

Africa

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I. OPERATIONS

Africa

In 1971 the ICRC carried out most of its activities in Africa through its regional delegations in Yaoundé and Addis Ababa, covering West and East Africa respectively. Matters relating to North Africa, South Africa and the Portuguese territories in Africa were dealt with direct by Geneva headquarters.

The ICRC President, Mr. Marcel A. Naville, accompanied by the Delegate-General for Africa, Mr. Georg Hoffmann, spent from 17 July to 8 August visiting Ethiopia, Kenya, Senegal and Cameroon. They contacted government authorities and the leaders of the National Red Cross Societies of those countries¹ and visited the two regional delegations a year after their establishment.

In January, Mr. Hoffmann, accompanied by Mr. Payot, a delegate, spent some time in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. He took the opportunity of explaining to the Mauritanian authorities, and in particular to Mr. Moktar Ould Daddah, President of the Republic, the structures, activities and aims of the International Red Cross and of proposing the creation of a National Red Crescent Society. He also touched on the matter of spreading knowledge of humanitarian principles among the armed forces and the younger generation.

WEST AFRICA

ACTIVITIES OF THE ICRC REGIONAL DELEGATION IN WEST AFRICA

The ICRC Regional Delegates in West Africa, Mr. André Tschiffeli and Mr. Ulrich Bédert, continued to develop their contacts with governments and recognized or emerging Red Cross Societies in West Africa. This took them on frequent visits to eighteen countries: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, People's Republic of the Congo, Dahomey, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Upper Volta

¹ See page 89 of this Report.

and the Republic of Zaire. In all of these countries, the delegates did all they could to encourage the dissemination of knowledge of the four Geneva Conventions and Red Cross principles among the armed forces and the young. They collaborated closely with the National Societies in nine of these countries (Cameroon, Dahomey, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone, Togo, Upper Volta) in organizing lecture tours on the ICRC and the Red Cross movement.

Of the many contacts made by the ICRC delegates, the following are worthy of special mention.

People's Republic of the Congo

The ICRC delegates followed up the action which they took in 1970 regarding the fate of three Portuguese military prisoners interned in a camp in Djoué after their plane had been diverted to Brazzaville in 1969. A second Portuguese plane had been diverted to Pointe-Noire in June 1971 and, here again, the delegates took steps to help the pilot who had been interned at the Commissariat at Pointe-Noire.

These missions took the delegates to Brazzaville on several occasions and they obtained permission from the Congolese authorities to visit the three Portuguese military prisoners at Djoué in May, July and September, and the Portuguese civilian pilot at Pointe-Noire in July. On each occasion the delegates handed the prisoners various relief supplies.

The delegates tried, during their talks with the Congolese authorities, to arrange for the repatriation of these prisoners and they prepared a plan for an exchange of the four Portuguese prisoners in Congolese hands with five Congolese prisoners in Portuguese hands.

On 26 October, this exchange at last took place on the border between the People's Republic of the Congo and the Portuguese enclave of Cabinda where it was directly transacted by the Congolese and Portuguese police.

Equatorial Guinea

Mr. Tschiffeli spent from 10 to 17 January in Equatorial Guinea acting on behalf of the Spanish, Portuguese and West German Gov-

ernments some of whose nationals had been arrested in that country. He was permitted to visit two Portuguese nationals detained in the San Carlos " Comandancia militar ".

Republic of Zaire

Prison visits : The ICRC delegates went on several missions to Kinshasa where, after making contact with the Zaire authorities and the Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (RGAE), they visited nine Portuguese military prisoners interned at Kinkuzu Camp. They gave relief supplies to these prisoners whom they had been able to see twice in 1970.

As usual, reports on all of these visits were submitted to the ICRC which passed them on to the detaining authorities.

EAST AFRICA

ACTIVITIES OF THE ICRC REGIONAL DELEGATION IN EAST AFRICA

Like their colleagues in West Africa, the regional delegates for East Africa, Mr. Roger Santschy and Mr. René Weber, tried to make better contact with the Governments and National Societies of East Africa.

From Ethiopia, they visited fourteen countries : Botswana, Burundi, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. In all of these countries they drew attention to the role of the ICRC and the importance of spreading knowledge of the Geneva Conventions among the armed forces and young people.

They were also successful in the following activities.

Burundi

Visits to political detainees : The delegates made two series of visits to political detainees in Burundi, from 26 to 28 May and from 9 to 11 December. They were able to speak to the detainees without witnesses and they handed them relief supplies. As usual, the ICRC sent the reports of their visits to the detaining authorities.

Kenya

Repatriation operation : After obtaining the agreement of the Portuguese Government, at the request of the persons concerned, and with the help of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the ICRC organized the repatriation to Mozambique of sixteen Portuguese nationals who had taken refuge in Kenya. Mr. Weber made a preliminary trip to Nairobi on 8 November to organize the journey. The repatriation actually took place on 21 November when the ICRC delegate accompanied the sixteen Portuguese nationals from Nairobi to Beira (Mozambique) by air.

Lesotho

Visit to political detainees : From 13 to 18 September, Mr. Santschy went to see government authorities and the Red Cross in Lesotho and visited Maseru prison where he interviewed a number of political detainees in private and handed them relief supplies. This was the third such visit ; the previous two had been made in 1970.

Uganda and Tanzania

The border events that had taken place between these two countries in August moved the Government of Uganda to request the good offices of the ICRC. On 28 August, Mr. Santschy left Addis Ababa for Uganda where he made contact with the government authorities and the National Red Cross Society. On 31 August, Mr. Weber arrived in Dar-es-Salaam where he immediately got in touch with the Tanzanian authorities and Red Cross. They left the respective capitals on 9 September, having done all in their power as neutral intermediaries between the two countries.

Rwanda

Visits to political detainees : The delegates visited Ruhengeri prison in Rwanda on 23 April and 15 December. As usual, reports on these visits were submitted by the ICRC to the detaining authorities.

Sudan

Assistance to displaced persons in the three southern provinces and to other needy civilians : In 1970, the ICRC sent Sudan 10 tons of powdered milk, a gift from the Swiss Government, and 500 tons of cereals made available by the European Economic Community (EEC). A further gift of 306 tons of flour from the EEC was sent in August 1971 and arrived at Port Sudan in mid-October.

Mr. Weber paid four extended visits to Sudan in January-February, April, June-July and November, in order to prepare a schedule for the distribution of this food. These visits took him to the " Red Sea Hills " region, Tokar and the Baraka Delta, where famine was rife, and to Wau, Malakal and Juba, the capitals of the three southern provinces of Bhar-El-Ghazal, Upper Nile and Equatoria. It was decided to send the food for displaced persons in the three southern provinces, in view of the unrest in that area, to the refugees in the " Red Sea Hills " region, at Tokar and on the Baraka Delta, and to the needy communities in Khartoum, North-Khartoum and Omdurman.

Zambia

Prison visit : In September, the South African Government asked the ICRC to take steps to help a South African interned in Zambia. Mr. Weber went to Lusaka where the Zambian authorities gave him permission to visit the person in question.

The ICRC similarly approached the Zambian and Tanzanian authorities and Red Crosses, at the request of the Portuguese Red Cross, in order to help Portuguese nationals captured by independence movements in Portuguese African territories and presumed to have been detained in these two countries. The delegates made several visits to Lusaka to agree, with the government authorities and the National Society, some procedure for the repatriation as soon as possible of Portuguese nationals detained in Zambia.

SOUTHERN AFRICA AND PORTUGUESE AFRICAN TERRITORIES

Portuguese territories in Africa

The ICRC Delegate-General for Africa went to Lisbon in June and November. He contacted the National Society and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where he discussed the problem of political detainees arrested by the General Directorate of Security Police and of combatants detained by the Portuguese armed forces in Portuguese territories in Africa.

Mozambique : Mr. Zuger, a delegate, and an ICRC doctor-delegate were introduced to the Portuguese authorities in Lourenço Marques by Mr. Hoffmann. They then visited ten places of detention from 11 to 30 April.

Island of Santiago do Cabo Verde : From 19 to 28 November, ICRC delegates visited political detainees held on the island of Santiago do Cabo Verde. They were completely free to confer privately with any detainee they chose. As usual the reports on these visits were submitted to the Detaining Power by the ICRC.

Rhodesia

Visits to political detainees : As agreed with the authorities in Salisbury in November 1970, Mr. Hoffmann accompanied by a doctor-delegate, made two series of visits to political prisoners detained under the emergency regulations in Rhodesia, from 27 March to 7 April and from 2 to 12 October 1971. He was able to speak to the detainees without witnesses and hand them various supplies.

South Africa

The Delegate-General for Africa visited the South African Red Cross from 21 to 28 September when he had the opportunity of attending the annual meeting of the National Society in East London, comprising the Presidents of the eight Regional Societies of South Africa. He also saw the work of the Red Cross in the Transkei.

Visit to detainees : From 1 to 18 November, an ICRC delegate visited prisoners who had been found guilty of offences of a political

nature. He was able to interview prisoners of his choice in private. As usual, the reports on these visits were submitted to the Detaining Power by the ICRC.

Latin America

In 1971, there were two outstanding events in Latin America : the opening of a permanent ICRC delegation in Caracas, in August, and the launching of a long-term operation in Bolivia, again in August.

In accordance with the wish expressed by a number of Red Cross Societies in Latin America, in February the ICRC decided to establish a permanent regional delegation in that part of the world. Caracas was chosen as the delegation headquarters for practical and financial reasons, and the official inauguration took place on 19 August, in the presence of Government representatives, Venezuelan Red Cross leaders, Mr. Serge Nessi, ICRC Delegate-General for Latin America, and the two new Regional Delegates. Mr. Nessi had already introduced Mr. Eddi Leemann, Regional Delegate for Central America and the Caribbean, and Mr. Jacques Moreillon, Regional Delegate for South America, to H.E. Dr. Rafael Caldera, President of the Republic, and to various Ministers.

From 19 March to 24 May, Mr. Leemann carried out a mission to Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama and Venezuela.

Mr. Nessi went to Brazil, Argentina and Chile, in June and July. With Mr. Moreillon, who joined him on 29 July, he proceeded to Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, where he introduced the new Regional Delegate to the government authorities and National Society leaders. On his way back to Caracas, Mr. Nessi made a stop-over in Trinidad and Tobago.

On 27 August, shortly after the official inauguration of the ICRC delegation in Caracas, Mr. Moreillon again went on a mission to Bolivia following the events which had occurred in that country. He was joined by Mr. Robert Gaillard-Moret, a delegate, on 30 August. To ensure that detainees received effective medical assistance, the ICRC sent out a doctor-delegate in October. On 17 October, Mr. Moreillon left Bolivia for Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, returning to Caracas on 23 December.