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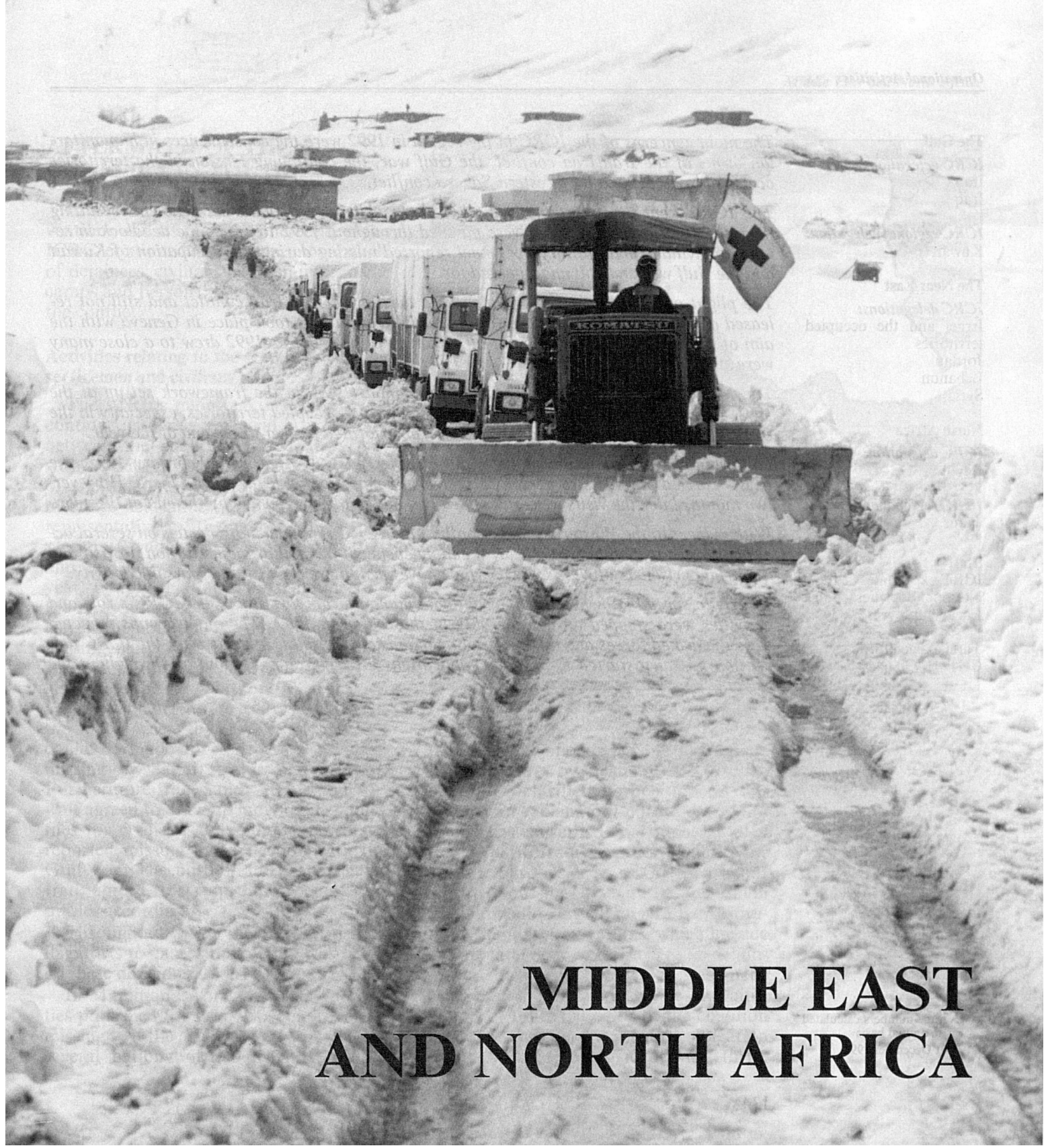
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# MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

**The Gulf**

**ICRC delegations:**

Iran  
Iraq

**ICRC regional delegation:**

Kuwait

**The Near East**

**ICRC delegations:**

Israel and the occupied  
territories  
Jordan  
Lebanon  
Syria

**North Africa**

**ICRC delegation:**

Egypt

**ICRC regional delegation:**

Tunis

**Staff**

ICRC expatriates\* : 105  
National Societies\* : 6  
Local employees\*\* : 345

**Total expenditure**

CHF 41,790,644

*The main concerns of the ICRC in the region in 1992 were the consequences in humanitarian terms of the Iran/Iraq conflict, the Gulf war, the continuing tension in the territories occupied by Israel and the Western Sahara conflict.*

*The ICRC kept up its attempts to solve the remaining humanitarian problems resulting from the Gulf conflict. Efforts were pursued throughout 1992 to break the deadlock in regard to civilians and military personnel reported missing during the occupation of Kuwait and the Gulf war and still unaccounted for.*

*The plight of the prisoners of war captured during the Iran/Iraq conflict and still not released also gave the ICRC cause for concern. Negotiations took place in Geneva with the aim of resuming the repatriation of all prisoners of war, but as 1992 drew to a close many were still waiting to go home.*

*The Middle East peace talks continued throughout 1992, in the framework set up at the 1991 Madrid Conference. Nevertheless, tension in the occupied territories, especially in the Gaza Strip, remained high, and the situation deteriorated further at the end of the year.*

*Following the proclamation of the state of emergency in Algeria in February 1992, the ICRC carried out visits to persons arrested in connection with the events there. However, two months later the visits were suspended and had not been resumed by the end of the year.*

*With respect to the Western Sahara conflict, the ICRC reminded both parties on several occasions of its availability, as a neutral and independent humanitarian institution, to visit and repatriate prisoners of war, some of whom have spent more than fifteen years in captivity.*

*Efforts to spread knowledge of international humanitarian law and of the ICRC's role and activities were stepped up considerably in the region in 1992. The main groups targeted were the armed forces and different political and social circles. In particular, the ICRC delegation in Cairo started to produce publications in Arabic for distribution throughout the region.*

\* average numbers calculated  
on an annual basis

\*\* as at December 1992

## AFTERMATH OF THE CONFLICT IN THE GULF

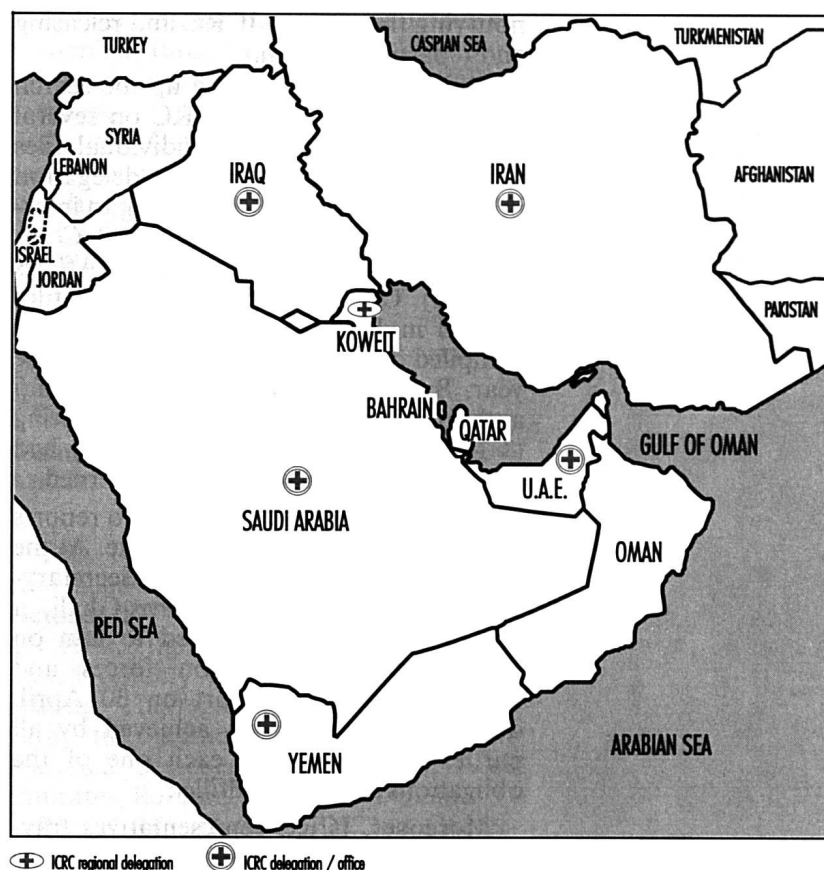
In accordance with the Geneva Conventions and its mandate thereunder, the ICRC continued its activities on behalf of detainees, civilians living in internment camps and persons reported missing since the conflict.

### Activities relating to the search for missing servicemen and civilians

The ICRC's main task in 1992 was to continue acting as a neutral intermediary between the coalition forces and Iraq, with a view to ensuring implementation of the bilateral decisions taken during meetings held under its auspices between representatives of the parties, which took place in Riyadh in March and April 1991 and in Geneva in October of the same year. During this third tripartite meeting the parties agreed that Iraq should publish in the country's media the names of missing persons listed by the Saudi and Kuwaiti authorities. The coalition forces also asked the Iraqi authorities to provide a list of all detention centres and grant the ICRC access to them so that a search could be made for the people reported missing by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Furthermore Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait agreed to draw up individual enquiry files for civilians and military personnel reported missing in connection with the Gulf war. The parties, and in particular Iraq, agreed to set up these personal enquiries accordingly.

Throughout 1992, the ICRC pursued its efforts to ensure that action was taken on these decisions.

In March and April, the Iraqi authorities published the lists of people reported missing by the Kuwaiti government in several national newspapers. Regarding



the search for missing persons in Iraqi detention centres by means of ICRC visits, the ICRC clarified its position on this issue in an explanatory note addressed to the parties concerned on 4 June. It stated that visits to Iraqi detention facilities for the sole purpose of searching for persons reported missing by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia would run counter to the institution's standard procedures, which include private interviews and access to all detainees in the prisons visited. It was made clear that should there still be Kuwaitis, Saudis or other nationals of the coalition forces detained in Iraq, Iraq's obligation would be confined to identifying them,



notifying them to the ICRC and releasing and repatriating them.

With a view to speeding up the search for missing people, the ICRC on several occasions requested that individual files be drawn up. To this end, the delegation in Kuwait gave extensive training to interviewers working for the National Committee for Missing and POW Affairs (NCPA). Out of the 207 individual files opened in 1992, over one hundred were compiled during the last few weeks of the year. By the end of December, the Iraqi authorities had replied to requests relating to 13 personal files, stating that they had no information on the people concerned.

In 1992, the ICRC drew up two reports on the progress made on this issue. At the request of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, a special report was presented to him on 16 January. The coalition forces and Iraq were given a report on 30 April, describing the progress achieved by all parties and reminding each one of the obligations still to be fulfilled.

Moreover, ICRC representatives travelled on several occasions to Iraq and to Kuwait, to hold talks with the authorities on the search for missing persons.

In March, the ICRC Delegate General for the Middle East and North Africa was received by high-ranking Iraqi officials, including the Prime Minister, Mr Muhammad Hamza Al-Zubaidi, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr A. Hussein. He then met with Kuwaiti government representatives in Kuwait City.

Three months later, in June, the Deputy Delegate General was in Baghdad where he met the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Tariq Aziz, the Minister of Defence, Mr Ali Hassan Al-Majid, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to raise once again the question of persons reported

missing and discuss ways and means of dealing with the enquiry files submitted by the Kuwaiti authorities. At the end of November, a member of the ICRC Committee, Mr Rudolf Jäckli, went to Baghdad with the Deputy Delegate General. Discussions on the same subject were held with the Vice-President, Mr Yassin Ramadan, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Mohammed Al-Sahhaf. The ICRC was told that all Kuwaitis previously held in Iraq had been released.

#### **Activities for civilians living in camps**

Throughout 1992, the ICRC continued to monitor the situation of some 28,000 Iraqis protected by the Fourth Geneva Convention who were living in camps in Rafha and Artawiyeh. Delegates carried out regular visits to the camps and duly reported their observations to the authorities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In June additional housing and facilities were built at Rafha by the Saudi authorities, and at the end of the year all the remaining inhabitants in Artawiyeh were transferred to the Rafha camp.

Following talks with the Minister of the Interior, Prince Nayef Ben Abdul Aziz Al-Saoud, at the end of 1991, the ICRC was given permission to visit civilians from the camps who had been arrested and were being held in police stations and prisons. As from November, families were also allowed to visit their detained relatives.

Contacts were established with the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO), which had set up a postal service for the people living in the camps. This relieved the ICRC of part of its tracing workload. In October representatives of the IIRO visited ICRC headquarters, where they were received by President Sommaruga, to discuss further cooperation with the ICRC.

## Repatriations and expulsions

The ICRC carried out occasional repatriations to and from Iraq.

Delegates organized the repatriation of several groups of Iraqi citizens living in Rafha or Artawiyeh who wished to return to their home country. In all, 585 people were repatriated under ICRC auspices. The ICRC also drew up travel documents for 1,448 people who were subsequently resettled in third countries by UNHCR.

Meanwhile, some 148 Kuwaiti citizens or former residents wishing to go back to Kuwait were taken by ICRC delegates from Baghdad to the border post of Arar in Saudi Arabia, where they were officially handed over to the Kuwaiti authorities.

At the end of the year, the ICRC was awaiting an official reply from the authorities of Kuwait to some 500 requests made by former residents of Kuwait who were living in Iraq and had requested permission to return to Kuwait.

People living in Kuwait who had not been granted permission to remain in the country continued to be expelled in 1992. Most of them were taken to the Iraqi border. The ICRC systematically interviewed detainees under expulsion orders before their departure to make sure that no one was being sent to a country where he or she might fear persecution. Delegates also supervised their transfer, ascertaining that they had the opportunity to settle their personal affairs and were permitted to take their belongings with them. To ensure their safe passage, ICRC delegates accompanied a total of 1,595 people (deportees and their families) to the Iraqi border, where they were met by delegates based in Baghdad.

In addition, the ICRC intervened on behalf of two Kuwaiti border guards captured by the Iraqi authorities in January.

They were freed three weeks later. In November, three Saudi and six Iraqi border guards were repatriated under ICRC auspices.

The ICRC continued to encourage the parties concerned, in particular Kuwait and Iraq, to identify and repatriate the mortal remains of soldiers or civilians of the adverse party.

## KUWAIT

### Regional delegation

**(Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen)**

The ICRC headquarters agreement concluded with the Kuwaiti authorities in October 1991 came into effect in February 1992. High-level contacts were maintained notably in Saudi Arabia and in Kuwait. The regional delegate held talks with the authorities and with the National Societies in the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Yemen and Qatar.

The ICRC attended the 22nd Conference of Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies, which was held in Abu Dhabi in November.

## KUWAIT

The delegation's main task in 1992 was to visit persons detained in connection with the Gulf war — in particular Iraqi, Jordanian, Yemeni and Sudanese nationals, Palestinians with travel documents and stateless persons — and held in detention facilities under the jurisdiction of the Ministries of the Interior and Defence, including police stations. The ICRC was first allowed to visit these detainees in 1991, soon after Iraqi troops had withdrawn from the country and Kuwaiti sovereignty had been restored.

Following talks with the Ministry of Defence, ICRC delegates were granted access to a further military detention centre as from March. The ICRC regularly reported its findings to the authorities and drew their attention to any problems encountered concerning conditions of detention. In November, the Delegate General travelled to Kuwait where he held talks with the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Al-Shaheen, and handed over three ICRC reports on its activities for detainees between March 1991 and 15 September 1992.

The delegation also continued to monitor the expulsion of persons not allowed to remain in Kuwait (see *Aftermath of the conflict in the Gulf*) and to follow the trials of people accused of collaboration with Iraq during the occupation of Kuwait.

The ICRC pursued numerous activities with regard to tracing missing persons, establishing and maintaining contact between family members by means of Red Cross messages and organizing repatriations and family reunions. (For other activities in this respect see *Aftermath of the conflict in the Gulf*.)

At the same time the regional delegation carried out dissemination activities. On 14 January, the first lecture on international humanitarian law was given to members of the Kuwaiti armed forces. In July, the delegation organized a four-day course for 28 officers serving in the Kuwaiti army.

#### SAUDI ARABIA

The regional delegation maintained high-level contacts with the Saudi authorities on the one hand and with the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Gulf Cooperation Council on the other. In December the ICRC was invited to attend the special OIC conference on

the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, which was held in Jeddah.

In August, the ICRC held its first course on international humanitarian law for officers of the Saudi army at the Riyadh Staff College.

ICRC delegates continued their cooperation with the Saudi Red Crescent Society, which consisted mainly in exchanging Red Cross messages between Somali nationals living in Saudi Arabia and their families at home.

(For activities relating to Iraqi civilians living in camps see *Aftermath of the conflict in the Gulf*.)

#### YEMEN

Following the visits carried out in 1991 in some 20 places of detention in the north of the country (see *1991 Annual Report*), an ICRC team started the third lap of its series of visits to detainees at the end of January 1992. Four places of detention situated in the southern governorates were visited. The ICRC also continued to offer tracing services to Somali and Ethiopian refugees living in towns or camps close to Aden. In May an ICRC tracing delegate based in Riyadh travelled to Yemen to hold a course for local Red Crescent tracing officers. Some 2,000 Red Cross messages were exchanged between refugees and their families in 1992.

#### IRAQ

At the beginning of 1992 the ICRC was still active in Iraq, bringing medical and other assistance to the victims of the Gulf war and the internal conflict. Subsequently such efforts were scaled down and emphasis shifted to protection, tracing and dissemination activities, as well

as assessment of living conditions in a country under an oil export embargo and economic sanctions.

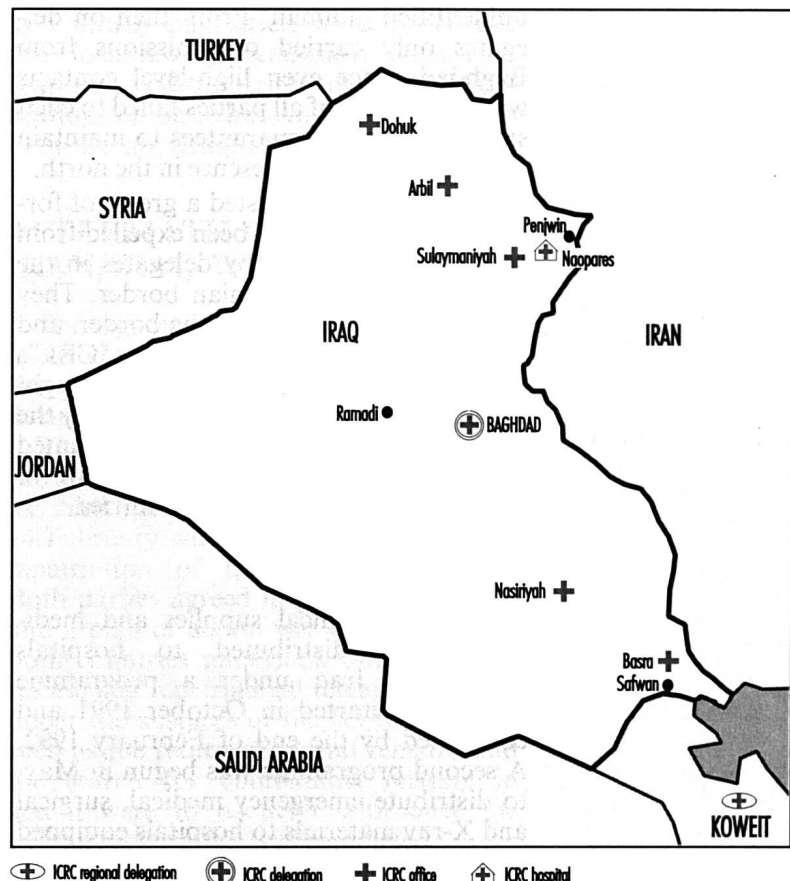
Throughout the year, the ICRC pursued its efforts to complete the repatriation of prisoners of war taken during the Iran/Iraq war (see *Aftermath of the Iran/Iraq war*) and continued its activities relating to the search for missing persons and other consequences of the Gulf war (see *Aftermath of the conflict in the Gulf*). High-level contacts with the Iraqi authorities were maintained and three missions carried out from headquarters by a member of the ICRC Committee, the Delegate General and his deputy.

### Activities for the civilian population

In January the ICRC launched a major food distribution programme for some 100,000 people living in the mountainous area around Penjwin, to tide them over the winter months. By March the programme was completed and the ICRC sub-delegation in Penjwin was transferred to Sulaymaniyah. Gradually the institution wound up its relief activities and in July/August most of the remaining food stocks were handed over to the World Food Programme, while some were given to the Iraqi Red Crescent for distribution to people living in particularly difficult circumstances.

Towards the end of autumn a survey was carried out to evaluate the Kurdish population's ability to face the coming winter. Results showed that as long as other humanitarian agencies were able to assist the local population, the ICRC should not be called upon to meet emergency needs.

All through 1992 the ICRC monitored compliance with the provisions of international humanitarian law by States and groups of combatants, with particular



regard to the internal conflict in northern Iraq and military operations by Turkey on Iraqi soil. In March, the ICRC reminded Turkey of the obligation to avoid civilian targets.

In spring, clashes between Iraqi forces and Kurdish *Peshmerga* troops caused some 30,000 people to flee their villages. Skirmishes also broke out between rival Kurdish factions, leaving many casualties.

Throughout 1992 the work of the humanitarian organizations was hampered by the general lack of security in the area. Working conditions for expatriates became increasingly dangerous and on 12 October an ICRC delegate was wounded by an

unidentified gunman. From then on delegates only carried out missions from Baghdad, since even high-level contacts with the leaders of all parties failed to elicit sufficient security guarantees to maintain a permanent ICRC presence in the north.

The ICRC also assisted a group of foreign civilians who had been expelled from Iraq and were found by delegates in the buffer zone on the Iranian border. They were not allowed to cross the border, and were without food or shelter. The ICRC's representations on their behalf brought about a solution to the problem and by the end of the year they had all been granted permission to transit through Iran in order to return to their own countries.

### Medical assistance

Essential medical supplies and medicines were distributed to hospitals throughout Iraq under a programme which was started in October 1991 and completed by the end of February 1992. A second programme was begun in May, to distribute emergency medical, surgical and X-ray materials to hospitals equipped with surgical units, but it ran into administrative difficulties during the last round of distributions. Consequently the ICRC handed over its remaining medical supplies to the country's central pharmacy, except for materials intended for hospitals in the north of the country, which delegates delivered later.

The surgical hospital in Naopares, set up by the ICRC in September 1991, worked at full capacity during the first half of the year. In all, 821 patients were admitted and 2,147 operations performed. At peak times up to 50 people were undergoing treatment. On 30 September 1992 responsibility for the hospital was handed over to the health authorities of Sulaymaniyah province.

### Water and sanitation

ICRC sanitation engineers provided equipment and technical assistance to Iraq's main water treatment plants, including the one serving the capital. Between May and November the water supply systems of 97 villages in northern Iraq were rehabilitated under a joint ICRC/Swiss Red Cross programme. Local teams who had received ICRC training were then put in charge of completing the last projects for some 20 villages, using materials provided by the institution. The Health Minister, Mr U.M. Mubarak, had talks in Geneva with ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga in May. Several aspects of the public health situation in Iraq, problems of medical supplies and the ICRC's relief programme were discussed.

### Activities for detainees

Activities relating to Iranian prisoners of war and Kuwaitis and Saudis reported missing in connection with the Gulf war are described under *Aftermath of the Iran/Iraq war* and *Aftermath of the conflict in the Gulf* respectively.

In addition, ICRC delegates visited 68 Iranians who had been arrested for participating in the March 1991 uprising and were being held in camps. When two Iranian pilots were shot down over Iraqi territory in April, the ICRC was allowed to visit these prisoners of war on several occasions. Delegates also visited several hundred foreign prisoners without diplomatic representation in Iraq.

The ICRC continued to have access to Iraqi soldiers held by Kurdish opposition groups. In January and April general visits to 11 places of detention were carried out. Later in the year two more such visits included six new places of detention. On one occasion nine Iraqi soldiers were handed over to the ICRC and, in ac-



cordance with their wishes, were taken back to their military units. As from June, delegates were also given access to security detainees held by local Kurdish authorities.

On 20 April the ICRC handed over to the Turkish authorities six Turkish soldiers captured by the Turkish PKK\* and held on Iraqi soil. Two more such prisoners were visited in June. Delegates collected Red Cross messages which were forwarded to the detainees' families in Turkey.

### Tracing activities

The ICRC's tracing activities concentrated on registering prisoners of war, civilian internees and captured members of the Iraqi armed forces. The tracing service also processed tracing requests, reunited families, handled Red Cross messages and dealt with matters concerning missing civilians and military personnel (see also *Aftermath of the Iran/Iraq war* and *Aftermath of the conflict in the Gulf*). In all, some 29,000 messages were handled in 1992.

Furthermore, ICRC delegates carried out a programme designed to help the Iraqi Red Crescent Society develop its tracing service.

### Dissemination

For the first time ever, two generals of the Iraqi armed forces attended the San Remo Institute's course on the dissemination of international humanitarian law in 1992. One of them later took part in the instructors' course held in Geneva.

From March to October ICRC delegates held sessions on international humanitarian law in the north of the country, reaching some 1,500 combatants belonging

to Kurdish opposition movements and their local law enforcement trainees. Delegates also distributed a number of publications on basic humanitarian principles in the Sorani (Iraqi Kurdish) language.

## AFTERMATH OF THE IRAN/IRAQ WAR

Throughout 1992, the ICRC pursued its efforts to complete the repatriation of the prisoners of war (POWs) captured during the conflict between Iran and Iraq.

The Joint Technical Committee (JTC), convened and chaired by the ICRC, held its third meeting in Geneva from 12 to 14 February with a view to resuming the repatriation of the remaining POWs. Both parties agreed in principle to do so and a plan of action was set up whereby both countries undertook unilaterally to release and repatriate all remaining POWs under the auspices of the ICRC. Matters such as the return of mortal remains and the search for combatants missing in action were to be dealt with once the overall repatriation was completed.

The JTC was set up in September 1990, with ICRC participation, to bring together representatives of the two countries in order to deal with questions related to the repatriation of POWs' mortal remains and to people missing in action. Previously, 81,341 POWs had been repatriated, but on 16 January 1991 the operation was brought to a halt.

Following this third meeting of the JTC, delegates carried out several visits in both Iran and Iraq to talk to the POWs in private and check whether they wished to return home.

At the beginning of March 1992 delegates were able to speak in private to 928 Iraqi POWs, 53 of whom had not been seen before, to ascertain their wishes in re-

\* Kurdish Workers' Party

gard to repatriation. In all, 151 agreed to return to their country. These visits were the first the Iranian authorities had allowed the ICRC to carry out since 1987. On 21 March, owing to obstacles encountered in the organization of the POW repatriation process and in the arrangements for visits to Iranian security detainees (see *Iran*), the ICRC was asked to suspend its activities in Iran and its delegates were requested to leave the country.

Meanwhile, in Iraq, ICRC delegates visited some 70 Iranian POWs and civilians held in the Ramadi camp. Only seven of these later wished to be repatriated.

On 15 April the JTC held a fourth meeting in Geneva, chaired by the ICRC. The agreement in principle to resume repatriations was confirmed. During the meeting the ICRC gave both parties figures regarding the remaining prisoners of war. These figures were based on evidence the ICRC had collected by registration, from the exchange of Red Cross messages and from media reports. In Iran, the ICRC considered that there were 13,405 registered POWs, 5,606 POWs known through Red Cross messages sent to their families and more than 400 POWs known from statements published in the Iranian media. As for Iraq, the ICRC considered that there were 645 registered POWs and 408 POWs known to it through other means to be visited or revisited.

In June, since implementation of the plan of action had not started, the ICRC renewed its efforts to persuade the parties to honour their commitments. The issue was raised on various occasions with high-level representatives from both countries. The delegate with responsibility for Iran/Iraq held talks in Tehran with Iranian officials but the latter would not allow the ICRC to have access to the POWs in order to arrange for their repatriation.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Delegate General went to Baghdad to have talks with the Iraqi authorities with a view to undertaking a final visit to all POWs who had not yet been registered by the ICRC and those who had previously refused repatriation. He met the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Tariq Aziz, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence, Mr Ahmed Hussein and Mr Ali Hassan Al-Majid, and the President of the Permanent Committee for War Victims. Subsequently, in August, the ICRC was able to interview a group of 591 Iranian POWs still in Iraq whom it had already interviewed to check whether they wished to be repatriated. Furthermore, the ICRC requested from the Iraqi authorities detailed and individual answers about the whereabouts of 562 Iranian POWs; this information was received by the delegation later in the year. Finally, the ICRC submitted to Iraq a list of several hundred Iranian servicemen presumed to be POWs. The list had been drawn up on the basis of first-hand accounts from people captured or detained with the servicemen in question. Iraq undertook to cross-check this list and report back to the ICRC.

On 22 October, the ICRC repeated its request, previously made to the Iranian authorities in November 1991, to be allowed to exercise its right under the Geneva Conventions to see all Iraqi POWs pending their repatriation. In addition to its bilateral contacts with Iran and Iraq, the ICRC informed members of the international community of the stalemate in the repatriation process and drew their attention to the plight of the remaining POWs, particularly some 20,000 Iraqi POWs still in Iran.

During the year under review, only seven Iranian and 15 Iraqi prisoners of war returned to their home countries. They were repatriated on 10 May. Mortal re-

mains were repatriated on several occasions in 1992, without ICRC involvement. In accordance with international humanitarian law, prisoners of war refusing repatriation retain POW status until the entire repatriation process is completed and therefore continue to benefit from all provisions of the Third Geneva Convention, in particular notification of their identity to the ICRC, visits by ICRC delegates and exchange of family messages.

tained throughout 1992. In the formal request addressed to the Iranian authorities on 22 October (see *Aftermath of the Iran/Iraq war*) the ICRC also repeated its wish to be granted access to all Iraqi soldiers captured following the March 1991 uprising in Iraq and held by the Iranian authorities. Towards the end of the year some 600 of these Iraqis were released and repatriated without ICRC involvement.

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## IRAN

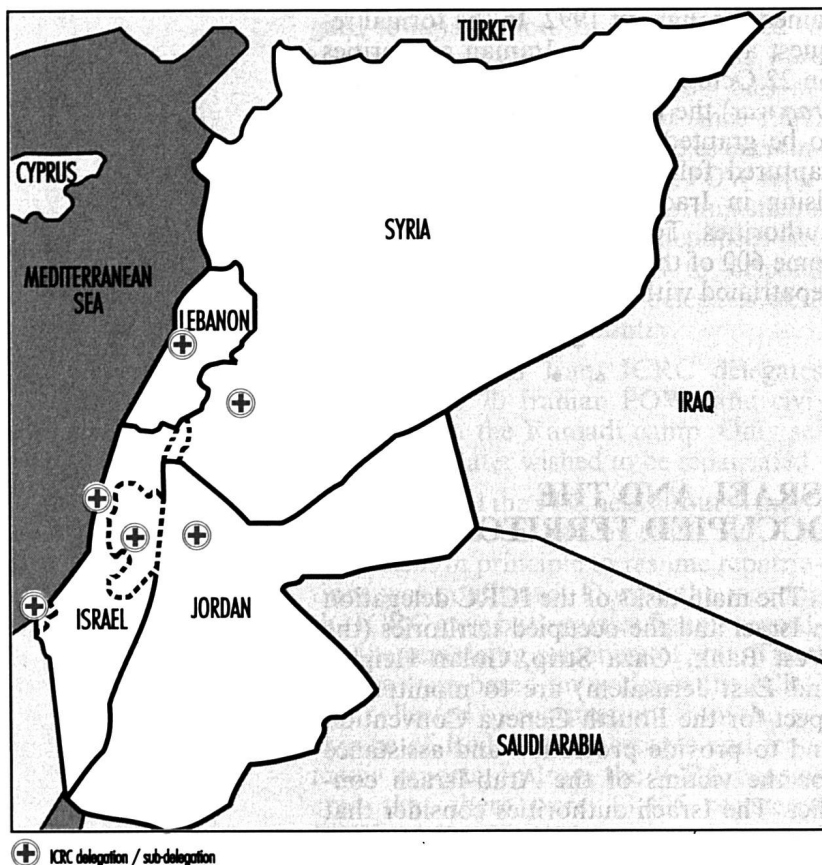
The first months of 1992 were marked by the beginning of ICRC visits to security detainees.

In August 1990, the Iranian authorities invited the ICRC to visit places of detention in the country and an agreement concerning practical arrangements for these visits was reached in November 1991. The ICRC team started visiting detainees held for state security reasons on 23 January 1992. In all, nine places of detention were visited. Two months later, on 21 March, the Iranian authorities asked the ICRC to suspend its activities in the country, because the visits were allegedly not being carried out in accordance with the agreement. The ICRC publicly stated that this was not the case since the visits complied with standard ICRC procedures stemming from the institution's mandate and fully respected the terms of the agreement reached with the Iranian authorities:

The President of the ICRC voiced his concern to Iran's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva on 24 March, regarding the serious consequences in humanitarian terms of the ICRC's expulsion from Iran, in particular for the POWs. Contacts with the Iranian authorities on this matter were main-

## ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

The main tasks of the ICRC delegation in Israel and the occupied territories (the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and East Jerusalem) are to monitor respect for the Fourth Geneva Convention and to provide protection and assistance for the victims of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Israeli authorities consider that in view of the *sui generis* status of the occupied territories, the Fourth Geneva Convention does not apply *de jure* to these areas, but they have stated, since 1967, that they would comply *de facto* with the humanitarian provisions of that Convention. However, the selective and pragmatic way in which the Convention is applied is increasingly tending to limit the impact of ICRC activities and does not allow the institution to attain all its humanitarian goals. Constant negotiations with the authorities for permission to engage in various types of activity have given the ICRC some leeway, and this has certainly made it possible to resolve a number of humanitarian issues arising in connection with the occupation. Nevertheless in 1992, 25 years after the begin-



ning of the occupation, discussions still centred on provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention that had been violated, with serious consequences in humanitarian terms.

The peace negotiations launched at the 1991 Madrid Conference to help the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict find a solution to the problems that had beset the region for so long continued throughout 1992. However, tension remained high in the occupied territories, especially in the Gaza Strip. There were still violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention by Israel, such as deportations, the destruction of houses, the building of Israeli settlements

in the occupied territories and ill-treatment of detainees under interrogation. The Palestinians for their part attacked Israeli civilians, killed persons in their power and others suspected of collaborating with the Israeli authorities. In September the ICRC Delegate General for the Middle East and North Africa met senior Israeli officials to discuss important issues such as conditions of detention, deportations, settlements in the occupied territories and the destruction of houses. He also voiced the ICRC's concern about the behaviour of Israeli undercover forces. In meetings with Palestinian representatives the ICRC expressed concern about the growing number of Palestinians killed for alleged collaboration and about Israeli civilians being killed. On two occasions the institution spoke out publicly against violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention, notably in a press release on 21 May, in which it called on the Israeli government to put an end to the ill-treatment inflicted during interrogation on detainees from the occupied territories, who are protected civilians under the Convention.

In connection with the killing of an Israeli border policeman and the expulsion of 415 Palestinians in December, the ICRC made public statements condemning hostage-taking and the killing of prisoners as violations of international humanitarian law, and the forcible transfer of protected persons as a grave breach of Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Despite intensive efforts, the ICRC delegation covering Israel and the occupied territories was not permitted to bring relief supplies to the deportees by road. However, on 9 and 23 January 1993 the ICRC was authorized to reach their camp by helicopter. It provided the deportees with medical assistance and evacuated 19 of them.

### Activities for detainees

Throughout 1992 ICRC delegates regularly visited detainees in 45 places of detention, mainly prisons, military detention centres, police stations and temporary or transit detention centres both in Israel and the occupied territories. In all, they carried out 562 visits to 12,500 security and administrative detainees, of whom 5,919 were registered for the first time. After these visits the ICRC gave the authorities oral and written reports on the delegates' findings. It also provided detainees with material assistance.

The ICRC stepped up the pace of its visits to places of detention in October when the inmates of most of the prisons under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Police were on hunger strike, and again in December following mass arrests in connection with the killing of an Israeli border policeman.

Another issue the ICRC regularly raised with the Israeli authorities was access to all Lebanese nationals held in Israel and in the Khiam prison (Lebanon).

The ICRC had been running a family visits programme for detainees since 1968, enabling detainees from the occupied territories to receive visits from their relatives in their place of detention. The ICRC's initiative to encourage the Central Committee of Red Crescent Societies in the West Bank and Gaza (CCRCS) to take over the family visits programme was formalized in a memorandum signed in April 1992. The programme provided transport for 287,619 people to visit relatives in detention in 1992. It had considerable impact on the psychological well-being of the detainees and helped to improve the overall atmosphere in places of detention. Following an agreement signed on 5 August between the ICRC and the Norwegian Red Cross, the latter took on the responsi-

bility of organizing and financing this programme for one year as from 1 September.

In 1992 the ICRC was also able to organize family visits for prisoners whose families were residing in various Arab countries. Despite the ICRC's sustained efforts, Lebanese prisoners who were held in Israel and whose families lived in Lebanon, outside the occupied zone in the south of the country, were still not allowed to receive family visits.

### Medical assistance

ICRC medical personnel continued to monitor health-care services in places of detention and to compile data on the overall health situation in the occupied territories. An extensive follow-up survey revealed that private hospitals in the occupied territories were having serious difficulty in covering their running costs. The Netherlands Red Cross Society, in cooperation with the ICRC, proposed to the European Community a repeat of the joint project under which USD six million had been distributed in 1991 to hospitals most in need. The proposal was accepted in early 1993.

In 1992 primary health-care facilities and private hospitals in the occupied territories received medical assistance from the ICRC in the form of sets of medicines and specific drugs. The ICRC also provided financial aid for different branches of the local Red Crescent to help cover maintenance and running costs of their ambulance services.

### Tracing activities

The ICRC carried out its tracing activities from Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Gaza and local offices in the major population centres of the occupied territories. The tracing agency collected information on the whereabouts of detainees, which it ob-



tained mainly through notification from the detaining authorities, and also by means of registration cards filled in by the detainees themselves during ICRC visits. The agency then centralized, processed and redistributed the data to all local offices in the occupied territories and other ICRC delegations in the Middle East so that families of detainees could be notified of their detained relatives' whereabouts as quickly as possible. Furthermore, the tracing agency handled tracing requests (mainly from Lebanese families looking for relatives who had gone missing in southern Lebanon) and facilitated the exchange of news between detainees and civilians in the occupied territories and their families living in Arab countries. In the course of the year 7,848 Red Cross messages were collected and 7,009 messages distributed. The delegation issued 18,469 certificates of detention and release and delivered 1,919 power-of-attorney documents to families of detainees. The ICRC also organized the transfer of 391 people who crossed during the year from the occupied Golan Heights to Syria and vice versa for the purpose of family visits, pilgrimage, studies or marriage.

Despite repeated efforts the ICRC made no progress in determining what had happened to Israeli servicemen who had disappeared in Lebanon.

## JORDAN

The year 1992 saw the lifting of martial law in April and the introduction of a law legalizing political parties in Jordan.

The ICRC delegation in Amman served as a logistics base for the transport of relief supplies to Iraq during the first few months of 1992. This activity decreased significantly as United Nations

agencies became active in the area. The delegation then concentrated on retrieving equipment and vehicles from Iraq so that they could be reallocated to other ICRC operations later in the year.

### Activities for detainees

As in previous years, ICRC delegates carried out regular visits to security detainees, including those under interrogation, in the General Intelligence Directorate, the Military Intelligence Directorate and the Swaqa, Zarka and Juweideh rehabilitation centres. The number of detainees fell sharply after a general amnesty on 12 November. Whenever needed, the ICRC arranged for the exchange of personal messages between detainees and their families. In all, delegates conducted 44 visits to six places of detention. They saw 468 detainees and registered 332 for the first time. Material assistance was also distributed in the prisons.

### Tracing activities

The ICRC provided tracing services for Palestinians who were in many cases separated from their families because of the situation in the territories occupied by Israel. It also carried out tracing work in connection with the Gulf conflict and the Iran/Iraq war. A total of 13,213 Red Cross messages were collected and 11,761 distributed in 1992. The ICRC also opened tracing enquiries concerning 72 people and resolved 61 such cases. Furthermore, it carried out 503 repatriations and transfers for medical and humanitarian reasons.

### Dissemination

In February two seminars on the law of war were held in Amman for instructors of the Jordanian armed forces. This

paved the way for a new programme of instruction on the law of war, set up by the Jordanian armed forces together with the ICRC, to be incorporated in officers' training courses. In May the delegation organized a three-day seminar on international humanitarian law and the law of war as part of the exhibition "Humanity in the midst of war", inaugurated in the presence of Crown Prince Hassan Ibn Talal at the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman. It was attended by some 60 representatives of academic circles and the Royal Armed Forces. At the same time, a course on dissemination methods was held for 26 teachers from the Ministry of Education and members of the executive committee of the youth branch of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society. Following these events, the delegation was formally requested to extend its dissemination activities to the Jordanian contingents to be attached to the United Nations peace-keeping forces in the former Yugoslavia. On two occasions it gave comprehensive presentations on international humanitarian law and ICRC activities in the Balkans at the Zarka military academy. This programme reached about 800 officers and soldiers.

The delegation continued its usual dissemination activities in schools and universities throughout the year. In November, as part of a training course organized in Amman by the Jordanian National Civil Defence, talks were given on international humanitarian law and ICRC sanitation programmes to Jordanian and Yemeni civil-defence technicians and officers.

## LEBANON

In 1992 the ICRC's presence was concentrated in southern Lebanon and the

Bekaa valley, and along the demarcation line separating the zone occupied by Israel and the rest of the country. The ICRC constantly reminded parties to the conflict in the south of the country of their responsibility to comply with international humanitarian law. Throughout the year the civilian population in the southern part of the country suffered loss of life, injury, property damage and sometimes displacement as a result of military operations in the area. The ICRC provided protection, medical assistance and relief supplies and followed up alleged violations of international humanitarian law. Following the deportation on 17 December of 415 Palestinians from the territories occupied by Israel the delegates based in Lebanon immediately organized relief convoys to the camp at Marj-ez-Zouhour, providing the deportees with tents, mattresses, medicines and other relief items. Subsequently the ICRC was not allowed access to the camp for further relief operations.

### Activities for detainees

The delegation organized family visits for detainees held by militia groups. (For activities relating to visits to Khiam prison see *Israel and the occupied territories*.)

### Medical assistance

Mobile clinics run by the ICRC in co-operation with the Lebanese Red Cross and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) continued to serve the civilian population along the border with the occupied zone, where access to medical services was made difficult by fighting. The clinic staff gave 8,573 consultations during the year. Moreover, the ICRC distributed medical supplies to hospitals and dispensaries, in addition to providing support for the National

Society's first-aid workers, blood bank, social and medical section and pharmacy service.

The ICRC also kept up material support for its two orthopaedic workshops in Sidon and Beit Chebab throughout the year. At Sidon, 143 patients were fitted with prostheses and 108 with orthoses. The workshop manufactured 305 prostheses and 230 orthoses, and made 65 repairs to artificial limbs. At Beit Chebab, 134 patients were fitted with prostheses and 137 with orthoses. Production of prostheses and orthoses amounted to 245 and 137 respectively, and 73 repairs were carried out. The ICRC also donated wheelchairs and crutches for distribution by the Lebanese Red Cross. Furthermore, it completed a water project at Kafr Bhamdoun and financed two other sanitation projects.

### **Tracing activities**

The tracing agency continued its work for dispersed families, in particular Palestinians. The delegation in Beirut collected 4,703 Red Cross messages and distributed 3,570. The agency carried out 25 transfers and repatriations, and issued 127 certificates of detention. It opened 127 tracing requests and resolved 124.

### **Assistance for the civilian population**

The ICRC distributed relief supplies to victims of the fighting in the southern part of the country. The items were handed over to the Lebanese Red Cross, which distributed them through its social assistance programme.

All in all, the ICRC supplied relief goods (such as family parcels, blankets, kitchen sets, tents and mattresses) and 11 tonnes of food aid for distribution in Lebanon, mainly by the Lebanese Red Cross. By the end of the year the regular

relief programme was being phased out, with only small stocks left in the country to cover emergencies.

### **Dissemination**

In June the delegation held a seminar on the law of war at the military academy of the Lebanese armed forces, mostly for commanders and instructors.

From mid-July to October the delegation was involved in a comprehensive series of presentations for the Lebanese armed forces on the law of war, ICRC activities and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. This major programme, comprising 28 sessions, reached more than 270 officers and 1,900 non-commissioned officers and soldiers from the army, the air force, the navy and the military police, and 900 trainees from the internal security forces.

## **SYRIA**

In 1992 the ICRC delegation in Damascus focused on tracing activities. The beneficiaries were civilians in Syria and the neighbouring countries, in particular the territories occupied by Israel, the Golan Heights and Lebanon. The ICRC also helped Somali nationals and Iraqis who had remained in Syria as a consequence of the Gulf war.

In all, tracing staff processed 2,818 Red Cross messages and issued 225 travel documents in 1992. In connection with the conflict in Somalia, 42 tracing enquiries and anxious-for-news requests were handled.

ICRC delegates interceded with the Syrian authorities on behalf of the population of the Golan Heights with regard to family visits to Syria. The Syrian Arab

Red Crescent received assistance from the ICRC in the form of a maternal and child health programme involving the distribution of wheat-soya milk. The orthopaedic centre of the Palestinian Red Crescent in Damascus received technical support from the ICRC.

The delegation organized dissemination courses for branches of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in Damascus and Sweida and a youth section in Damascus.

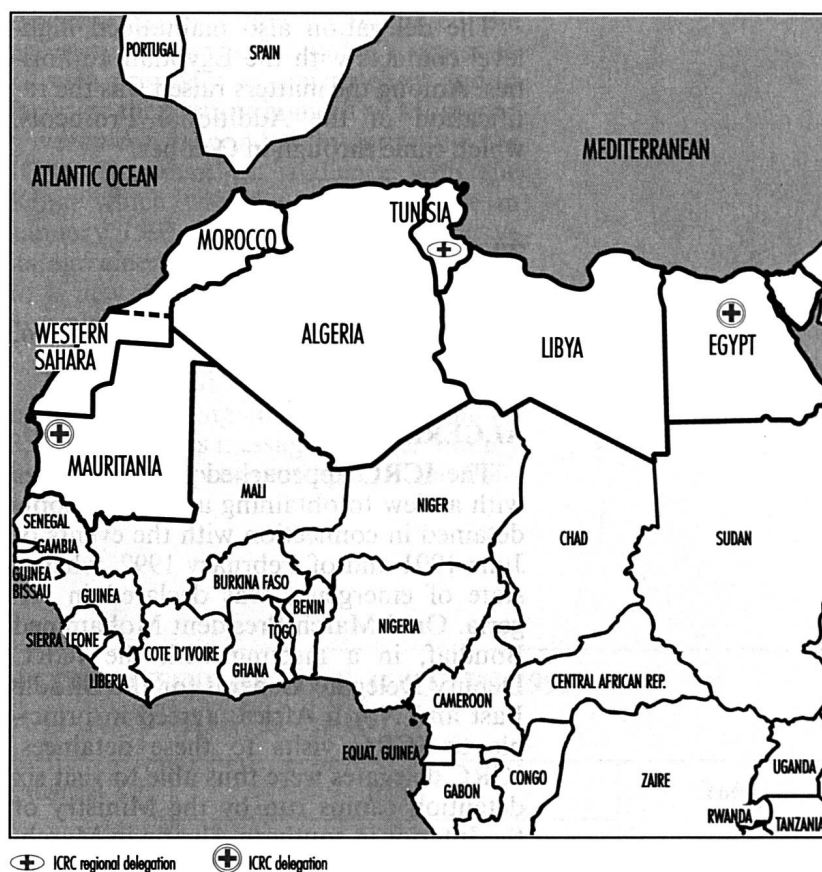
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## EGYPT

Besides carrying out the ICRC's traditional tracing activities in connection with the Arab-Israeli conflict and the aftermath of the Gulf war, the main task of the ICRC delegation in Cairo was to continue its work in the field of dissemination.

The tracing agency received 399 tracing requests and handled 1,942 Red Cross messages in 1992.

In January, a dissemination delegate was assigned to Cairo to spread knowledge of international humanitarian law to the armed forces in the region. To this end, contacts were established with the department of military affairs of the Arab League. The ICRC delegate to the armed forces arranged for the translation of the teaching file on the law of war into Arabic and organized a number of training courses for officers in the region. In October a three-day seminar on international humanitarian law was held in Cairo under the auspices of the Arab League. ICRC Vice-President Claudio Caratsch led the ICRC delegation. A month later the ICRC exhibition "Humanity in the midst of war" was



shown, attracting a large number of visitors including government officials, diplomats, journalists, students and schoolchildren. This travelling exhibition focuses on the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols.

Throughout the year delegates in Cairo also worked on dissemination materials for the general public. A calendar designed to draw parallels between examples of humanitarian behaviour selected from ancient Arab Islamic chronicles and contemporary humanitarian law was produced and distributed throughout the Arab world.

The delegation also maintained high-level contacts with the Egyptian authorities. Among the matters raised was the ratification of the Additional Protocols, which came through in October.

## **TUNIS**

### **Regional delegation**

**(Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Western Sahara)**

#### **ALGERIA**

The ICRC approached the authorities with a view to obtaining access to people detained in connection with the events of June 1991 and of February 1992, when a state of emergency was declared in Algeria. On 4 March President Mohammed Boudiaf, in a meeting with the ICRC Deputy Delegate General for the Middle East and North Africa, agreed in principle to ICRC visits to these detainees. ICRC delegates were thus able to visit six detention camps run by the Ministry of the Interior in southern Algeria in March, and a military prison under the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and two prisons under that of the Ministry of Justice in May. However, the programme of visits was suspended in July at the request of the authorities. In a note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 20 July the ICRC asked the authorities to reconsider their position. Several other steps were taken at the highest level, but to no avail. By the end of the year the ICRC and the authorities concerned had still not reached an understanding on the resumption of visits.

#### **MAURITANIA**

At the beginning of the year an ICRC delegate handed over to the authorities a

report on the third series of prison visits, carried out at the end of 1991. In 1992 the ICRC opened an office in Fassala-Neré in the south-eastern part of the country, near the border with Mali, to maintain contact with Tuareg refugees and their leaders. The latter were informed in meetings throughout the year about ICRC relief and protection work in Mali. Tracing delegates helped to restore links between separated families by exchanging Red Cross messages. The ICRC also undertook medical surveys among Tuareg refugees and provided assistance as needed.

#### **TUNISIA**

In response to a formal invitation issued by the Tunisian government, ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga visited Tunisia from 31 October to 3 November 1992. Mr Sommaruga met the President of the Republic, Mr Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Mr H. Ben Yahia, of Justice, Mr A. Zouari, of National Defence, Mr A. Ben Dhia, and of Health, Mr D. Jazy, to discuss the possibility of developing traditional ICRC activities. At the invitation of the Tunisian authorities the ICRC President inaugurated the exhibition "Humanity in the midst of war" in Tunis. In December the delegation sponsored a five-day "Course on international humanitarian law for the Maghreb", which was organized in cooperation with the Law Faculty of the University of Tunis and drew an audience of some 30 lawyers and military staff from five North African States.

#### **WESTERN SAHARA**

The ICRC continued its attempts to gain access to all the prisoners taken in connection with the Western Sahara conflict and held by the Moroccan govern-



ment and the Polisario Front. Many of these prisoners had spent more than ten years in captivity, some even as long as 16 years. The regional delegate went to Tindouf in February to hold talks on the matter with representatives of the Polisario Front. The ICRC approached Moroccan government and Polisario Front representatives on several occasions in Geneva, New York and elsewhere during the year with a view to obtaining authorization to visit all captured prisoners and other people arrested in connection with the Western Sahara conflict. The ICRC President addressed letters to King Hassan II of Morocco and the Secretary General of the Polisario Front, Mr Mohammed

Abdel Aziz, in which he reiterated the necessity for the ICRC to have access to all such prisoners, to register them and to facilitate their return home. The Moroccan government responded by granting the ICRC President an audience with the King, which was due to take place in January 1993. The Polisario Front gave its agreement in principle to ICRC visits to a new group of Moroccan prisoners, also planned for the beginning of 1993.

The regional delegation in Tunis opened 77 tracing enquiries and handled 3,323 Red Cross messages in 1992, mainly for Moroccan prisoners held by the Polisario front.

**RELIEF SUPPLIES DISTRIBUTED BY THE ICRC IN 1992  
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA**

Countries	Medical (CHF)	Relief		Total (CHF)
		(CHF)	(Tonnes)	
Algeria .....	12,840	52,442	4.1	65,282
Iran .....		207,541	16.0	207,541
Iraq .....	7,946,603	3,510,097	2,766.5	11,456,700
Israel and the occupied territories .....	79,219	1,171,605	290.4	1,250,824
Jordan .....		36,908	1.0	36,908
Kuwait .....	15,756	10,348	1.4	26,104
Lebanon .....	465,011	1,553,715	1,438.5	2,018,726
Mauritania .....	5,693	837	0.5	6,530
Syria.....	168,579	152,801	80.0	321,380
Yemen.....		2,018	0.8	2,018
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>8,693,701</b>	<b>6,698,312</b>	<b>4,599.2</b>	<b>15,392,013</b>