

Zeitschrift: Annual report / International Committee of the Red Cross
Herausgeber: International Committee of the Red Cross
Band: - (1989)

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: 22.03.2026

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

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

To carry out its activities in the Middle East and North Africa in 1989, the ICRC had seven permanent delegations there, in Tel Aviv, Beirut, Amman, Damascus, Cairo, Tehran and Baghdad, and two regional delegations based in Tunis and in Geneva. The regional delegation in Tunis remained in charge of co-ordinating ICRC activities in Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania, and matters related to the conflict in the Western Sahara. The second regional delegation was responsible for ICRC relations with the countries of the Arabian Peninsula (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen). The geographical location of this regional delegation was still under consideration at the end of 1989; the regional delegate, while remaining based in Geneva, frequently visited the countries of the Peninsula and other areas in the Middle East.

During the year, the ICRC employed an average of 100 delegates (including medical and technical personnel provided by National Societies) and about 250 locally recruited staff members.

Major problems arose in 1989, first and foremost in Lebanon, where two ICRC orthopaedic technicians were abducted in Sidon in October. The delegation had already been unable to resume activities until February 1989, serious incidents having obliged the ICRC to withdraw from the country temporarily on 20 December 1988. Despite this interruption, the emergency programmes set up to benefit the ever more numerous victims of the conflict in Lebanon remained one of the most important facets of the ICRC's work in this part of the world.

Unfortunately no significant progress was made during the year towards repatriation of the Iranian and Iraqi prisoners of war held in connection with the Iran/Iraq conflict, in spite of the hopes raised by the cease-fire that came into effect in August 1988.

In the territories occupied by Israel, during the second year of the Palestinian uprising, problems of humanitarian concern caused the ICRC to approach the Israeli authorities on numerous occasions.

Finally, the hopes raised by the United Nations peace plan for the Western Sahara conflict also failed to materialize. In addition, although the Polisario Front had announced the release of 200 Moroccan prisoners in May 1989, these prisoners — elderly, ill or interned for a long period of time — had still not been repatriated by the end

of the year, despite numerous steps taken on their behalf by the ICRC.

CONFLICT BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ

On 20 August 1988, following Iran's acceptance of UN Resolution 598 (it will be recalled that Iraq had accepted this resolution the previous year), a cease-fire went into effect between Iran and Iraq. However, the comprehensive repatriation of prisoners of war, provided for by international humanitarian law as soon as active hostilities have ceased, was still not under way at the end of 1989.

Immediately after the cease-fire, the ICRC had proposed a comprehensive repatriation procedure to both parties, based on the applicability of Article 118 of the Third Geneva Convention, which is mentioned in Point 3 of Resolution 598.

In view of the as yet still irreconcilable positions adopted by Iran and Iraq, the ICRC repeatedly approached both parties, orally and in writing, and did all it could to heighten the international community's awareness of the plight of these prisoners of war, estimated at more than 100,000 and held in interminable captivity.

On 31 March, a "Memorandum concerning the release and repatriation of all prisoners of war" was handed over to the Iranian and Iraqi authorities. In this document the ICRC placed particular stress on the parties' obligation under the Geneva Conventions to organize a unilateral repatriation if they could not reach a bilateral agreement. During negotiations in Tehran, Baghdad, Geneva and New York, the ICRC Delegate General for the Middle East and the heads of delegation in Iran and Iraq tried to obtain agreements from both parties that, pending a comprehensive repatriation in accordance with Article 118, Iran and Iraq would at least begin by fulfilling their other obligations under the Conventions. In spite of these efforts, only some of the sick or wounded POWs were granted priority repatriation in 1989 as stipulated by the Third Geneva Convention (Article 109 *et seq.*). At the end of the year the ICRC had still not been notified (as stipulated in Article 122 of the Third Convention and Article 16 of the First Convention) of the identity of all soldiers captured or killed on the front: tens of thousands of prisoners of war have thus never been registered by the ICRC, whose delegates were still not able to visit, in accordance with Article 126

of the Third Convention, all POWs interned in both countries. In addition, many of those held have not been able to send Red Cross messages to their families to let them know they are still alive. Thus ICRC activities were again confined to regular visits to some 18,000 Iranian POWs interned in Iraq and to forwarding Red Cross messages between a number of POWs in each country and their families.

The ICRC President publicly underscored this tragic situation, in particular during his annual press conference on 13 February in Geneva, and again on 13 October in New York when addressing members of the United Nations Correspondents Association. He also met the two Foreign Ministers, Mr. Velayati for Iran and Mr. Tareq Aziz for Iraq, during the summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Belgrade in September. At the same time the ICRC sought to mobilize humanitarian support by contacting certain states, in particular the member States of the United Nations Security Council and the Non-Aligned Movement, to inform them of the ICRC's efforts to convince the parties to respect their fundamental obligations, and more generally to alert them to the magnitude of this human tragedy. The ICRC also remained in close contact with the office of the United Nations Secretary-General.

Repatriation of sick and wounded prisoners of war

Despite an agreement on the priority repatriation of all sick and wounded prisoners, signed by both countries on 10 and 11 November 1988 at ICRC headquarters, only 56 Iranian POWs and 155 Iraqi POWs were repatriated during three operations carried out at the end of 1988, before the process was halted by disputes over numbers and proportionality, as well as over the definition of criteria for repatriation.

In 1989, Iraq repatriated 255 Iranian sick or wounded POWs (131 on 23 January, 124 on 24 January). Iran repatriated 348 Iraqi POWs in this same category during three operations (21, 22 and 23 February, 10 April and 23 May).

These repatriations took place aboard aircraft chartered by the ICRC; its delegates, including doctors and nurses, prepared the prisoners' departure and accompanied them during the journey. Before being repatriated, each prisoner of war confirmed his decision to return to his country, in an interview without witnesses held with ICRC delegates.

Representations on behalf of civilians in both countries

The plight of civilians protected by the Fourth Geneva Convention (displaced, interned and refugees) continued

to be a matter of grave concern for the ICRC. On 22 August the ICRC addressed a *note verbale* to Iran and Iraq, asking once again for access to all civilians protected by the Fourth Convention. The Iranian authorities did not respond to this request. The Iraqi authorities answered that, apart from the persons visited regularly by ICRC delegates in civilian internment camps, there were no other civilians on Iraqi soil who came within the scope of the Fourth Convention.

The ICRC sought to persuade both parties to work out lasting solutions, such as the repatriation of civilians to their countries of origin, but to no avail.

IRAQ

Activities for Iranian prisoners of war

The ICRC continued its regular visits to the 13 camps for Iranian prisoners of war in Iraq, where a new camp had been opened in Salaheddine in 1989. The delegates, including ICRC doctors, carried out six series of visits, each lasting three days and conducted in accordance with the criteria of the Third Geneva Convention. The relatively high frequency of visits is all the more justified by an increased need for dialogue among prisoners suffering from the psychological effects of prolonged internment. A total of some 18,000 Iranian POWs were visited.

The ICRC also continued to distribute personal requisites (toilet articles, clothing) and items for sports and leisure activities. Its delegates organized workshops (for tailoring, hairdressing) and planned to carry on with this assistance in 1990, while setting up educational programmes as well (literacy courses, the distribution of books, etc.). In all, 1,195,500 Swiss francs was spent on this assistance in 1989.

Activities for the civilian population

In Iraq, the ICRC also acts on behalf of various groups of civilians protected by the Fourth Geneva Convention. However, despite repeated requests, it was not authorized to see all Iranians (Kurds and others) living on Iraqi territory. Its delegates did continue their visits to some 35,000 Iranian civilians, mostly Kurdish, interned in Al-Tash camp near Ramadi, and to a number of civilians detained in Iraqi prisons. These visits, carried out regularly since July 1983, have enabled the ICRC to monitor their living conditions. The Iraqi authorities provide the necessary facilities and medicine; the ICRC distributes sports articles and educational material. The ICRC set up weaving and tailor-

ing workshops to give the people some form of activity and to provide warm clothing for the children. Finally, ICRC delegates helped to set up an educational system by providing school books in the Kurdish language for the children in the camps.

In early 1989, UNHCR took charge of finding host countries for resettlement of the approximately 350 Iranian refugees interned in Shomeli camp. The ICRC thereafter limited its activities to regular visits to people interned there, including those held in custody, and assistance (educational material, sports articles, etc.).

In the province of Meisan, in south-east Iraq, where several tens of thousands of Khuzistani civilians (Arabic-speaking Iranians) have found refuge in 11 villages, the ICRC was authorized to conduct two visits in 1989, one at the end of March and one in October. Regular visits must be continued to these civilians protected by the Fourth Geneva Convention. The ICRC has requested Iran's permission for them to exchange Red Cross messages with their families in Iranian Khuzistan. At the end of 1989, Iran had not yet responded to this request.

Tracing Agency

Tracing activities continued to account for much of the ICRC's work in Iraq. The ICRC transmitted 281,297 Red Cross messages written by Iranian prisoners of war to their families and 244,421 messages from Iranian families to their relatives in captivity. Since the beginning of the conflict in 1980, over 12 million Red Cross messages have been transmitted between Iran and Iraq via the Central Tracing Agency in Geneva. Red Cross messages written by Iranian Kurdish civilians interned at Al-Tash camp were entrusted to ICRC delegates, who also distributed family messages there from Iranian POWs interned in Iraq (some 3,000 such messages were exchanged in 1989). Finally, with the hope that repatriations and/or family reunifications may become possible in the future, the ICRC has drawn up lists of separated families which have some members living at Al-Tash and others held in POW camps.

IRAN

Activities for Iraqi prisoners of war

Not only did the ICRC not have access to all Iraqi prisoners of war interned in Iran, but visits to Iraqi POWs (over 50,000 were registered up to 27 December 1987) could not resume. As in 1988, no visits were conducted in 1989

for lack of acceptable conditions guaranteeing that ICRC visits could be carried out in conformity with the provisions of Article 126 of the Third Geneva Convention. A reduced team of three delegates was therefore maintained in the Tehran delegation throughout the year.

As the ICRC did not have access to all POWs and as a number of Iraqi POWs have been released locally without notification to the ICRC, the number of prisoners currently held by Iran is not precisely known. The matter was taken up with the Iranian authorities on several occasions during the year, as the ICRC considers that these people retain prisoner-of-war status and must be allowed to decide, in particular when a general repatriation takes place, whether or not they wish to return to their country of origin.

Tracing Agency

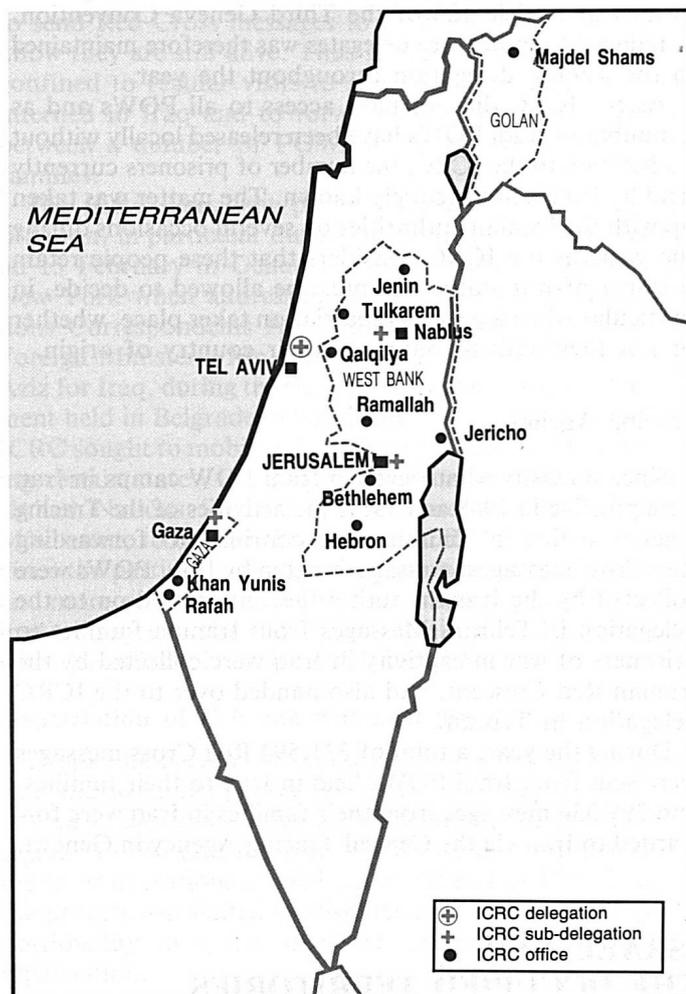
Since no visits whatsoever to Iraqi POW camps in Iran were possible in 1988 and 1989, the activities of the Tracing Agency office in Tehran were confined to forwarding Red Cross messages: messages written by Iraqi POWs were collected by the Iranian authorities and passed on to the delegation in Tehran. Messages from Iranian families to prisoners of war in captivity in Iraq were collected by the Iranian Red Crescent, and also handed over to the ICRC delegation in Tehran.

During the year, a total of 331,594 Red Cross messages were sent from Iraqi POWs held in Iran to their families, and 399,336 messages from their families in Iraq were forwarded to Iran via the Central Tracing Agency in Geneva.

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Two years after 9 December 1987, the day the *intifada* began, the dimension assumed by the unrest and the means adopted by the Israeli authorities to repress it had considerably modified the situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The ICRC made numerous approaches in 1989, including representations at the highest level, to remind the civilian and military authorities of their obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention for the protection of civilians. Through the sustained presence of its delegates in the field and in places of detention (where the number of people in custody increased considerably), the delegation endeavoured to carry out its mandate of protection and assistance on behalf of protected persons in the territories that have been occupied since 1967.

ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES



In the conflict between Israel and the Arab states, the ICRC considers that the conditions for application of the Fourth Convention are fulfilled in all of the occupied territories (the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Golan and East Jerusalem). The principle that the rights of persons who are in occupied territory are inviolable is in fact expressed in Article 47 of the Fourth Convention. The Israeli authorities consider that "in view of the *sui generis* status of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza District, the *de jure* applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to these areas is doubtful. Israel prefers to leave aside the legal question of the status of these areas and has decided, since 1967, to act *de facto* in accordance with the humanitarian provisions of that Convention."

Throughout the year, the ICRC was in regular contact with the Israeli authorities, in particular with those responsible for places of detention. Discussions were also held with the authorities concerning protected persons in the "security zone" in southern Lebanon (see under *Lebanon* below). As for the occupied territories, following the increased repressive measures announced on 17 January 1989 by the Minister of Defence, Mr. Rabin, the ICRC delegation sent him a letter on 25 January, with copies to the high-level authorities concerned. This letter pointed out, with statistical support, some of the major areas of concern for the ICRC at the beginning of 1989 (excessive use of firearms by the armed forces against civilians; the increased number of detainees causing, among other problems, difficulties in the application of legal guarantees to which the detainees have a right; the total or partial destruction of a steadily growing number of houses; brutalities committed against inhabitants of the occupied territories). In this letter, the ICRC demands that the fundamental rules of international humanitarian law, and of the Fourth Convention in particular, be respected.

The prevailing tension and permanent insecurity were especially clear on 13 April, during an intervention by the Border Police in the West Bank village of Nahalin in which six inhabitants were killed and about thirty others injured. The ICRC issued a very strong public protest over this further tragic incident.

At various times during the year, the ICRC also made public declarations about other cases involving violations of the Geneva Conventions, such as expulsions, the destruction of houses, collective punishment, incidents in which ambulances or the work of health service personnel was obstructed, and the disproportionate use of force to maintain order.

In addition to the steps taken by the delegation, the President of the ICRC, Mr. Sommaruga, paid an official visit to Israel and the occupied territories from 20 to 25 June. During his visit, the ICRC President had talks with the Head of State, Mr. Herzog, the Prime Minister, Mr. Shamir, the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Peres, the Ministers of Defence and of Justice, Mr. Rabin and Mr. Meridor, and high-ranking members of the government and the supreme command of the armed forces. He also met the leaders of the Magen David Adom and representatives of various humanitarian organizations working in the occupied territories. During his stay, the ICRC President visited the Yad Vashem memorial to attend a ceremony in remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust.

The main purpose of his visit was to discuss the problems of humanitarian concern prevailing in the West Bank

and Gaza Strip. The ICRC President therefore presented a memorandum to the highest governmental authorities and gave them the ICRC's assessment of the situation in the light of the rules of international law and in particular of the Fourth Convention.

Mr. Sommaruga regretted Israel's refusal to accept the principle of the formal applicability of the Geneva Convention to these territories, but he also took note of the intention, reiterated by the members of the government, to implement and to respect all the provisions thereof. In this connection, Mr. Sommaruga expressed his disapproval of the demolition of houses and the expulsion of residents of the territories, as means of repression. He also pointed out the grave consequences, in humanitarian terms, of the intensive use of firearms. The ICRC President took note of the pledge given by the military authorities to protect the wounded, ambulances and medical services, and offered to increase the ICRC's direct contribution to the running of medical and hospital services in the territories. His interlocutors confirmed that Israeli civilians present in the occupied territories should no longer interfere in the maintenance of law and order, which is the exclusive responsibility of the occupation forces.

The problems of detainees from the occupied territories were also taken up, in particular the treatment given to detainees during the period of interrogation, as well as ICRC access to certain new places of detention and the application of basic rights such as the right of prisoners to receive family visits. The replies to these important issues were encouraging.

The discussions likewise dealt with certain problems faced by the local population in the zone controlled by the Israeli armed forces in southern Lebanon. Finally, Mr. Sommaruga met the families of the Israeli soldiers missing in Lebanon and confirmed that the ICRC would continue its efforts to ascertain their fate and whereabouts.

In 1989, the ICRC had to increase the number of its delegates to cope with humanitarian needs in the occupied territories. They sometimes had to contend with safety problems: on 4 February a delegate, Mr. Alexandre Antonin, was wounded at Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip by an Israeli soldier's bullet, fired during an incident involving Palestinian demonstrators and the Israeli armed forces.

This incident was the subject of discussions with the Ministry of Defence concerning the ICRC's activities and the safety of its delegates.

On average, the delegation consisted of 45 delegates (including two doctors and three nurses) and 77 local staff members. Besides the delegation in Tel Aviv and the two sub-delegations in Jerusalem and Gaza, the ICRC also had

local offices in Bethlehem, Hebron, Jericho, Nablus, Ramallah, Jenin, Tulkarem, Qalqilya, Rafah and Khan Yunis.

Activities for detainees

The delegation regularly visited nine military detention centres run by the Israeli army, 20 prisons under the jurisdiction of the Prison Service and some 20 police stations, located on Israeli soil and in the occupied territories. The total number of detainees visited by the ICRC was about 15,000, not including those imprisoned for a short period of time.

On the whole, delegates continued to have rapid and regular access to all the **military detention centres** (Qziot, Meggido, Fara'a, Dahariyeh, Ofer, Tulkarem, Hof and Anatot; the centre at Khan Yunis was opened during the year and visited since November). The ICRC registered all the detainees held in general sections, most of whom were awaiting trial, sentenced or in administrative detention. Delegates were able to inform the families concerned and, above all, to monitor the material, medical and psychological conditions of detention. Their observations were transmitted to the relevant authorities through official channels. The Qziot camp, which is situated in the Negev desert on Israeli soil and is thus, contrary to the provisions of the Fourth Convention, outside the occupied territories, remained a major preoccupation for the delegation in 1989. Over 4,300 detainees, i.e. about half the total number of those detained in military camps, are held at Qziot, where they still cannot receive family visits. The delegation also approached the Israeli authorities and Palestinian representatives concerning the problem of detainees presumed to be collaborators who were killed or injured by their co-detainees in military camps, particularly at Qziot.

Among detainees arrested in connection with the *intifada*, besides those who have been sentenced or are awaiting trial, particular mention must be made of those held in **administrative detention**. More extensively than in the past, the Israeli authorities resorted to this form of preventive detention based on administrative warrants, the maximum duration of which increased from six to twelve months. Detainees of this category in Qziot camp were being held under the same conditions of detention as the other detainees, whereas they should have benefited from special conditions of detention conferred by their status.

Throughout the year, the delegation approached the Israeli authorities on numerous occasions, requesting

access to temporary **places of detention under military authority**. The average length of detention in these military governorates exceeds, in a large proportion of cases, the 48 hours set as the upper limit by the Minister of Defence in a letter sent to the ICRC in August 1988. Between August and December 1989, ICRC delegates carried out a first visit to six of these temporary places of detention. The ICRC asked to visit them regularly, in accordance with its usual criteria. At the end of the year, the Israeli authorities had not yet acceded to this request.

Delegates continued their work on behalf of detainees **under interrogation**. In 1989, they conducted 3,577 interviews without witnesses in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, despite difficulties caused by late or incomplete notification given by the Israeli authorities, particularly when detainees were transferred from one prison or section to another. These difficulties were the subject of repeated representations during the year.

The ICRC also visited 170 people **arrested in southern Lebanon or on the high seas**, who had been transferred to Israel contrary to the provisions of the Fourth Convention, and repatriated 33 people released from Israeli prisons.

Throughout 1989, the ICRC carried on with its assistance programmes for detainees. During visit to places of detention, delegates distributed leisure articles and educational material for an overall value of 782,000 Swiss francs. The delegation also continued to organize family visits for detainees and to finance the transport costs, totalling 1,400,000 Swiss francs.

Activities for the civilian population

The consistent presence of ICRC delegates in the occupied territories was meant to contribute to the protection of civilians living in the camps, towns and villages concerned. Delegates were able to observe the effects of measures taken by the Israeli authorities, such as the use of force that led to brutality, the consequences of the excessive use of firearms, interference with medical activities (*see below*), prolonged curfews, collective punishment (destruction of houses and crops, for example, or confiscation of identity cards), expulsions from the occupied territories, the existence of settlements and the behaviour of settlers towards the local population. Systematic approaches were made in writing to the relevant authorities concerning these violations of international humanitarian law.

In this climate of extreme tension, ICRC delegates tried to act as neutral intermediaries, with specific interventions on behalf of victims. To provide **medical assistance**, the two doctors and three nurses working for the ICRC closely

monitored needs that could change rapidly with the heightening of unrest. Existing medical facilities were sufficient, but only just. In spite of the growing number of ambulances provided, in particular to the "Red Crescent", the transfer of serious casualties was sometimes impeded or delayed. Unfortunately, several incidents of this kind were noted during emergency evacuations and also in hospitals in the occupied territories, where soldiers bearing arms entered the premises and intervened on several occasions. ICRC medical teams frequently visited injured people taken to hospital after demonstrations or repressive measures, to check on their condition and enquire about the circumstances that had led to their hospitalization.

To provide **material assistance**, the delegation regularly evaluated living conditions among civilians living throughout the occupied territories. As a growing number of houses were destroyed or walled up, the assistance programme for families who had lost their homes had to be intensified. Tents and other assistance were provided for a value of 720,000 Swiss francs.

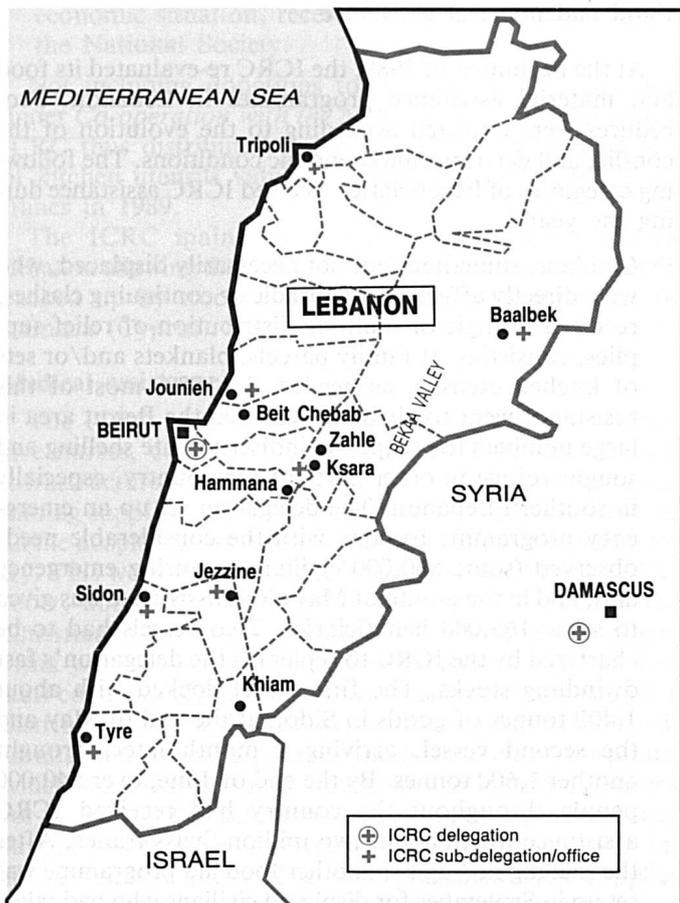
Tracing Agency

The ICRC continued to search for persons reported missing in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In addition, the delegation in Tel Aviv, the sub-delegations in Jerusalem and Gaza, and ten local offices (eight in the West Bank, two in the Gaza Strip) forwarded nearly 75,000 Red Cross messages. Because of the growth of the prison population and its fluctuation (frequent transfers, increased number of sentences for short terms of imprisonment), considerable work was involved in keeping track of the number of detainees and centralizing information about them. Tracing Agency staff in Jerusalem and Gaza issued 26,575 certificates of detention.

With the consent of the authorities on both sides, the ICRC organized transfers across the demarcation lines, most often on behalf of former detainees. These operations also allowed families to be reunited and sick people to be transferred with the help of the National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies concerned (*see also the sections on Tracing Agency activities in other countries of the region*).

LEBANON

In 1989 Lebanon was the scene of particularly dramatic events: six months of indiscriminate shelling in and around Beirut causing hundreds of thousands of civilians to flee, and, for the ICRC, the abduction of two of its delegates in Sidon on 6 October. It will be recalled that on 17



November 1988, an ICRC delegate had already been abducted in this same town and released a month later. Serious threats were made against the ICRC delegation following this first abduction, and the institution's activities in Lebanon had to be temporarily suspended at the end of 1988. Seven weeks later, on 6 February 1989, the ICRC returned to Lebanon, and its delegates gradually resumed their activities. In the meantime, the ICRC had received assurances from various groups and from the states concerned by the Lebanese crisis that its personnel would henceforth be fully respected. Despite these guarantees, on 6 October unidentified armed men abducted Emanuel Christen and Elio Erriquez, two orthopaedic technicians, in the town of Sidon. These two delegates, who were on their way to the Sidon orthopaedic centre, were forced at gunpoint to leave their vehicle and to follow their abductors.

The ICRC issued an appeal at once, demanding the immediate release of its two delegates to restore "the respect required, at all times and in all circumstances, to enable

the International Red Cross to carry out its mission on behalf of the victims of war". Since then, the ICRC has multiplied its contacts and representations both in Lebanon with all the parties to the conflict and with all the states concerned by the Lebanese crisis. Numerous high-level missions have been carried out. ICRC President Sommaruga went to Lebanon on 18 December, where he was received by Lebanese President Elias Hrawi, and to Syria on 19 December, where he met the Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Farouk El Shara, and the Vice-President of the Syrian Arab Republic, Mr. Abdel Halim Khaddam. Unfortunately, in spite of all the assurances received and the support of all those approached in this matter, the ICRC was still without news of its two delegates at the end of 1989, after 86 days of captivity. Many demonstrations of solidarity were organized by support groups in Switzerland as well as in Lebanon, where the Sidon orthopaedic centre has been closed since the abduction of the two technicians in charge. Many governments and organizations vigorously condemned the abduction, including the 149 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies assembled in Geneva for the Council of Delegates on 26 October.

The extreme gravity of this event, which threatens the security of the ICRC team in Lebanon and the future of ICRC activities in the country, should not obliterate the fact that 1989 was also a year of intense activity for the delegation. The volume of assistance provided for the population affected by the conflict reached levels higher than those attained in previous years. One month after the return of ICRC delegates to Lebanon, shelling began in and around Beirut, where over six months of fierce combat killed more than 1,000 people and wounded over 5,000. Besides its interventions and the ICRC emergency programmes developed in this new context, the delegation also continued its activities in the south of the country, in particular in the "security zone" controlled by the "South Lebanon Army" (SLA) with the support of the Israeli forces.

The delegation was able to carry out its activities with the help of some 100 local employees; its expatriate staff of some 30 delegates included five nurses, two orthopaedic technicians and one medical co-ordinator. They were deployed throughout the country, with a delegation in Beirut, a sub-delegation in Tyre and offices in Jounieh, Jezzine, Ksara, Sidon, Tripoli and Baalbek.

Representations on behalf of the civilian population

Since resuming its activities in Lebanon in February, the ICRC has maintained a permanent presence throughout the country and has been in regular contact with all parties

to the conflict, in order to ensure respect for the Red Cross by promoting a heightened awareness of its principles and work and to intervene on behalf of civilian victims of the conflict. There was an enormous amount of work to do during the six months of fighting between General Aoun's army and the pro-Syrian forces. The shelling of civilian areas greatly affected the population of Beirut, East and West, as well as the southern suburbs and the towns and villages of the Chouf area. To escape from the shelling, hundreds of thousands of civilians fled to regions believed safer, especially to the south, but also to the Lebanese mountains, the Bekaa valley and the north, towards Tripoli and the Akkar region. The fighting also resulted in the blockade of the ports of Jounieh and Beirut, making the transfer of people and goods even more hazardous.

In this context, the ICRC had to approach the parties to the conflict on numerous occasions, calling for civilians, the wounded and prisoners to be treated with due respect. On 26 April, in particular, a memorandum was presented by the ICRC's Director of Operations to the Lebanese factions in Beirut and to the Syrian authorities in Damascus. This memorandum specified the ICRC's mandate and made various concrete proposals, such as the establishment of and respect for humanitarian truces that would allow the wounded to be cared for in acceptable safety conditions. In mid-August, the ICRC Delegate General for the Middle East visited Beirut and Damascus, handing over a letter from President Sommaruga to the Lebanese Prime Ministers, Mr. Selim al Hoss and Mr. Michel Aoun, and to the Syrian Head of State, Mr. Hafez al Assad. Officials in both capitals gave their agreement in principle to the ICRC's proposals, but their implementation came up against the exigencies of war until the cease-fire, accepted by the parties on 22 September. Several public appeals were also addressed by the ICRC to all the parties involved in the conflict, demanding that the basic rules of international humanitarian law be respected and, more specifically, that the belligerents stop the shelling of civilian objects such as hospitals.

Throughout the year, the ICRC was also concerned with the situation of civilians living in or coming from the "security zone", as well as of those living in villages and refugee camps north of this demarcation line who fell victim to clashes between opposing forces or to Israeli air attacks. Numerous representations were made, from ICRC headquarters in Geneva and from its delegations in Tel Aviv and in Beirut, urging all parties to respect these civilians and protesting when people from the "security zone" were displaced or expelled, when civilians were killed or wounded, when houses were destroyed or crops seized.

Food and material assistance

At the beginning of 1989, the ICRC re-evaluated its food and material assistance programmes in Lebanon. Procedures were adjusted according to the evolution of the conflict and deteriorating economic conditions. The following categories of beneficiaries received ICRC assistance during the year:

- Civilians, sometimes but not necessarily displaced, who were directly affected by sporadic or continuing clashes, received a single or multiple distribution of relief supplies, consisting of family parcels, blankets and/or sets of kitchen utensils, as needed. In 1989, most of this assistance went to civilians who fled the Beirut area in large numbers to escape the indiscriminate shelling and sought refuge in other parts of the country, especially in southern Lebanon. The delegation set up an emergency programme to cope with the considerable needs observed (some 800,000 civilians requiring emergency aid), and in the month of May alone assistance was given to some 165,000 beneficiaries. Two vessels had to be chartered by the ICRC to replenish the delegation's fast dwindling stocks. The first vessel docked with about 1,400 tonnes of goods in Sidon at the end of May and the second vessel, arriving a month later, brought another 1,600 tonnes. By the end of June, over 540,000 people throughout the country had received ICRC assistance worth about two million Swiss francs. After the shelling in August, another food aid programme was set up in September for displaced civilians who had taken refuge in public buildings in the Sidon and Tyre regions. Most people were able to return to their homes after the cease-fire, at the beginning of October, and the ICRC relief operation in the south was discontinued.

Family parcels were regularly distributed to civilians living in regions bordering the "security zone" in southern Lebanon (including the region south of the Bekaa valley). Some 50 villages received regular visits and assistance from the ICRC, in co-operation with local authorities. Because of their isolation, civilians living near other front lines, such as those in the region of Souk el Gharb, also received such assistance.

- Families in extremely difficult circumstances because their breadwinners were detained, wounded and in hospital or disabled as a result of the conflict; these beneficiaries received family parcels from the ICRC.
- Social cases, such as families in particular distress for reasons linked not only to the conflict but also to the

economic situation, received ICRC assistance through the National Society.

Not including donations to the National Society (see under *Co-operation with the National Society*, below), the ICRC thus distributed family parcels, blankets and sets of kitchen utensils valued at more than 3,800,000 Swiss francs in 1989.

The ICRC maintains a permanent buffer stock in Lebanon allowing the delegation to assist some 50,000 people, backed up by stocks held in its regional warehouses in Larnaca (Cyprus).

Medical assistance

The ICRC medical team, made up of one doctor and five nurses, continued to monitor the Lebanese medical infrastructure, increasingly disrupted by difficulties in obtaining supplies and by shelling. The team regularly visited all the hospitals, dispensaries and first-aid posts in the country. This work was particularly intense from March to October, during the six months when fighting raged in the Christian areas. When conditions were not too precarious, visits were carried out nearly every day so that medical staff could rapidly detect the most urgent needs and organize distributions of medicine and medical supplies as required. In addition to this assistance the protection of hospitals, which were shelled many times, was of constant concern for the ICRC. The delegation's stocks of emergency medical supplies were soon depleted in the attempt to meet increased needs, and had to be replenished: new supplies were shipped in at the end of May and again at the end of June. On numerous occasions, convoys across the front lines were organized to provide Beirut's hospitals with oxygen flasks, generators and other much-needed supplies.

The violence of this conflict, the extent of the destruction and the high numbers of civilians displaced prompted the ICRC to take over many technical tasks as well: delegates disinfected shelters for civilians, supplied cleaning requisites, repaired and/or installed pumping stations for drinking water (in particular in the southern suburbs, in co-operation with UNICEF), and helped improve hygiene (installing latrines and water supply systems) in places where displaced civilians had found refuge.

The ICRC also continued to support Lebanese Red Cross efforts as follows:

- participation in the transfer of wounded across demarcation lines when National Society first-aid workers could not act alone;
- support for the Lebanese Red Cross mobile clinics programme in various villages with no medical facilities and

sometimes difficult to reach, located along the demarcation line of the "security zone" in southern Lebanon;

- support to the Lebanese Red Cross to enable its dispensaries and mobile clinics throughout the country to meet increasing demands; with the steadily growing economic difficulties, more and more people were having to rely on these facilities, which provide consultations and free medicine.

Lastly, the ICRC medical team participated in visits to detention centres, examining some of the detainees and providing aid in some cases.

The total value of medical assistance supplied by the ICRC in Lebanon in 1989 (including orthopaedic assistance and support given to the National Society) amounted to approximately 1,583,000 Swiss francs.

Orthopaedic assistance

From 12 March to 6 October, the ICRC continued to give material and technical support to the orthopaedic centres in Sidon and Beit Chebab and helped train orthopaedic technicians. As some patients could not travel to the centres for reasons of security, ICRC orthopaedic technicians gave consultations in the Lebanese Red Cross medical and social centre in Mreije (in Beirut's southern suburbs) and in its centres at Tyre, Jezzine and Marjayoun. On 6 October, Elio Erriquez and Emanuel Christen were abducted and the entire orthopaedic assistance programme unfortunately had to be suspended.

For co-ordination purposes and to standardize working methods, the ICRC maintained close contact with the orthopaedic centre in Hammana (a joint project of the Lebanese and the Netherlands Red Cross Societies) and with the Abu Samra centre in Tripoli (a Swiss Red Cross project). New production methods continued to be tested in 1988, using materials that are available locally and are thus less expensive and easier to procure.

Orthopaedic workshops supported by the ICRC produced 89 artificial limbs and 42 orthopaedic devices during the year, as well as fitting and repairing orthopaedic material.

Activities for detained persons

Throughout the year, the ICRC continued to visit persons detained because of the conflict and sought to negotiate regular access to all detainees. Although delegates were able to register a total of 490 new detainees in 1989 and saw several hundred who had been visited before, the ICRC still could not systematically visit all those captured or arrested in relation to the conflict. Its representations did, however, bring progress, as can be seen by the high total

number of detainees visited and by the agreement given by certain factions guaranteeing that henceforward visits could be conducted according to all ICRC criteria.

Visits thus continued to detainees held by the Lebanese government and by various parties to the conflict (Lebanese Forces, Amal, Military Police of the Nasserite Popular Organization in Sidon, Popular Liberation Army, Progressive Socialist Party, Hezbollah and others). During these visits, delegates were also able to give detainees Red Cross messages to fill in for their families and to provide them with assistance (medicines, blankets, articles for personal hygiene and for leisure).

On the other hand, Khiam prison, in the "security zone", remained closed to the ICRC, along with other places of detention situated in this region, despite repeated requests made to the "South Lebanon Army" (SLA) and to the Israeli authorities. In addition, family visits for detainees in Khiam prison, authorized until February 1988, remained suspended during 1989; similarly, no Red Cross messages have been exchanged since that date. Finally, following a series of incidents that caused the death of one detainee at Khiam, in a statement issued on 29 November the ICRC drew public attention to the fact that it was still unable to carry out its humanitarian mission in this prison in accordance with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

During 1989 the Israeli authorities notified the ICRC of the arrest of some twenty people in southern Lebanon and their subsequent transfer to Israeli prisons. ICRC delegates were able to visit in Israel 170 people arrested in southern Lebanon or on the high seas, and organized family visits.

It was again to no avail this year that the ICRC contacted the parties concerned to request access to captured members of the "South Lebanon Army", or to obtain information about the seven members of the Israeli armed forces taken prisoner or reported missing in Lebanon, some of them since 1982. The ICRC nevertheless renewed its representations to all the parties to the conflict, hoping to clarify the fate and whereabouts of people missing in Lebanon.

Tracing Agency

The exchange of Red Cross messages between detainees and their families or between family members separated because of the conflict, and the urgent transmission of news between Lebanon and other countries, continued to be key ICRC activities in Lebanon. In 1989 a total of 17,247 Red Cross messages were forwarded between Lebanon and other countries, between various regions of the country, between persons detained (in Lebanon, in Israel or in the occupied

territories) and their relatives. In addition, thanks to the ICRC telecommunications network, 5,431 messages were exchanged by radio inside Lebanon or with foreign countries.

The ICRC organized the transfer of 83 people across the front lines, including 33 people who had reached the end of their prison sentence in Israel and were repatriated. The delegation also took care of 25 people expelled by the Israeli authorities from the occupied territories onto Lebanese soil, facilitating their departure elsewhere and providing for the exchange of Red Cross messages between them and family members who remained in the occupied territories.

The ICRC also played an important role in reuniting families by helping the persons concerned to obtain identity papers, visas and airline tickets: during the year 35 people were able to join relatives who had settled abroad.

All detainees visited by the ICRC are registered by the Tracing Agency, which can then issue certificates of detention useful for the detainees' families while their relative is still being held, and thereafter certificates of release to the detainees themselves, facilitating their subsequent rehabilitation. The delegation issued 212 of these certificates in 1989.

ICRC delegates kept in close touch with the families of persons detained in Israel and in the occupied territories, providing them with the means to exchange news and with material assistance if necessary.

The ICRC is still gravely concerned, however, for the many people detained, captured or reported missing of whom it has received no news and to whom it has been unable to obtain access.

At the request of the French government, the ICRC organized the repatriation of 22 wounded civilians, six people accompanying them and the mortal remains of six deceased from France to Lebanon. These people had been transferred by the French authorities to be treated in and around Paris as part of an operation launched in April 1989 by the French Secretary of State for Humanitarian Policy. Two repatriations were organized via Damascus by the ICRC; they took place on 16-17 May and 25-26 June with the co-operation of the Lebanese Red Cross and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. A third repatriation, simpler to organize because by that time Beirut's international airport had reopened, took place on 4 October.

Co-operation with the National Society

Throughout 1989, the ICRC continued to support the Lebanese Red Cross. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement paid tribute to the Lebanese National Society during the meeting of the Council of Delegates,

held in October in Geneva, by naming the Society as the first recipient of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity.

In addition to the material and financial assistance it provided for the Emergency Committee of the Lebanese Red Cross, the ICRC participated in the work of the Committee, as it had in 1988. The Emergency Committee was set up at the end of 1987 to strengthen and increase the operational capacity of all sectors of the National Society dealing with emergencies (first aiders, medical and social, pharmacy, blood bank, information and dissemination). Taking into account the material furnished by the ICRC for the blood banks administered by the National Society and the support given to the first aiders (nearly 1,500 volunteers deployed in 32 sectors throughout Lebanon), ICRC support for the Lebanese Red Cross can be estimated at 4,000,000 Swiss francs in 1989.

In September, the Society was faced with a serious internal crisis: the Chouf regional section broke away and declared itself the "Red Cross and Red Crescent Society of Lebanon". In their mutual concern for Lebanon to have a single, unified, effective, neutral, independent and impartial National Society, trusted and respected by all parties and groups in the country, the ICRC and the League decided to carry out a joint mission from Geneva. Representatives of both institutions visited Beirut from 4 to 10 October and from 10 to 18 November. During discussions with the Central Committee of the Lebanese Red Cross they confirmed their determination to co-operate in the reform process undertaken by the Committee, and helped to decide what should be done without delay to bring about reunification. These meetings, due to reconvene at the beginning of 1990, had already brought encouraging results at the end of 1989, with the Central Committee of the Lebanese Red Cross electing a commission responsible for preparing a complete revision of the Society's statutes.

JORDAN

Since 1979, the ICRC has been visiting all places of detention in Jordan. Over the years it reduced the frequency of its visits to the rehabilitation centres: at first twice yearly, these visits became annual, and now take place every 18 months. Special visits are carried out, however, between each series, to follow up individual cases. During a series of visits from 19 September to 28 October to seven rehabilitation centres, including the central prison in Swaqa, ICRC delegates saw some 3,300 detainees, 160 of them in interviews without witnesses.

Most security detainees (some 200-300 per year) pass through the GID (General Intelligence Department) prison, where ICRC delegates continued to visit them every second week.

At the MID (Military Intelligence Department) prison the ICRC pays monthly visits to detainees under interrogation. Special visits can also be conducted in these detention centres, in Amman and in the provinces. In addition, all persons involved in hand-over operations with the occupied territories are seen by ICRC delegates.

As in previous years, the ICRC provided assistance to Jordanian detainees, mainly books and leisure articles, valued at about 30,000 Swiss francs.

The volume of the delegation's Tracing Agency activities has constantly increased since the beginning of the uprising in the occupied territories:

- over 14,000 certificates of detention were issued, based on information transmitted regularly by the ICRC sub-delegation in Jerusalem, along with over 700 certificates attesting to the demolition or walling up of houses, also based on information sent by delegates working in the occupied territories;
- nearly 25,000 messages were transmitted in all, including a considerable number by radio, mainly to the West Bank and Gaza Strip;
- some 2,000 Red Cross messages were forwarded by the ICRC between detainees and their families;
- in addition to the transfer of sick people organized in co-operation with the Jordanian Red Crescent across the Jordan river, eight repatriations and/or transfers were organized in 1989 across the demarcation line between Jordan and the West Bank.

WESTERN SAHARA CONFLICT

As in previous years, the ICRC must unfortunately note that it is still not able to provide all combatants captured in connection with the Western Sahara conflict with the protection to which they are entitled. This situation is all the more unacceptable since some of these prisoners have been held since 1975. On 12 June 1989, the ICRC was formally requested by the Polisario Front to organize the repatriation of 200 Moroccan prisoners, all belonging to a particularly vulnerable category (sick, wounded, in most cases in captivity for over ten years). The Polisario Front wished to release these prisoners unilaterally, for humanitarian reasons. Despite numerous discussions, both in Geneva with the Moroccan ambassador and the representative of the Polisario Front, and in Belgrade between the

President of the ICRC and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Morocco and Algeria, no repatriation agreement acceptable to both parties could be reached. ICRC approaches were therefore to be intensified in 1990.

In June 1989, ICRC delegates visited and registered 400 prisoners held by the Polisario Front, including the 200 declared releasable by the Front one month earlier. This brought the number of prisoners visited by the ICRC, on six different occasions, to a total of 976 prisoners since its first visit at the end of 1975, including interviews without witnesses but outside their usual place of detention. For the first time since the beginning of the conflict, the ICRC was notified by the Polisario Front of the identity of 82 Moroccan combatants captured during the fighting in October and November 1989. However, the identity of other Moroccan combatants captured in the past and still not visited by the ICRC has still not been communicated.

The ICRC did not visit any Sahrawi prisoners in Morocco during the year. The one and only visit it was able to make to this category of prisoner took place in 1978. In addition, the Moroccan authorities have never notified the ICRC of the identity of persons captured.

In 1989, the ICRC forwarded 148 Red Cross messages from Moroccan prisoners to their families in Morocco and 42 messages from Moroccan families to their relatives in captivity.

OTHER COUNTRIES

TUNISIA — In charge of co-ordinating ICRC activities in Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Libya and in matters related to the Western Sahara conflict, the regional delegation for North Africa, based in Tunis, also worked to develop its relations with the National Societies of the region, in particular in dissemination and Tracing Agency activities. In February, a member of the Committee, Mr. R. Jäckli, visited Tunis to meet representatives of the Tunisian Red Crescent. During this mission, he was also received by the Secretaries of State for Health and Foreign Affairs.

The permanent presence of an ICRC delegate in the region made it possible to intensify contacts with the League of Arab States and with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

ALGERIA — Two members of the Committee, Mrs. L. Kraus-Gurny and Mr. R. Jäckli, were received together with the regional delegate based in Tunis and a representative from ICRC headquarters by the Algerian Red Cres-

cent at the end of February. Interesting discussions were held *inter alia* on the fundamental principles of the Movement, in particular the principle of independence, and on various projects concerned with the development of dissemination programmes. The National Society representatives also informed the ICRC that the process of ratification of the two Additional Protocols was well under way (accession on 16 August 1989).

Then in June Mr. A. Hay, a member of the Committee and former President of the ICRC, went to Algeria for the Fifth Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of the Mediterranean.

EGYPT — The ICRC delegation in Egypt continued to search for missing persons and forward Red Cross messages for families separated by conflict in the Middle East, including those affected by the conflict between Iran and Iraq and the unrest in the territories occupied by Israel.

The ongoing programme for the dissemination of international humanitarian law, carried out jointly with the Egyptian Red Crescent Society, continued throughout the year. Close contacts were maintained with the Ministry of Defence and developed with university circles. During the year, several conferences on the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and on international humanitarian law were organized for various audiences, in particular in Egyptian universities, which have included this subject in their syllabus for the past several years. A course on the law of war was given for the first time at Cairo's military academy from 8 to 12 March, for 25 officers of various ranks from major to colonel.

In Geneva, the President of the ICRC received a delegation from the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 2 May, including the Secretary of State, Mr. Boutros Ghali. A member of the Committee, Mr. R. Jäckli, visited Cairo from 19 to 24 May, to meet representatives of the Egyptian Red Crescent Society. Their dialogue focused on the dissemination programmes that the National Society wishes to develop, both for its own members and for the armed forces and police, in co-operation with the ICRC.

The question of the ratification by Egypt of the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions was brought up during various discussions between the ICRC and the authorities.

MOROCCO — Mrs. L. Kraus-Gurny and Mr. R. Jäckli were received by the Moroccan Red Crescent at the beginning of March. This visit enabled them to strengthen ties with the National Society and to note the wealth and diversity of its activities.

MAURITANIA — An account of ICRC activities in connection with the tensions between Senegal and Mauritania is given in the chapter on Africa in this report. Mention can be made here, however, that during the series of visits conducted by the ICRC between 12 June and 15 August to thirteen places of detention in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, delegates visited, in accordance with ICRC criteria, a total of 588 detainees, including 65 security detainees.

A visit by two members of the Committee, Mrs. L. Kraus-Gurny and Mr. R. Jäckli, to the Mauritanian Red Crescent at the beginning of March, enabled ties to be strengthened between the ICRC and this National Society.

LIBYA — Several meetings were held with the authorities and with the National Society, in Geneva and also in Libya, where ICRC representatives were received by Colonel Kadhafi at the beginning of January. Various subjects were brought up during the discussions, in particular ICRC activities in the Middle East and the grave difficulties it faced in Lebanon. The question of Libyan prisoners in Chad was also discussed, of course, during all these meetings (see the chapter on *Africa*).

OMAN — In September a member of the Committee, Mr. R. Jäckli, paid a visit to Oman, accompanied by the regional delegate for the Arabian Peninsula, in order to strengthen relations between the ICRC and the top-level authorities of this country.

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN — The Vice-President of the ICRC, Mr. M. Aubert, visited Aden at the end of October to introduce the regional delegate for the Arabian Peninsula to the authorities and also to examine the possibility of intensifying co-operation with the National Society.

The numerous meetings arranged, in particular with the Ministers of Health, Justice, Foreign Affairs, and State Security, with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, the Attorney General and the President of the Supreme Court, gave the ICRC representatives the opportunity to discuss at the highest level the question of conditions and procedures for visits to security detainees in the country, and to address various matters such as the accession of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen to the Additional Protocols of 1977 and the ICRC's activities in the Middle East.

YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC — The Vice-President of the ICRC and the regional delegate subsequently visited the Yemen Arab Republic at the beginning of November. In addition to their contacts with the National Society, the ICRC representatives were received in particular by the Prime Minister, Dr. Abdelaziz Abdelghani, the Ministers of Health, of Information and Culture, and for Youth and Sports, as well as by the Secretary General of the Parliament and the Deputy Ministers of the Interior, State Security, Foreign Affairs and Education. Besides the activities of the ICRC in the region, subjects such as the country's accession to the Additional Protocols of 1977 received particular attention.

As concerns visits to places of detention, at the beginning of 1989 two ICRC representatives handed over to the authorities the institution's official report on the annual series of visits carried out in 1988. At the end of 1989 a new series of visits was held, with the participation of an ICRC doctor; 4,212 detainees were seen in nine places of detention (1,743 detainees in Sana'a and the others in Dhamar, Ibb, Ta'iz, Hodeidah, Hajjah and Sa'ada).

SYRIA — Throughout the year, events in Lebanon considerably influenced the activities of the delegation in Damascus, which is responsible for providing operational and logistic support for the delegation in Beirut. Besides this specific role the ICRC delegation in Syria, with the co-operation of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, continued to search for missing persons and to forward Red Cross messages, in particular between civilians, whether detained or not, in the territories occupied by Israel, persons detained in Lebanon, Jordan or elsewhere, and members of their families in Syria. In addition, the delegation was able to arrange for family visits in Syria for 379 residents of the Golan, and for seven family reunifications to take place in this same context.

The ICRC also continued to support the Syrian Arab Red Crescent's public health programmes: 80 tonnes of WSM (Wheat-Soya-Milk) was provided for the National Society's "Mother and Care" programme. Regular support continued, as well, for the orthopaedic centre run by the "Palestinian Red Crescent" in Damascus: ICRC orthopaedic technicians gave advice, training courses and technical assistance. Finally, as mentioned in the section on *Lebanon*, the President of the ICRC visited Damascus at the end of 1989. Discussions held during this visit focused on the situation in Lebanon and on ICRC activities in the Middle East in general. On this occasion, Mr. Sommaruga also met the leaders of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent.

RELIEF SUPPLIES DISTRIBUTED BY THE ICRC IN 1989

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Country (in French alphabetical order)	Recipients	Relief		Medical assistance	Total Sw. fr.
		(Tonnes)	Value in Sw. fr.	Value in Sw. fr.	
Iraq	Prisoners of war and refugees	81	1,470,704	64,614	1,535,318
Iran	Civilians, through the National Society	23	108,294	25	108,319
Israel and the occupied territories	Civilians and detainees	696	2,073,992	149,997	2,223,989
Jordan	Detainees	1	26,668	—	26,668
Lebanon	Displaced civilians, the disabled, National Society and detainees	4,105	5,452,099	1,583,007	7,035,106
Mauritania	Displaced civilians, detainees and National Society	3	84,860	13,220	98,080
Syria	National Society	80	216,850	9,829	226,679
North Yemen	Detainees	—	—	21,963	21,963
TOTAL		4,989	9,433,467	1,842,655	11,276,122



(Photo: ICRC/A. Hassan — LIBA 89-223/15)

Distribution of emergency food aid to displaced civilians in Lebanon.