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International Law, Communication & the Movement

*Preparing for the future:
teaching humanitarian values from an early age.*



IMPLEMENTATION OF AND RESPECT FOR THE LAW

Through its humanitarian work, the ICRC endeavours to provide protection and assistance for victims of armed conflict. Its role is also "to work for the faithful application of international humanitarian law" and "to prepare any development thereof".¹

The ICRC constantly strives to ensure that belligerents respect their humanitarian commitments. Whenever the situation warrants, the organization may also appeal to all the members of the international community to urge the warring parties to meet their obligations.

By the same token, the ICRC keeps a close watch not only on methods and means of warfare in order to assess their consequences in humanitarian terms, but also on any other developments that have a bearing on international humanitarian law, so as to prepare for the adoption, whenever necessary, of new rules of that law. Its role consists in gathering relevant information, organizing consultations with experts, and monitoring and fostering debate on the evolution of humanitarian issues. In so doing, it relies mainly on its observations in the field.

ADVISORY SERVICE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

Ensuring greater respect for humanitarian law

In order to strengthen respect for international humanitarian law, in 1996 the ICRC set up a unit in charge of providing national authorities with assistance in acceding to relevant treaties and implementing that branch of law within their domestic legal systems. Called the Advisory Service on International Humanitarian Law, the unit helps carry out the major and urgent task of promoting respect for humanitarian law and its implementation at national level. To that end, it works in close cooperation with governments, the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, international organizations and specialized agencies.

Meetings on humanitarian law

In 2000 the Advisory Service organized several workshops, discussion groups and seminars, at both national and regional level, to promote as extensive a debate as possible on subjects relating to the national implementation of humanitarian law. It also took part in other relevant seminars and meetings. These gatherings brought together representatives of various ministries, parliamentarians, members of the armed forces and civil defence bodies, and representatives of university circles and other interested groups. Often held under government auspices, the meetings were generally organized in close cooperation with the National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in the host country. They provided an opportunity to present the activities in this sphere that had been carried out in other regions. National meetings took place notably in the following countries: Argentina (September), Cameroon (March), Croatia (June), Egypt (November), El Salvador (October), Guatemala (August and October), Honduras (September), Kazakhstan (April), Kenya (November), Lithuania (April), Malawi (August), Mexico (August), Nigeria (June), Panama (March and September), Senegal (May) and Zimbabwe (September). Regional meetings were also held in India (November) and in the Russian Federation, Spain and Trinidad and Tobago (all in May). Moreover, humanitarian law and its implementation at national level were the subject of several courses and lectures. Regional courses, designed for officials from the CIS,* were organized chiefly in Moscow (June, October and November).

¹ Article 5.2 (c) and (g) of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

* CIS: Commonwealth of Independent States

Cooperation with other organizations

The better to meet its goals, the Advisory Service cooperates with various organizations that have an interest in the implementation of international humanitarian law at country level, whether in general or in relation to particular aspects thereof. During the year it made contact with ECOWAS,* with a view to holding a regional seminar on weapons and mines in 2001, and with the League of Arab States, to prepare a regional round table on implementation. The Advisory Service worked with the OAS,* in particular its Technical Cooperation Department, on the convening of an inter-American meeting of government experts on humanitarian law early in 2001. The ICRC also presented the issue of implementation of humanitarian law at two meetings held by the OSCE.* Contact was maintained with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Latin American Parliament, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the Council of Europe, and with UNESCO,* in particular in connection with the meeting of experts on cultural property held in October 2000 (see below). Exchanges took place with the CIS and its Inter-Parliamentary Assembly on the subject of model laws for the implementation of humanitarian law. Finally, representatives of the Advisory Service took part in several conferences and seminars devoted to the Rome Statute of the ICC* and its implementation.

Advice on national legislation

In order to ensure that international humanitarian law is fully respected, it is of paramount importance that States adopt domestic legislation to implement the rules of this law, in particular to repress war crimes and to protect and regulate the use of the emblems of the red cross and red crescent and the other signs and signals provided for by humanitarian law. The Advisory Service therefore gives technical assistance and advice on the drafting, adoption and amendment of such legislation. In 2000, it did so in the following countries: Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Moldova, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Panama, Paraguay, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Analysis of legislation and case law

The Advisory Service collects and analyses all information relating to new national legislation and case law. In 2000 it noted, in particular, the following developments: Belarus, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan and Lithuania adopted laws to protect the emblem; Albania, Honduras, Nicaragua and Zimbabwe took measures to implement the Ottawa treaty on anti-personnel mines; Canada adopted legislation implementing the Rome Statute of the ICC and Colombia carried out a reform of its criminal law, taking account of issues linked to international humanitarian law.

Protection of cultural property

A meeting on the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict brought together some 40 experts in Geneva on 5 and 6 October. These included officials from the ministries concerned, high-ranking military personnel, teachers, and representatives of cultural circles. Together with staff from the Advisory Service, the participants discussed practical guidelines for implementing the rules to protect cultural property at national level. The aims of the meeting were to raise awareness of the need to apply the relevant provisions of humanitarian law, to examine and assess the techniques already in use for protecting cultural property in various countries, to highlight the problems associated with the issue and to encourage the development, at national level, of legislative and other mechanisms for ensuring better protection of and greater respect for cultural property in the event of armed conflict.

* ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States
* OAS: Organization of American States
* OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
* UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
* ICC: International Criminal Court

IMPLEMENTATION OF AND RESPECT FOR THE LAW

National committees

The national committees responsible for the implementation of international humanitarian law include representatives of the various ministries concerned and national authorities appointed for this purpose. They constitute an effective way of promoting respect for this branch of law in the countries in which they exist. New national committees were set up in 2000 in Croatia, Egypt, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Sri Lanka, Ukraine and Yemen,² bringing the total number of operational committees to 60. Other countries, such as Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Nepal and Poland, also envisage setting up such bodies. Regional meetings of national committees were held in the Russian Federation (January and February) and Mali (March) to facilitate an exchange of views on the roles, powers, working methods and activities of the committees and to discuss current issues in the sphere of humanitarian law. Bilateral contacts between national committees were also encouraged. In addition, many contacts were made between the staff of the Advisory Service and representatives of the various national authorities in order to support the latter in their work.

Publications

Besides reports on certain national and regional meetings, in 2000 the Advisory Service published its fourth annual report.³ This report, which will be published every two years from now on, has a new format and puts greater emphasis on what has been achieved in selected States in terms of the national implementation of humanitarian law. The Advisory Service has added to the store of resources in this field by producing new fact sheets on the various aspects of

implementation. It continues to expand and update its database, which can be accessed through the ICRC's Website and which contains examples of national legislation and case law relating to the implementation of humanitarian law.

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Promoting ratification

The Statute of the ICC, adopted on 17 July 1998 in Rome, provides for the establishment of a permanent international criminal tribunal to prosecute persons accused of having committed war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. The Statute will enter into force once it has been ratified by 60 States. On 31 December 2000, it had been signed by 139 and ratified by 27 States. The ICRC has consistently expressed its support for a fair and effective international criminal tribunal and, to that end, promotes ratification of the Rome Statute.

Work of the Preparatory Commission

In 2000 a Preparatory Commission drafted the ICC's Rules of Procedure and Evidence and a document entitled "Elements of Crimes", designed to facilitate application of the Statute. With a view to ensuring that existing international humanitarian law was properly reflected in these instruments, the ICRC prepared an extensive study on international and national case law relating to the elements of war crimes. Substantial account was taken of the study, submitted by a group of seven States, in the Preparatory Commission's final draft.

Right to non-disclosure in judicial proceedings

In a 1999 decision, the ICTY* held that the ICRC enjoyed a right under customary international law to maintain the confidentiality of information relating to its work and could therefore not be compelled to disclose such information in judicial proceedings. The ICTY stressed that confidentiality was essential to the ICRC in discharging its mandate to protect the victims of armed conflict. On the basis of this decision, the ICRC successfully argued that its right to confidentiality should be reflected in the ICC's Rules of Procedure and Evidence.

Need for national implementation

The ICC will merely complement, not replace national jurisdiction – its power is limited to bringing cases only when the legal systems of States are either unable or unwilling to do so. States will, therefore, continue to have a duty to exercise their domestic criminal jurisdiction over persons alleged to have committed crimes covered by the Rome Statute. To fulfil this duty, States must enact national legislation and, if necessary, amend their constitutions to implement the terms of the Rome Statute. Through the Advisory Service, the ICRC provides States with technical assistance on the adoption and implementation of the required national legislation.

² In Guatemala and Yemen, the committees were actually set up at the end of December 1999.

³ *National Implementation of International Humanitarian Law, 1999 Annual Report*, Advisory Service, ICRC, Geneva, 2000, 79 pages.

* ICTY: International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

STRENGTHENING AND DEVELOPING THE LAW

Study on customary rules of international humanitarian law

The ICRC pursued the study on customary rules of international humanitarian law which the 26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (1995) had invited it to carry out. The final report, scheduled for 2001, will consist of two volumes entitled, respectively, "Rules" and "Practice". The first volume will contain a list of rules found to be customary, with a short commentary on why they are defined as such and practical examples illustrating the scope of application and interpretation of the rules in question. The report will also discuss trends wherever practice remains uncertain. The volume on rules was drafted in 2000 and submitted to inside and outside readers. The second volume will deal with the practice of international humanitarian law as observed during the four years of research and will be presented in eight parts: the principle of distinction, specific protection regimes, methods of warfare, weapons, the treatment of civilians and persons *hors de combat*, individual responsibility, implementation, and remedies and enforcement. This volume was edited and updated during the year so as to reflect practice until December 2000.

Protection of displaced persons

International humanitarian law provides extensive protection for civilians against arbitrary displacement during armed conflicts. By promoting faithful implementation of the law, especially by reminding parties to conflicts of their obligation to spare the civilian population from the effects of hostilities, and by providing material assistance, the ICRC helps to ensure a safe environment and

the basic means of subsistence, both of which are essential to prevent displacement in the first place.

In 2000, the ICRC continued to participate in inter-agency discussions on how the protection and assistance needs of uprooted populations could best be met, both at policy level and in specific conflicts. It also pursued its dialogue with other international organizations, in particular with UNHCR,* in order to better coordinate activities.

International humanitarian law and human rights law

International human rights law is a rapidly evolving body of rules which, like international humanitarian law, aims to protect the life, health and dignity of individuals or groups of people. In 2000, as in previous years, the ICRC strove to explain the points of convergence of these bodies of law and their dissimilarities in order to ensure the fullest possible protection of persons in need. In pursuance of this goal, the ICRC took an active part in the 2000 sessions of the United Nations (UN) Commission on Human Rights and its Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, and worked with some of the treaty bodies and Special Rapporteurs on issues of common concern. In particular, the ICRC contributed actively to the drafting of an Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture, to the finalization of basic principles and guidelines on the right to a remedy and reparation for victims of violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law, and to preliminary discussions on the drafting of an international treaty on enforced disappearances.

The ICRC also played an active role in the debate on fundamental standards of humanity that went on within the UN Commission on Human Rights. Pursuant to the relevant Commission resolution,

* UNHCR: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

the ICRC took part in informal consultations on this issue organized in 2000 in Stockholm and Geneva and provided comments on the report being prepared for the 2001 Commission session. Similarly, the ICRC worked with the Commission's newly appointed Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food with the aim of assisting him in defining the legal parameters of his mandate so as to include international humanitarian law. The ICRC also took part in debates on the right to adequate food and housing, and continued working with bodies and agencies within the UN system on issues that had a bearing on humanitarian action. An ongoing project was the ICRC's involvement with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Humanitarian Action and Human Rights, which was preparing a comprehensive "best practices" manual.

During the year, the ICRC devoted considerable time and effort to preparations for the Third World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance scheduled to take place in 2001 in South Africa. The aim of the ICRC's effort was to remind governments and others concerned that non-discrimination was not only a basic tenet of human rights law but also one of international humanitarian law. Through participation in regional preparatory meetings for the World Conference (Strasbourg and Santiago de Chile) and in a regional seminar of experts on ethnic and racial conflicts in Africa (Addis Ababa), the ICRC attempted to ensure that the documents adopted at these meetings acknowledged discrimination as both a cause and a consequence of armed conflicts and that they called on States to implement their obligations under international humanitarian law.

IMPLEMENTATION OF AND RESPECT FOR THE LAW

REGULATIONS ON WEAPONS

Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines

The ban on anti-personnel landmines continued to gain ever wider acceptance as a basic norm of humanitarian law. By the end of 2000, a total of 109 countries had formally ratified the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines (Ottawa treaty) and many States were making important strides in eliminating stockpiles of these weapons. By the end of the year 21 States Parties had announced the total destruction of their reserves of anti-personnel mines and another 24 were in the process of eliminating them. In another significant development, 17 States passed national laws prohibiting these weapons and criminalizing violations of the ban on their use.

In addition to attending the annual meeting of States party to the Ottawa treaty, which took place in Geneva in September, and numerous meetings of the intersessional Standing Committees working to facilitate the instrument's implementation, the ICRC continued to promote ratification of the treaty by States. On the first anniversary of the treaty's entry into force, in March, the President of the ICRC wrote to signatory States and other non-parties to the treaty, encouraging their adherence at the earliest opportunity. In June the ICRC highlighted the importance of the Convention during a seminar it organized in Abuja, Nigeria, on weapons and international humanitarian law for government and military officials, parliamentarians and prominent members of Nigerian civil society. The meeting was intended to facilitate understanding of the treaty and the global problem of anti-personnel mines while stressing the regional significance of Nigerian ratification.

ICRC representatives also took part in major regional meetings on the landmines issue held by governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Minsk (Belarus), Cairo (Egypt), Ljubljana (Slovenia) and Djibouti. In addition to providing expertise, the ICRC made available documentation, videos and in several cases its travelling exhibitions on the Ottawa treaty.

1980 Conventional Weapons Convention

At the end of 2000 a total of 84 States were party to the 1980 CCW,* which regulates the use of certain weapons deemed to cause unnecessary suffering or to have indiscriminate effects, with the following nine States having adhered during the year: Bangladesh, Colombia, El Salvador, Estonia, Lesotho, the Maldives, Moldova, Nicaragua and the Seychelles. Regarding the three original protocols, at year's end 83 States Parties had ratified Protocol I (non-detectable fragments), 76 Protocol II (mines, booby-traps and other devices) and 80 Protocol III (incendiary weapons). As for the two protocols adopted at the 1996 Review Conference, an additional 11 States ratified Protocol IV (blinding laser weapons) in 2000, bringing the total number to 56, and 12 States ratified amended Protocol II (mines, booby-traps and other devices), increasing the overall number to 58. Throughout the year, ICRC delegations and National Societies encouraged States to ratify and implement the CCW and its Protocols.

New protocols

Preparations began in 2000 for the second Review Conference of the CCW, which was scheduled to take place in December 2001. The ICRC proposed that States Parties consider adopting a new protocol to extend the CCW's scope of application. Currently, the treaty's Protocols, with the exception of Protocol II as amended in 1996, apply only in international armed conflicts. As most armed conflicts now occur within the borders of a single State, the ICRC considers it essential that the rules of the CCW be extended to non-international armed conflicts. This would constitute an important development of international humanitarian law and ensure better protection for both civilians and combatants.

The ICRC also proposed that States Parties consider the adoption of a new protocol on "explosive remnants of war". This protocol would seek to limit the death, injury and suffering caused by a variety of unexploded munitions. While the international community has taken important steps to eradicate anti-personnel mines, along with their tragic human and socio-economic consequences, little has been done to reduce the problems caused by anti-vehicle mines, cluster bomb submunitions and other types of unexploded ordnance. The ICRC's proposal would require States to clear or ensure the clearance of unexploded munitions, to provide technical information to clearance organizations and thus facilitate the removal of mines and unexploded ordnance, and to provide warnings for civilians who could be affected by these devices. The ICRC also proposed a prohibition on the use of submunitions against military objectives located in populated areas since such devices could strike civilians or fail to detonate and remain hazardous to civilians.

* CCW: United Nations Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects

These proposals were first introduced at an ICRC meeting of experts convened in Nyon, Switzerland, on 18 and 19 September, which was attended by 100 government and military experts and representatives from international organizations and mine-clearance agencies. The proposals were later formally presented at the first Preparatory Committee meeting of the CCW Review Conference, which was convened in Geneva on 14 December. On that occasion, some 35 governments declared themselves in favour of placing the issue of "remnants of war" on the agenda of the April 2001 Preparatory Committee meeting for substantial debate, with a view to achieving a mandate for negotiations on the subject at the Review Conference of the CCW in December 2001.

Arms availability

The ICRC followed up its 1999 study entitled *Arms Availability and the Situation of Civilians in Armed Conflict* and commitments made by States and National Societies at the 1999 Council of Delegates and the 27th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent by drawing attention to the impact in humanitarian terms of the unregulated proliferation of small arms in a wide variety of national, regional and global meetings on the subject. Its work focused, in particular, on discussions with governments and assistance to National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in addressing the humanitarian aspects of the issue in their own countries.

The 1999 ICRC study shows that the unregulated transfer of weapons and ammunition can increase tension, heighten the number of civilian casualties and prolong conflicts. One of the central conclusions is that the current pattern of transfers of small arms, light weapons and related ammunition, which falls largely outside international control, has grave implications in terms of respect for international humanitarian law and for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable groups.

Humanitarian law considerations

While the primary responsibility for compliance with international humanitarian law falls upon users of weapons, States and firms engaged in production and export bear a degree of political, moral and, in some cases, legal responsibility towards the international community for the use made of their weapons and ammunition. The ICRC focuses its efforts on ensuring that likely respect for humanitarian law by prospective arms recipients is taken into account in national policies and regional and international norms governing arms transfers.

During the year, ICRC specialists and field delegates took part in some 30 national and regional meetings and conferences on small arms issues, and gatherings held in advance of the 2001 UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons In All Its Aspects. The ICRC also approached senior government officials, urging them to recognize that humanitarian law considerations should be an important component of any limitations on arms availability and encouraging them to promote the destruction, rather than the transfer, of excess arms stocks.

As a result of ICRC efforts, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Organization of African Unity incorporated, in November, references to the importance of respect for international humanitarian law in regional agreements and action plans aimed at regulating the transfer and availability of small arms and light weapons. The ICRC will seek to ensure that similar commitments are part of any norms to be adopted by the UN Conference on Small Arms.

The arms availability issue was also on the agenda of numerous meetings and workshops for National Societies. In particular, it was the principal subject of a regional meeting organized in Sofia, Bulgaria, by the Norwegian and Bulgarian National Societies. To support this work the ICRC developed, in cooperation with the National Societies and their International Federation, guidelines for National Society activities on arms availability and small arms. It also put out a number of publications on arms availability for use by National Societies and ICRC delegations.

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Reviewing the legality of new weapons and the SlrUS Project

The SlrUS project, now endorsed by over 15 national medical associations, aims to identify and quantify the types of injuries and suffering resulting from the use of weapons during armed conflicts. The ICRC has proposed that the data gathered by the project be used to determine the legality of certain weapons under international humanitarian law by establishing which ones may cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering (SlrUS). The ICRC considers that the information provided by the SlrUS project could be used as a tool by States in fulfilling their obligation to assess the legality of weapons (Article 36 of 1977 Additional Protocol I). Its value is that it provides objective medical information on the nature of injuries which have most often been sustained in conflicts over the past few decades and suggests that this information be taken into account when evaluating the effects of weapons under development. It does not attempt to define superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering.

In its Plan of Action, the 27th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent encouraged States which had not yet done so to establish mechanisms, in accordance with Article 36 of 1977 Additional Protocol I, to determine whether the use of a proposed new weapon was consistent with the requirements of international humanitarian law. It also supported consultations between the ICRC and States on how the medically based approach contained in the SlrUS project might be used in weapons review processes.

During the year the ICRC began a series of consultations with States, requesting written comments on the SlrUS project and any additional data on the nature of injuries sustained in armed conflict that States might have or be aware of. These consultations were to culminate in a meeting of experts on "legal reviews of weapons and the SlrUS project" to be held near Montreux, Switzerland, from 29 to 31 January 2001. The aim of the meeting was to examine national mechanisms currently being used to review the legality of weapons, to consider means of promoting transparency in the conduct of such reviews, and to discuss how medical data on the nature of injury from weapons currently in use might be incorporated into weapons reviews.

Other weapons

The ICRC continued to be active in monitoring developments regarding new weapons and problems posed by existing weapons in the light of humanitarian law. In 2000 it pursued its efforts aimed at ensuring respect for, in particular, the 1868 St Petersburg Declaration, which established the principle that weapons which inflict more suffering than is required to take a soldier out of action are contrary to the laws of humanity and on this basis specifically prohibited exploding bullets. During the year the ICRC strove to ensure that certain bullets capable of exploding on impact with a human body would be examined by the States concerned, that the design of such bullets would be altered and that problems caused by the proliferation of such bullets would be addressed. The ICRC expects to report on this problem and seek appropriate action during the 2001 Review Conference of the 1980 CCW.

The ICRC also kept a close watch on the possible health effects of so-called "non-lethal" weapons, specifically those related to certain directed-energy devices. It stressed the need for a careful review of all new weapons in relation to the requirements of humanitarian law, regardless of whether they were described as "lethal" or "non-lethal". The ICRC presented its concerns about the concept and implications of "non-lethal weapons" to a number of international technical meetings on the subject.

Identification of medical transports

In 2000 the ICRC continued its efforts to improve the identification of medical transports in times of armed conflict. It took part in several meetings of experts held by specialized international organizations such as IMO* and ITU.* In addition, these organizations drew up guidelines and adopted recommendations that will make it possible to equip hospital ships with a new automatic identification system in 2002.

* IMO: International Maritime Organization
* ITU: International Telecommunication Union

LEGAL STATUS AND HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENTS

The ICRC is traditionally described as the promoter and guardian of international humanitarian law, under which it enjoys a unique status. Its mandate and recognized role as a neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian organization are enshrined in various humanitarian law instruments and in the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. To some extent, the status enjoyed by the organization and its staff under international law is also derived from practice.

In order to facilitate its efforts to bring protection and assistance to victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence, the ICRC has concluded headquarters agreements with more than 60 States. The purpose of these agreements, which grant the ICRC various privileges and immunities, is to enable the organization and its staff to act independently. In 2000, the ICRC concluded headquarters agreements with Albania and Venezuela.

By drawing attention to the protection of humanitarian norms at the international conference on small arms in 1999, the ICRC has helped to initiate a series of efforts, regional and global meetings on the subject. Its work focused, in particular, on discussions with governments and non-governmental organizations of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in addressing the humanitarian aspects of the issue in their own capacities.

IMPLEMENTATION OF AND RESPECT FOR THE LAW

UNIVERSAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS AND THEIR ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS

In 2000 a total of 189 States were party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. During the year, Eritrea acceded to the Four Geneva Conventions and two States acceded to the two 1977 Protocols additional to the Conventions: Lithuania (13 July) and Monaco (7 January). This brought the number of States party to Additional Protocol I and Additional Protocol II to 157 and 150 respectively.

Article 90 of Additional Protocol I provides for the establishment of an International Fact-Finding Commission to enquire into allegations of serious violations of humanitarian law. In 2000 Lithuania (13 July) filed the declaration recognizing the competence of the Commission, bringing the number of States which had done so to 58.

IMPLEMENTATION OF AND RESPECT FOR THE LAW

This map shows which States were party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and to their 1977 Additional Protocols, as at 31 December 2000. It also indicates which States had made the optional declaration under Article 90 of 1977 Additional Protocol I, recognizing the competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission.

N.B.: The names of the countries given on this map may differ from their official names.

States party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and to their 1977 Additional Protocols, as at 31 December 2000. The ICRC considers Honduras, Costa Rica and Venezuela to be non-party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and to their 1977 Additional Protocols.

	States party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions:	189
	States party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and to 1977 Additional Protocol I:	157
	States party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and to 1977 Additional Protocol II:	150
	States party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and to both Additional Protocols:	148
	States having made the declaration under Article 90 of 1997 Additional Protocol I:	58
	States not party to the Geneva Conventions and Protocols	



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Tables

The following tables show which States were party to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and to the two Additional Protocols of 1977, as at 31 December 2000. They also indicate which States had made the optional declaration under Article 90 of 1977 Protocol I, recognizing the competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission. The names of the countries given in the tables may differ from their official names.

The dates indicated are those on which the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs received the official instrument from the State that was ratifying, acceding to or succeeding to the Conventions and Protocols or accepting the competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission. Apart from the exceptions mentioned in the footnotes at the end of the tables, for all States the Conventions and the Protocols enter into force six months after the date given in the present document; for States making a declaration of succession, entry into force takes place retroactively, on the day of their accession to independence.

Abbreviations

Ratification (R): a treaty is generally open for signature for a certain time following the conference which has adopted it. However, a signature is not binding on a State unless it has been endorsed by ratification. The time limits having elapsed, the Conventions and the Protocols are no longer open for signature. The States which have not signed them may at any time accede or, in the appropriate circumstances, succeed to them.

Accession (A): instead of signing and then ratifying a treaty, a State may become party to it by the single act called accession.

Declaration of Succession (S): a newly independent State may declare that it will abide by a treaty which was applicable to it prior to its independence. A State may also declare that it will provisionally abide by such treaties during the time it deems necessary to examine their texts carefully and to decide on accession or succession to some or all of the said treaties (declaration of provisional application of the treaties). At present no State is bound by such a declaration.

Reservation/Declaration (R/D):

unilateral statement, however phrased or named, made by a State when ratifying, acceding or succeeding to a treaty, whereby it purports to exclude or to modify the legal effect of certain provisions of the treaty in their application to that State (provided that such reservations are not incompatible with the object and purpose of the treaty).

Declaration provided for under Article 90 of Protocol I (D90): prior acceptance of the competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission.

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COUNTRY	GENEVA CONVENTIONS		PROTOCOL I			PROTOCOL II	
	R/A/S	R/D	R/A/S	R/D	D90	R/A/S	R/D
Afghanistan	26.09.1956	R					
Albania	27.05.1957	R	X	16.07.1993	A		16.07.1993
Algeria	20.06.1960 03.07.1962	A		16.08.1989	A	X	16.08.1989
Andorra	17.09.1993	A					
Angola	20.09.1984	A	X	20.09.1984	A	X	
Antigua and Barbuda	06.10.1986	S		06.10.1986	A		06.10.1986
Argentina	18.09.1956	R		26.11.1986	A	X	26.11.1986
Armenia	07.06.1993	A		07.06.1993	A		07.06.1993
Australia	14.10.1958	R	X	21.06.1991	R	X	21.06.1991
Austria	27.08.1953	R		13.08.1982	R	X	13.08.1982
Azerbaijan	01.06.1993	A					
Bahamas	11.07.1975	S		10.04.1980	A		10.04.1980
Bahrain	30.11.1971	A		30.10.1986	A		30.10.1986
Bangladesh	04.04.1972	S		08.09.1980	A		08.09.1980
Barbados	10.09.1968	S	X	19.02.1990	A		19.02.1990
Belarus	03.08.1954	R	X	23.10.1989	R		23.10.1989
Belgium	03.09.1952	R		20.05.1986	R	X	20.05.1986
Belize	29.06.1984	A		29.06.1984	A		29.06.1984
Benin	14.12.1961	S		28.05.1986	A		28.05.1986
Bhutan	10.01.1991	A					
Bolivia	10.12.1976	R		08.12.1983	A		08.12.1983
Bosnia-Herzegovina	31.12.1992	S		31.12.1992	S		31.12.1992
Botswana	29.03.1968	A		23.05.1979	A		23.05.1979
Brazil	29.06.1957	R		05.05.1992	A		05.05.1992
Brunei Darussalam	14.10.1991	A		14.10.1991	A		14.10.1991
Bulgaria	22.07.1954	R		26.09.1989	R		26.09.1989
Burkina Faso	07.11.1961	S		20.10.1987	R		20.10.1987
Burundi	27.12.1971	S		10.06.1993	A		10.06.1993
Cambodia	08.12.1958	A		14.01.1998	A		14.01.1998
Cameroon	16.09.1963	S		16.03.1984	A		16.03.1984
Canada	14.05.1965	R		20.11.1990	R	X	20.11.1990
Cape Verde	11.05.1984	A		16.03.1995	A		16.03.1995
Central African Republic	01.08.1966	S		17.07.1984	A		17.07.1984
Chad	05.08.1970	A		17.01.1997	A		17.01.1997
Chile	12.10.1950	R		24.04.1991	R		24.04.1991
China	28.12.1956	R	X	14.09.1983	A	X	14.09.1983
Colombia	08.11.1961	R		01.09.1993	A		14.08.1995

IMPLEMENTATION OF AND RESPECT FOR THE LAW

COUNTRY	GENEVA CONVENTIONS		PROTOCOL I			PROTOCOL II	
	R/A/S	R/D	R/A/S	R/D	D90	R/A/S	R/D
Comoros	21.11.1985	A	21.11.1985	A		21.11.1985	A
Congo	04.02.1967	S	10.11.1983	A		10.11.1983	A
Congo (Dem. Rep. of)	24.02.1961	S	03.06.1982	A			
Costa Rica	15.10.1969	A	15.12.1983	A	02.12.1999	15.12.1983	A
Côte d'Ivoire	28.12.1961	S	20.09.1989	R		20.09.1989	R
Croatia	11.05.1992	S	11.05.1992	S	11.05.1992	11.05.1992	S
Cuba	15.04.1954	R	25.11.1982	A		23.12.1999	A
Cyprus	23.05.1962	A	01.06.1979	R		18.03.1996	A
Czech Republic	05.02.1993	S	X	05.02.1993	S	02.05.1995	05.02.1993
Denmark	27.06.1951	R	17.06.1982	R	X	17.06.1982	17.06.1982
Djibouti	06.03.1978	S	08.04.1991	A		08.04.1991	A
Dominica	28.09.1981	S	25.04.1996	A		25.04.1996	A
Dominican Republic	22.01.1958	A	26.05.1994	A		26.05.1994	A
Ecuador	11.08.1954	R	10.04.1979	R		10.04.1979	R
Egypt	10.11.1952	R	09.10.1992	R	X	09.10.1992	R
El Salvador	17.06.1953	R	23.11.1978	R		23.11.1978	R
Equatorial Guinea	24.07.1986	A	24.07.1986	A		24.07.1986	A
Eritrea	14.08.2000	A					
Estonia	18.01.1993	A	18.01.1993	A		18.01.1993	A
Ethiopia	02.10.1969	R	08.04.1994	A		08.04.1994	A
Fiji	09.08.1971	S					
Finland	22.02.1955	R	07.08.1980	R	X	07.08.1980	07.08.1980
France	28.06.1951	R				24.02.1984	A
Gabon	26.02.1965	S	08.04.1980	A		08.04.1980	A
Gambia	20.10.1966	S	12.01.1989	A		12.01.1989	A
Georgia	14.09.1993	A	14.09.1993	A		14.09.1993	A
Germany	03.09.1954	A	X	14.02.1991	R	X	14.02.1991
Ghana	02.08.1958	A	28.02.1978	R		28.02.1978	R
Greece	05.06.1956	R	31.03.1989	R		04.02.1998	15.02.1993
Grenada	13.04.1981	S	23.09.1998	A		23.09.1998	A
Guatemala	14.05.1952	R	19.10.1987	R		19.10.1987	R
Guinea	11.07.1984	A	11.07.1984	A		20.12.1993	11.07.1984
Guinea-Bissau	21.02.1974	A	X	21.10.1986	A		21.10.1986
Guyana	22.07.1968	S		18.01.1988	A		18.01.1988
Haiti	11.04.1957	A					
Holy See	22.02.1951	R	21.11.1985	R	X	21.11.1985	R
Honduras	31.12.1965	A	16.02.1995	R		16.02.1995	R
Hungary	03.08.1954	R	X	12.04.1989	R		12.04.1989

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COUNTRY	GENEVA CONVENTIONS		PROTOCOL I			PROTOCOL II		
	R/A/S	R/D	R/A/S	R/D	D90	R/A/S	R/D	
Iceland	10.08.1965	A	10.04.1987	R	X	10.04.1987	10.04.1987	R
India	09.11.1950	R						
Indonesia	30.09.1958	A						
Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	20.02.1957	R	X					
Iraq	14.02.1956	A						
Ireland	27.09.1962	R	19.05.1999	R	X	19.05.1999	19.05.1999	R
Israel	06.07.1951	R	X					
Italy	17.12.1951	R	27.02.1986	R	X	27.02.1986	27.02.1986	R
Jamaica	20.07.1964	S	29.07.1986	A			29.07.1986	A
Japan	21.04.1953	A						
Jordan	29.05.1951	A	01.05.1979	R			01.05.1979	R
Kazakhstan	05.05.1992	S	05.05.1992	S			05.05.1992	S
Kenya	20.09.1966	A	23.02.1999	A			23.02.1999	A
Kiribati	05.01.1989	S						
Korea (Dem. People's Rep. of)	27.08.1957	A	X	09.03.1988	A			
Korea (Rep. of)	16.08.1966	A	X	15.01.1982	R	X	15.01.1982	R
Kuwait	02.09.1967	A	X	17.01.1985	A		17.01.1985	A
Kyrgyzstan	18.09.1992	S	18.09.1992	S			18.09.1992	S
Lao (People's Dem. Rep. of)	29.10.1956	A		18.11.1980	R	30.01.1998	18.11.1980	R
Latvia	24.12.1991	A	24.12.1991	A			24.12.1991	A
Lebanon	10.04.1951	R	23.07.1997	A			23.07.1997	A
Lesotho	20.05.1968	S	20.05.1994	A			20.05.1994	A
Liberia	29.03.1954	A	30.06.1988	A			30.06.1988	A
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	22.05.1956	A	07.06.1978	A			07.06.1978	A
Liechtenstein	21.09.1950	R	10.08.1989	R	X	10.08.1989	10.08.1989	R
Lithuania	03.10.1996	A	13.07.2000	A		13.07.2000	13.07.2000	A
Luxembourg	01.07.1953	R	29.08.1989	R		12.05.1993	29.08.1989	R
Macedonia	01.09.1993	S	X	01.09.1993	S	X	01.09.1993	S
Madagascar	18.07.1963	S		08.05.1992	R		27.07.1993	08.05.1992
Malawi	05.01.1968	A		07.10.1991	A		07.10.1991	A
Malaysia	24.08.1962	A						
Maldives	18.06.1991	A		03.09.1991	A		03.09.1991	A
Mali	24.05.1965	A		08.02.1989	A		08.02.1989	A
Malta	22.08.1968	S		17.04.1989	A	X	17.04.1989	A
Mauritania	30.10.1962	S		14.03.1980	A		14.03.1980	A
Mauritius	18.08.1970	S		22.03.1982	A		22.03.1982	A
Mexico	29.10.1952	R		10.03.1983	A			
Micronesia	19.09.1995	A		19.09.1995	A		19.09.1995	A

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COUNTRY	GENEVA CONVENTIONS		PROTOCOL I			PROTOCOL II	
	R/A/S	R/D	R/A/S	R/D	D90	R/A/S	R/D
Moldova (Rep. of)	24.05.1993	A	24.05.1993	A		24.05.1993	A
Monaco	05.07.1950	R	07.01.2000	A		07.01.2000	A
Mongolia	20.12.1958	A	06.12.1995	R	X	06.12.1995	R
Morocco	26.07.1956	A					
Mozambique	14.03.1983	A	14.03.1983	A			
Myanmar	25.08.1992	A					
Namibia	22.08.1991	S	17.06.1994	A		21.07.1994	17.06.1994
Nepal	07.02.1964	A					
Netherlands	03.08.1954	R	26.06.1987	R	X	26.06.1987	26.06.1987
New Zealand	02.05.1959	R	X	08.02.1988	R	X	08.02.1988
Nicaragua	17.12.1953	R					
Niger	21.04.1964	S	08.06.1979	R		08.06.1979	R
Nigeria	20.06.1961	S	10.10.1988	A		10.10.1988	A
Norway	03.08.1951	R	14.12.1981	R		14.12.1981	R
Oman	31.01.1974	A	29.03.1984	A	X	29.03.1984	A X
Pakistan	12.06.1951	R	X				
Palau	25.06.1996	A	25.06.1996	A		25.06.1996	A
Panama	10.02.1956	A	18.09.1995	R		26.10.1999	18.09.1995
Papua New Guinea	26.05.1976	S					
Paraguay	23.10.1961	R	30.11.1990	A		30.01.1998	30.11.1990
Peru	15.02.1956	R	14.07.1989	R		14.07.1989	R
Philippines	06.10.1952	R				11.12.1986	A
Poland	26.11.1954	R	X	23.10.1991	R	02.10.1992	23.10.1991
Portugal	14.03.1961	R	X	27.05.1992	R	01.07.1994	27.05.1992
Qatar	15.10.1975	A	05.04.1988	A	X	24.09.1991	
Romania	01.06.1954	R	X	21.06.1990	R	31.05.1995	21.06.1990
Russian Federation	10.05.1954	R	X	29.09.1989	R	X	29.09.1989
Rwanda	05.05.1964	S	19.11.1984	A		08.07.1993	19.11.1984
Saint Kitts and Nevis	14.02.1986	S	14.02.1986	A			14.02.1986
Saint Lucia	18.09.1981	S	07.10.1982	A			07.10.1982
Saint Vincent Grenadines	01.04.1981	A	08.04.1983	A			08.04.1983
Samoa	23.08.1984	S	23.08.1984	A			23.08.1984
San Marino	29.08.1953	A	05.04.1994	R		05.04.1994	R
Sao Tome and Principe	21.05.1976	A	05.07.1996	A		05.07.1996	A
Saudi Arabia	18.05.1963	A	21.08.1987	A	X		
Senegal	18.05.1963	S	07.05.1985	R		07.05.1985	R
Seychelles	08.11.1984	A	08.11.1984	A		22.05.1992	08.11.1984
Sierra Leone	10.06.1965	S	21.10.1986	A		21.10.1986	A

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COUNTRY	GENEVA CONVENTIONS		PROTOCOL I			PROTOCOL II	
	R/A/S	R/D	R/A/S	R/D	D90	R/A/S	R/D
Singapore	27.04.1973	A					
Slovakia	02.04.1993	S	X	02.04.1993	S	13.03.1995	02.04.1993
Slovenia	26.03.1992	S		26.03.1992	S	26.03.1992	S
Solomon Islands	06.07.1981	S		19.09.1988	A		19.09.1988
Somalia	12.07.1962	A					
South Africa	31.03.1952	A		21.11.1995	A		21.11.1995
Spain	04.08.1952	R		21.04.1989	R	X	21.04.1989
Sri Lanka	28.02.1959	R					
Sudan	23.09.1957	A					
Suriname	13.10.1976	S	X	16.12.1985	A		16.12.1985
Swaziland	28.06.1973	A		02.11.1995	A		02.11.1995
Sweden	28.12.1953	R		31.08.1979	R	X	31.08.1979
Switzerland	31.03.1950	R		17.02.1982	R	X	17.02.1982
Syrian Arab Republic	02.11.1953	R		14.11.1983	A	X	
Tajikistan	13.01.1993	S		13.01.1993	S		13.01.1993
Tanzania (United Rep. of)	12.12.1962	S		15.02.1983	A		15.02.1983
Thailand	29.12.1954	A					
Togo	06.01.1962	S		21.06.1984	R		21.11.1991
Tonga	13.04.1978	S					21.06.1984
Trinidad and Tobago	24.09.1963	A					
Tunisia	04.05.1957	A		09.08.1979	R		09.08.1979
Turkey	10.02.1954	R					
Turkmenistan	10.04.1992	S		10.04.1992	S		10.04.1992
Tuvalu	19.02.1981	S					
Uganda	18.05.1964	A		13.03.1991	A		13.03.1991
Ukraine	03.08.1954	R	X	25.01.1990	R		25.01.1990
United Arab Emirates	10.05.1972	A		09.03.1983	A	X	06.03.1992
United Kingdom	23.09.1957	R	X	28.01.1998	R	X	17.05.1999
United States of America	02.08.1955	R	X				28.01.1998
Uruguay	05.03.1969	R	X	13.12.1985	A		17.07.1990
Uzbekistan	08.10.1993	A		08.10.1993	A		13.12.1985
Vanuatu	27.10.1982	A		28.02.1985	A		08.10.1993
Venezuela	13.02.1956	R		23.07.1998	A		28.02.1985
Viet Nam	28.06.1957	A	X	19.10.1981	R		23.07.1998
Yemen	16.07.1970	A	X	17.04.1990	R		13.12.1985
Yugoslavia	21.04.1950	R	X	11.06.1979	R	X	17.04.1990
Zambia	19.10.1966	A		04.05.1995	A		11.06.1979
Zimbabwe	07.03.1983	A		19.10.1992	A		R

Palestine

On 21 June 1989, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs received a letter from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations Office at Geneva informing the Swiss Federal Council "that the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, entrusted with the functions of the Government of the State of Palestine by decision of the Palestine National Council, decided, on 4 May 1989, to adhere to the Four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and the two Protocols additional thereto".

On 13 September 1989, the Swiss Federal Council informed the States that it was not in a position to decide whether the letter constituted an instrument of accession, "due to the uncertainty within the inter-national community as to the existence or non-existence of a State of Palestine".

1. Djibouti's declaration of succession in respect of the First Convention was dated 26 January 1978.
2. On accession to Protocol II, France made a communication concerning Protocol I.
3. Entry into force on 7 December 1978.
4. Entry into force on 7 December 1978.
5. Entered into force on 23 September 1966, the Republic of Korea having invoked Art. 62/61/141/157 common respectively to the First, Second, Third and Fourth Conventions (immediate effect).
6. An instrument of accession to the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols was deposited by the United Nations Council for Namibia on 18 October 1983. In an instrument deposited on 22 August 1991, Namibia declared its succession to the Geneva Conventions, which were previously applicable pursuant to South Africa's accession on 31 March 1952.
7. The First Geneva Convention was ratified on 7 March 1951.
8. Accession to the Fourth Geneva Convention on 23 February 1959 (Ceylon had signed only the First, Second and Third Conventions).
9. Entry into force on 21 October 1950.
10. Accession to the First Geneva Convention on 17 May 1963.

ICRC ACTION WITHIN THE MOVEMENT

ACTIVITIES OF THE STATUTORY BODIES

Work of the Standing Commission

The newly constituted Standing Commission, the body within the Movement in charge of supervising preparations for the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and the Council of Delegates, met four times in 2000.

The ICRC played an active part in all the Commission's work, through its President and the Director for International Law and Communication, who represented the organization.

In order to meet its various priorities, the Standing Commission set up five ad hoc working groups. Each group consisted of one or two elected members of the Commission, who chaired it, key figures from the National Societies and representatives of the ICRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The work of these different groups, each of which had a specific mandate, focused on the following topics:

- (a) international relief operations;
- (b) the Movement's overall strategy;
- (c) the emblem;
- (d) the Council of Delegates;
- (e) the International Conference.

A great deal of work was done on these issues – which are vital for all the components of the Movement – in order to maximize effectiveness, strengthen cooperation within the Movement and draft conclusions and recommendations for submission to the 2001 Council of Delegates.

One topic merits special mention: that of the *emblem*.

After a lengthy consultation process, which culminated in the adoption of a resolution by the 27th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held in Geneva in November 1999, a joint working group composed of representatives of the Movement and of 16 States was set up. Its mandate was to find an acceptable, comprehensive solution to the issue of the emblems used to protect the medical services of the armed forces and the National Societies. The group instructed the ICRC to prepare a draft third protocol additional to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, in close consultation with the International Federation, instituting a new distinctive sign to be added to those recognized by the Geneva Conventions and which would be free of any national or religious connotations.

The finalized draft third protocol was submitted on 12 October 2000 by the Swiss government to the States party to the Geneva Conventions, while the ICRC and the International Federation distributed it to all the National Societies. The draft, which was the outcome of widespread consultation, provides a fair basis for negotiation at a future conference to examine and adopt a third protocol. Switzerland, in its capacity as depositary of the Geneva Conventions, offered to hold such a conference in late October 2000, but the event had to be postponed until 2001 owing to the difficult situation in the Middle East.

FUNCTIONAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE ICRC AND THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

Consultation and coordination mechanisms in Geneva

Pursuant to the Seville Agreement, adopted in 1997, and in the same spirit, the main mechanisms for consultation and coordination between the International Federation and the ICRC stepped up their work in 2000. These mechanisms, which are in conformity with the division of labour stipulated in the Agreement, provide the two organizations with several venues for dialogue that are intended to help them better meet the new challenges facing the Movement. Included in the mechanisms are the senior management meetings, the Joint ICRC/Federation Commission and the Joint ICRC/Federation Commission for National Society Statutes.

Senior management meetings

Meetings between the ICRC Directors and the Secretary General of the International Federation and the latter's direct subordinates are held on a regular basis, usually every six or seven weeks. They are aimed at encouraging innovative cooperation and promoting better understanding of the key problems and the priorities of each organization. In 2000 the meetings dealt mainly with issues relating to the Movement's strategy, the implementation of the Seville Agreement and the emblem. The meetings are also intended to promote exchanges of information during the crucial phases of operational and other

ICRC ACTION WITHIN THE MOVEMENT

activities, with a view to taking advantage of the possibilities for complementary action and overcoming any difficulties that may arise.

Joint ICRC/Federation Commission

Designed to serve as a framework for general cooperation (excluding operational activities) between the ICRC and the International Federation, the Joint Commission meets on average three times a year. These meetings allow the two organizations to keep each other regularly informed of each other's activities and to harmonize their positions on issues that concern them both or that affect the Movement as a whole. Much of the Commission's work is devoted to preparations for the Movement's statutory meetings, ensuring efficient communication, upholding and spreading knowledge of the Fundamental Principles, promoting international humanitarian law and protecting the integrity of the National Societies.

Joint ICRC/Federation Commission for National Society Statutes

In accordance with Resolution VI of the 22nd International Conference (Tehran, 1973) and Resolution XX of the 24th International Conference (Manila, 1981), the Joint Commission for National Society Statutes monitors the application and constant observance of the rules governing recognition of new National Societies by the ICRC and their admission to the International Federation. It also examines the amendments that National Societies propose to make to their statutes and ensures that the latter remain in conformity with the conditions for recognition and the Movement's Fundamental Principles, and that the National Society functions democratically.

In 2000 the Commission held five meetings at which the statutes of some 30 National Societies were reviewed or approved and the applications of eight emerging Societies were closely scrutinized.

Informal meetings

Extensive cooperation takes place between the ICRC and the International Federation, both within and outside the formal mechanisms described above. The two Presidents meet regularly, as do the Directors of Operations, who frequently hold discussions with the aim of streamlining the work of the two organizations, both in Geneva and throughout the world. These informal meetings provide an opportunity to examine the possibilities of launching or developing functional cooperation initiatives and to hold systematic exchanges of views on the problems and issues raised in particular contexts so as to work jointly to resolve them. Such exchanges of information are, moreover, carried out at all levels by very regular contact between those responsible for the various departments, divisions or zones, on both operational and statutory matters. The close cooperation built up between ICRC and International Federation staff within the ad hoc groups set up by the Standing Commission also represents a platform for exchange that contributes towards stepping up dialogue and promoting understanding and mutual respect between the two organizations.

ICRC CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES

The aim of ICRC cooperation activities is to help each National Society increase its ability to meet its specific responsibilities as a Red Cross or Red Crescent institution in areas of common concern, such as the promotion of international humanitarian law and the Movement's Fundamental Principles, the restoration of family links and preparedness for action in times of conflict, especially in the health sector. The ICRC also provides legal assistance for National Societies wishing to draw up or revise their statutes and promote the implementation of national legislation pertaining to humanitarian law.

In 2000 the ICRC budgeted 52.8 million Swiss francs for cooperation programmes to support:

- the dissemination activities of 138 National Societies;
- the tracing activities of 89 National Societies;
- the activities of 71 National Societies to promote conflict-preparedness and response.

These activities were carried out in close consultation and coordination with the International Federation, the long-term goal being to further the development of each National Society. In a cooperation programme, the National Society of a given country, together with the ICRC, defines its objectives and plan of action. The National Society manages, implements and monitors the programme and reports back to the ICRC on the progress made.

The ICRC's cooperation activities are also carried out for the broader purpose of strengthening the work of the Movement as a whole and achieving greater coherence in operations involving more than one component. To this end, in 2000 the ICRC deployed 51 delegates specifically in charge of cooperation with

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National Societies. It also organized two seminars for delegates responsible for cooperation activities in the field, focusing on Movement policy, strategy matters and the approach taken to the programmes outlined above.

As part of its activities in this area, during the year ICRC headquarters:

- carried out 20 operational support missions in the field, including three to review cooperation programmes;
- drafted four standard cooperation agreements for use by delegations;
- signed 87 cooperation agreements with National Societies;
- jointly with the International Federation, prepared a model Memorandum of Understanding;
- conducted a country-by-country review of the activities of all the components of the Movement, with comments on the implementation of the Seville Agreement, and sent it to each delegation;
- provided week-long individual training sessions for 11 cooperation delegates taking up their first assignments;
- together with the International Federation, set up a working group on development cooperation issues that organized briefings for heads of delegation by both organizations and put in place a coordinated approach to the planning of cooperation activities;
- provided timely and updated information through an electronic database on the Movement's components, events and gatherings, in particular regarding cooperation with National Societies;
- issued the internal cooperation newsletter *InfoCoop* every two months and sent it to each delegation.

MEETINGS WITH NATIONAL SOCIETIES

Meeting of 5 May

On 5 May the ICRC organized a meeting with the members of the Governing Board of the International Federation and those of the Standing Commission. Two topics relating to the Movement's strategy were discussed in separate working groups: the mission of the Movement as a whole and the role of the National Societies in armed conflicts. Thirty or so representatives of 20 National Societies took part, together with the Presidents of the International Federation and the ICRC, accompanied by their close staff, and members of the ICRC.

Visit by National Society representatives

At the request of the National Societies or by invitation, the ICRC organized 37 visits for 260 people – members, leaders, senior staff and support staff. The visits were intended not only to make the ICRC, its operating methods, its activities worldwide and the challenges facing it better known – they also provided an opportunity for exchanges on topics of common interest. By promoting mutual understanding, they furthermore increased cohesiveness within the Movement.

Regional conferences and meetings

- 14-16 April: 13th Conference of the Balkan Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Belgrade, Yugoslavia;
- 11-13 May: eighth Conference of the Mediterranean Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Nice, France;
- 15-19 May: second Central European Forum for Cooperation with National Societies, Debeli Rtic, Slovenia;
- 20-22 June: meeting of ACROFA,* Canary Islands, Spain;
- 21-25 September: fifth Pan African Conference, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

Regional seminars organized by National Societies or with their cooperation

- 12-16 February: meeting of the Presidents and Secretaries-General of the Central African National Societies, Kribi, Cameroon;
- 21-22 February: meeting of CORI,* Quito, Ecuador;
- 31 March-2 April: fourth meeting of the Indian Ocean National Societies, Saint-Denis, Réunion (organized by the French Red Cross);
- 11-13 May: seminar "From Principles to Action", organized by the International Federation in Windhoek, Namibia;
- 5-10 June: partnership meeting of the International Federation, participating National Societies and National Societies operating in East Africa, Kenya;
- 29-30 June: sixth annual seminar for the dissemination coordinators of the five Central Asian National Societies, Tashkent, Uzbekistan;
- 6-8 July: meeting of National Society Presidents and technical seminars, Asunción, Paraguay;
- 5-7 September: sixth workshop of the Praia Group, Dakar, Senegal;

* ACROFA: Association of French-speaking National Societies in Africa

* CORI: Inter-American Regional Committee

- 1-3 October: small arms seminar held in Sofia, Bulgaria, by the Bulgarian Red Cross, together with the Norwegian Red Cross and the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT), to follow up on commitments made at the 27th International Conference and pursuant to Resolution 12 of the 1999 Council of Delegates regarding the Movement's role with respect to the problem of small arms availability (23 participants, including representatives of the National Societies of Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Macedonia, Turkey and Yugoslavia);
- 25-29 October: round table for the dissemination officers of the 11 countries covered by the regional delegation in Budapest;
- 23-25 November: sixth meeting of the Secretaries-General of the National Societies of Southern Asia, Sri Lanka;
- 28-29 November: Cross-border Landmine Project meeting, Maputo, Mozambique;
- 7-9 December: civil society meeting on small arms, Lomé, Togo.

National Society anniversaries

29 November: 125th anniversary of the Yugoslav Red Cross.

FUNDS AND MEDALS

Florence Nightingale medal

This Medal may be awarded to qualified male or female nurses and also to male or female voluntary nursing aides who are active members or regular helpers of a National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society or of an affiliated medical or nursing institution. It is distributed every two years to those who have distinguished themselves in time of peace or war either by their exceptional courage and devotion to the wounded, sick or disabled or to civilian victims of a conflict or disaster, or by exemplary services or a creative and pioneering spirit in the areas of public health or nursing education.

A circular was sent on 1 September to the Central Committees of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, inviting them to nominate one or more candidates for the 38th award of the Medal, scheduled to take place on 12 May 2001.

Maurice de Madre French Fund

The purpose of the Maurice de Madre French Fund, which was set up under the terms of the will of Count de Madre, who died in 1970, is to assist staff working for a component of the Movement who have suffered injury or illness in the service of the Movement or, in the event of their death, to assist their families. Thanks to a decision made in 1995 to extend the scope of the Fund, the latter is now better able to help recipients resume their professional activities and, in exceptional cases, to provide assistance even though the illness, accident or death has no direct link with activities undertaken for the Movement.

To reduce administrative costs as much as possible, the Fund's Board conducts its work mainly through correspondence. It held only one formal meeting, on 17 March. On that occasion, and during the year, it studied or followed up on 45 files (concerning one or more people) on Movement staff in 29 countries.

Empress Shôken Fund

This Fund, which was set up in 1912 thanks to the generosity of the Empress whose name it bears, is designed to encourage relief activities by National Societies in peacetime.

During the year, the Fund's Joint Commission, under the chairmanship of Mr Georges-André Cuendet, a member of the ICRC, examined applications submitted by 44 National Societies. At its meeting on 6 April, attended by Mr Koichi Haraguchi, Japan's Permanent Representative in Geneva, the Commission awarded a total of 448,000 Swiss francs to the National Societies of 13 countries: Argentina, Armenia, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Fiji, Haiti, India, Kiribati, Morocco, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Turkmenistan. It also approved a draft document entitled "Investment Objectives and Guidelines", aimed at optimizing the Fund's management.

On 22 May, the Emperor and Empress of Japan contributed five million yen to the Fund during their visit to the ICRC's headquarters.

ICRC POLICY GUIDELINES

Protection of children in armed conflicts

The suffering of children affected by violence and armed conflicts continues to be a major concern for the ICRC. Besides the protection afforded to all victims of conflict and to the civilian population as a whole, no fewer than 25 provisions of international humanitarian law ensure special protection for children – who are not just victims of the effects of armed conflicts but also, all too often, targets and strategic pawns. Yet the situation of children is steadily worsening, and we need to ask ourselves why this is so.

ICRC ACTION WITHIN THE MOVEMENT

With the international community suddenly becoming more aware of the plight of children caught up in armed conflicts, the year was marked by many seminars, meetings and conferences on the subject. The most striking event was the adoption in Geneva, in January, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. The text adopted, while containing many weaknesses, is nonetheless a sign of progress as it sets the minimum age of conscription at 18 years. The ICRC played an active part in the work that led to the adoption of this Protocol and, in pursuance of the aims of the Movement's Plan of Action for Children Affected by Armed Conflict, supported the efforts made to raise to 18 the minimum age for recruitment and participation in hostilities. Likewise, it backed arguments in favour of introducing mechanisms for the rehabilitation of children and their reintegration into their communities.

The ICRC also played an active part in the West African Conference on War-Affected Children held in Ghana in April by the Canadian and Ghanaian governments, and in the Asia and the Pacific Conference held in Kathmandu, Nepal, in May by the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. In September, the ICRC Vice-President headed a delegation at the International Conference on War-Affected Children, held in Winnipeg, Canada. This, the first conference on the subject at ministerial level, was organized by the Canadian government, which thereby took the lead in the movement to implement the Optional Protocol.

Finally, the ICRC President gave an introductory talk at the Human Dimension Seminar on Children and Armed Conflicts, organized by the OSCE in Warsaw in May. The OSCE decided to attach special importance to the rights of children in general and to those of children in conflicts in particular. The President concluded his speech by recalling the ICRC's main goals in this area: to encourage implementation of international humanitarian law, to conduct programmes focusing on the psycho-social readjustment and reintegration of children, including child soldiers, and to urge States to set the minimum age for conscription and participation in hostilities at 18 years by adhering to the Optional Protocol. In view of the brutality of some conflicts being fought, however, and the very young age of child combatants, the President again underlined the urgent need at least to ensure respect for the age limit of 15 years already in force.

The ICRC continued its daily efforts at the operational level to identify children's needs more precisely and to meet them through its assistance and protection activities and through its work to prevent recruitment, and to reunite families split apart by war.

At the next Council of Delegates, to be held in Geneva in 2001, the components of the Movement were to present a report on progress achieved in implementing the Movement's Plan of Action for Children Affected by Armed Conflict. The efforts undertaken were aimed in particular at preventing the participation of children in hostilities and at promoting the rehabilitation of those caught up in them.

Protection of women in armed conflicts

The ICRC constantly strives to ensure that women receive due protection against the effects of armed conflicts, and especially against the acts of violence to which they are particularly vulnerable. It tries to prevent such acts by making appropriate representations to the parties to conflicts, be they States or not, urging them to comply with the rules of international humanitarian law. Throughout the year, the ICRC took part in many international conferences and forums in order to raise awareness of the plight of women in wartime and to stress that protection of women in armed conflicts can be achieved through better implementation of and respect for humanitarian law and other international instruments.

At the end of 2000 the ICRC completed a two-year study on the impact of armed conflicts on women. The study was to serve as the basis for drawing up guidelines on women in wartime aimed at increasing understanding of the impact of violence on women and knowledge of the law that affords them protection and assistance. The ICRC also set up a "Women and War" project specifically designed to implement the pledge it made at the 27th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to raise awareness among all parties concerned of the provisions of humanitarian law protecting women and to ensure that all ICRC activities take account of the needs of this vulnerable group. Throughout the year, the organization stepped up its protection and assistance activities for women in armed conflicts.

The twin challenges of promoting international humanitarian law and raising public awareness of the ICRC called for major changes in the approach taken towards communication in 2000. These changes were made to ensure better use of assets, such as public recognition of the emblem, in promoting the principles, activities and unique nature of the organization. New communication avenues were developed in Geneva and in the field. More use was made of market research and the Internet. A greater effort was made to target ICRC products and messages more effectively at key audiences around the world that could have an impact on the organization's access to victims and ability to perform its humanitarian work. Marketing and distribution became priorities, and evaluation of the impact of communication and education programmes in the field, and more generally, took on growing importance. Regional communication support centres were set up in Buenos Aires, Cairo and Moscow during the year.

The focus of communication was sharpened in 2000, and clearly targeted at the armed forces, the police and security forces, governments, the influential media, young people, and certain business and academic circles. It was essential for the ICRC to gain a better insight into the perceptions these groups had of humanitarian law and humanitarian action so as to ensure that the role and mission of the organization were properly understood. The worldwide network of National Society communicators once again facilitated this process in 2000. The year also saw further progress in communicating with, and speaking on behalf of, the most important groups of all, the beneficiaries of humanitarian action and, in particular, the victims of war.

PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

The ICRC promoted international humanitarian law in 2000 by aiming programmes and special projects at key groups, in particular the armed forces, the police and security forces, young people and the academic world.

Better response from the armed forces

The ICRC's work with the armed forces in 2000 concentrated on incorporating the basic rules of humanitarian law into military exercises, manuals and procedures. Projects covered three strategic levels: basic awareness-building, integration into activities, and promotion and teaching of humanitarian law by the armed forces. There was a marked increase in the number of armed forces taking on the responsibility of teaching humanitarian law themselves in 2000. The ongoing activities of the 17 delegates involved in these programmes, supported by a multinational network of officer-instructors, also significantly raised training standards.

During the year, UN peace-support operations opened up new opportunities for the ICRC. Training in humanitarian law was integrated into such operations both during the set-up phase and after the contingents had actually been deployed in the field. A training module on the ICRC's mandate and role was provided by a special delegate to SFOR* and KFOR* contingents in late 1999 and early 2000. These efforts aimed to build mutual confidence and understanding between ICRC delegates and military forces on the ground and were being extended to other operations such as East Timor, Sierra Leone, and Ethiopia-Eritrea.

* SFOR: NATO-led Stabilization Force

* KFOR: NATO-led International Security Force

In 2000 the ICRC continued to be involved in numerous military exercises, manoeuvres, conferences and round tables. These included three major exercises under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO's) Partnership for Peace programme in Europe, and two major exercises each in the Americas, Africa and Asia.

In June 2000 the fourth ICRC conference for senior instructors, "HOT 4", brought together representatives from 16 countries to discuss the integration of humanitarian law into armed forces' training, procedures governing cooperation on the ground between humanitarian and military personnel, and ways of promoting humanitarian law among irregular forces. The ICRC continued to develop its worldwide contacts with military academies.

Expanded training of police and security forces

Thanks to the activities of four specialized ICRC delegates, supported by local staff and a multinational network of police instructors, efforts to train police and security forces in humanitarian law were stepped up in 2000. In Brazil, an evaluation was undertaken of a major programme set up in 1998⁴ in cooperation with Equity International and São Paulo University, under which some 800 instructors had been trained. A programme in the Horn of Africa provided training modules on humanitarian law and human rights for police academies in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. Other target areas were the Russian Federation, the Balkans, the Philippines, Indonesia and the Pacific, the Caribbean and seven countries in central and south America.

⁴ See the ICRC's 1998 Annual Report, p. 148.

Getting young people involved

The positive response of young people in the ex-Soviet Union to the ICRC's efforts in previous years to explain conflict-related issues helped to consolidate humanitarian law programmes in 2000. An external evaluation undertaken in the autumn in Armenia, Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation, the full results of which will be available in early 2001, showed real enthusiasm among students, teachers and educationalists for the subject matter.

The year saw further development of the "Exploring Humanitarian Law" project begun in 1998. Five teaching modules for 13- to 18-year-olds were prepared, covering the limits to armed conflicts, responsibility for compliance with the law, and different approaches to justice and humanitarian action. A guide and video for trainers were also produced.

Pilot projects carried out in Morocco, South Africa and Thailand between June and October 2000 confirmed the potential of teaching modules to influence the attitudes of young people to violence. The involvement of a group of young actors from Northern Ireland in the pilots led to the development of theatre as a means of raising awareness of humanitarian issues.

While the problem of child soldiers attracted considerable international attention in previous years, especially its legal aspects and rehabilitation efforts, little had been done to communicate them while they were actively engaged in armed groups. In 2000 the ICRC undertook a preliminary study, involving consultation with internal and external experts and interviews with former child soldiers, to explore the possibilities for action in this area. Practical proposals were to be put to the delegations in 2001.

Humanitarian law in the academic world

In 2000 the ICRC intensified its activities to promote humanitarian law in universities and other institutions of higher learning through a network of delegates in the field, coordinated from Geneva. The teaching of humanitarian law in a systematic way remained a high priority for the ICRC, which cooperated in this area with the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo, Italy, the Paris-based International Law 90 Research Centre and UNITAR.*

In 1999 the ICRC published *How Does Law Protect in War?*, a book which provided students and professors with almost 200 case studies and suggestions for teaching the subject in law, political science and journalism courses. A first of its kind, the publication was actively promoted by the ICRC in 2000 and was used by a growing number of teachers.

During the year, the ICRC's programme to train specialized teachers of international humanitarian law was targeted on the Russian Federation, the countries of central Asia, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan and the Philippines. In August the ICRC organized, in cooperation with IUHEI* in Geneva, a third training seminar on humanitarian law for university teachers.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Targeting productions

The Production Unit undertook a major review of ICRC output in 2000, beginning with an extensive and critical look at existing publication stocks. The review assessed the usefulness of existing publications against three criteria: appropriateness, relevance and credibility.

* UNITAR: United Nations Institute for Training and Research

* IUHEI: Graduate Institute of International Studies

The second issue was consistency in graphic standards including the need for guidelines on the use of images, a standard ICRC logo and the development of product lines. As a result, a set of guidelines on basic graphic standards for headquarters publications was issued during the year, to be followed by similar norms for all ICRC output in 2001.

The review process continued with an analysis of all communication products. A benchmarking exercise compared the ICRC's *Annual Report* with those of 12 major NGOs, private institutions or UN agencies. With the aid of an internationally recognized marketing and communications agency, the Production Unit also undertook a broad study of how ICRC stakeholders viewed the organization's communication tools such as its publications, videos and Website, what media consumption habits they had and how they preferred to receive information. As a result, the unit developed strategies to improve products and target them more effectively.

Marketing

The priority in 2000 was to develop and start setting up essential marketing tools. An evaluation was made of shortcomings in the area of communication and the results were used to develop a marketing plan.

Systematic environmental scanning of key developments that would inevitably have a major impact on the ICRC and the wider humanitarian world, and stakeholder mapping, were both begun. Building a proper marketing and communication database continued to be a main objective, with 4,500 contacts added in 2000.

As part of a positioning process, the ICRC recruited the London agency, Fishburn Hedges, from a shortlist of 12 companies, to help profile its unique mandate and activities.

COMMUNICATION

A special effort was made to market and distribute the second issue in the *Forum* series, called *War, Money and Survival*, through promotion, press work and the use of events such as conferences. The publication was specifically aimed at key audiences such as NGOs. Similar communication plans were developed for topics including women and war, internally displaced persons and the emblem.

Publications with a focus

The *Forum* issue, *War, Money and Survival*, came out at the beginning of the year and attracted great interest, in particular a review in *The Economist*. Other publications included a revised-format *Annual Report*, the *Headquarters Appeal 2000* and the *Emergency Appeals 2000*, and a brochure entitled *Women and War*. Four editions of the *International Review of the Red Cross* were published in 2000. The quarterly *Red Cross Red Crescent* magazine, produced jointly with the International Federation, ran cover stories on women, Chechnya, the emblem and the elderly.

Videos: greater impact

Fewer videos were produced than in previous years but they had a greater impact. Regular contributions to CNN's* *World Report*, through an association with the Geneva television station Léman Bleu, continued throughout the year. The professional quality of these reports in terms of production techniques and content improved significantly. Other news-based videos included contributions to APTN's* *Roving Report* via the EBU.* The major video release, *Women at the End of a Gun*, was made in collaboration with a British-based production company.

ICRC Websites

The Website, www.icrc.org, underwent an internal review and audit in the second half of 2000 with the aim of enhancing its use. An improved home page was set up during the year. The ICRC also introduced downloadable video clips of its operations for use by the media. The same approach was adopted on the www.onwar.org site with material gathered from the "People On War" campaign and a more interactive format was being considered for the ICRC's main site.

Public Information Centre

The ICRC's Public Information Centre in Geneva responded to thousands of external requests for publications, photos, videos and library services in the fields of humanitarian law, humanitarian action and related topics in 2000. The requests came from National Societies, academic and educational institutions, publishers, the media, UN agencies and NGOs. The centre also met the needs of delegations and staff at ICRC headquarters. In 2000, some 10,000 people were received by its visitors service.

Historical research

In 2000, the ICRC continued to do historical research, in particular for internal purposes. Its researchers also dealt with outside requests relating to matters subject to a 50-year waiting period, the archives on which are consequently not open to the public. They continued compiling a history of the ICRC during the periods from 1945 to 1955 and 1956 to 1965, and to supply the ICRC's history page on the Web with material.

"People on War" project

The "People on War" project, a global survey carried out in 1999⁵ to mark the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, gathered the views of over 20,000 individuals on war, many based on personal experience. In 2000, the ICRC used the findings to influence leaders, opinion formers and communities, particularly in the countries surveyed. A significant impact was recorded in Bosnia-Herzegovina, El Salvador, the Middle East, Somalia and South Africa. Preliminary results of the project, summarized in a series of reports written by Greenberg Research Inc., a Washington-based opinion-research firm, were also presented at a number of international forums. A Geneva task force identified the implications of the "People on War" findings for ICRC operational, legal and communication practices. In the same vein, two regional workshops were organized in Moscow and Cairo with staff and volunteers who had participated in the worldwide consultation. In May 2000, the ICRC decided to make the results available to researchers and academic circles. The raw data collected during the survey was gradually transferred to SIDOS,* a new institute linked to the established international social science network. By the end of 2000, SIDOS had finished cross-checking and cross-referencing the data from 10 countries. It expected to complete the entire process in the course of 2001.

In September 2000, the Harvard School of Public Health set up a team of scholars to analyse "People on War" data from countries affected by armed conflict. It aims to identify group profiles and attitudinal patterns that may assist humanitarian workers and policy makers responsible for protecting the population and implementing international law in modern conflicts.

* See the ICRC's 1999 *Annual Report*, p. 348.

* SIDOS: Swiss Information and Data Archive Service

New multimedia *Cross Fire* modules were also added to the "People on War" Website www.onwar.org, including: *The Civilian Battlefield*, *Crowded Places*, *Taking Sides*, *War – Just a Man's Business?*, and *The Ailing Distinction*. Selections of the best video interviews and a new 23-minute video on humanitarian law, *Military Perspectives*, were produced for dissemination and training purposes.

Relations with the media

The conflicts that erupted in 2000 were characteristic of the complex environments which marked the last decade of the century. ICRC press officers faced the challenge of using media opportunities to convey messages about the organization's humanitarian concerns, including the need for greater compliance with international humanitarian law, while avoiding being drawn into polemics that could jeopardize the ICRC's humanitarian activities, and possibly the safety of victims and its own staff.

Efforts were also made to generate interest in the legacies of numerous conflicts. Here the ICRC recognized the importance of involving the local media in drawing public attention in their own countries to the lingering consequences of war, which often hinder the chances of reconciliation and lasting peace.

Mobilizing the press to focus on the plight of the victims of protracted and "forgotten" conflicts remained difficult. Initiatives like the forging of links between major TV news outlets such as CNN International proved a successful way for the ICRC to get this important message across. The worldwide network of National Societies was also a major asset to the ICRC in pursuing its communication activities.

Away from the operational focus, there were other issues that necessitated a coherent media strategy, such as the search for an additional emblem.

One important facet of the ICRC's work was to contribute to the debate within journalistic circles on the ethics of conflict reporting and the challenges of new technology. The ICRC attended numerous forums to take part in discussions on the respective roles of journalists and humanitarian organizations in conflicts.

Mine awareness 2000

In 2000 there was a significant increase in the number of requests from ICRC delegations for mine-awareness programmes. As a result, the geographical distribution of efforts in this area was balanced.

Special emphasis was placed on the quality of the programmes and on the implementation of an integrated approach with other agencies involved in mine action, in particular mine clearance and victim assistance.

Programmes were consolidated in the Balkans and the Caucasus, assessments were carried out in Africa and Asia where delegations had initiated programmes and support was given by the ICRC to National Societies conducting mine-awareness programmes in Central America.

THE INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE

The International Tracing Service (ITS) grew out of the Central Tracing Bureau, which was set up by Allied Headquarters at the British Red Cross in London in 1943. The Bureau moved several times before finally settling in Arolsen, Germany, in January 1946. It adopted its current name on 1 January 1948.

Since 1955, the ITS has been directed and administered by the ICRC and supervised by an International Commission composed of representatives of the ITS member States. Poland joined the international supervisory body in March 2000, bringing to 11 the number of members.

The mandate of the ITS is to gather, file, preserve and process personal records concerning civilians who were persecuted under the Third Reich. In particular, the ITS regularly acquires archival documents and provides victims of the Nazi regime with certificates attesting to the fact that they were persecuted, for example by being deported, interned or subjected to forced labour.

The digitization of the ITS's central databank (47 million records) was completed at the end of 1999. The databank, which became operational in the second half of 2000, makes it possible to process, by this means alone, a considerable quantity of data electronically rather than manually, and thus to respond more quickly to requests for information and certificates.

Under a German law enacted on 12 August, a federal foundation entitled *Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft* (Remembrance, Responsibility and Future) was set up to provide financial compensation for persons persecuted by the Nazi regime, including those subjected to slave or forced labour. As a result, there was a surge in the number of enquiries sent to the ITS. To deal with the additional workload, the ITS developed a

new system for processing requests, using standard lists. This system enables the German foundation's partner organizations (including the IOM* in Geneva) to transfer the data contained in the requests they receive to the lists. These are then passed on to the ITS, which cross-checks the names in its central databank and enters the information it finds directly on the lists, before sending them back to the partner organizations. At the end of November, the ITS had cross-checked 154,275 names and by the end of December the number had reached 211,669.

During the year, the ITS received 322,007 new individual requests from 66 countries, and provided 361,099 replies. By the end of the year, 497,000 requests still awaited processing.

In order to complete its sources, which are necessary for documenting its replies, the ITS stepped up its efforts to acquire further stocks of documents in Germany and abroad. For the first time, and with the approval of the Federal Data Protection Commissioner, it signed agreements with the social health insurance offices in three *Länder* (states).

In addition, in Ukraine the ITS obtained personal data contained in papers kept in the State archives in Lvov and Odessa. This precious information, of particular importance to Ukrainians who were subjected to forced labour in the past, was computerized, copied onto diskette and entered into the ITS databank.

* IOM: International Organization for Migration

