

"A well recognized institution"

Jean-Luc Blondel, Director of the International Tracing Service (ITS), Bad Arolsen

When the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was entrusted with the management and the administration of the International Tracing Service all parties concerned were then considering a five year responsibility. It was in 1955. Fifty-seven years later, the ITS is still active. Even more, it is a well recognized institution whose mandate was recently confirmed and extended by the International Commission for the ITS.



COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL
DE LA
CROIX-ROUGE

Genève,
No 16.7'

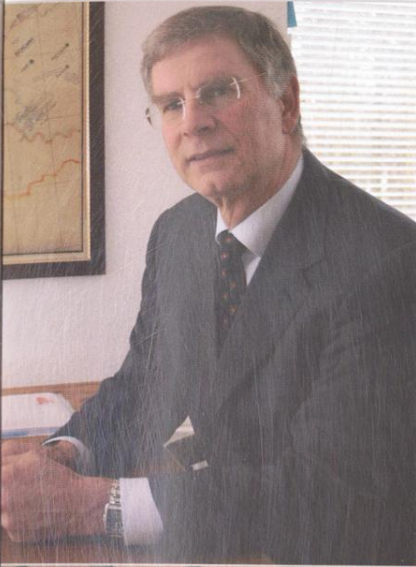
leur l'Ambassadeur,

En l'absence
ident du Comité international
s l'honneur d'accuser réception
avez bien voulu transmettre
texte définitif du Règlement
nationale pour le S.I.R.

Handwritten text in German:
Ausdrucks des Herrn Bundespräsidenten
aus Anlaß der Unterzeichnung
Vereinbarungen über den
Suchdienst.
Exzellenz,
Ich darf meiner aufrichtigen
Ausdruck verleihen, daß es in freudiger
Zusammenarbeit gelungen ist, die mit
der Arbeiten des Internationalen Such-
diensten Fragen in einer für alle Be-
denstellenden Weise zu lösen. Die Unter-
Internationalen Suchdienstes geben Aus-
leidvolle und schmerzliche Vergangenheit
uns, stets der Opfer dieser unheilvollen
ken. Wir wissen, daß sich in Deutschland
Reihe von anderen Ländern eine große Zahl
schmerzlich an das ihnen und ihren Angehörigen
Leid erinnern und die Tätigkeit des Intern-
Suchdienstes mit regem Interesse verfolgen.
der Verwaltung des Internationalen Suchdienstes
Internationalen Komitee...

This evolution is indeed no surprise. Although reduced in comparison with the first years the task of tracing people remains, as the name of the institution clearly indicates. While adding new tasks to the initial mandate of the ITS, the International Commission has maintained the central concern of the ITS: the civil victims of the national socialist regime.

The search for missing persons, subsequent family reunification, the clarification of fates, the historical research and the preparation of educational materials referring to the persons who had suffered under this regime are all complementary aspects of this sole concern.



Jean-Luc Blondel,
Director of the ITS and
ICRC delegate.

Picture to the left: Letter of the ICRC accepting the management of the ITS and speech by Adenauer on the occasion of the signing ceremony of the Bonn treaties in 1955.



As it withdraws from the direction of the International Tracing Service, the ICRC thus leaves an institution offering many services to the survivors of the Second World War and their families, the research community, educational institutions and – more generally – to all interested publics.

This brochure presents the reflections of the personalities speaking at the farewell ceremony of 29 November 2012 and simultaneously offers a broader view on the main activities of the ITS as they have developed over the years and will continue in the near future under a new leadership.