

**Zeitschrift:** Annual report / International Committee of the Red Cross  
**Herausgeber:** International Committee of the Red Cross  
**Band:** - (1986)

**Rubrik:** Middle East and North Africa

#### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

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

#### **Conditions d'utilisation**

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

#### **Terms of use**

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

**Download PDF:** 09.02.2026

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

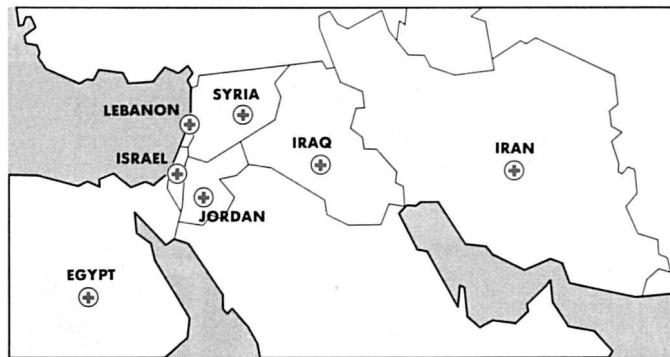
# MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

As in previous years, the ICRC carried out its activities in the Middle East and North Africa through seven permanent delegations, in Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel and the occupied territories, Jordan, Lebanon (with offices in Beirut, Sidon, Tripoli, Tyre, Jezzine, Jounieh, Ksara and Baalbek) and in Syria, plus its regional delegation for the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa, based in Geneva. In addition, from the end of January to the end of April, the ICRC had a delegation in Aden to protect and assist victims of the events.

In 1986 as in 1985, visits to Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq and protection and assistance for the victims of the war in Lebanon constituted the greater part of ICRC activities in the Middle East. Its activities also continued in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict. It furthermore visited Moroccan prisoners held by Algeria and Algerian prisoners held by Morocco, and security detainees in Jordan and the Arab Republic of Yemen. It was unable, however, to engage in any activities for detainees belonging to the same category in other countries of the Middle East and North Africa.

A notable event at the end of the year was the resumption of visits to Iraqi prisoners of war in Iran. In the early months of the year, the ICRC carried out emergency activities in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, as a result of the events which broke out on 13 January.

ICRC operations in connection with the conflict between Iran and Iraq, in Lebanon and as a result of events in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen were financed by donations received in response to special appeals (ICRC special budgets), while the other activities in the Middle East—especially in Israel and the occupied territories—and in North Africa were covered by the institution's regular budget.



## Bombardment of civilian zones

As in previous years, indiscriminate bombardments of civilian persons and objects were of great concern to the ICRC, especially since they gave rise to an escalation of reprisals and counter-reprisals against the populations of both Iranian and Iraqi towns. The ICRC intervened on several occasions with both belligerents, urging them to stop these practices, which constitute a serious violation of international humanitarian law.

## Missing persons

In 1986 the ICRC was still unable to resume its searches for persons reported missing in the course of the hostilities (mainly combatants). This work had had to be interrupted in March 1985 because of the absence or inexactitude of information supplied by the two belligerents about combatants killed on the battlefield. On 23 January, in a *note verbale* to the Permanent Missions of Iran and Iraq in Geneva, the ICRC reminded these two States of their obligations under the Third Geneva Convention concerning notification to the ICRC of enemy soldiers killed or captured. This concern of the ICRC was also raised in interviews with the respective authorities of the two countries, both in their capital cities and in Geneva. Despite all these efforts, however, the ICRC had not observed any improvement in this domain by the end of the year.

## Repatriations of prisoners of war

Prisoners of war designated for repatriation, under the provisions of Article 112 of the Third Convention, by Mixed Medical Commissions which visited camps in Iran at the beginning of

## CONFLICT BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

The war between Iran and Iraq continued to claim countless victims and was a subject of grave concern to the ICRC, particularly as regards respect for the Geneva Conventions which are fully applicable in this international conflict. There were nevertheless some developments in 1986, since the ICRC was able to resume its activities for Iraqi prisoners of war in Iran which had been interrupted since October 1984, and continued its work in Iraq for the benefit of Iranian prisoners of war. In Iran, these activities were carried out by two delegates until 7 November, and from then on by eight, assisted by 18 locally recruited persons; in Iraq, there were 21 delegates (including administrative personnel) and three Iraqi employees.

1983 and camps in Iraq in November of 1985, had not been repatriated by the end of 1986.

No seriously wounded or sick prisoners of war, under the terms of Articles 109 and 110 of the Third Convention, were repatriated by either of the belligerents during 1986.

### Appeal for funds

To obtain the necessary funds 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 5,200,000 Swiss francs.

## Activities in Iraq

ICRC delegates continued their protection and assistance activities throughout the year for victims of the conflict.

On two occasions, the President of the ICRC met Mr. Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iraq, in Bern in June and in Geneva in October. These meetings dealt with humanitarian problems resulting from the conflict.

### Protection

*IRANIAN PRISONERS OF WAR.*—In 1986 the delegates continued their visits to Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq on a regular schedule of one complete visit to their camps every six weeks. During the year, the ICRC thus visited 12,698 Iranian prisoners of war, 2,857 of whom were registered and visited for the first time. The ICRC continued to be concerned about a group of prisoners of war to whom it had not yet been able to obtain access.

During their visits, ICRC delegates gave the prisoners recreational and educational material worth about 270,000 Swiss francs.

*REPATRIATED IRAQI PRISONERS OF WAR.*—In January, ICRC delegates visited 97 former Iraqi prisoners of war at the military hospital in Tamuz, seriously wounded or sick, who had been repatriated in December 1985.

*CIVILIAN POPULATION.*—In Iraq the ICRC also continued its work for the civilian population protected by Article 4 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

ICRC delegates continued to make regular visits every three months to 25,000 Kurdish refugees, natives of Iran who were interned at the Al Tash camp near Ramadi. These visits made it possible to monitor their living conditions and to exchange Red Cross messages.

Similar visits were made to several thousand families (about 20,000 persons) who came originally from Khuzistan or Ahwaz (Arabic-speaking Iranians) in 15 villages in the region of Meisan in February. Later, ICRC delegates no longer had access to this

population because of differences of view between the ICRC and the authorities on the procedures for visits. Subsequent approaches to the authorities had not succeeded in changing the situation by the end of the year.

At the request of the Iraqi authorities, the ICRC also continued its efforts to find countries willing to accept a number of Iranian citizens who had sought refuge in Iraq and were visited regularly by the delegates in the Shomeli and Ramadi camps. With the co-operation of the diplomatic representatives of various countries, 122 Iranians thus obtained the necessary authorization in 1986 to settle in host countries.

### Tracing Agency

In addition to registering new prisoners of war to whom the ICRC had access, Agency activities were concerned mainly with exchanges of family messages. The ICRC was thus able to give the Permanent Committee for War Victims 415,553 Red Cross messages for Iranian prisoners of war and received 345,266 for families living in Iran or other countries. Several hundred messages were distributed to or collected from the civilian population assisted by the ICRC.

## Activities in Iran

In order to renew the dialogue with the Iranian authorities, the President of the ICRC sent a letter on 4 April to Dr. Velayati, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In this message Mr. Alexandre Hay emphasized the ICRC's desire to resume its dialogue with the Islamic Republic of Iran with a view to finding solutions to the humanitarian problems created by the conflict.

After two missions to Iran by the ICRC Director of Operations in May and July, an agreement was reached for the resumption of visits to Iraqi prisoners of war interned in Iran. A team of delegates including doctors left for Iran on 7 November and visits proper were able to begin on 4 December. By the end of the year, visits had been made to the first two camps with a total of 3,615 Iraqi prisoners of war. Among them, 377 prisoners who were visited for the first time by the ICRC filled in capture cards, which were handed over to the Iraqi authorities so that their families in that country could be informed.

### Tracing Agency

Throughout the year, the ICRC delegation in Tehran continued to exchange family messages between prisoners of war and their families. Thus, 712,592 Red Cross messages were passed on to the Iranian authorities for forwarding to Iraqi prisoners of war and 540,495 messages from these prisoners were sent to Iraq for their families.

In addition, two Egyptian sailors taken from their ship in November 1985 left Iran under ICRC auspices in January 1986.

## LEBANON

In 1986 the situation in Lebanon continued to be of extreme concern to the ICRC because of the many violent clashes in different parts of the country (particularly in Beirut, in the Metn, in the southern part of the country and in Tripoli). The ICRC continued its intensive protection and assistance activities for the civilian population affected by the conflict and sought to extend this protection to persons arrested and detained by the various parties to the conflict. Its humanitarian activities were prompted by two aspects of the conflict: on one hand the events associated with the internal conflict, in particular the "war of the camps" between Lebanese and Palestinian factions, and the series of indiscriminate acts of violence such as car bombs and parcel bombs; and on the other hand the situation in the "security belt" controlled by the South Lebanon Army (SLA), supported by the Israeli armed forces. In this region the ICRC, during approaches to the SLA and the Israeli authorities, reminded the latter of their responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The activities of the ICRC and the Lebanese Red Cross were rendered especially difficult throughout the year by the increasing disrespect for the Red Cross emblem and personnel. For example, two Lebanese Red Cross first-aid workers were killed and eight others injured during the evacuation or transfer of casualties, and ICRC and Lebanese Red Cross vehicles were stolen. Relief supplies intended for victims were also stolen, usually for fear that only some people, and not others, would benefit by this assistance, or conversely to ensure that only one side received it.

The movements of Red Cross representatives were accordingly limited. These restrictions prevented the humanitarian operation from progressing normally. As a result, there were wounded who could not be evacuated in time and stranded civilian victims of fighting between factions who could not be given assistance.

The ICRC and the Lebanese Red Cross maintained constant contact with all the parties involved in the conflict, seeking to obtain sufficient assurances to enable them to continue their humanitarian action. Due to the seriousness of the situation, they were compelled to launch public appeals to this effect. On 1 December, the ICRC delegation in Beirut issued a press release calling attention to the impossibility of coming to the assistance of victims of combats, both in Beirut and in the southern part of the country.

Throughout the year, the ICRC remained in contact with the Israeli authorities and the principal leaders of the SLA, reminding them of their obligations and responsibilities in the "security belt". Although it had observed serious humanitarian problems in this region and in areas close to the demarcation line, the ICRC was not always able to do what it should to help the

victims. Indeed, the situation was sometimes so hazardous that all movement had to be discontinued for several weeks, preventing delegates from evacuating the wounded or helping civilians cut off in their villages. Furthermore, the ICRC did not obtain access to persons detained by the SLA, despite repeated approaches to its commander, General Lahad, and the highest Israeli authorities.

To carry out its various activities, the ICRC had a team of about 28 delegates and some 80 local employees in Lebanon all year, and in early December even increased the number of staff there. At the beginning of the year, some members of the team had been supplied by the Canadian, French and Swedish National Societies (two physiotherapists, a nurse and a radio operator). In view of the growing dangers, however, the ICRC felt obliged to withdraw them from Lebanon and keep only expatriate staff of Swiss nationality who were exclusively under contract to the ICRC.

The delegate-general for the Middle East visited Lebanon twice, in August and November, to take stock with the delegation and discuss the main humanitarian questions resulting from the situation with the leaders of the various parties involved in the conflict.

### Appeal for funds

At the beginning of the year the ICRC launched an appeal for 8,045,900 Swiss francs to finance its activities in Lebanon.

### Protection

**CIVILIAN POPULATION.**—The effect on civilian victims of the tragic events in Lebanon continued to be of major concern to the ICRC. Outbreaks of fighting in various parts of the country often compelled groups of civilians to flee their homes or, on the contrary, left them isolated in their villages or camps, unable to get food or medical care. The ICRC arranged on several occasions for cease-fires to enable civilians to cross through the fighting lines, for example in the last quarter of the year for the inhabitants of the village of Maghdouché and for people living in Palestinian camps near Tyre and Beirut.

In the south of the country, the people living in and alongside the "security belt" suffered particularly from the situation. Hundreds were forced to leave their villages in the "security belt" and thus joined the growing number of displaced persons; other civilians were cut off by the fighting, especially in villages along the demarcation line. Both crops and homes were pillaged or destroyed. Whenever possible ICRC delegates visited these places to bring assistance to the populations and made regular visits to villages near the front line. The ICRC also repeatedly approached all parties concerned to remind them of the essential rules of international humanitarian law.

Following grave violations by armed combatants, all parties to the conflict were also reminded by the ICRC in Beirut in July

of the respect to which the wounded and sick are entitled, especially those receiving treatment in hospitals, and of the respect due to the civilian population.

**PERSONS ARRESTED.**—The ICRC continued its efforts throughout the year to visit persons captured and detained because of the conflict.

— ICRC delegates accordingly visited more than 330 persons held by various parties to the Lebanese conflict (Lebanese Army, AMAL, Popular Liberation Army, Lebanese Forces, the Socialist Progressive Party and various Palestinian groups). In the course of about 50 visits, these detainees benefited from protection and regular assistance by the ICRC. The visits also enabled them to fill in or receive family messages and thus maintain contact with their relatives. The detainees received material assistance in the form of blankets, medicines, recreational material, etc. While these visits proceeded, the ICRC continued its approaches to all parties, seeking to gain access to all the detained persons.

— Numerous persons were taken prisoner in clashes at the end of the year in the Sidon area. The ICRC obtained lists of prisoners and subsequently the right to visit some of them (about 70 in all), even while the combats continued; a number of families were thus able to receive quick reassurance about the fate of their kindred.

— Despite repeated requests to the Israeli authorities and the SLA, the ICRC was unable to obtain access to places of detention in the “security belt”, especially the Khiyam prison, the largest of them. Under these conditions it could not fulfil its mandate for the detained persons in this region of Lebanon. The ICRC was able, however, to organize family visits for detainees in Khiyam who had come from places outside the “security belt” (*see below under “Tracing Agency”*).

— The ICRC also requested the Israeli authorities to notify it of arrests made by the Israeli army on Lebanese territory and to permit its delegates to visit these prisoners wherever they were. Pursuant to this request, its delegates visited 27 persons who had been arrested in the south of Lebanon in February during a military operation and transferred to Israeli territory (*see also “Israel and the Occupied Territories” below*). It was impossible to find out, however, what had happened to many other persons reported missing during the same operation.

— The ICRC approached all parties concerned in its efforts to gain access to members of the SLA militia captured during the year, but without success. Likewise, it was unable to find out what happened to three members of the Israeli armed forces captured in Lebanon on 17 February (two) and 16 October (one). As a general practice, the ICRC continued as in previous years to seek information on the fate of persons reported missing or presumed dead in Lebanon and for this purpose approached all parties to the conflict.

— The ICRC again condemned the taking of hostages as being acts committed in violation of the most fundamental principles of war and humanity. It may be noted that, with the consent of the parties concerned, delegates may assist hostages and, by their presence, give some degree of moral comfort. But as a rule it is not within the province of the ICRC to join in negotiations which may take place in this connection.

### Tracing Agency

During regular ICRC visits to persons detained by the various parties to the Lebanese conflict, more than 130 persons were registered in 1986.

ICRC delegates assisted in the transfer of more than 80 persons, about half of whom were detainees who had reached the end of their period of detention in Israel and were being repatriated by the ICRC to Lebanon; the others were transferred across the front lines inside Lebanon. The ICRC also arranged for several family reunifications; 41 persons in Lebanon were thus able to rejoin their relatives abroad with the help of the ICRC and the National Societies concerned.

At the families’ request, the ICRC took charge of transferring or repatriating the mortal remains of persons killed in clashes in the “security belt”. Six bodies were thus brought back to their families in Israel or in the “security belt” through the intermediary of the ICRC and in co-operation with first-aid teams of the Lebanese Red Cross.

However, the main activity of the Tracing Agency in Lebanon continued to be the transmission of Red Cross messages. This was especially important in 1986 to detained persons in Lebanon and elsewhere and to their families. During the violent fighting which took place in the Metn in January and the “war of the camps”, the number of Red Cross messages exchanged between separated family members increased. A total of more than 13,700 Red Cross messages were collected and distributed by ICRC delegates in Lebanon during the year.

In addition, the ICRC organized family visits for persons detained in the Khiyam prison, in the hands of the SLA, when their families lived outside the “security belt”. These family visits were interrupted a number of times, however, and were again suspended at the end of the year by the SLA, which explained its decision by reasons of reciprocity. Nevertheless, 28 detainees received visits from their relatives in 1986 (49 persons were transported by the ICRC for this purpose).

It is also a vital function of the Tracing Agency to search for persons reported missing. The great number of cases which could not be solved, despite repeated approaches by the delegates to the relevant authorities, continued to be a matter of grave concern to the ICRC.

### Relief

As in previous years, the ICRC distributed food and other relief supplies to civilians affected by the many violent clashes in the country (persons displaced because of the fighting, persons

without shelter or otherwise in distress and those who lived close to the front lines). In order to carry out emergency assistance actions, the ICRC maintained a permanent buffer stock of relief goods in several warehouses (East and West Beirut, Tripoli, Ksara, Jezzine, Sidon and Tyre), sufficient to cover the vital needs of 55,000 persons. These stocks were regularly replenished throughout the year.

Emergency relief operations were organized for victims of the hostilities which flared up at the beginning of the year in East Beirut and the Metn. In these operations, the ICRC assisted more than 11,000 civilians on both sides of the front, giving them family parcels (containing foodstuffs, candles and soap) plus such other items as cooking utensils and blankets.

Throughout the year, ICRC delegates working in the regions of Jezzine and Tyre identified, located and assisted groups of destitute civilians who had been forced to leave the "security belt", who had fled from their destroyed homes or were victims of the fighting. The delegates also made regular visits to villages along the demarcation line of the "security belt" to evaluate the situation and provide relief where necessary. Hundreds of blankets and family parcels were thus distributed.

Clashes between Palestinian and Lebanese factions, especially in October and December, resulted in the displacement of many civilians whom the ICRC assisted until it was possible for Lebanese relief organizations to take over. In this way, more than 16,000 persons received about 11,000 blankets, 2,700 family parcels and 400 sets of cooking utensils.

The total amount of relief distributed in 1986 to more than 39,000 persons came to about 600,000 Swiss francs.

### Medical assistance

ICRC medical activities continued to be substantial throughout the year to maintain the effectiveness of the existing medical infrastructure in Lebanon. A medical team consisting of at least one doctor and three nurses, supplemented if necessary by medical personnel from Geneva, carried out systematic assessments in the country's hospitals and dispensaries. In serious emergencies, this team made daily visits and surveys in the medical centres where the wounded were treated and distributed medicines and other medical supplies as needed. The ICRC made about 2,000 such visits and surveys during the year.

ICRC medical teams also gave particular attention to villages in the south of the country, in the "security belt" and especially along the demarcation line. In addition to distributing first-aid material to village dispensaries, ICRC medical personnel went whenever necessary to isolated villages or those which were difficult to reach because of military operations or lack of security to evaluate needs, to evacuate the wounded and dead (in close co-operation with the Lebanese Red Cross) and to distribute emergency medical supplies. Since some villages had no medical facilities, the ICRC helped to install two mobile clinics, run by the Jezzine section of the Lebanese Red Cross, by supplying medicines and medical equipment. About 30 first-aid centres along the demarcation line of the "security belt" regularly received such material from the ICRC.

In January, the fighting which broke out in East Beirut and spread rapidly into the Metn region necessitated an increase in ICRC medical personnel and activity. A nurse was assigned to Ksara and two others to East Beirut. Medical material was also distributed for victims of the fighting in East Beirut in August and again in September, as well as for the victims of car bombs in both the eastern and western parts of the city.

In September, after a fire in a factory at Furn-el-Chebak, the ICRC sent a Geneva doctor specializing in the treatment of serious burns and gave appropriate material to the medical centres concerned worth approximately 70,000 Swiss francs.

Because of clashes throughout the year in the western part of the capital, ICRC medical personnel was in virtually non-stop contact during and after the fighting with all the Lebanese medical centres in West Beirut and in the southern suburbs, evaluating needs and distributing the necessary supplies. On the other hand, the ICRC was able to act only to a limited extent in the Palestinian refugee camps because of the danger involved during the hostilities and the lack of any safety guarantee by the parties concerned. The emergency situation which developed in October and still prevailed at the end of the year, resulting from clashes between Lebanese and Palestinian factions in the Tyre, Sidon and Beirut areas, prompted a further increase in ICRC medical activity. Although the delegates could not enter the Palestinian refugee camps they did have access to the medical centres in the affected areas, which they visited daily. These were supplied with medical material worth about 200,000 Swiss francs during the last three months of the year.

During the year, dispensaries, clinics and hospitals run by Palestinian social services, in particular by the "Palestinian Red Crescent", received medical supplies worth about 140,000 Swiss francs from the ICRC.

In Tripoli as well, the violent fighting which broke out at the end of December in the Tebbaneh quarter induced the ICRC to mount a brief operation consisting of visits to medical centres and the supply of medical material.

ICRC **orthopaedic technicians** continued their work in the Beit Chebab and Sidon centres. For patients unable to go to the established orthopaedic centres because of hazardous conditions, consultations were arranged in various other places such as Tyre, Mrejje (a suburb of Beirut) and Jezzine. The ICRC also worked in close co-operation and co-ordination with the Hammana orthopaedic centre, a joint project of the Lebanese and Netherlands National Societies, as well as with the orthopaedist supplied by the Swiss Red Cross working in the Abou Samra workshop in Tripoli, especially in the training of technicians. In 1986, ICRC orthopaedists produced 191 prostheses and 93 orthoses.

Total ICRC medical assistance in Lebanon in 1986 amounted to about 1,116,000 Swiss francs, not including aid given to the National Society.

### Support for the National Society

In 1986, the ICRC continued and increased its support for the Lebanese Red Cross, concentrating on emergency activities and

strengthening the necessary operational structures. The ICRC accordingly financed and gave material assistance to the development of first-aid centres, including the creation of three new centres. The ICRC also helped strengthen the first-aid section, in particular by donating 20 new ambulances. In addition, to increase awareness of the Red Cross among the population and thus ensure better respect for its activities, the ICRC helped the Lebanese Red Cross to organize and carry out a programme to disseminate knowledge of Red Cross principles among militia members and local political and military leaders, participating for example in the production of brochures. The head of the ICRC Co-operation-Dissemination Division visited Lebanon in April to take stock of the situation together with the delegation and National Society and to decide on possible courses of action in this field.

The ICRC continued its support for the Mreije medical and social centre, in a southern suburb of Beirut. It donated 240 wheelchairs to the Lebanese Red Cross programme for the disabled and increased assistance to its central pharmacy and dispensaries. The Lebanese Red Cross blood bank received 4,550 units of blood and the necessary equipment for transfusions, donated by the Norwegian and Swiss National Societies.

ICRC assistance and support for the Lebanese Red Cross in 1986 came to a total of 1,725,000 Swiss francs.

## ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Ever since 1967, in Israel and especially in the territories occupied by Israel, the ICRC has carried out activities based principally on the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilian persons. In the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries, the ICRC considers that the conditions for application of the Fourth Convention are fulfilled in all of the occupied territories, including the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Golan and East Jerusalem, whatever status the Israeli authorities ascribe to these territories. Article 47 of the Fourth Convention lays down the inviolability of the rights of protected persons in occupied territories. The Israeli authorities, however, consider that the *de jure* applicability of the Fourth Convention presents difficulties, but state that they apply its provisions *de facto* in the Gaza Strip and on the West Bank.

Throughout the year the ICRC maintained regular contact with the Israeli authorities to protect and assist, in accordance with its mandate, the protected persons in the territories occupied since 1967. It also discussed with these authorities the position and problems of protected persons in the southern Lebanon "security belt" (see "Lebanon" in this Report). In this connection, the Director General of the ICRC and the delegate-general for the Middle East and North Africa went to Israel in August to discuss with the highest Israeli authorities the humanitarian problems in the occupied territories and also the subject

of respect for the Fourth Geneva Convention. They met Mr. Shamir, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Rabin, Minister of Defence, Mr. Sharir, Minister of Justice, Mr. Weizman, Minister without portfolio, Mr. Bar Lev, Minister of Police, and many other high officials in these respective Ministries.

### Protection

**DETAINED PERSONS.**—The ICRC continued its protection activities for persons arrested not only in Israel and in the occupied territories but also in Lebanon and at sea (seizures of vessels).

Regular visits to **persons sentenced or awaiting trial** continued throughout the year to all places of detention. On the annual series of complete visits to each place of detention the delegates were accompanied by a medical delegate; nine police stations were visited in May and June and the 17 places of detention under the jurisdiction of the Prison Service were the object of another series of visits from mid-July to the beginning of October. The prison population throughout the year averaged about 4,000.

ICRC delegates continued their activities for **detainees under interrogation**. During the year they had about 1,700 interviews without witness with more than 1,000 detainees on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. During the disturbances in December, the increase in the number of persons arrested led the Israeli authorities to open another detention centre at Gaza, the "El Katiba" camp. ICRC delegates made a complete visit to the camp three days after it was opened and registered 65 detainees, who were either released or transferred to the prison at Gaza on 17 December. The El Katiba camp reopened, however, on 25 December.

The system of visits to detainees under interrogation, adopted in 1982, was continued. Under an agreement concluded with the Israeli authorities in 1977 and amended in 1979, the ICRC must be notified of arrests within 12 days and have access, within 14 days of their arrest, to security detainees under interrogation. Following several approaches by the ICRC, in October 1986 the detaining authorities confirmed their intention to implement fully the 1977-79 agreement, in particular the transfer of the detainees to the general wings after a period not exceeding four weeks of detention, except where imperative or absolute military security or necessity so requires. However, despite this confirmation, the proportion of detainees remaining under interrogation for periods in excess of four weeks was still high at the end of the year.

In addition, the Israeli authorities in October agreed to notify the ICRC of arrests of protected persons from East Jerusalem and to give it access to them in accordance with the same arrangements as those applying to protected persons from Gaza and the West Bank. The first notifications of such arrests of persons from East Jerusalem were transmitted to the ICRC on 29 December. On the other hand, the Israeli authorities refused to extend such measures to protected persons from the Golan. The ICRC thus found it impossible to fulfil its mandate with respect to these persons.

The ICRC delegates continued their visits to **administrative detainees**. There were 91 such detainees at the beginning of the year and 33 at the end of the year.

**Persons arrested in southern Lebanon** were also visited by the ICRC delegates in Israel, as well as **passengers and crew members of several vessels** seized in the Mediterranean by the Israeli armed forces. The ICRC, however, was not routinely notified of such captures on land or at sea and was sometimes informed only after excessively long delays. Furthermore, the ICRC emphasized that it considers the detention in Israel of persons arrested in southern Lebanon to be contrary to the Fourth Convention, which forbids such transfers from one country to another.

The ICRC also continued its activities in connection with **penal prosecution**. The legal delegate attended public hearings in the trials of security detainees and remained in contact with their lawyers and the Israeli judicial authorities to make sure that the guarantees to which protected persons are entitled were respected.

**CIVILIAN POPULATION.**—The ICRC continued to concern itself with the situation of the population in the occupied territories. It intervened in particular with regard to certain measures for the maintenance of order and certain aspects of the administration of occupied territories which violate the provisions of the Fourth Convention.

For example, curfews and bans on travel were regularly applied and sometimes extended to whole districts. Houses were destroyed or walled up by the Israeli authorities who cited reasons of security, preventive or punitive.

The occupying power also continued its practice of expelling protected persons from the occupied territories.

Lastly, the practice of inciting persons to collaborate continued to be of concern to the ICRC.

Throughout the year, pieces of land were seized or declared to be "state land". Although no new settlements appeared, the existing settlements continued to be developed.

However, in most of the above cases, which often constituted grave breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention, interventions by the ICRC were disallowed by the Israeli authorities who consider that the ICRC oversteps its mandate by such interventions.

### Tracing Agency

The ICRC continued to search for persons reported missing as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In 1986, 151 tracing requests were received and 48 could be given an answer.

The Tel Aviv delegation and the sub-delegations in East Jerusalem and Gaza forwarded more than 60,000 Red Cross messages between persons detained in Israel and the occupied territories and their families in Arab countries.

With the consent of the authorities on both sides, the ICRC organized several transfer operations across the demarcation

lines, usually for former detainees. Such operations also made it possible to reunite families and transfer sick persons, with the assistance of the National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies concerned. During 1986, more than 70 persons benefited from such transfer operations.

### Assistance

The ICRC continued throughout the year to provide material assistance to detainees and their families. During prison visits, delegates distributed recreational articles and medical material worth about 425,000 Swiss francs. This total also includes small sums of money which the ICRC gave to the neediest detainees to enable them to buy things at the prison canteen.

The ICRC continued to facilitate family visits to detainees by making buses available so that relatives could make one trip a month from their homes to the prisons; more than 45,000 people were transported in the course of this operation, which cost about 497,000 Swiss francs in 1986.

The ICRC also donated tents to families who were homeless because of the walling-up or destruction of their houses.

### Dissemination

In 1986, ICRC delegates gave lectures on international humanitarian law to officers and members of the police occupying important posts in the occupied territories and to legal representatives of various ministries.

## PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

When fighting broke out on 13 January in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, the ICRC at once offered its services to the authorities for the provision of protection and assistance to the victims. A positive reply was received on 27 January and an initial team of four delegates, including a medical coordinator, which had been on standby in Djibouti, reached Aden the following day. The team immediately established the necessary contacts to begin its assessment of needs. Relief supplies and telecommunication equipment accompanied the team. This ICRC delegation in Aden was increased during the following days to a total of 17 persons, including medical teams and specialists in public health.

The situation in the country soon returned to normal and the ICRC delegation left Aden at the end of April, after offering its services to the authorities for visits to persons detained because of the events. During its three months' presence in Aden, ICRC activities included medical work, assistance and the tracing of

missing persons, all carried out with the constant support of the National Red Crescent Society.

To finance these activities, the ICRC launched an appeal in March for 1,884,800 Swiss francs, including donations already received or promised amounting to about 150,000 francs. This target was not reached and the ICRC had to make up a deficit of about 800,000 francs.

### Assistance

In an initial evaluation of the situation after their arrival in Aden at the end of January, ICRC medical personnel recognized that the most obvious needs were for surgical assistance and improved public hygiene. Accordingly, on 29 January the surgical team (consisting of a surgeon and nurse from the Finnish Red Cross and two ICRC nurses) and a specialist in public hygiene set to work in Aden. On 5 February a Swedish Red Cross team joined them and continued the work already begun in war surgery, in co-operation with local medical personnel, at the Al-Gumhuriah hospital in Aden. Regular visits were also made to other hospitals in the capital to identify serious cases which should be transferred to the Al-Gumhuriah hospital. By the end of February, 15 hospitals in the Governorates of Aden, Lahaj and Abyan had been visited. In April other hospitals and dispensaries were visited by the ICRC in the Governorates of Abyan and Shabwa. Whenever necessary, emergency medical material was distributed in the places visited, about 30 in all. The medical team left Aden at the end of February, by which time the emergency situation had subsided.

During February an ICRC physiotherapist made a survey of needs for rehabilitation and worked with local physiotherapists to find satisfactory solutions for the rehabilitation of the wounded. He also organized a seminar lasting several days on physiotherapeutic care.

During the first three weeks of the ICRC presence in Aden, a team specializing in public health and environmental sanitation tackled the problem of safe water supplies. It organized cleaning-up operations at water sources and in buildings and zones severely affected by the fighting, providing technical assistance and supplying disinfectants, insecticides, a portable laboratory for testing water, pumps, etc. to the public health services of the Governorate of Aden.

Initial contacts with the authorities and representatives of the National Society and surveys carried out by the ICRC itself indicated that the situation did not call for emergency assistance in the form of food and other items. The ICRC nevertheless participated in the Red Crescent programme in aid of persons displaced by the events. A total of 1,950 blankets, 1,800 sheets and 250 sets of cooking utensils were delivered to Aden for distribution.

### Protection and Tracing Agency

A delegate of the Central Tracing Agency arrived in Aden on 2 February and worked with the National Society to restore

contact, which had temporarily been lost, between members of families living in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and those living abroad. More than 100 families were thus reassured about the safety of relatives and many Red Cross messages with family news were exchanged. The Government designated the National Society as the body responsible for co-ordinating information about persons who had died during the events.

The ICRC informed the Yemeni authorities of its concern over persons detained because of the events and expressed its wish to visit them in accordance with the institution's usual criteria. Under the terms of its mandate and on the basis of its right of initiative, the ICRC presented its offer of services in this connection on 17 February during a meeting in Aden of the head of delegation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Abdul Aziz Ad-Dali, and later in a *note verbale* sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 6 March. Contacts were maintained throughout the year. Some positive assurances were given by the authorities, particularly during a meeting between the President of the ICRC and the Minister for Foreign Affairs at Harare in September, on the occasion of the summit meeting of the Non-aligned Countries. At the end of the year, however, no visits had been made to persons detained because of the events.

## CONFLICT IN THE WESTERN SAHARA

As in previous years, the ICRC continued its efforts to obtain access to all prisoners detained by the different parties to the conflict. It was unfortunately evident, however, that it was still not possible to provide all the combatants captured in the conflict in the Western Sahara with the protection to which they are entitled.

The President of the ICRC, accompanied by the delegate-general for the Middle East and North Africa and the regional delegate, carried out a mission to Morocco in June, during which he was received by King Hassan II and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Abdelatif Filali. At this meeting, which dealt with humanitarian aspects of the situation of combatants captured in the Western Sahara conflict, Mr. Alexandre Hay informed the King of the ICRC's wish to visit the Algerian and Sahrawi prisoners in Moroccan hands.

### Protection

Ninety-nine Algerian soldiers were visited by ICRC delegates in Morocco in October. They had previously been seen in June 1984.

In Algeria in December, ICRC delegates visited 35 Moroccan prisoners, 34 of whom had already been seen in 1985. They registered one new military prisoner who had been held since June 1986. In addition, the body of a prisoner who had died

since the previous visit was repatriated to Morocco in October under the auspices of the ICRC.

However, the ICRC had still not been informed of the identity of all Moroccan prisoners in the hands of the Polisario Front, nor of Sahrawi prisoners in Moroccan hands. No visits to prisoners detained by the Polisario Front were carried out in 1986. The ICRC has not been authorized to visit Sahrawi prisoners in Moroccan hands since 1978.

### Tracing Agency

During 1986, the Tracing Agency organized the exchange of 882 family messages between Algerian prisoners held in Morocco and their families, and 222 such messages between Moroccan prisoners held in Algeria and their families. These exchanges were made possible by the co-operation of the Algerian and Moroccan Red Crescent Societies.

### Assistance

In February, two ICRC delegates visited Sahrawi refugee camps to check the use made of relief supplies turned over to the "Sahrawi Red Crescent" the year before for distribution to the civilian population. In view of the needs, especially those of particularly vulnerable members of the population such as children, pregnant women and the elderly, the ICRC continued acting as an intermediary between donors and the "Sahrawi Red Crescent" in 1986. In this way, 1,436 tonnes of food relief valued at about 3 million Swiss francs were distributed in 1986.

In addition, the ICRC delivered to the Moroccan Red Crescent parcels sent by the Algerian Red Crescent for Algerian soldiers held in Morocco and vice versa.

## OTHER COUNTRIES

— In February, the President of the ICRC visited three countries in the Gulf and discussed the various activities of the ICRC, particularly in the Middle East. He placed special emphasis on the need for ratification of the Additional Protocols and for dissemination of international humanitarian law. Finally, he stressed the increased needs of the ICRC for the financing of its humanitarian activities.

□ In **Saudi Arabia**, the ICRC President met the Minister for Finance and the Economy, Sheikh Muhammad Ali Aba al Khail and the Vice-Minister for International Co-operation in the same Ministry, Mr. Osama Fakih, as well as other high officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Mr. Alexandre Hay also met leading officials of the National Society, in particular Dr. Hamad

Abdullah Al-Sugair, President of the Saudi Arabian Red Crescent Society.

□ In **Bahrain**, President Hay was received by the Emir Issa Ben Selman Al-Khalifa. He also had talks with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Mohammad Ben Moubarak Ben Hamad Al-Khalifa, the Minister of Education, Dr. Ali Mohammad Fakhro, who is also President of the Bahrain Red Crescent, and with other officials of the National Society. The State of Bahrain acceded to the Protocols on 30 October 1986.

□ In **Qatar**, Mr. Hay met the Emir Khalifa Bin Hamad Al-Thani, the Minister of Work and Social Affairs, Mr. Ali Bin Ahmad Al-Ansari, who is also Vice-President of the Qatar Red Crescent, and the Minister of Health, Mr. Khalid Bin Mohammed Al-Mana, as well as other high officials and the President of the National Society, Sheikh Ali Bin Jaber Al-Thani and other leading members of the Qatar Red Crescent.

— In **Egypt**, the programme for dissemination of international humanitarian law launched by the ICRC in co-operation with the Egyptian Red Crescent continued throughout the year. In this connection, close contacts were maintained with the Ministry of Defence. Similar contacts were developed in university circles and lectures were given before various audiences, including talks to more than 100 Egyptian officers undergoing training to be military judges. Pursuant to these contacts, two initial lectures on international humanitarian law were also presented as part of the curriculum of the University of Asyut Faculty of Law.

The ICRC delegation continued to exchange Red Cross messages and to deal with other Central Tracing Agency matters between persons living in Egypt and members of their families in other countries, especially in the territories occupied by Israel.

— In **Jordan**, as in previous years, the ICRC continued its activities for the protection of security detainees in all places of detention. In Amman, the delegates visited detainees under interrogation, making 19 visits to the prison of the General Intelligence Department and three other visits to the prison of the Military Intelligence Department. In addition, a general series of visits by the delegates and an ICRC doctor took place from October to December in 26 places of detention for both civilians and military personnel. In the course of these 48 visits carried out in 1986, the ICRC saw more than 3,000 detainees, of whom about 300 were registered for the first time so that they could obtain regular assistance from the delegates throughout their period of detention. ICRC delegates also facilitated contacts between the detainees and their families, especially through exchanges of Red Cross messages. Material assistance in the form of books, games, medicines, etc., worth about 34,000 Swiss francs, was also distributed to the detainees. The ICRC delegation in Jordan also continued its Tracing Agency activities, particularly the exchange of Red Cross messages between Jordan and the territories occupied by Israel. Some 5,000 such messages were distributed and collected during the year.

— Following the attack by the United States Air Force on Tripoli and Benghazi, **Libya**, on 15 April, the ICRC notified both parties of its availability but neither wished to take advantage of its offer of services.

— The ICRC delegation in **Syria** continued its Tracing Agency activities in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict, mainly through the exchange of Red Cross messages, in co-operation with the Syrian Red Crescent, between detainees and the population of territories occupied by Israel on the one hand and their families in Syria on the other. The delegation also dealt with tracing requests, issued certificates of captivity and arranged five transfers across the demarcation line with Israel and across the Lebanese border. Three family reunifications were also arranged.

As in previous years, the ICRC delivered 40 tonnes of powdered milk donated by the EEC to the Syrian Red Crescent for its assistance programmes. An ICRC nutritionist made two visits to Syria, in July and November, to modify this programme of co-operation with the Syrian Red Crescent by making a greater variety of foodstuffs available for children in the dispensaries run by the National Society. The local branches at Aleppo and Homs were visited on these occasions.

The orthopaedic centre in Damascus which was established in 1983 in co-operation with the Swedish Red Cross and the "Palestinian Red Crescent" and run by the three institutions jointly, was entirely taken over by the "Palestinian Red Crescent" in April 1986. The ICRC and Swedish Red Cross continued nevertheless to supply it with equipment. An orthopaedic tech-

nician attached to the ICRC delegation in Lebanon made regular visits to Damascus to supervise the work carried out by technicians who had been trained on the spot since 1983. Between January 1983 and April 1986 the centre fitted some 588 patients with prostheses; more than half of the patients (298) were war amputees.

— As in the previous year, the ICRC had access to persons detained for security reasons in the **Yemen Arab Republic**. Three delegates, including a doctor, made visits in July and the beginning of August to the central prison in Sana'a and places of detention in Dhamar, Ibb, Ta'iz, Hodeida, Hajjah and Sadah in the provinces. The visits took place in accordance with ICRC criteria. The delegates saw about 3,500 detainees, including 67 security detainees, with whom they had interviews without witnesses. At the end of the visits, relief supplies in the form of recreational and educational items were given to the detainees. At Sana'a, the delegates met the Minister of Health and also the President of the National Society, Dr. Mohammad Al Kayab, the Minister of the Interior, Dr. Abdullah Hussein Barrakat, and other representatives of the authorities and of the Yemen Red Crescent.

In relation to the events which took place in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, a delegate went to the Yemen Arab Republic in February to evaluate the situation of refugees in the south of the country, in co-operation with the National Society. Emergency relief supplies were distributed: medicines and other medical materials were given to dispensaries and clothing, blankets and tents were provided for the refugees.

**RELIEF SUPPLIES DISTRIBUTED BY THE ICRC IN 1986**

*MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA*

Country (in French alphabetical order)	Recipient	Relief		Medical Assistance	Total Sw. fr.
		Tonnes	Value in Sw. fr.	Value in Sw. fr.	
Iraq. . . . .	Prisoners of war and refugees	14	273,376	2,296	275,672
Iran. . . . .	Prisoners of war	—	4,289	—	4,289
Israel/occupied territories . . . . .	Civilians and detainees	1,138	974,645	11,228	985,873
Jordan . . . . .	Detainees	1	33,476	—	33,476
Lebanon . . . . .	Displaced civilians, National Society, detainees	277	1,366,518	1,931,329	3,297,847
Conflict in the Western Sahara .	Displaced civilians	1,436	3,018,798	—	3,018,798
Syria . . . . .	National Society and the disabled	20	212,926	—	212,926
Yemen Arab Republic. . . . .	National Society, refugees and detainees	3	46,466	1,869	48,335
Democratic Yemen	Civilians, National Society	21	107,314	163,838	271,152
<b>TOTAL . . . . .</b>		<b>2,910</b>	<b>6,037,808</b>	<b>2,110,560</b>	<b>8,148,368</b>