



## PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

4 FEBRUARY 1986

The Prime Minister today officially handed over to the International Committee of the Red Cross the first of the Hercules aircraft the Government has offered to provide for the airlift of food supplies to famine areas in Africa.

The International Committee of the Red Cross will use the aircraft for its relief operations in Africa for a 12 month period commencing 1 March 1986.

The Hercules C130A was handed over at Richmond RAAF Base, near Sydney, to the Assistant Secretary-General of the Australian Red Cross Society, Mr Alan McLean, representing the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The ICRC has demonstrated a capacity for effective distribution of humanitarian aid in Ethiopia and elsewhere in Africa.

The aircraft is scheduled to leave Richmond tomorrow for Bordeaux, France, for further mechanical refurbishment before it commences operations in Ethiopia in March.

The Government offered to provide two C130A aircraft for famine relief work in Africa following a request by Bob Geldof, of Live Aid, and to meet the costs of making the aircraft flightworthy and ferrying them to Africa. This was initially estimated to cost between \$1.1 million and \$1.7 million.