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# MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

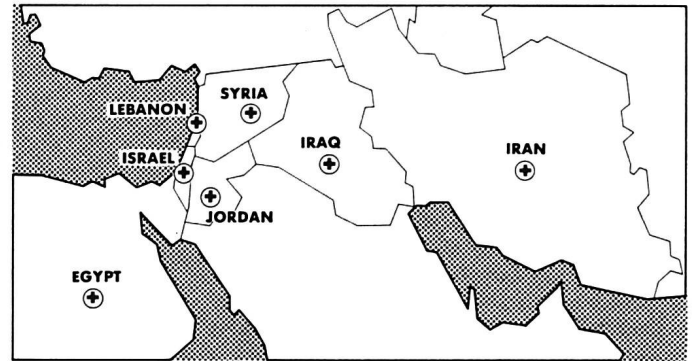
For its operations in the Middle East, the ICRC had, as in previous years, seven delegations in that area: in Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel and the occupied territories, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. It also maintained a regional delegation, based in Geneva, for the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa. In 1984, as in past years, this part of the world was of major concern to the ICRC which, on two occasions, was prompted by the difficulties it encountered in discharging its humanitarian mandate in the war between Iran and Iraq to appeal to all the States party to the Geneva Conventions. The ICRC based its appeals on Article 1 common to the four Geneva Conventions which places the High Contracting Parties under the obligation not only to respect but also to ensure respect for the Conventions in all circumstances. These appeals were made following repeated representations to both belligerent countries, in conformity with ICRC policy. In the absence of tangible lasting results, the ICRC, on 13 February, nine months after a previous appeal, called for the first time in 1984 on the States party to the Conventions to take action in the face of the grave and repeated violations of international humanitarian law committed by Iran and Iraq. On 23 November, in the wake of, among other things, the interruption of its protection activities for Iraqi prisoners, the ICRC made its second appeal of 1984 to the international community asking it to help in putting an end to the violations committed by the belligerents which strike a blow at the very essence of international humanitarian law. In addition, on 5 March the ICRC issued its findings concerning the use in the Iran-Iraq conflict of weapons prohibited by the customary and codified rules of the law of war. On 7 June the ICRC requested the cessation by both belligerents of reprisal and counter-reprisal bombing raids on civilian zones.

In 1984 the ICRC also continued its activities in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Lebanese conflict. It also resumed its protection of prisoners captured in the Western Sahara conflict and continued its visits to security detainees in Jordan. It was not, however, able to carry out activities for detainees of the same category in other countries of the Middle East and North Africa.

The ICRC's activities in connection with the Iran-Iraq conflict and in Lebanon were financed through donations received in response to special appeals (the ICRC's special budgets) while its other activities in the Middle East were financed by the ordinary budget.

## Conflict between Iran and Iraq

In 1984 the ICRC once again met with difficulties in discharging the mandate entrusted to it by the Geneva Conventions, particularly in its activities on behalf of



prisoners of war captured in the Iran-Iraq conflict. At the beginning of the year, visits to Iraqi prisoners of war, which had been suspended at the end of July 1983, had still not been resumed and the delegates were not able to visit all of the Iranian prisoners. Consequently, the ICRC issued an Appeal-memorandum on 13 February calling on all the States party to the Geneva Conventions to aid it in its efforts on behalf of the victims and to raise, in the course of their bilateral or multilateral relations with the two belligerents, the humanitarian question of the prisoners of war and the civilian victims of the Iran-Iraq conflict. On 9 May 1983 the ICRC had already appealed to all the States party to the Geneva Conventions which are under the obligation (Article 1) to respect and to ensure respect for the Conventions (see Annual Report 1983).

In the period from 25 February to 13 May, during which two series of visits were to have been conducted, protection activities on behalf of Iranian prisoners of war were suspended. Visits to Iraqi prisoners of war were resumed on 19 May but were stopped again in October following an incident in the Gorgan camp. As a result, the ICRC issued a second appeal on 23 November urging signatory States to intervene in accordance with Article 1 common to the Conventions so that some 50,000 Iraqi prisoners of war in the Islamic Republic of Iran could be provided with protection.

### **Overt representations**

—In view of the grave and repeated breaches of international humanitarian law committed by both parties to the conflict, placing in jeopardy the very essence and principles of international humanitarian law, the ICRC felt it necessary to make an appeal on 13 February to all the States party to the Geneva Conventions. In this first appeal of 1984 it pointed out that some 50,000 Iraqi prisoners benefited from no protection

## OVERT REPRESENTATIONS BY THE ICRC RELATED TO THE IRAQ/IRAN CONFLICT

*9 May 1983: first appeal to States party to the Geneva Conventions*

*13 February 1984: second appeal to States party to the Geneva Conventions*

*7 March 1984: report on the use of prohibited weapons*

*7 June 1984: press release on the bombing of Iraqi and Iranian cities*

*23 November 1984: third appeal to States party to the Geneva Conventions.*

in the Islamic Republic of Iran as the ICRC, since the suspension of its visits on 27 July 1983, was no longer able to establish the number, location or identity of the prisoners; to monitor their detention conditions or state of health; to draw up lists of prisoners of war requiring prompt repatriation for medical reasons; or to transmit Red Cross messages between prisoners and their families. Moreover, the ICRC stated in this appeal that some Iraqi prisoners, particularly officers, had been systematically concealed from it during the visits and that serious incidents had taken place in the camps where prisoners were undergoing indoctrination contrary to the ideology of their government. The appeal, while mentioning certain improvements in material conditions and disciplinary measures for the Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq, also pointed out that a large number of Iranian prisoners, some of whom had been captured at the beginning of the conflict, had regularly been concealed during visits by the ICRC. The appeal further pointed out that the Iraqi armed forces' bombardment of Iranian civilian zones constituted a violation of the customary law of war and especially of the essential principle that a distinction must be made between military zones and civilian persons and objects.

—Following an incident on 10 October in Gorgan camp in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the protection activities of the ICRC in this country were suspended. On 23 November, the ICRC President invited the diplomatic representatives of the States party to the Geneva Conventions to meet him at ICRC headquarters where he described to them the situation of some 50,000 Iraqi prisoners of war held in the Islamic Republic of Iran who had recently been deprived of all the protection to which they were entitled under the Geneva Conventions. In addition, he pointed out that these prisoners, who were being subjected to a programme of indoctrination aimed at setting them against their own government, were dividing within the camps into antagonistic groups which violently attacked each other, sometimes with fatal results, as was the case at Gorgan on 10 October. In its appeal of 23 November to the States signatory to the Conventions, the ICRC stated that it was no longer able alone to provide protection for the roughly 50,000 Iraqi prisoners of war and it therefore requested the States party to the Geneva Conventions to support it in the performance of its task and aid it to ensure application of

international humanitarian law, the very essence of which was being undermined.

—After a medical survey conducted in Iran to estimate the need for assistance created by fighting on the Iranian-Iraqi front, the ICRC reiterated publicly on 7 March that the use on the battlefield of substances prohibited by the international law of war was incompatible with humanitarian principles and constituted a violation of the customary and codified rules of this branch of law.

—As in the previous year, indiscriminate bombardment of civilian persons and objects was a cause of great concern to the ICRC. After mentioning the situation on 13 February (see first public appeal of 1984), it issued a further appeal on 7 June following the bombing of the Iranian city of Baneh, which led to a series of reprisals and counter-reprisals directed against the inhabitants of Iranian and Iraqi cities. It called on the belligerents to put an immediate stop to these acts.

### Missions from Geneva

In an attempt to resolve the differences and dispel the misunderstandings which had prevented the ICRC since 25 February from carrying out its protection activities in Iraq, the ICRC President, accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East, undertook a mission to Baghdad where he met Mr. Tarek Aziz, Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. Following this meeting, the visits to Iranian prisoners of war were resumed. Mr. Hay, again accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East, undertook a second mission to Iraq from 9 to 13 August, in the course of which he again met Mr. Tarek Aziz.

In addition, on 19 May, the delegate-general for the Middle East undertook a mission to Iran, where he supervised the resumption of visits to Iraqi prisoners of war. On 15 December, while on a mission to Iraq, he again met Mr. Tarek Aziz. Following their discussions, the ICRC obtained access to the Iranian prisoners of war captured during the 1984 offensives, a Mixed Medical Commission was appointed to designate those prisoners eligible to be repatriated under Article 109 of the Third Geneva Convention and, finally, the ICRC was allowed to undertake, consistent with the mandate

devolved on it under the Fourth Geneva Convention, an assessment mission to Iraqi Kurdistan.

### Repatriations

In 1984, three repatriation operations involving seriously ill or wounded prisoners of war were carried out under the auspices of the ICRC after the desire of each prisoner involved to be returned to his country of origin had been verified during an interview without witness. On 29 January at Ankara Airport, Turkey, the ICRC took charge of 190 Iranian prisoners handed over by representatives of the Iraqi authorities. Acting as a neutral intermediary between the parties to the conflict, the ICRC delegates then handed the released prisoners over to representatives of the Iranian authorities, who repatriated them. Delegates and doctors from the ICRC accompanied the prisoners from Baghdad to Teheran. On 20 October, a similar operation took place involving 100 ill or wounded Iranian prisoners. On 25 October, 72 Iraqi prisoners were repatriated, also via the Turkish capital. All of the personnel and equipment necessary for this operation were supplied by the Turkish authorities and the Turkish Red Crescent, which, together with the ICRC, provided the prisoners with the necessary medical care and oversaw their transfer at Ankara Airport.

In addition, in September the ICRC repatriated the passengers and crew of two Iranian aircraft hijacked to Iraq. The first of these operations took place on 4 September for 189 passengers and 11 crew members, who were returned to Teheran aboard an aircraft chartered by the ICRC. The second took place on 15 September involving 57 passengers and eight crew members. Both operations were carried out at the request of the Iranian authorities, with the consent of the Iraqi authorities and in accordance with the ICRC's policy on hostage situations—the ICRC condemns all acts which violate legal and humanitarian principles. In these matters, as in all others, it is guided solely by the interests of the victims and the desire to help them.

### Tracing Agency

In Iran and Iraq, the Tracing Agency continued to register the prisoners of war that the ICRC was able to see in 1984 (28,222 Iraqi prisoners of war in the Islamic Republic of Iran and 9,473 Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq). In addition, 1,733,538 family messages were exchanged between prisoners of war and their families through the Central Tracing Agency and 12,790 enquiries concerning civilians or military personnel reported missing were transmitted to the appropriate authorities. Of these many inquiries there were responses to only 1,319, all of them relating to persons in prisoner-of-war camps.

### Personnel

In 1984, the ICRC delegation in Baghdad was made up of 19 expatriate staff and three locally recruited employees. In

Teheran, the delegation numbered between 13 and 15 until November when ICRC activities, with the exception of the tracing, ceased. From that point on, only three expatriate staff remained in Teheran. Thirty-eight locally recruited employees helped throughout the year with the ICRC's work in Iran.

### Appeal for Funds

To obtain the funds required for its activities in connection with the conflict between Iran and Iraq, the ICRC launched an appeal to donors at the beginning of the year for the sum of 10,580,000 Swiss francs. Of this, 8,950,800 francs was for 1984 while 1,629,200 was to cover the budget deficit of previous years.

## Iraq

### Protection

*PRISONERS OF WAR.*—In 1984, ICRC delegates visited, on five occasions from 1 January to 25 February and from 13 May to 31 December, eight prisoner-of-war camps and four military hospitals, seeing a total of 9,473 Iranian prisoners. Among them were 2,100 new prisoners who were duly registered (some 1,400 prisoners who had been captured at the beginning of the year were not visited for the first time until December). Capture cards supplied by Iraq were forwarded to the Iranian authorities and the Iranian Red Crescent so that the families concerned could be informed. In 1984, the ICRC's conviction that it did not have access to all of the prisoners, particularly those captured at the beginning of the conflict, was strengthened. An ICRC doctor who participated in each visit examined the medical and sanitary conditions in the camps and drew up a list of seriously ill or wounded prisoners eligible for repatriation in accordance with the Third Geneva Convention. This list was forwarded to the authorities. During the visits, the delegates distributed to the prisoners books and leisure items worth 99,000 francs.

*CIVILIAN POPULATION.*—In 1984 the ICRC was able to discharge the mandate entrusted to it in the Fourth Geneva Convention, especially in Article 143. It had regular access to certain displaced civilians in Iraq entitled to protection under Article 4 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Their treatment is laid down in Article 35 and those immediately following. In January and December, ICRC delegates visited several thousand families from Khuzistan (Arabic-speaking Iranians), who had been transferred in 1983 by the Iraqi armed forces to the Basra region following the Iraqi withdrawal back across the border, then to the Meisan region in mid-1984. In addition, Iranian Kurdish civilians who had sought refuge in Iraq were regularly visited at the Al-Tash camp near Ramadi. In the course of each visit the living conditions of these persons were examined. Family messages were exchanged

between Khuzistanis or Kurds and members of their families still in Iran. The ICRC also endeavoured, at the request of the Iraqi authorities and in co-operation with the diplomatic representatives of certain countries, to find countries willing to accept a number of Iranian citizens who had been regularly visited by the delegates and wished to leave Iraq. Four hundred and eleven family messages were transmitted on behalf of these persons.

## Iran

### Protection

On 19 May the ICRC resumed its protection of Iraqi prisoners of war; these activities had been suspended since 27 July 1983. In the last half of 1984 visits were made to nine camps and the military hospitals in the Teheran region. In one of the camps, Davudieh, the ICRC did not have access to all of the prisoners. In all, 28,222 Iraqi prisoners were seen in these camps near the capital, 4,443 of them for the first time. The capture cards supplied by Iran were forwarded to Iraq in order to inform the prisoners' families. For these visits, each ICRC team included three delegates, one medical delegate and one tracing delegate.

In early October, the delegates began a tour of the camps in the rest of the country. During their visit to the first, Gorgan, violent clashes broke out between prisoners belonging to different factions. This incident resulted in the death of several prisoners and caused Iran once again to suspend the ICRC's protection activities, which had still not resumed at the end of the year. Following the incident at Gorgan the ICRC called on the detaining authorities to hold an enquiry in accordance with Article 121 of the Third Geneva Convention. The Iranian authorities ignored this request. On 10 October, 35 prisoners injured in the incident (which is reported to have resulted in six deaths) were visited by the ICRC.

Greatly concerned about the plight of some 50,000 Iraqi prisoners left without any protection, the ICRC issued, on 23 November, in accordance with Article 1 common to the four Conventions, an appeal to all the States party to the Geneva Conventions (see above).

In addition, the ICRC forwarded to the Iranian authorities a list of 500 seriously ill or wounded prisoners eligible for repatriation under Article 109 of the Third Geneva Convention. These prisoners, like the 98 Iraqi prisoners whose repatriation had been approved by the Mixed Medical Commission (ICRC-Iran) in 1983, had not been repatriated by the end of the year.

### Assistance

In February, the ICRC carried out a survey in civilian zones which had been bombed, after which it provided the Iranian Red Crescent with 7,900 blankets and 210 tents for the victims. In addition, several offers of medical assistance were made to the Iranian authorities, who consistently declined.

## Lebanon

The situation in Lebanon continued to be of profound concern to the ICRC in 1984, owing to the intense fighting that took place in February in Beirut and in August in Tripoli, and to the problem of applying the Fourth Geneva Convention in southern Lebanon, under Israeli occupation. During the first half of the year the delegation and the sub-delegations of the ICRC in Lebanon were active essentially in providing assistance. In the second half of the year, thanks to the relative calm that prevailed, they were able to concentrate on their traditional tracing and protection activities for the civilian population and persons under arrest.

In order to assist the victims of the fighting during the first six months of the year, the ICRC had to make appeals, as it had the year before, to the parties to the conflict, notably on 7 February in Beirut, calling on them to respect the Red Cross emblem and agree to cease-fires in order to evacuate the wounded. During this period of fighting, a first-aid worker from the Lebanese Red Cross was killed while attempting to evacuate the wounded.

Since Israeli troops entered Lebanon in 1982, the ICRC has considered the Fourth Geneva Convention to be applicable in the zones under Israeli control for the benefit of the affected population. Israel does not share this view.

The ICRC, alarmed at the consequences (numerous arrests, interrogations, destruction of homes, harassment of the population, confiscations, pressure to collaborate) for the civilian population of the "legal void" prevailing in southern Lebanon, repeatedly reminded the occupying power of its humanitarian obligations and attempted to bring about the application of the Fourth Geneva Convention. A document was presented to the Israeli Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence by the ICRC Director for General Affairs and the delegate-general for the Middle East, who together undertook a mission to Tel Aviv from 28 January to 2 February. In its reply to the ICRC on 28 October, Israel stated that it was unable to accept the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention in southern Lebanon because of the temporary character of its presence there and the lack administrative structures. Moreover, the Israeli authorities denied any responsibility for the acts of the South Lebanon Army.

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Mr. Aubert, ICRC Vice President, on mission to Lebanon from 30 July to 4 August, met, among other persons, the President of the Lebanese Red Cross.

### Appeal for Funds

To finance its traditional activities in Lebanon, the ICRC appealed to donors at the beginning of the year for 32,840,000 Swiss francs. During the events of February in Beirut, a special appeal was launched for a further 15 million francs to cover the

immediate relief and medical needs created by heavy fighting in and around the Lebanese capital.

## Protection

**CIVILIAN POPULATION.**—As in past years, the ICRC was greatly concerned for civilians in Lebanon who were seriously affected by the grave events there, brought about as much by the clashes between the different parties to the Lebanese conflict as by the Israeli occupation of the south of the country. The inhabitants of that region found themselves on several occasions, especially in August and October, cut off from the rest of the country because all routes between north and south had been closed. Even vehicles bearing the emblem of the right to protection and carrying ill and wounded persons sometimes had great difficulty crossing the Awali line. On several occasions the ICRC reminded the parties to the conflict of their humanitarian obligations and the delegates went to the worst affected regions in an attempt to ensure by their presence the safety of the inhabitants of certain isolated zones in the south and in the Palestinian camps situated near Sidon and Tyre.

**PERSONS ARRESTED.**—Throughout the year, ICRC delegates registered and visited persons arrested in connection with the Lebanese conflict or the Israeli occupation of the south of the country.

—**Ansar camp**, reopened in December 1983, received seven complete visits and 44 visits for the registration of persons (Palestinians, Lebanese and other nationals) detained there by the Israelis. There were 83 detainees at the end of 1983 and 1,269 at the end of 1984. During the course of the year, 210 persons were released. The ICRC was able to arrange infrequent family visits only for certain prisoners at Ansar. The authorization for the detainees to receive parcels was also obtained. During each complete visit, ten delegates, accompanied by a medical team, interviewed prisoners without witness, examined the material and psychological conditions of detention and submitted to the Israeli authorities the names of seriously ill prisoners whom they recommended for release or transfer to hospital. During these visits, leisure items worth 18,120 francs were provided. Regular visits were also made to wounded prisoners who had been moved to Israeli territory for medical treatment.

—The prison at **Nabatiyeh**, held by the Israelis in southern Lebanon, was visited three times a week until the 40 prisoners held there were transferred to the Ansar camp. This prison has since become an interrogation centre (see below).

—In 1983 and during the first quarter of 1984, the ICRC asked the Israeli authorities for notification of the arrest of any person in southern Lebanon and for permission to visit arrested persons in the **interrogation centres**. In September, the Israeli authorities agreed to notify the ICRC of arrest after 24 days, and to allow the first visit after 30 days and subsequent visits every 15 days until the release or transfer to

Ansar of the detainee concerned. Consequently, delegates were able to visit, in October, 13 persons in Mar Elias, 18 in Nabatiyeh and 20 in Tyre, after being notified of their arrest. Of these 51 detainees, who were interviewed without witness, 16 were seen during the subsequent fortnightly visits. In addition, six detainees transferred from Ansar to interrogation centres were interviewed. The ICRC opened negotiations aimed at obtaining access to the detainees under interrogation before the 30th day, when the period of investigation is generally over.

—The persons (arrested by the Israelis in the Christian zone) detained at Marjayun were transferred in July to the Khiyam centre (held by the South Lebanon Army), to which the ICRC had still not obtained access by the end of the year despite repeated requests to the Israeli authorities and to the South Lebanon Army.

—The ICRC was able, in 1984, to carry out 33 visits to 203 prisoners being held by the different parties to the Lebanese conflict—the Lebanese Forces, the Amal movement and the Progressive Socialist Party. This activity was made possible by an agreement reached in December 1983 between these movements and the ICRC. Following these visits, requests for an improvement in the conditions of detention for a number of the detainees were made to the detaining movements. These visits enabled the ICRC to give replies to several enquiries concerning missing persons which it had received from families. However, it was unable to make much progress in comparison with the very large number of enquiries that the ICRC had received since the Lebanese conflict began in 1975.

## Medical Assistance

Throughout the year and especially during the first quarter, the ICRC carried on its medical assistance activities for the victims of the war in Lebanon. The regular visits to Ansar camp constituted one of the main tasks of the medical team, which was composed, at the beginning of the year, of three doctors (one, based in Beirut, acted as medical co-ordinator while the other two were based in Tyre and Sidon) and four nurses. The team made regular visits to Lebanese hospitals and dispensaries, especially those in conflict zones. In the course of these visits, medical supplies (1,838 standard kits, 70 wheelchairs and four ambulances) to a value of 1,390,000 francs were delivered to 53 hospitals and 157 dispensaries according to their estimated needs. In addition, the following medical supplies, worth 1,583,872 francs, were provided to the Lebanese Red Cross: 11,368 units of blood and 1,675 units of plasma received from the National Red Cross Societies of Finland, France, Italy, Norway and Switzerland; 165 standard kits and 22 ambulances received from the National Red Cross Societies of Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany and Norway and the government of the Federal Republic of Germany; 84 wheelchairs received from the National Red Cross Society of Spain; 123 wheelchairs and medicines provided by the ICRC. The stocks of medical relief supplies

established at the beginning of the year enabled the ICRC to respond quickly to most of the requests from hospitals for blood, oxygen and dialysis equipment, especially during the period from February to July when Beirut airport and the port of Junieh were closed.

The ICRC also provided medical supplies worth 158,000 francs to the "Palestinian Red Crescent" for use in its hospitals and dispensaries.

The bulk of these medical supplies was distributed from February to May. The ICRC, especially in February, transported them across the "Green Line" separating East and West Beirut. In the course of that month, shelling destroyed all of the ambulances of the Lebanese Red Cross. In response to the special appeal launched in February, the ICRC received, within one week, 41 ambulances from the National Red Cross Societies of Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, Finland and Norway. Twenty-two of these ambulances were delivered to the Lebanese Red Cross and five to other relief organizations, while the ICRC kept six for its own use in Lebanon and the remaining eight in reserve at the depot in Larnaca (Cyprus).

As in the previous year, the orthopaedic centres in Beit Chebab and Sidon for war casualties requiring prostheses operated under ICRC auspices. A total of 329 prostheses were produced for 307 persons thanks to the joint efforts of four ICRC technicians and eight local employees. At the Beit Chebab centre daily consultations were provided by the technicians, who also went regularly into southern Beirut and into the Haut-Metn to fit the wounded with prostheses. In addition, the orthopaedic centre in Sidon extended its activities in May to Tyre and the Chouf.

In the latter half of the year, the ICRC negotiated with the Israeli authorities the evacuation to Beirut of 229 ill or wounded civilians who could not be treated in southern Lebanon.

#### **Support for the National Society**

Following an urgent request from the Lebanese Red Cross, the ICRC, after consulting the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, made an appeal for 430,000 francs to several National Societies in order to help 250 children suffering from thalassemia who had been receiving blood provided by the Norwegian Red Cross since 1978. In response to this appeal the ICRC received 262,591 francs. This sum was forwarded to the Lebanese Red Cross, which used it to purchase medication and other medical supplies to be used in treating 85 children afflicted by thalassemia who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In addition, the ICRC lent financial support to certain projects of the Lebanese National Society. In April it contributed 370,900 francs towards building two socio-medical centres to provide first aid in the Chouf and the southern sections of Beirut. The centre in Beiteddine (Chouf), supplied with material worth 14,272 francs from the ICRC and an ambulance from the Finnish Red Cross, was active mainly in the evacuation of wounded. The centre in Mreije

(southern Beirut) was supplied by the ICRC with material worth 32,455 francs and, besides its socio-medical activities and teaching of first-aid, gave first-aid to the wounded during the night. It was aided in its work by the delivery of two ambulances furnished by the National Society of Norway.

#### **Relief**

The ICRC distributed 2.6 metric tonnes of relief supplies (food and blankets), mostly in the first half of the year, to 123,450 persons affected by the war in Lebanon (these figures include assistance provided to detainees and to the Lebanese Red Cross).

During the February fighting in the Lebanese capital, the ICRC distributed 984,243 kg of relief supplies to the victims. In order to carry out its assistance activities, the ICRC, which was often the only organization able to cross the "Green Line" separating East and West Beirut, had to negotiate cease-fires among the parties to the conflict to permit relief supplies to be brought to the victims of the combat. After gradually lessening in scale, the ICRC's relief operation in Beirut ceased in mid-April and in West Beirut at the beginning of May. Limited distributions continued until the end of May in the southern suburbs, where the population, already poor, was the worst affected.

In the northern Lebanese city of Tripoli, the scene in August of violent clashes between rival factions, the ICRC distributed limited relief supplies (97 tonnes of food and 7,648 blankets) to some 4,000 persons affected by the shelling.

In Sidon and in southern Lebanon, the stocks accumulated by the ICRC in January and February enabled it to provide 11,000 persons there with some 45 metric tonnes of provisions and 1,090 blankets during the first half of the year.

In the region of the Chouf and the Haut-Metn, 1,367 metric tonnes of provisions and 1,990 blankets were distributed in the first six months of the year to assist 35,000 persons displaced because of the 1983 war in the Chouf.

In the Bekaa Valley, 2,000 persons living in the village of Ezze, situated between Israeli and Syrian forces, were provided with relief supplies throughout the year.

#### **Tracing Agency**

In 1984, five delegates and 26 locally recruited employees carried out the customary activities of the Tracing Agency in Lebanon from offices set up in Beirut, Tyre, Sidon, Baalbek and Tripoli. They registered the 1,186 new prisoners at Ansar, the 51 persons visited in the Israeli interrogation centres in southern Lebanon and the 203 visited while being held by various parties to the Lebanese conflict (Lebanese Forces, Amal movement and the Progressive Socialist Party). The delegates also made certain that the 210 prisoners released from Ansar during the year had returned home safely (56 of them were returned to their country of origin, 14 were transferred by the ICRC from the south to the north of the country).

The Tracing Agency also transmitted 114,106 family messages, 87,440 of them on behalf of the detainees mentioned above. A clear upsurge in this activity was noticeable in August, when traffic between the north and the south of the country was halted on several occasions. The processing of enquiries concerning missing persons necessitated the opening of 121 new files. In addition, 278 positive responses and 265 negative responses were received to enquiries during the year. The difference between the figures is explained by the fact that some files were closed in 1984 whereas they had been opened in previous years.

The Tracing Agency in Lebanon also issued 5,117 certificates of captivity, 4,171 of which were for persons arrested by the Israeli forces in southern Lebanon. These certificates were forwarded to the detainees' families, who were then able, if necessary, to use them to facilitate administrative formalities. The tracing delegates also participated, in 1984, in the organization of family visits to Ansar camp.

### **Dissemination and Information**

In 1984 the ICRC had regular meetings, both in Beirut and Geneva, with the Lebanese Red Cross in order to set up a joint programme for the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law among members of the National Society.

To convey information relating to its activities in Lebanon, the ICRC maintained regular contact throughout the year with the media and their representatives in Beirut. Special efforts in this area were made during the February fighting in Beirut and the August fighting in Tripoli, when the ICRC sent seven special communiqués to the information services of National Societies. In April, a series of 80 slides depicting ICRC activities in Lebanon were sent to each of these National Societies.

### **Personnel**

At the end of 1984, the delegation in Beirut and the sub-delegations in Jounieh, Tripoli, Sidon, Tyre and the Bekaa Valley had 38 ICRC staff, assisted by 87 locally recruited employees. It should be mentioned that the activities carried out in southern Lebanon were under the administration of the delegation in Tel Aviv.

## **Israel and the occupied territories**

In Israel, and more particularly in the territories occupied since 1967, the ICRC continued its activities, which were principally based on the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons. The ICRC considers that the conditions specified for the application of the Fourth Geneva Convention exist in the conflict between Israel and the

Arab countries, whereas the Israeli authorities maintain that the Fourth Convention is not applicable in the territories occupied since 1967. In order to resume a dialogue with the Israeli authorities on this subject, the ICRC Director for General Affairs, accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East, travelled to Tel Aviv on 28 January. There he met the Israeli Prime Minister and the Defence Minister and submitted to them a document listing the humanitarian problems that the ICRC has observed in the territories occupied since June 1967 and calling on the State of Israel to resolve them by strictly applying all the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The ICRC endeavoured, as in past years, to ensure that the inhabitants of Golan and Jerusalem were not deprived of the benefits of the Fourth Geneva Convention and that their rights under Article 47 were respected.

Apart from their activities in connection with the conflict in Lebanon, the 16 members of the delegation in Tel Aviv and the sub-delegations in Jerusalem and Gaza regularly visited, until their release, the Syrian prisoners of war, the former Ansar prisoners transferred to Atlit, the security detainees under interrogation, persons awaiting trial and those convicted. They arranged repatriations and transfers across the demarcation lines. They intervened in cases where the Fourth Geneva Convention was being breached and in general assisted protected persons.

### **Settlements and Destruction of Houses**

In 1984, the ICRC once again voiced its concern regarding the conditions attending the expropriation or purchase of land and the destruction of cultivated areas or houses constructed without a building permit on land earmarked for settlement or for roads to serve the settlements. The ICRC's view is that the Israeli authorities' colonization policy constitutes a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, in particular of Articles 27, 47 and 49.

In 1984 the ICRC reported 11 houses destroyed or partially walled up as acts of reprisal in the occupied territories.

### **Protection**

In 1984 the ICRC visited Syrian prisoners of war until their release on 28 June, 128 prisoners transferred from Ansar to Atlit whereas they should have been released on 24 November 1983 (see Annual Report 1983), several detainees captured in southern Lebanon and transferred to Israel for medical treatment, the security detainees under interrogation to which the ICRC has had access since 1978 and other categories of detainees visited since 1967 (persons awaiting trial or convicted).

On six occasions 291 **Syrian prisoners of war** were visited in Meggido camp before being released and repatriated under the auspices of the ICRC on 28 June after many months of negotiations. On that occasion, the Israeli authorities handed

over to the ICRC the mortal remains of 72 persons, which were then transferred to Syria. In addition, seven Syrian civilian internees were released and returned to Damascus while 13 others returned to their homes in the Golan Heights.

Of the 128 **former Ansar prisoners** whom the Israeli authorities had promised to release on 24 November 1983 but who instead were transferred to Israeli territory, in violation of Articles 49 and 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, nine were released and 119 were visited by the ICRC each month at Atlit. The 90 prisoners who also should have been released on 24 November 1983 from interrogation centres in southern Lebanon, were either released or transferred to Ansar camp where they were regularly visited by the ICRC.

In 1984, ICRC delegates had 1,467 interviews without witness with **detainees under interrogation** on the West Bank and in the Gaza sector. The system for visits to this category of detainee, adopted in 1982, was maintained—the detainees under interrogation were no longer all visited each time the delegates came to the detention centres. Emphasis was placed on the first visit.

Under an agreement concluded with the Israeli authorities, the ICRC is entitled to receive notification within 12 days of an arrest and to have access to security detainees not later than 14 days after their arrest, and subsequently once every 14 days during the period of interrogation. Although the system functioned unsatisfactorily during the first half of the year (lists incomplete or late), there was a marked improvement in the last six months.

Visits to **security detainees** continued in 1984 under the system adopted in 1982, which provides for one complete visit a year. Under the new system, partial visits of the premises or special one-day visits may also take place in order to conduct certain interviews without witness. These last two types of visits resulted in a note being sent to the Israeli authorities. In 1984, the ICRC carried out one complete visit and 126 partial or special visits to the 15 old prisons which make up the Israeli detention system and the new prison in Nablus, opened in June. In the course of these visits, the delegates saw eight detainees who had been transferred from Ansar to Israeli territory in violation of Articles 49 and 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

As in previous years, ICRC delegates made regular visits to 14 police stations on the West Bank, in Jerusalem and in the Gaza sector. The ICRC also visited two military prisons: the prison at Far'a, holding mainly students, most of them arrested for taking part in banned demonstrations, and the Ramallah Governorate barracks, containing mainly detainees in transit to the prison at Far'a. These barracks were visited until their closure in March.

During these visits, 3,800 detainees were seen in Israeli prisons, police stations, Far'a and Ramallah.

In addition, the ICRC made five visits in the first half of the year to the **passengers and crews** of two boats seized by the Israeli navy. Of the 10 prisoners visited, seven were repatriated to Lebanon or to Syria, on 29 March and 3 April, one was repatriated by the Israeli army and the two others were still being detained at the end of 1984.

In addition, from 5 June to 5 August a medical delegate visited three establishments under the jurisdiction of the Israeli Ministry of Health, Meggido camp and, on two occasions, Atlit camp. This mission was undertaken to evaluate the medical care available to the detainees.

As it has done since 1967, the ICRC regularly contacted the Israeli authorities to bring about improvements in conditions of detention. Overcrowding remains of major concern, especially in prisons in the occupied territories.

**LEGAL SAFEGUARDS.**—The ICRC continued to assist persons protected by the Fourth Geneva Convention against whom legal proceedings had been instituted. Since 1973, the Israeli authorities have notified the ICRC of cases brought before military courts. In 1984, the ICRC legal delegate attended 46 public hearings by tribunals in the West Bank, Gaza and Lod, and by the High Court of Justice in Jerusalem, the Military Court in Jaffa and the District Court of Tel Aviv.

### Assistance

As in past years, the ICRC provided detainees and their families with material assistance.

The detainees received leisure items and medical articles (spectacles, dentures etc.). Those having no family in the occupied territories received summer clothes (this project was carried out with the co-operation of charitable organizations in the occupied territories). The neediest among the detainees were given money to make purchases in the prison canteen.

The ICRC also continued to facilitate family visits to detainees. In 1984, 26,683 places were provided in buses to enable families to pay monthly visits to their relatives in detention. The assistance provided to the detainees and their families throughout the year amounted to a total of 1,072,000 Swiss francs.

As in past years, the ICRC shipped relief supplies (1,100 tonnes) from the European Economic Community which were distributed, under the supervision of ICRC delegates, by the Israeli Ministry of Social Welfare and various charitable organizations to the poorest sections of the population in the occupied territories.

### Transfers and travel across the demarcation lines

With the agreement of the authorities concerned in the occupied territories and neighbouring countries, and in co-operation with the delegations in Damascus and Amman, ICRC delegates in Israel arranged for certain categories of persons to cross the demarcation lines. Most of these people were detainees who had been released and repatriated or expelled, and persons who had entered the occupied territories without authorization. Among them were the Syrian prisoners of war captured in Lebanon in 1982 and 1983.

In 1984 the following operations were carried out under the auspices of the ICRC:

- at **Roshanikra**, two persons captured in southern Lebanon before 1982 were transferred to Lebanon;
- in **Kuneitra**, two transfer operations (besides that of 28 June—see “Protection” above) enabled six Syrian detainees to return to their country of origin; 10 persons (two families) went to Syria to be reunited with other members of their families; nine students also returned from Syria to their homes in Golan via Kuneitra;
- across the **Allenby Bridge**, 33 persons went to Jordan or to the West Bank; the mortal remains of one person were also transferred.

### Tracing Agency

As in past years, the Tel Aviv Tracing Agency conducted enquiries to locate military personnel or civilians missing in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict. Of the 124 tracing requests received by the delegation, 37 files were closed, 19 of them positively. Eleven files still open on 31 December 1983 were closed, seven of them positively.

In addition, the Tel Aviv delegation arranged the exchange of family messages, not only between persons detained either in Israel or the occupied territories and their families, but also between Israeli prisoners of war held in Syria and their families. A total of 57,317 messages were exchanged in 1984 between the persons mentioned above. These activities were carried out in co-operation with the ICRC delegations in neighbouring countries and with the assistance of the National Societies of the countries involved.

The Tel Aviv Tracing Agency, after the release, on 28 June, of 291 Syrian prisoners of war, participated in their repatriation.

### Dissemination

The ICRC in 1984 continued its dissemination activities in Israel and the occupied territories by giving lectures to prison guards being trained at the Kfar-Saba school.

## Syria

The ICRC's work in Syria in 1984 was mainly concerned with the protection of Israeli prisoners. From January to June, delegates made monthly visits to three Israeli prisoners held there since mid-1982.

The delegate-general for the Middle East undertook a mission to Damascus from 10 to 14 June in order to negotiate access to other Israeli prisoners held both by the Syrian forces and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine/General Command (PFLP/GC). From 14 June on, three other Israeli prisoners, arrested on 1 May north of Beirut then transferred to Syria, were also visited by the ICRC. Following negotiations, the six Israelis held by the Syrians and the mortal

remains of five others were repatriated on 28 June under the auspices of the ICRC. Three other Israeli prisoners held by the PFLP/CG since 1982 were visited only four times in 1984. These visits were carried out by a delegate accompanied by a doctor. During these visits the prisoners received leisure items.

As part of its tracing activities, the Damascus delegation sent government and family parcels to Syrian prisoners of war held in Israel. It also transmitted 27,680 Red Cross messages.

In addition, 820 detention or release certificates concerning prisoners were issued to their families, for presentation to the competent Syrian authorities.

Forty tonnes of powdered milk, a gift from the Swiss government, were handed over to the Syrian Red Crescent. In addition, 20 wheelchairs and 200 canes were offered to the “Palestinian Red Crescent”.

In 1984, the orthopaedic centre in Damascus, established in 1983 in co-operation with the Swedish Red Cross and the “Palestinian Red Crescent”, produced 250 prostheses under the auspices of the ICRC for use by 220 amputees. Three technicians and six locally recruited trainees worked at the centre throughout the year.

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Mr. Aubert, Vice President of the ICRC, travelled to Damascus to attend the Third Conference of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the Mediterranean Area, which was held in the Syrian capital from 14 to 18 October.

## Conflict in the Western Sahara

After making many representations in 1984, as in previous years, requesting permission to carry out its activities under the Geneva Conventions, especially on behalf of prisoners of war, the ICRC was able to visit, in the course of the year under review, some prisoners captured in connection with the conflict in the Western Sahara.

At the end of April, 210 Moroccan prisoners, held by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguiet el Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario Front), were visited in accordance with the ICRC's customary criteria. On the occasion of this visit, 10 of them were released. After being brought to Geneva, they were repatriated under the auspices of the ICRC. It was planned that the other prisoners held by the Polisario Front, who had not been visited in April, would be seen in the course of later visits by ICRC delegates. The previous visit to Moroccan prisoners held by the Polisario Front had taken place in 1976.

In 1984, the ICRC once again requested access to 33 Moroccans taken prisoner by Algeria in June. In addition, on 22 June, following a request by the Algerian Red Crescent, the mortal remains of four Moroccans were handed over by delegates to the Moroccan Red Crescent.

In Morocco, 99 Algerian servicemen, making up a portion of the prisoners held in that country and already seen on a

previous visit in 1978, were visited in accordance with the ICRC's customary criteria. In July, the ICRC made representations to the Moroccan authorities to gain access to the prisoners belonging to the Polisario Front, who have not been visited since 1978, and to other Algerian servicemen held by them.

In connection with the conflict in the Western Sahara, the Tracing Agency transmitted 502 messages between Algerian or Moroccan prisoners and their families.

In spite of the activities described above and repeated attempts to negotiate with the parties to the conflict, the ICRC must admit that the results obtained fall far short of the protection to which the Geneva Conventions entitle the prisoners.

## Other countries

### SAUDI ARABIA

From 2 to 5 April, the President of the ICRC, accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East and the head of the Financing Division, visited Saudi Arabia where they held talks with Prince Saud al Faisal, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Sheikh Muhammad Ali Aba al Khail, Finance Minister.

### EGYPT

In Geneva, the ICRC received a visit on 3 December from Mr. Boutros Ghali, Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, who had talks with the ICRC President on the subject of the various breaches of international humanitarian law in the world and the ratification by Egypt of the 1977 Protocols.

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In 1984, the ICRC delegation in Cairo concentrated its activities on the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law among the armed forces, volunteers from the Egyptian Red Crescent and certain government and university personnel concerned with international law.

Co-operation with the Egyptian Red Crescent took place not only in the area of dissemination but also in tracing activities where certain cases were handled jointly. In addition, the ICRC paid visits in 1984 to all the local sections of the Egyptian Red Crescent.

In 1984, ICRC delegates transmitted 345 family messages between persons living in Egypt and persons detained in other countries. This activity has fallen off sharply, relative to past years, owing to the release, in November 1983, of some detainees from Ansar camp. In addition, the delegation continued to perform its customary activities consisting in processing requests for news, issuing detention or death certificates and transferring money from families to detainees

abroad (previously seen by the ICRC for that purpose). These activities were carried out with the co-operation of the Egyptian Red Crescent.

The ICRC also helped to prepare the second Cairo seminar on international humanitarian law, which was held from 18 to 22 November (see under heading "Dissemination of international humanitarian law and the principles and ideals of the Red Cross").

### JORDAN

As in previous years, the ICRC continued its protection and assistance activities on behalf of detainees in Jordan. The frequency with which the visits took place in 1983 was maintained. Delegates made 59 visits to 15 prisons where security detainees were held and to the six interrogation centres throughout the country. In this way, 203 detainees were visited in these various places in 1984. Recreational items worth some 31,000 Swiss francs were distributed to them by the delegates.

The delegation in Amman transmitted 9,419 family messages, both between detainees and their families and between separated members of the same family—some living in Jordan and others in the territories occupied since 1967 or in Arab countries.

### LIBYA

From 14 to 17 May, the ICRC President accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East and the head of the Financing Division, undertook a mission to Libya. There he met Mr. Ali Abdul Salam Treiki, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Ibrahim el Faghi Hassan, Minister for Social Affairs. In addition, from 1 to 4 December, an ICRC delegate participated in the first Libyan seminar for the dissemination of knowledge of international humanitarian law and the principles of the Red Cross.

An ICRC delegate was based in Sebha from May to the end of July in order to take part in the negotiations with a view to enabling the ICRC to carry out certain protection activities in connection with the conflict in Chad (see "Chad").

### MAURITANIA

The regional delegate for North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula undertook, from 19 to 24 February, a mission to Nouakchott where he had contacts with representatives of the National Society. He visited the prosthetics centre for the handicapped where he delivered a number of artificial eyes. In March, the ICRC made an offer of services to the authorities, proposing a visit by its delegates to persons detained for breach of State security. The ICRC had received no reply when, in May, a *coup d'état* ousted President Haidalla.

## YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

In 1984, the ICRC President, accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East and the regional delegate for North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, travelled to the Yemen Arab Republic. In Sana'a he attended the 15th Conference of Arab Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, which took place from 31 March to 2 April.

During his visit, the ICRC President also had talks with the Minister of the Interior.

At the end of the year the ICRC received permission to visit all of the prisons, including those where security detainees were held.

## TUNISIA

From 26 to 28 February, the regional delegate for North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula was in Tunisia where he met representatives of the Tunisian Red Crescent.

In March, the ICRC made an offer of services to the Tunisian authorities, proposing a visit by its delegates to persons detained for State security violations. At the end of 1984 the ICRC had received no reply to this offer.

On 22 and 23 March, the ICRC President, accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East and the head of the Financing Division, had talks in Tunisia with Mr. Ameer Fezzani, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Chadli Klibi, Secretary-General of the Arab League.

### RELIEF SUPPLIES DISTRIBUTED BY THE ICRC IN 1984

#### MIDDLE EAST

Country	Beneficiaries	Relief		Medical Assistance	Total Sw. fr.
		Tonnage	Value in Sw. fr.	Value in Sw. fr.	
Iran . . . . .	Prisoners of war, displaced civilians through National Society	18	239,079	10,572	249,651
Iraq . . . . .	Prisoners of war, refugees, internees	3	123,789	3,230	127,019
Israel and occupied territories . . . . .	Civilians, detainees	1,257	1,051,422	21,043	1,072,465
Jordan . . . . .	Detainees	1	31,153	—	31,153
Lebanon . . . . .	Displaced civilians, National Society, detainees	2,645	5,438,847	3,292,597	8,731,444
Syria . . . . .	National Society, disabled persons	40	397,411	227,212	624,623
<b>TOTAL . . . . .</b>		<b>3,964</b>	<b>7,281,701</b>	<b>3,554,654</b>	<b>10,836,355</b>



*Iraq: Iranian prisoners of war grouped together before being repatriated, via Ankara, under the auspices of the ICRC. (Photo ICRC — Jean-Jacques Kurz)*