

Backgrounder

CANADIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ICRC

Canada has always responded generously to special appeals for humanitarian aid launched by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Over the past five years, Canada's contributions have totalled almost \$93 million, reaching a peak of over \$32 million during the 1992-93 fiscal year. Canada also contributes to the headquarters costs of the ICRC in Geneva. In 1993, Canada provided \$1.5 million.

Most of the Canadian contribution is supplied by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The funds are used to finance the ICRC's activities in the developing countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. In addition, over the past three years, the Central and Eastern Europe Bureau of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has made contributions to ICRC programs and special appeals in Europe.

During the fiscal year ending March 31, 1994, CIDA contributed over \$11 million to ICRC appeals. Of this amount, nearly \$4 million went to Asia, in particular to finance protection and tracing operations and provide emergency aid and medical care in Afghanistan; to establish blood banks, provide medical care and emergency aid, and reunite families dispersed by the Cambodian conflict; to visit and provide medical and material assistance to detainees and set up a public health program in East Timor; and, to support the emergency assistance program in Sri Lanka.

The countries of Africa were the second-largest beneficiaries of our contribution to the ICRC last year, receiving nearly \$3 million. Among ICRC activities supported by Canada were the medical and humanitarian assistance program in Burundi; the visiting of detainees and prisoners, and the provision of medicine, health care and emergency aid to victims of the conflict in Liberia; the provision of emergency food aid to Somalia; the protection of civilians, tracing of missing persons, dissemination of information and provision of medical and humanitarian assistance in Sudan; and, in Zaire, visits to detention centres, provision of emergency aid, and establishment of facilities for sanitation and for observing the situation of persons displaced by the conflict.

Contributions for the Middle East totalled \$1.8 million in 1993-94. Of this, \$300 000 was devoted to the program of protection and medical assistance for the victims of the Lebanese conflict. The remainder of Canada's contribution was used to support the ICRC program to protect civilian populations in the