians who had been reported missing and were presumed to be in ZANU hands, in order to establish whether they had been captured and, if so, to visit them. Although no replies were received, ZANU did release during the year a few persons on whose behalf the ICRC had interceded.

The ICRC also played a neutral intermediary role between Mozambique and Rhodesia by intervening, at the request of the Rhodesian Government, which wished to return to Mozambique a Bulgarian engineer who had been working there and had been arrested in September by Rhodesian security forces during a military operation against ZANU. With Mozambique's agreement, the Bulgarian was transferred from Rhodesia to Mozambique via South Africa on 21 September under the auspices of the ICRC.

At its own request, ZANU was handed a memorandum on the application of international humanitarian law in the

Rhodesian conflict, during the mission by the Director of ICRC Operations.

**ORGANIZATION.** — From the end of May onwards, the regional delegate responsible for Mozambique and Angola was seconded by a new delegate based permanently at Maputo.

## Angola

In 1979, ICRC activities in Angola related both to the Namibian conflict on the Angolan border between the South African armed forces and combatants of the South-West African People's Organization (SWAPO) and to the aftermath of the 1975-1976 conflict in Angola, where armed opposition movements were still active, especially in the centre and south of the country.

### Protection

#### *SOUTH AFRICAN PRISONERS DETAINED BY SWAPO.*

— The ICRC continued its visits to the South African prisoner of war detained by SWAPO in Angola since February 1978 (see Annual Report 1978, page 16). Although two visits were made, the ICRC delegate was unable to conduct private interviews or inspect the place of detention. The prisoner was given sundry relief during these visits.

The ICRC also intervened on behalf of a South African civilian captured by SWAPO in November 1978 but could not get permission to visit him during his detention. After his release in late August 1979, however, the prisoner was handed over to the ICRC and repatriated to South Africa via Zambia. The delegate responsible for Angola and the delegations at Pretoria and Lusaka all lent a hand in this operation.

*ANGOLAN NATIONALS DETAINED IN NAMIBIA/SOUTH-WEST AFRICA.* — As the result of a navigational error, an Angolan aircraft made a forced landing in Namibia/South-West Africa on 15 July 1979 and the pilot and his four passengers were detained.

Having no diplomatic relations with South Africa, the Angolan Government asked the ICRC to negotiate the repatriation of the passengers and the aircraft. The Government in Pretoria responded favourably but pointed out that a South African aircraft had been in Angolan hands since April 1979. The ICRC declared its willingness, in view of the humanitarian aspects involved, to see to the repatriation of the persons in question; as to the exchange of aircraft, it offered to act as an intermediary between the Governments. The delegate responsible for Angola and the regional delegate based at Pretoria made several approaches before the repatriation operation was effected on 16 December. The four Angolan passengers were repatriated under ICRC auspices. At the same time, a pilot and a mechanic from South Africa went to Angola to check the state of the South African aircraft

and fly it home. The aircraft were exchanged and the Angolan pilot repatriated on 22 December in the presence of Angolan and South African government representatives.

### Assistance to displaced persons

The tense domestic situation in the centre and south of the country where armed opposition movements were operating led to major displacements of population. In response to a formal request for aid made in April by the Angolan Government, the ICRC dispatched early in June a relief specialist and a nutrition expert made available by the Swedish Red Cross to Huambo and Benguela Provinces to determine more accurately the nature and magnitude of the local needs. An identical mission was made at the end of September in the province of Bié after the Angolan authorities had indicated severe shortages there.

During their missions, the ICRC delegates found that the conflict raging in those provinces was creating major food, medical and clothing shortages, that the situation was particularly grave in Bié Province and that the Angolan Government had neither the staff nor the material facilities needed to deal with the problem on its own, thus justifying ICRC intervention.

As a first step, the ICRC made a limited emergency distribution of some 40 tons of foodstuffs donated by the Swedish Red Cross; the beneficiaries were displaced persons who had recently arrived in the provinces visited and not yet found a livelihood, and the poorer members of the local population, particularly orphans. Distributions were effected in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary of State for Social Affairs and the Angolan Red Cross.

Before engaging in broader assistance work, the ICRC approached the Angolan authorities at the end of August with a view to solving the important questions of safety and of freedom of travel and action in the regions affected, previous missions having encountered difficulties in this respect. The leaders of UNITA, the main opposition movement, were approached at the same time.

At the beginning of November, the ICRC submitted to the Angolan Red Cross—its partner in this action—a draft agreement on relief action for displaced persons. This draft, which was also transmitted to the Angolan authorities for information, set out the terms of ICRC intervention and was approved by the Angolan Red Cross. A technical operations plan was to be drawn up later.

By the end of 1979, 61 tons of foodstuffs donated by the Swedish and Swiss Red Cross Societies to a value of 88,178 Swiss francs had been forwarded to Angola, the transport costs (amounting to 212,859 Swiss francs) being borne by the ICRC.

### Medical assistance

As tentatively planned in 1978 during the mission by the ICRC's Chief Medical Officer (see Annual Report 1978, page 16), the ICRC set about initiating, with the approval of the



Angolan authorities, medical assistance action for war amputees in Huambo Province. A physiotherapist was sent out early in January to assess the situation of war amputees in Angola and make an appraisal of the treatment facilities available locally, for the ICRC wanted all the human and material resources it could get locally for producing and maintaining prostheses. The Angolan authorities for their part undertook to place at the ICRC's disposal a building, the Bomba Alta Centre at Huambo.

As a result of this mission, an agreement was signed between the ICRC and the Angolan Red Cross and came into force early in August 1979 for an initial period of two years. The ICRC undertook to send out a team of prosthesis and physiotherapy technicians, supply both the orthopaedic equipment needed for starting the action and the plant required for producing that equipment locally and, lastly, to train supervisory staff. For its part the Angolan Red Cross undertook to facilitate the ICRC's task.

The ICRC team was on the spot by 2 August; it consisted of five persons (three physiotherapists and two prosthetists) but

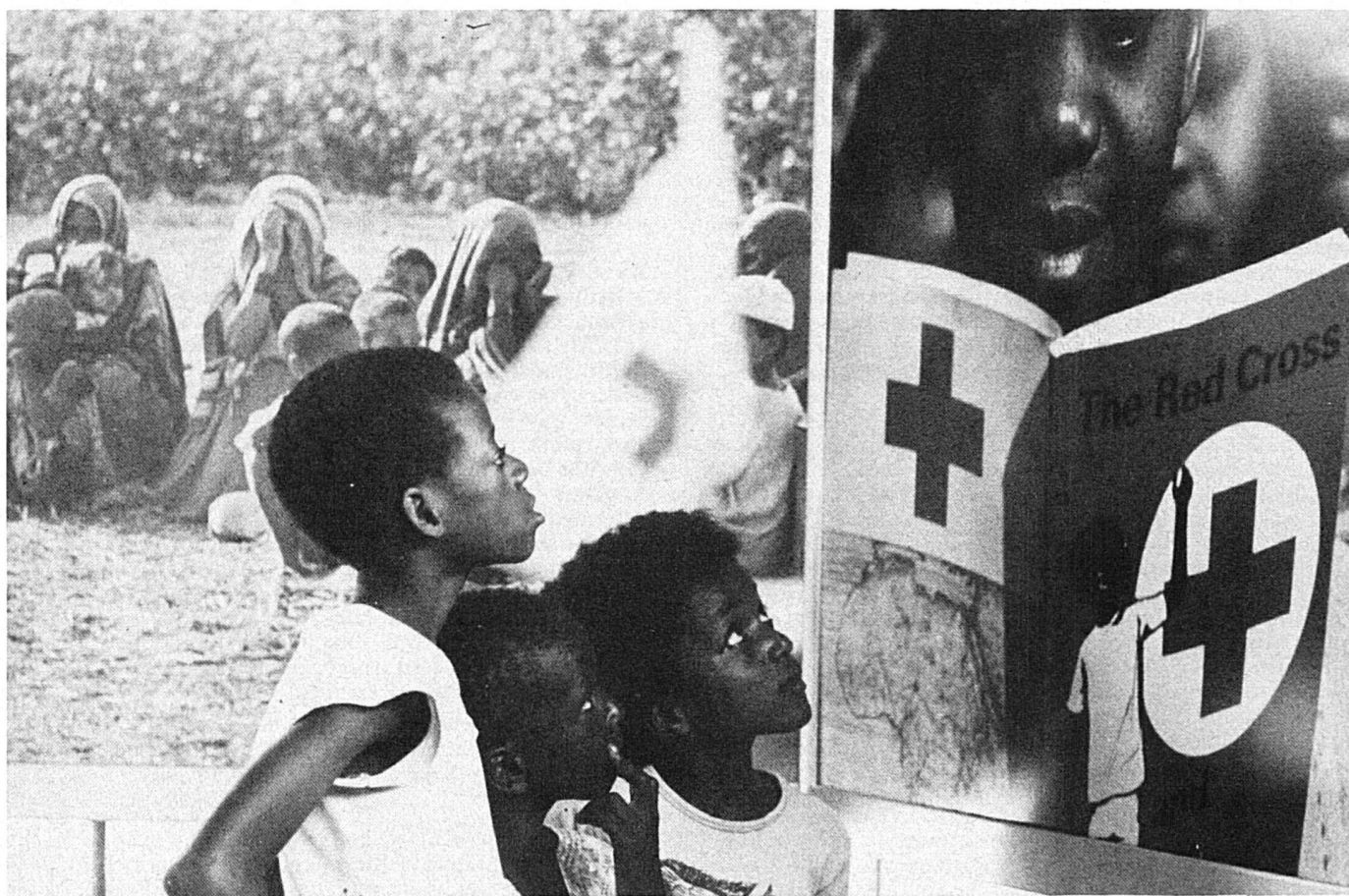
was later augmented by two more. The action got under way with a consignment of goods including various tools, vehicles, medicaments and food. A second consignment was sent in mid-October to increase the working capacity of the orthopaedic centre at Bomba Alta. Altogether, these two consignments were worth 278,300 Swiss francs.

Some 30 people had been fitted with prostheses by the end of the year.

## South Africa and Namibia/South-West Africa

### Protection

The ICRC continued its protection work on behalf of security prisoners sentenced in South Africa and persons detained under section 10 of the Internal Security Amendment Act, the two categories to whom it had access in South Africa. At the same time it took further steps to gain access to other





categories of political and security detainees imprisoned in South Africa or Namibia/South-West Africa by the South African authorities. For instance, this question was raised by Mr. Alexandre Hay, the President of ICRC, during an interview he had on 8 March with Mr. R.F. Botha, the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was passing through Switzerland. The ICRC regional delegate based in Pretoria also made three visits to Namibia/South-West Africa to meet local authorities, including the General Administrator of the territory. Unfortunately, none of these approaches bore any fruit in 1979.

**PERSONS IMPRISONED BECAUSE OF THE INTERNAL SITUATION.** — The South African authorities authorized only one series of visits by the ICRC to persons imprisoned because of the internal situation. These visits took place in August, when four ICRC delegates—including the delegate-general for Africa and a medical delegate—travelled to six detention centres holding 488 sentenced security prisoners. At the time of the visit there was nobody detained under section 10 of the Internal Security Amendment Act.

**ANGOLAN NATIONALS DETAINED IN NAMIBIA/SOUTH-WEST AFRICA.** — The ICRC delegate at Pretoria visited five Angolan nationals temporarily detained in Namibia/South-West Africa after their aircraft had made a forced landing there. He was instrumental in having them repatriated (see page 19).

#### Assistance

The ICRC developed a programme of assistance for detainees, their families and former detainees. Prisoners were also brought relief following the August visit.

With regard to aid to the families of detainees and to former detainees, which had been approved in principle by the Minister of Justice, contact was established with the South African Council of Churches (SACC)—another organization active in this field—with a view to co-ordinating the actions of both institutions. The ICRC agreed to bear the transport costs of the second annual family visit to the detainees, the first one being financed by the SACC. The ICRC also supplied food aid to the poorer families and former detainees. This assistance effort involved a financial commitment of 13,100 Swiss francs.

#### Other activities

In liaison with the ICRC delegation at Nairobi and the South African Red Cross, the delegation at Pretoria collaborated in the repatriation of South African and Namibian nationals from Kenya.

The delegate based at Pretoria also took part in the Seminar on the Dissemination of Knowledge of International Humanitarian Law, organized by the South African Red Cross late in October (see page 72).

## East Africa

### Conflict between Uganda and Tanzania

In October 1978 the ICRC had offered its services to the Governments of Tanzania and Uganda when Ugandan troops had occupied the Kagera region in the extreme north of Tanzania during the initial stages of the conflict between the two countries. In response to a request by the Tanzanian Red Cross, the ICRC had started in November to assist displaced persons in the region. It had not been asked to intervene in Uganda at that stage, but there was an agreement that the Ugandan Red Cross would call for assistance if the need arose.

Following a flare-up of the hostilities early in 1979, the ICRC again offered its services to both parties to the conflict on 27 January. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tanzania acknowledged receipt of the offer on 31 January, stating that the ICRC would be called in if the need were felt.

The fighting continued until the end of the first half of 1979—the troops of the Ugandan National Liberation Front having joined forces with the Tanzanian troops in the second half of March—and resulted in the fall of Kampala and Arua, in April and June respectively.

In view of the violence of the combats, the President of the ICRC sent a message to the Prime Minister of Tanzania on 5 April at the request of the President of the Ugandan Red Cross and national religious authorities, drawing attention to the obligations to be fulfilled under the Geneva Conventions, to which Tanzania became a party on 12 December 1962, and also requesting the Tanzanian authorities to spare civilian installations (hospitals, dispensaries, schools, churches, etc.) in the combat areas. In addition, the ICRC decided to send a delegation to Uganda; it comprised a head of delegation, an administrator and a Central Tracing Agency delegate and it arrived at Kampala on 4 May.

#### Uganda

Early in February the Ugandan Red Cross transmitted to the ICRC a request for medical assistance to the displaced population in the southern part of the country together with permission from the Ugandan Ministry of Health to visit the camps where the victims were living.

The regional delegate for East Africa based at Nairobi therefore went to Uganda, accompanied by a medical delegate, from 24 February to 8 March in order to seek permission to visit Tanzanian prisoners of war as well as to assess the needs of the displaced persons. As a result of this mission, the ICRC decided to carry out a relief operation in the Ibuga camp, which was among those visited and housed mainly Tanzanian civilians. On the other hand, the question of visits to Tanzanian prisoners of war could not be discussed with the competent authorities.

## Protection

When the Lule Government came into power, the head of the Kampala delegation broached the subject of protection with the authorities and obtained permission to visit the members of the previous régime who were held in detention.

Visits to detainees started at Luzira prison on 25 May and continued throughout the year, the Binaisa Government having renewed the authorizations delivered by its predecessor. Delegates concentrated their efforts on the Kampala and Jinja prisons, which housed most of the detainees. However, visits were also carried out to provincial prisons, in particular Tororo (in the east of the country), where Ugandan refugees from the Kakamega camp in Kenya, which had been evacuated early in July under an agreement concluded between the Ugandan and Kenyan Governments, were being held temporarily.

Between May and December 1979 some 4,500 detainees in 18 detention centres were visited by the delegates in accordance with the conditions laid down by the ICRC. A list was also compiled of detainees in all the Kampala prisons.

## Material assistance

In order to cater for the emergency requirements of the civilian population fleeing north and west from the capital upon the approach of the Tanzanian and Ugandan National Liberation Front troops, the ICRC distributed foodstuffs to almost 5,000 displaced persons in camps near the Tanzanian frontier. Relief material was also delivered to various hospitals.

However, the ICRC did not wish to become involved in long-term assistance work once the emergency was over and it had explained its position to the Ugandan authorities and Red Cross in May. The League decided to support the National Society and it was agreed to share the work as follows: the ICRC would continue its protection and emergency medical assistance work, while the League would help the Ugandan Red Cross with its relief programme. Agreement was also reached between the League and the ICRC as to the ways and means in which the National Society would be helped to resume and expand its activities.

Apart from a little relief work limited to the purchase of clothing and blankets, ICRC direct assistance was focused largely on forwarding essential equipment and goods (beds, mattresses, blankets, soap, etc.) to hospitals and dispensaries, as part of the League-ICRC joint effort with the active participation of the National Red Cross. The ICRC provided the logistical support (vehicles) which enabled the distribution of medicaments and relief material to proceed smoothly.

The ICRC also supplied some relief material to prisons in order to improve living conditions for the detainees.

Material assistance provided by the ICRC in 1979 amounted to 78 tons of relief supplies worth 363,000 Swiss francs.

## Medical assistance

Following the intensification of the fighting during the second quarter of the year, visits to the principal medical

centres and dispensaries both at Kampala and in the surrounding areas had revealed a general need for medicaments of all kinds. The ICRC therefore decided to carry out an emergency medical assistance operation in collaboration with the National Society. In the first half of May an initial consignment of medicaments was forwarded to Kampala and distributions were started in the southern and north-eastern parts of the country with the help of Ugandan Red Cross volunteers. Later on, medical assistance was stepped up and extended to all regions where medical requirements had been seen to be urgent. Because of logistic difficulties (shortage of vehicles and interruption of communications), the ICRC purchased two trucks and four Land Rovers in order to carry out its distributions.

At the end of July the ICRC had approached the Ugandan Red Cross and the League on the subject of handing over responsibility for medical assistance, as had been done for relief work. Both the Ugandan Government and the National Society indicated their willingness to take charge of the distribution of medicaments and medical supplies, and the ICRC started to phase out its activities in October. However, it continued to help in organizing distributions by providing logistic support until the end of the year, in view of the scant means of transport at the Government's disposal.

Between May and December, ICRC delegates visited a number of medical centres (hospitals, dispensaries), where they distributed 52.5 tons of medicaments and medical supplies worth about 1,429,000 Swiss francs.

## Central Tracing Agency

The Central Tracing Agency started its work at the beginning of May in difficult conditions. Until September, when a tracing office was opened at the delegation, steps were taken to set on foot a card-index filing system, register detainees, pass messages between them and their families and conduct a number of family enquiries. In view of the results obtained, it was decided in the second half of October to step up these activities, particularly the tracing of missing persons and the exchange of family messages.

*ORGANIZATION.* — On 1 August the Kampala delegation comprised six persons. Taking into account the workload, the ICRC decided to keep the entire team on the spot, and it was augmented by one person at the end of the year. In addition, the Ugandan Red Cross made available 20 volunteers and field officers whose assistance was invaluable.

## Tanzania

### Protection

Following the Tanzanian Government's reply to the offer of service made on 27 January by the ICRC (see page 21), the delegate responsible for Tanzania in Geneva and the delegate-

general for Africa visited Dar-es-Salaam, in February and March respectively, to seek permission to visit Ugandan prisoners of war in Tanzanian hands. As the delegate-general was not able to meet the competent authorities, he transmitted to the Prime Minister a note enumerating Tanzania's obligations as a party to the Geneva Conventions and reiterating that the ICRC hoped to be allowed to visit the prisoners of war as soon as possible.

On 2 April the First Secretary of the Defence Ministry informed the ICRC delegate at Dar-es-Salaam that the Tanzanian Government considered it premature to discuss questions relating to protection. A letter sent on the same day from the Prime Minister's office in reply to the delegate-general's note confirmed that statement.

On 5 April the President of the ICRC sent a message to the Prime Minister of Tanzania, drawing attention to that State's treaty obligations and expressing the ICRC's surprise at the arguments presented to it.

As a result of further representations by a member of the Committee, Mr. Victor Umbricht, at Dar-es-Salaam in May, the ICRC was given permission to visit the prisoners of war in Tanzanian hands. On 22 May the regional delegate for East Africa went to Dar-es-Salaam and, on 29 May, formal permission to start the visits was received from the Minister of Defence.

From 2 to 20 June the regional delegate for East Africa, accompanied from 8 June onwards by a medical delegate, carried out the first series of visits, which were made in accordance with the conditions laid down by the ICRC, including private talks and the distribution of sundry relief. The National Society and Prison Administration facilitated these visits.

In the second fortnight of August another series of visits was made, again in accordance with normal ICRC criteria. In addition to 15 Ugandan children, and 482 wounded Tanzanian combatants, 795 prisoners of war were visited, including 741 Ugandans, 52 Libyans, one Pakistani and one national of the Seychelles.

#### **Assistance to displaced persons**

The assistance activities initiated by the ICRC in November 1978 on behalf of 15,000 displaced persons in the Kagera region (see page 21) lasted until March, because some of the relief material was held up in the capital.

The relief delegate from the regional delegation for East Africa supervised the distributions in collaboration with the National Society. This was to have been the last of the ICRC's assistance activities in Tanzania. In the first week of August however, at the request of the Secretary-General of the Tanzanian Red Cross and following a visit by ICRC delegates to the Umbwayo camp for displaced persons, a mission was sent to the camps in the Kagera area in order to assess the requirements of the displaced persons there. The mission was led by the medical delegate who had taken part in the second series of visits to prisoners of war.

On the basis of the information collected, the ICRC decided to launch a final assistance effort worth 115,500 Swiss francs, thus bringing the total amount of assistance to displaced persons in Tanzania to 347,000 Swiss francs for 1979. The relief material was provided by the ICRC, the Swedish Red Cross and the Swiss Government.

#### **Assistance to South African refugees**

Relief worth 7,840 Swiss francs was distributed to South African refugees through the Tanzanian Red Cross.

#### **Central Tracing Agency**

The activities of the Central Tracing Agency consisted mainly in registering prisoners and exchanging messages with their families.

### **Ethiopia**

In 1979 the ICRC continued to assist the victims of the armed conflicts in Eritrea and Ogaden. At the same time, it made further representations to the Ethiopian authorities, through the head of delegation at Addis Ababa, seeking permission to perform protection work, extend its assistance activities to Ethiopian territory as a whole and open a CTA tracing office. At the beginning of April, it addressed a memorandum to Lieutenant-Colonel Demissié, member of the Central Committee for Social Affairs of the Provisional Administrative Military Council (DERG), describing the ICRC's role and general scope of action, outlining its past activities in Ethiopia and indicating the action it now wished to be allowed to take. No reply had been received by the end of the year and very little progress made with regard to ICRC activities which continued to be confined, in Eritrea and Ogaden, essentially to assistance.

The uneasy situation in the provinces of Tigre and Gondar led the ICRC to extend its aid to the populations of these areas as well.

#### **Ogaden**

##### **Protection**

As in 1978, the ICRC repeatedly approached the authorities during the year with a view to obtaining access to the combatants of the adverse party captured by the Ethiopian armed forces. Eventually, on the occasion of a survey mission in October to the province of Harrarghe with the Secretary-General of the Ethiopian Red Cross, the head of the ICRC delegation at Addis Ababa was able to visit, on 25 and 26 October, the 17 Somali prisoners of war interned in a military camp at Harrar who had previously been seen on 6 March 1978. The ICRC delegate was able to talk privately with them and give them capture cards.

After this visit, which was the subject of a report sent by the ICRC to the detaining Power and to the prisoners' own government, sundry relief material was forwarded to the prisoners through the Ethiopian Red Cross.

### **Material assistance**

In 1979 the ICRC continued to assist displaced persons in the three provinces of Harrarghe, Bale and Sidamo, in collaboration with the Ethiopian Red Cross and the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC).

Following two survey missions, to the provinces of Sidamo (15-17 February) and Bale and Harrarghe (October), the ICRC decided to continue its relief work in the region.

### **Medical assistance**

In order to cater for the medical requirements of displaced persons in the provinces of Bale and Sidamo, two mobile medical teams went there in July.

The Ethiopian Ministry of Health provided the personnel for these teams, whereas the medicaments, vehicles and operational costs were financed jointly by the Ethiopian Red Cross and the ICRC.

### *Eritrea*

The continuation of hostilities in Eritrea during 1979, and in particular the Ethiopian army's winter offensive, resulted in further displacements of population.

The ICRC repeated its representations to the Ethiopian authorities to be allowed to perform its traditional work on behalf of all the victims of the Eritrean conflict, wherever they might be. On the Ethiopian side, it continued to provide assistance to displaced persons in the regions of Asmara and Mekele, but it was not able to gain access to the other side of the front from Addis Ababa.

### **Assistance**

In order to identify the needs of the civilian population in the war-stricken areas under Ethiopian control and assess the relief programmes being carried out by the RRC, the Eritrean Regional Affairs Special Commission (ERASC) and the Social Welfare Centre (SWC), the head of the ICRC delegation at Addis Ababa, accompanied by a representative of the RRC, visited Asmara in the first fortnight of April.

On the basis of the delegate's conclusions, the ICRC decided to continue to distribute foodstuffs and medicaments to displaced persons, victims of the Eritrean conflict.

### **Debre Zeit rehabilitation centre**

The project to establish a prosthesis and physiotherapy workshop for the war disabled at the Debre Zeit centre near Addis Ababa was carried out by the ICRC in accordance with the undertaking it had made in 1978 (see Annual Report 1978, page 18).

By virtue of the agreement which was concluded between the Ethiopian Government and the ICRC and formally signed on 4 April 1979, the ICRC sent a team of five specialists (three orthopaedists and two physiotherapists) to the centre. It set up a workshop for the manufacture of prostheses, trained local staff, imported prostheses for an initial period and met the costs incurred during the first year.

In January 1979 the first two members of the ICRC's medical team arrived at Debre Zeit and by February the material and equipment had been installed.

Two surveys of the centre's work were conducted at Debre Zeit, one in the first fortnight of May by a physiotherapist from Geneva and the other by the ICRC Chief Medical Officer. The second mission, which took place from 25 August to 9 September, also provided an opportunity to settle the question of task-sharing between the ICRC and a medical team sent out by the Yugoslav Government in response to the appeal launched by the Ethiopian authorities at the beginning of the year.

The workshop project derives its originality from the emphasis it places on manufacturing prostheses from materials available locally, using technology adapted to local conditions, and on active participation by the amputees themselves in the manufacturing process.

In view of the increase in the number of patients, the administrator of the centre submitted an official request for more assistance on 26 May. The ICRC responded by sending additional specialists to the centre, whose activities were expanded to include the manufacture of wheel-chairs.

At the end of the year the medical team at the centre consisted of four orthopaedists, three physiotherapists and a nurse for paraplegics. The local staff comprised 36 Ethiopians, half of them amputees. On 20 November they started a 13-month training course at the end of which they will sit an examination. By December, 40 prostheses, 20 orthoses for artificial legs, 80 pairs of crutches and 15 wheel-chairs were being produced each month.

ICRC medical assistance (medical and paramedical equipment, medicaments) to the centre totalled some 320,000 Swiss francs. The centre has been a great success; it is regarded as a pilot project by the Addis Ababa Government and has been visited by several high Ethiopian officials.

### **Summary of relief in Ethiopia**

In 1979 the ICRC provided Ethiopia with 1,336 tons of relief material (foodstuffs, blankets, tents, medical assistance, etc.) worth 2,143,000 Swiss francs, including:

- some 286 tons, worth 364,000 Swiss francs, for the victims of the conflict in Eritrea;
- 623.5 tons, worth 1,218,500 Swiss francs, for the victims of the conflict in Ogaden (provinces of Bale, Sidamo, Harrarghe and Arusi);
- 125 tons, worth 109,000 Swiss francs, for the population of Gondar;
- 298 tons, worth 336,000 Swiss francs, for the population of Tigre.



## Central Tracing Agency

Sixteen family messages from Somali prisoners of war were forwarded to Somalia and the replies returned to Ethiopia. In addition, about 100 requests for enquiries were registered by the delegation and transmitted to the CTA in Geneva.

**ORGANIZATION.** — Apart from the medical team at the Debre Zeit centre, ICRC representation in Ethiopia in 1979 was confined to a head of delegation.

## Somalia

### Protection

Despite repeated approaches by delegates throughout the year, the ICRC was not able to visit Ethiopian prisoners of war held in Somalia.

Following the visit of Mr. Richard Pestalozzi, Vice-President, to Mogadishu in August 1978 (see Annual Report 1978, page 19), the ICRC gave the Permanent Representative of Somalia in Geneva a letter addressed to the President of the Republic, Mr. Syad Barré, drawing attention to the Somali Government's responsibilities under the Geneva Conventions and reiterating the ICRC's desire to afford protection and assistance to the Ethiopian prisoners of war detained on Somali territory and for whom, consequently, the Somali authorities were responsible.

In an attempt to solve these protection problems, the delegate-general for Africa, M. F. Schmidt, went to Mogadishu in the last week of April. His visit was unsuccessful as he was not able to meet any member of the Somali Government. A few days later an ICRC delegate managed to converse with a representative of the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF) and obtained permission to visit a Cuban prisoner of war in the hands of the movement. The visit was carried out on 5 May in accordance with the conditions laid down by the ICRC.

While in the Somali capital from 2 to 6 July for the Eleventh Conference of Arab Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the delegate-general for the Middle East, Mr. Jean Hoefliger, and the regional delegate for North Africa, the Arab Peninsula and Iran were able to talk with representatives of the Somali Red Crescent and with leaders of both the WSLF and the "ABBO Liberation Front". The latter handed the delegates a statement of intended compliance with the humanitarian principles embodied in the Geneva Conventions. The leaders of both fronts also undertook to provide to the ICRC, through the President of the Somali Red Crescent, with lists of the prisoners of war in their hands together with the number of places of detention and the dates on which visits might commence.

Unfortunately the President of the Somali Red Crescent had no list of prisoners of war to hand to the ICRC when he came to Geneva on 4 October for a meeting of the League Executive Council.

## Central Tracing Agency

At the end of 1979, 200 requests for enquiries into the whereabouts of missing persons had been registered by the tracing office at the regional delegation at Nairobi.

## Sudan

Since the ICRC was not given permission to visit from Addis Ababa the territories controlled by the Eritrean movements, it pursued its objective of assisting victims of the conflict on both sides of the front by continuing to send relief material via Sudan.

At the same time it intervened on behalf of Eritrean refugees on Sudanese territory.

### Material assistance

In 1979, ICRC assistance to the civilian population and to Ethiopian prisoners in the hands of the Eritrean movements amounted to 2,527 tons (2,356 tons of foodstuffs, 29 tons of medical relief and 142 tons of sundry material), worth some 6,032,000 Swiss francs.

The EEC provided 94.5 per cent of the foodstuffs.

The relief was forwarded in part (1,679 tons) to the Eritrean Relief Association (ERA), the assistance body of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), and in part (848 tons) to the Eritrean Red Cross and Crescent Society (ERCCS), the assistance body of the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF).

### Medical assistance

Medical assistance was concentrated mainly on the Kassala hospital, where the ICRC took over the supervision of medical activities, and the Port Sudan rehabilitation centre.

**KASSALA HOSPITAL.** — At the beginning of the year and with the agreement of the HCR, the ICRC in collaboration with the Swiss Red Cross took charge of medical activities at the Kassala hospital, which had previously been under the supervision of the HCR. The Swiss medical teams working at the hospital and in the neighbouring refugee camps had been made available to the HCR by the Swiss Disaster Aid Volunteer Corps and their mission had ended with 1978.

The new medical team, comprising four persons including a surgeon, was made available by the Swiss Red Cross which also kept the hospital supplied with medical equipment and medicaments.

The team's principal task was to dispense treatment to all the victims of the Eritrean conflict but, in view of the inadequate medical infrastructure in the region, the local population also benefited from its services. In addition, the team made regular visits to the HCR's refugee camp at Kashm el Girba (80 km from Kassala) and supplied both that camp's dispensary and the one at Kassala with medicaments.



About 20,900 Swiss francs of expenditure was incurred by the ICRC in 1979 for this operation.

**PORT SUDAN REHABILITATION CENTRE.** — Following a survey by the ICRC's Deputy Chief Medical Officer in the first half of May, the ICRC decided to implement a programme of medical assistance to paraplegic and hemiplegic victims of the Eritrean conflict, in collaboration with the ERA.

In accordance with the agreement concluded between the partners, under which the ICRC was to provide the necessary personnel, equipment and medicaments, a rehabilitation centre for paraplegics, hemiplegics and war casualties was opened in July at Port Sudan.

The ICRC prepared a rehabilitation programme in which provision was made for training Eritreans to run the centre. It despatched the equipment required and provided a medical team consisting of three physiotherapists and a nurse specializing in the treatment of paraplegics.

By 31 December, medicaments and medical equipment worth 63,500 Swiss francs had been made available by the ICRC for about 160 patients.

In addition, medicaments and medical supplies were delivered to the Port Sudan dispensary and various medical centres.

#### **Central Tracing Agency**

In November 1979 the CTA sent a delegate to Khartoum to set up a tracing office at the delegation for the following purposes:

- to organize the registration of prisoners;
- to re-establish contacts between refugees in camps and their families (enquiries, family reuniting, etc.);
- to seek missing persons.

**ORGANIZATION.** — The ICRC delegation at Khartoum had opened in October 1978 with a head of delegation and two relief delegates. By the end of 1979, its personnel had increased to six (excluding the Port Sudan medical team).

#### **Kenya**

In 1979 the activities of the regional delegation for East Africa based at Nairobi (Kenya) related mainly to the conflict between Uganda and Tanzania, for prior to April the ICRC had no permanent delegation at either Kampala or Dar-es-Salaam.

With regard to CTA work, the regional delegation organized the repatriation of some South African and Namibian nationals (see also page 21). With a view to studying the prospects for stepping up tracing activities in the countries covered by the regional delegation, a CTA delegate went to Kenya in the second half of October. His visit enabled the role of the tracing office at the Nairobi delegation to be clarified: it was to be responsible for centralizing information concerning

the countries in which there was no office, namely, Tanzania, Djibouti, Somalia and Ethiopia. To that end, a CTA delegate was sent to Nairobi at the end of the year.

### **Other conflicts and countries**

#### **Chad**

Immediately after the fighting broke out on 12 February at N'Djamena between the Chad National Army (CNA) favourable to the President of the Republic, Félix Malloum, and the Northern Armed Forces (NAF) of Prime Minister Hissen Habré, the ICRC broadcast an appeal to the combatants to respect basic humanitarian principles, reminding them that protection must be granted to casualties, women, children, hospitals, ambulances and vehicles of the Red Cross, so that the latter could carry out its mission unhindered and afford speedy assistance to victims.

Despite successive cease-fires, the fighting continued for over a month in the capital, which was split into an eastern and a western zone controlled, respectively, by the NAF and the Chad Armed Forces (CAF), known previously as CNA.

At the same time, negotiations started between the parties to the conflict, in the presence of government representatives from five neighbouring countries (Cameroon, Libya, Niger, Nigeria and Sudan). An agreement which was signed on 17 March at Kano and came into force on 23 March made provision, *inter alia*, for a cease-fire throughout the national territory. A provisional caretaker committee, presided by Mr. Goukouni Oueddei, President of the FROLINAT (Chad National Liberation Front) revolutionary council, was set up to discharge governmental duties until a transitional government of national unity could be formed. The release of prisoners of war seemed to have been agreed, but the practical arrangements were left for the future government to make.

A second conference, held also at Kano, resulted in the formation of a government of national unity headed by Mr. Lol Mohamed Choua on 29 April. It soon became apparent that this government was torn between the various factions represented in it; fighting broke out in the south of the country at the end of May and skirmishes took place at N'Djamena at the beginning of June between FROLINAT and CPLM (Chad People's Liberation Movement).

An agreement which appeared to give practical expression to the desire for national reconciliation was concluded on 21 August at Lagos, and the eleven Chad factions who signed it agreed to return prisoners of war to their own part of the country, in particular those held in the provinces of Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti (BET, the northern part of the country). On 24 November a government of national unity set up on 10 November and headed by Mr. Goukouni Oueddei confirmed its agreement to the projects of releasing prisoners of war, and on 17 December instructed a committee to study the question.

The ICRC, which had been involved in the internal conflict in Chad since 1978 and had opened two delegations there (see Annual Report 1978, page 20), deployed its efforts in a number of fields in 1979: protection, medical assistance, relief and CTA work in the entire territory.

### Protection

The ICRC continued its work on behalf of prisoners of war in the hands of FROLINAT and FROLINAT prisoners in the hands of the Chad authorities, and extended its activities to prisoners taken as a result of the fighting in the capital and in other parts of the country.

*FAYA DELEGATION.* — Prisoners of war in the hands of FROLINAT were visited regularly in the BET during the year, except for an interruption from the end of June to the beginning of August caused by the refusal of the detaining authorities to allow interviews without witnesses. ICRC delegates carried out about 60 visits to more than 1,200 Chad prisoners of war in camps and at the Faya prison. In general, they were able to conduct private interviews.

*N'DJAMENA DELEGATION.* — As soon as hostilities broke out at N'Djamena in February and disturbances arose in the region of Abéché, the ICRC delegates organized two convoys in the capital and two return flights from N'Djamena to Abéché in order to evacuate wounded to the central hospital and transport essential medicaments.

The delegates also approached both the CAF and the NAF with a view to securing the release of civilians captured during the combats.

The NAF decided to release civilians interned at Abéché and the ICRC, whose aid had been solicited by the CAF, was able to make logistical arrangements for their return home, which took place between 25 and 31 May. Almost 1,500 persons were transferred from Abéché to N'Djamena under ICRC auspices, in trucks and aircraft made available by the French forces; at N'Djamena they were taken to four reception centres run by the Catholic mission. By mid-June all these civilian prisoners had returned to the southern provinces where their homes had originally been. This operation was carried out with ICRC support.

During the events in March which affected the Muslim population in the south, the ICRC helped to evacuate Libyan and Sudanese nationals to N'Djamena in aircraft made available by France.

The ICRC encountered many difficulties in carrying out its protection activities on behalf of those taken prisoner as a result of the fighting. It was obliged, on each occasion, to negotiate with the political-military groups concerned in order to obtain permission to visit the prisoners in their hands. Consequently, complete lists of prisoners of war and civilian detainees could not be compiled and visits were carried out on a limited basis, as and when permission was received. Only the Kanem region, controlled by FROLINAT, could be visited regularly.

At N'Djamena itself the delegates made about ten visits to some forty prisoners at three places of detention.

### Return home of civilian prisoners in the hands of FROLINAT in the BET

During his mission to N'Djamena at the beginning of May, the delegate responsible for Chad at ICRC Headquarters in Geneva raised with FROLINAT ministers the question of returning to their homes the civilian prisoners detained by FROLINAT in the BET. The FROLINAT leaders with whom the matter was again discussed by the head of the ICRC Faya delegation were willing to release the prisoners immediately. Following negotiations between the parties concerned, the criteria for selecting the persons to be returned to their homes were agreed by the ICRC and FROLINAT. On 6 June the Chad authorities accepted the arrangements proposed by the ICRC.

The transfers, which were due to begin in the first half of June, were postponed as a result of the fighting that broke out at N'Djamena. Eventually they took place from 2 to 21 August under ICRC auspices; five operations were organized, enabling 643 civilian prisoners to go to Moundou, Sahr and N'Djamena. The first three operations were carried out using aircraft provided by France and the other using a DC-4 belonging to Chad.

### For the release of prisoners of war

In March the ICRC delegates broached the subject of releasing prisoners of war with the authorities, but to no avail. After the conclusion of the Lagos agreement, they raised the question again with the new government, which confirmed that release and return home would take place as soon as possible and invited the ICRC to help in making the practical arrangements. On 27 December the delegates, as advisers and observers, attended a meeting of the governmental committee responsible for the question. The committee decided that all prisoners (prisoners of war, civilians, political prisoners and hostages) would be released; however, that decision had to be ratified by the Council of Ministers, which was also to approve the arrangements for release.

### Medical assistance

*IN THE BET,* the ICRC medical team continued to visit prison camps in order to assess medical needs, organize distributions and dispense treatment to the inhabitants of the camps. The team, which was based at Faya-Largeau, performed the same work in the medical centres and hospitals of that town.

*AT N'DJAMENA,* a doctor and a nurse who had been made available by the Coopération technique suisse became part of the delegation as soon as the fighting broke out. In mid-March a surgical team arrived from Geneva to cater for the many needs of the N'Djamena Central Hospital, where it remained

until the end of the month. From 1 to 15 April two doctors and a nurse worked at the Central Hospital and one doctor stayed on there after 15 April. The N'Djamena delegation also provided medical assistance to the country's principal hospitals and medical centres.

In 1979, 23 tons of medicaments worth about 785,000 Swiss francs were made available by the ICRC including 2.3 tons, worth 128,500 Swiss francs, for prisoners in the BET.

#### Material assistance

*FAYA DELEGATION.* — Although the delegates had asked FROLINAT at the beginning of the year progressively to take charge of assistance to prisoners of war in the BET, the ICRC was obliged to continue to cater for those prisoners' needs (see Annual Report 1978, page 21). Although FROLINAT agreed in principle to take charge and to transport goods from Faya through the BET, it soon encountered logistical difficulties which compelled the ICRC to continue to distribute foodstuffs in the camps.

*N'DJAMENA DELEGATION.* — Following the February fighting, the ICRC provided assistance to victims and refugees at N'Djamena and in the provinces. Difficult access and lack of security nevertheless limited the scope of these relief activities. In particular, the ICRC was not allowed into the south from the end of March to September. Even so, after the events affecting the Muslim population of the southern towns in March, the ICRC was able to assist persons belonging to that population who had sought refuge in centres placed under the protection of the authorities.

In October the ICRC started to phase out its involvement, and only a few activities at N'Djamena were kept up until the end of the year.

In 1979 the ICRC distributed 1,096 tons of relief material (including 1,082 tons of foodstuffs) worth 1,465,500 Swiss francs in Chad; of this total, 399 tons, worth 734,000 Swiss francs, went to prisoners of war in the BET.

#### Central Tracing Agency

The work of the tracing offices at N'Djamena and Faya-Largeau was mainly the registering of prisoners, the exchange of family messages between the north and the south, and the transfer and tracing of persons. In order to offset the difficulties encountered in transmitting family messages, two CTA outposts were installed in the south. In 1979 almost 900 enquiries were initiated, 2,200 persons transferred and several tens of thousands of family messages exchanged between north and south.

*ORGANIZATION.* — In 1979 the ICRC maintained a sizeable organization at Faya-Largeau. The N'Djamena organization was reinforced in March and reduced again at the end of August.

Some 50 ICRC workers travelled to Chad in 1979 (heads of delegation; delegates to visit prisoners, for relief work, for

tasks related to the CTA and for administrations; doctors, nurses and technical personnel), not counting air crews and locally engaged staff.

*LOGISTICS.* — During the year a Piper-Aztec based at N'Djamena carried delegates and relief material to the BET provinces. In view of the transport difficulties encountered by the N'Djamena delegates, the ICRC sent a second Aztec aircraft to Chad at the end of March.

## Zaire

In 1979 the ICRC focused attention on expanding its protection activities in Zaire.

#### Protection

Permission to visit all the places of detention in Shaba had been granted orally in December 1978 and the first series of visits to the province was carried out in January 1979.

Subsequently, visits were made periodically; between 20 April and the end of August delegates covered the entire southern part of Shaba, visiting 56 places of detention where they saw 2,563 detainees. During these visits 3.8 tons of sundry relief was distributed, worth approximately 21,100 Swiss francs.

The ICRC then sought to extend its activity to other provinces where it wished to gain access to all places of detention, be they civilian, military or run by the National Documentation Centre (security services). Representations made to the Zaire authorities with this end in view were successful, inasmuch as the principle of across-the-board permission to visit all civilian places of detention in the country as well as certain military centres was accepted and confirmed in writing at the end of November. On 7 December General Babia Zongbi Majobia, co-ordinator of the Zaire armed forces, advised the ICRC delegates that the President of the Republic, General Mobutu, had agreed to allow the ICRC to visit all military and police prisons.

At the end of 1979 the ICRC had therefore obtained an agreement in principle regarding visits to all civilian, military and police prisons. Only to places of detention run by the National Documentation Centre had access not been granted.

The Government of Zaire also adopted a series of measures designed to improve conditions of imprisonment and speed up legal proceedings. In addition, it released a number of "political" and other prisoners.

In the last quarter of the year the ICRC delegates endeavoured to visit places of detention in the Kinshasa region to which they had not previously had access.

In 1979 some 2,900 detainees were visited in 64 places of detention in Shaba. The relief material distributed during these visits and to the families of detainees amounted to 9.2 tons (blankets, soap, foodstuffs, clothing, medicaments), worth about 60,600 Swiss francs.

**ORGANIZATION.** — In view of the encouraging results achieved, the ICRC decided to keep a delegation at Kinshasa permanently. The Lubumbashi office, which had been opened in May in order to step up humanitarian operations in the Shaba province, was closed in October.

#### **Central Tracing Agency**

A few family messages were exchanged between detainees and their families in Zaire, Angola and Congo.

### **Congo**

The head of the Kinshasa delegation carried out three missions to Congo in 1979, to inform the authorities and the leaders of the Congolese Red Cross about the ICRC's activities, especially in the field of protection. The National Society was particularly interested by the ICRC's work on behalf of detainees and took steps to facilitate interviews between the delegate and the Ministers of Health and the Interior, both of whom stated that they were prepared to allow the ICRC to visit prisons if it so requested. It was agreed that a trial visit would be organized at a later date. This visit was carried out on 25 and 26 November to the Brazzaville prison, and the authorities expressed the hope that it would be repeated.

### **Western Sahara**

The ICRC continued to follow developments in the conflict in the Western Sahara, as it had been doing since 1975. Contacts were maintained with all the parties concerned, with a view to enabling the ICRC to perform its traditional functions on behalf of all victims, particularly prisoners of war. However, the many efforts deployed produced tangible results only in Mauritania.

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

In July, two ICRC delegates including a doctor again carried out a visit, in accordance with normal ICRC specifications, to all the Polisario Front prisoners detained by the Mauritanian armed forces, namely, 152 persons (150 of whom were detained at Nouakchott and 2 at Aïoun El Atrous). The Mauritanian Red Crescent gave the ICRC a list of 50 persons who had been released since the previous visit in November 1978.

Medicaments and medical supplies (1.3 tons), 50 spectacles, school supplies and blankets worth 38,190 Swiss francs were delivered to the Mauritanian Red Crescent for prisoners and families victims of the conflict in the Western Sahara.

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

During a visit to Morocco at the end of February, ICRC delegates requested permission to pay another visit to the 99 Algerian prisoners who had been visited several times since 1976. The Moroccan authorities replied that the question would be studied. The request was repeated in November. The last visit paid by the ICRC to the Algerian prisoners of war took place in April 1978; on that occasion the delegates had also visited Polisario Front members or combatants taken prisoner by the Moroccan armed forces.

Despite ICRC overtures, no visits to prisoners on Moroccan territory were allowed in 1979.

Nevertheless, the Central Tracing Agency passed mail, parcels and money between the Algerian prisoners and their families, through the Moroccan and Algerian Red Crescent Societies (872 letters were forwarded to families, and 914 letters and 66 parcels were forwarded to the Moroccan Red Crescent for the prisoners of war).

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

The ICRC, which had not been able to visit Mauritanian and Moroccan prisoners of war in the hands of the Polisario Front since 1976, continued to make representations to the leaders of the movement, drawing attention to the agreement of principle reached in 1978. It also maintained contact with the Algerian authorities in both Geneva and Algiers. Two missions, including one by the delegate-general for the Middle East, were carried out to Algeria, in April and October. Furthermore, a letter by the President of the ICRC was sent to the Secretary-General of the Polisario Front in October.

These efforts did not provoke any reaction from the Polisario Front indicating that a breakthrough might be possible. The obstacles encountered by the ICRC relate mainly to the principles of access to all detainees and private interviews. Adequate guarantees have not yet been forthcoming in either respect. Consequently, no visits could be made in 1979.

#### **Assistance to displaced persons in the Tindouf region (Algeria)**

In response to a request for assistance from the "Sahrawi Red Crescent", the ICRC launched a small-scale operation on behalf of displaced persons victims of the torrential rains which had fallen in the Tindouf region (Algeria) early in September.

Relief material worth 73,840 Swiss francs (8,065 blankets) was purchased for needy persons, mainly women and children.