

# Eastern Europe and Central Asia

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A small bag of seeds may be all that is needed to set victims of war back on the path to self-sufficiency. In 1998, the ICRC distributed 6,250 tonnes of seed and thousands of agricultural tools in 20 countries.

ICRC/B. Heger

**Eastern Europe****ICRC regional delegations:**

Kyiv  
Moscow

**The Caucasus****ICRC delegations:**

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia

**Central Asia****ICRC delegation:**

Tajikistan

**ICRC regional delegation:**

Tashkent

**Staff**



ICRC expatriates: <sup>1</sup>	110
National Societies: <sup>1</sup>	28
Local employees: <sup>2</sup>	903

**Total expenditure** **Sfr**  
50,304,286

**Expenditure breakdown**

Protection/tracing:	13,239,161
Relief:	14,690,306
Health activities:	7,230,933
Cooperation with	
National Societies:	2,018,483
Promotion/dissemination:	5,953,812
Operational support:	4,519,332
Overheads:	2,652,259



 ICRC regional delegation     ICRC delegation

ICRC / AR 12.98

# *EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA*

<sup>1</sup> Average figures calculated on an annual basis.

<sup>2</sup> Under ICRC contract, as at December 1998.

*F*or the third year in succession, situations of neither war nor peace prevailed in many of the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia where conflicts had flared up after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Although cease-fire agreements signed over three years ago held for the most part, there was little progress in addressing the underlying causes of the conflicts or in establishing peace settlements, and 1998 was marked by an upsurge of armed incidents throughout the region.

In Georgia, high-level contacts continued between the Georgian and Abkhaz authorities, but hopes of a solution receded when fighting broke out again in the Gali region in May. In Tajikistan too, repeated armed clashes put an end to any prospect of early national reconciliation, although both government and opposition leaders remained committed to the peace process. Meanwhile, political crisis in Armenia stalled attempts to resolve the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, and in the Russian Federation negotiations over the future status of Chechnya were deadlocked. In addition, there were fears that civil war might break out in Chechnya and in Daghestan.

In the absence of lasting political settlements, humanitarian problems remained unresolved. The need for emergency aid has been superseded by the need for development and reconstruction, but the investment required for economic recovery will not be forthcoming until stability returns to the region, and displaced persons are unwilling to return to their homes as their safety is not guaranteed. Moreover, the economic crisis which hit the Russian Federation in August dealt a further blow to an entire region which has been struggling to switch to a market economy since 1992. The constant decline in living standards, the breakdown of the social and health services, soaring crime rates and recurrent political crises all generated a growing sense of insecurity and frustration among the population. Against this backdrop, the ICRC and other humanitarian organizations encountered serious difficulties, especially in the northern Caucasus.

The ICRC pursued its efforts to protect and assist civilians and detainees still suffering the effects of armed conflict in the region. Many of the remaining prisoners of war and civilians captured during the Abkhaz and Nagorny Karabakh conflicts were visited. The ICRC continued to receive new tracing requests concerning people still unaccounted for in connection with the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, adding to the 2,200 requests already registered and submitted to the parties of the conflict since 1997. Unfortunately, progress in this regard seems unlikely until a political settlement is reached.

In Armenia and Georgia the ICRC again had access to both common law and security detainees. Negotiations were pursued in other countries of the region with a view to establishing similar visiting programmes.

During the year under review, the ICRC shifted the emphasis of its operations to rebuilding local capacities and restoring the self-sufficiency of the civilian population where possible, while maintaining emergency stocks so as to be ready to respond to a new crisis at any time. Many relief programmes were scaled down, and, particularly in

Abkhazia and Nagorny Karabakh, short-term agronomy programmes were carried out to restore a degree of food security to villages in former conflict areas. In Chechnya, relief operations continued as before, and the water distribution programme was maintained, as the poor condition of sewage and water-supply systems continued to represent a major public health hazard.

To assist the war-wounded and the victims of armed clashes, the ICRC continued its support for hospitals, in particular in Abkhazia and Tajikistan. A similar programme in Azerbaijan was phased out, as it no longer corresponded to a real need.

Another constant concern was the alarming spread of tuberculosis (TB) throughout the former Soviet Union, particularly among the prison population. The ICRC consolidated its TB control programme in prisons in Azerbaijan and set up a similar programme in Georgia.

The process of reforming the legal systems of all the newly independent States offers a unique opportunity for ensuring incorporation of international humanitarian law in the national legislation. The ICRC drew up studies on the legislation of all the States in the light of humanitarian law, and submitted commentaries to the authorities on draft revisions.

As part of a comprehensive strategy to make the humanitarian rules and principles part of the very foundations of society in this inherently unstable region, the ICRC continued to approach political, military, educational and academic circles. The authorities have generally proven receptive to the ICRC's dissemination programmes. In Russia, Belarus, Tajikistan and Estonia, the law of armed conflict is already an obligatory component of military training. By the end of the year, a growing number of universities were offering courses on humanitarian law.

The vast programme of dissemination in schools, set up in the Russian Federation in 1995 and subsequently extended to other countries of the region, is designed to make young people aware of the origins of violence and of the need for rules limiting violence in all situations. The programme's textbooks use extracts from national literature and culture as an effective vehicle for conveying the humanitarian message.

As in the past, cooperation with the region's National Societies mostly comprised support and training to bolster their operational capacity in the areas of tracing, dissemination and relief and to promote their long-term structural development and independence.

The ICRC continued to put pressure on the Chechen and federal authorities to provide information on the investigation opened following the tragedy of Novye Atagi, where six of its delegates were murdered in 1996. Sadly, representations made by the ICRC and the delegates' States of origin yielded no results. In 1998, security continued to be a constant concern. However, in view of the immense humanitarian needs and the fact that few other organizations were active in the region, the ICRC pursued an ambitious and extensive programme in restrictive working conditions which are unlikely to improve as long as no political solutions are in sight.

# Eastern Europe

## KYIV

### Regional Delegation

(Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Ukraine)

The first timid signs of economic growth witnessed in some of the countries covered by the Kyiv regional delegation at the beginning of 1998 suffered a severe setback with the effects of the Russian financial crisis in August. Living conditions for much of the population became even more difficult than before. In addition, minority issues were a constant source of tension throughout the region. Six years after fighting had broken out in Moldova, the situation remained deadlocked, despite the 1997 Normalization Memorandum which provided for a return to normal relations between the parties on the basis of a common State and autonomous status for the self-proclaimed Moldovan Republic of Dniestr. The document was further endorsed by a meeting of the Presidents of Russia, Ukraine and Moldova in Odessa, Ukraine, in March 1998. These developments did not, however, yield any tangible results on the ground. For its part, the ICRC kept up its efforts to regain access to the four members of the "Ilascu group" held since 1992 in Tiraspol, in the self-proclaimed Moldovan Republic of Dniestr. The detainees were last visited in 1993/4. Throughout the year, the ICRC was unable to meet with the Minister of State Security of the self-proclaimed Moldovan Republic of Dniestr.

*supporting  
the implementation  
of humanitarian law*

The delegation continued to provide advice and technical support for the incorporation of international humanitarian law in national legislation and the adoption of measures to protect the red cross emblem. To this end, the delegation met regularly with the national committees for the implementation of humanitarian law in Belarus and Moldova and, in countries where such committees had not yet been set up, with State officials and working groups on implementation, to chart their progress and make recommendations. In addition, the ICRC produced commentaries on the new or amended penal codes of the Baltic States, Moldova and Ukraine in the light of international law, and submitted them to the authorities. These five countries also received financial support from the ICRC Advisory Service to conduct their own studies on the state of national legislation in relation to humanitarian law. Seminars were held and presentations given in all countries as a means of promoting implementation. Of particular note was a first high-level seminar on the implementation of humanitarian law held in Estonia in cooperation with the authorities. Those countries that had not yet done so (the

Baltic States and Ukraine) were encouraged to create national committees to coordinate government activities in the field of implementation.

The Kyiv regional delegation pursued its efforts to see the law of armed conflict included in teaching and training programmes at all levels of the armed forces. Under cooperation agreements signed at the beginning of the year between the ICRC and the Defence Ministries of Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, a number of seminars and presentations were organized to help the armed forces incorporate the subject into daily instruction and combat training. In Belarus, the ICRC gave presentations on the law of armed conflict to border guards, Interior Ministry troops and officers of the security services. A training course was organized for field instructors at the Military Academy. In Ukraine, the ICRC established contact with the Ukrainian Army in the Crimea, the Ukrainian Naval Forces and the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol to offer its assistance in promoting and teaching the law of armed conflict. Two high-ranking Ministry of Defence officers from Moldova and Ukraine respectively took part in the second Russian-language course on the law of armed conflict held at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in San Remo, Italy. In the Baltic States, the ICRC presented programmes for incorporating the law of armed conflict into regular military training to the Ministries of Defence.

Cooperation agreements covering a range of activities were renewed with the National Societies of the region. Training as well as material and financial support were provided to help strengthen their operational capacity, notably in the areas of tracing and dissemination. The ICRC also assisted in the preparation and publication of the National Societies' internal bulletins, so as to enhance contact between local branches and headquarters, and to spread basic knowledge of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and humanitarian law. In all the countries covered, dissemination seminars on the Red Cross and humanitarian law also served to make the local authorities aware of the role the Red Cross can play in providing useful community services.

Throughout the region, the ICRC pursued its efforts to have humanitarian law included in all academic courses on international law, and, as a second step, to set up specialized courses in humanitarian law at selected universities. To that end, the ICRC provided training and support for several professors of international law.

The ICRC continued to provide material and technical support for Ukrainian Red Cross relief activities in Crimea, where the social and economic situation remained very precarious. The Crimean branch distributed food parcels, clothes and shoes to the most vulnerable and handed medical supplies over to the 80 Red Cross nurses who regularly visited elderly and disabled persons in their homes and provided them with basic medical care and food parcels. In April the Ukrainian Red Cross, with ICRC support, initiated a new programme to set up

*promoting the law of armed conflict*

*cooperation with the region's National Societies*

*dissemination at universities*

*joint relief work with the Ukrainian Red Cross in the Crimea*

first-aid centres in settlements for "formerly deported people".<sup>3</sup> By the end of the year, seven such centres were in operation with 12 more planned, and 18 medical kits had been distributed to their staff. The ICRC provided some of the material for distribution, and assisted the Crimean branch of the Ukrainian Red Cross in assessing the needs of the population and in organizing surveys, reporting and logistics.

<sup>3</sup> Mainly Tatar communities who had been deported to Central Asia at the end of the Second World War.

## KYIV Regional delegation



– continued to request access to the 4 members of the "Ilascu group" detained since 1992 in Tiraspol, in the self-proclaimed Moldovan Republic of Dniestr;



– provided 20 tonnes of clothes, a computer and a minibus to the Crimean branch of the Ukrainian Red Cross, which supports some 17,000 vulnerable individuals;

– provided equipment and basic medicines for the 80 Red Cross visiting nurses, who visited 10,000 people at home and dispensed medical and social services to

## IN 1998 THE ICRC:

a further 15,000 persons on Crimean Red Cross premises;

– provided assistance and held workshops on humanitarian law at the newly established first-aid centres in settlements for former deportees in the Crimea;



– provided extensive training for Latvian and Lithuanian dissemination officers at the Kyiv delegation;

– supported Latvia's first country-wide dissemination seminar for Red Cross workers, organized by the National Society;

– held 5 dissemination seminars for Red Cross staff and volunteers at regional branches in Belarus, 4 in

Ukraine, and 3 in Moldova (in Chisinau, Komrat and Tiraspol);

– worked with the Ukrainian Red Cross tracing service to harmonize its activities with the Belarusian and Moldovan tracing services;

– funded National Society publications: the Ukrainian Red Cross bulletin (3,000 copies), the Belarus Red Cross quarterly newsletter (5,000 copies), and dissemination material produced by the Latvian and Estonian National Societies;

– financed the production of 10,000 pocket calendars to promote the Crimean branch of the Ukrainian Red Cross;





- arranged for two government representatives from Belarus and Ukraine respectively to take part in the first seminar on the implementation of humanitarian law organized for CIS countries by the ICRC in Moscow;
- gave presentations on the incorporation of humanitarian law in national law at seminars for members of the national committees for implementation in Moldova and Belarus, and at a conference on implementation in Ukraine;
- drew up commentaries on draft laws on the National Societies of the Baltic States and Ukraine regarding the use and protection of the red cross emblem;
- supported the first issues of "Justice of Belarus", the first comprehensive legal journal to be published in Belarus, which also discusses humanitarian law questions;
- in Moldova, gave a presentation on the law of armed conflict for 30 officers from Ministry of Defence troops and from units deployed in Chisinau; supported 4 seminars organized by the Ministry of Defence for over 90 military officers from 2 infantry brigades, Chisinau Military College, the Moldovan Peace-Keeping Forces, and the Russian and Transnistrian Peace-Keeping Forces;
- in Ukraine, gave a presentation on the law of armed conflict for 300

- officers at Kyiv Army Institute, and held standard 2-day seminars reaching 80 military officers jointly with the Ministry of Defence;
- in Belarus, held 5 training sessions on the law of armed conflict for 249 military officers, and produced working documents on the law of armed conflict for military instructors;
- arranged for several high-ranking Ukrainian officers to participate in the fourth international course on the law of armed conflict organized by the ICRC Moscow delegation, and in the third ICRC Conference for Heads of Military Training in Geneva;
- in Belarus, worked with national experts in preparing the first humanitarian law textbook for university students;
- arranged for teams of university students from Belarus and Moldova to participate in the ICRC-organized De Martens moot court competition in St Petersburg;
- jointly with the Red Cross Society of Belarus, organized the first seminar on humanitarian law and Red Cross topics for media representatives in Minsk;
- jointly with the Ukrainian and Belarusian National Societies, brought the photo exhibition *People and War* to Kyiv (2,500 visitors) and Minsk (7,000 visitors);



- provided financial support for one representative of the Ministry of Defence and one of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from every country covered to take part in the anti-personnel landmines conference held in Budapest for countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

# MOSCOW

## Regional delegation

(Russian Federation, with specialized services for all countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia)

In 1998, the situation remained bleak throughout the Russian Federation, with the majority of the population experiencing increased economic and social hardship. This was exacerbated by the financial crisis of August 1998, which caused rampant inflation and further sapped the confidence of investors and small savers. Over the year little or no progress was made towards resolving the conflicts in the northern Caucasus. More than two years after the end of hostilities in Chechnya, negotiations regarding the separatist republic's future status remained deadlocked, leaving it in virtual political and economic isolation. Six years after the conflict between Ingushetia and North Ossetia came to an end, thousands of people have still not been able to return to their homes in the Prigorodny district of North Ossetia. The frustration caused by this stagnation led to a marked deterioration in the security situation in the region, particularly in the north-eastern Caucasus, with irregular armed groups pursuing conflicting goals. Tougher law-enforcement measures imposed by the local and federal authorities had limited impact; Moscow sent more troops to the region, but no military action was taken.

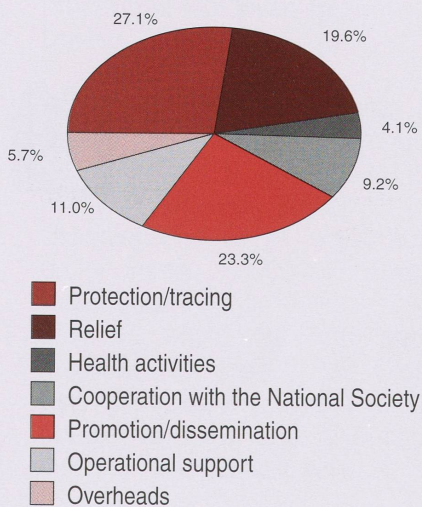
The Moscow regional delegation continued to provide the Russian Federation and the newly independent States with advice and assistance in their efforts to implement international humanitarian law. The delegation carried out numerous missions to the newly independent States, prepared commentaries on draft laws, and encouraged governments to establish national committees for the implementation of humanitarian law. In addition, the ICRC Advisory Service conducted studies on the legislation of all the successor States where the ICRC is present in the light of humanitarian law, and made recommendations accordingly. A first seminar on the implementation of humanitarian law for CIS\* countries was attended by two high-ranking officials from Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Ukraine respectively.

The ICRC continued to concentrate on disseminating the principles of humanitarian law and on spreading knowledge among the public at large of the ICRC's specific mandate and its role within the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, as Russian society at all levels remained insufficiently informed in this regard.

As in previous years, support was given to national efforts to incorporate the law of armed conflict in the training, instruction and combat procedures of the armed forces. The ICRC focused on informing and training the command and

\* Commonwealth of Independent States

**MOSCOW**  
Total expenditure in 1998:  
Sfr 13,355,950



teaching staff of military academies, in accordance with cooperation agreements signed with the Russian Ministries of the Interior and Defence. Under separate cooperation programmes with Moscow Military University and the command of the northern Caucasus military district, further dissemination sessions were held. A seminar on the teaching of human rights and humanitarian law to police forces, held in Volgograd, was attended by representatives of training institutions run by the Ministries of the Interior of the Russian Federation and other CIS countries. Given their specific role and the current situation in the Russian Federation, the police are a target audience of primary importance.

As part of its comprehensive strategy to promote the teaching of humanitarian law at university level, the ICRC signed a cooperation agreement with the Russian Education Ministry departments responsible for setting academic standards and drawing up programmes. This agreement provided for the incorporation of humanitarian law in standard curricula for the social sciences and journalism. Throughout the year, the ICRC was invited to take part in humanitarian law courses for university lecturers and in academic conferences across the CIS. To stimulate the interest of professors and students, the ICRC held the second De Martens moot court competition on humanitarian law in St Petersburg, which drew participants from 13 law faculties in the CIS region, representing 11 countries.

The ICRC's vast schools programme, now in its fourth year, is designed to familiarize secondary school students in the Russian Federation with the basic principles underlying both international humanitarian law and the mandate and activities of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. A survey showed that in 1998, fully 66 percent of fifth graders were studying the ICRC textbook, which had been formally introduced two years previously. The trial phase of the sixth-grade textbook was completed, in preparation for its introduction in 1999, and work began on one for the seventh grade.

The travelling exhibition entitled *People and War*,<sup>4</sup> which comprised 140 photos from ICRC archives spanning the period from 1859 to 1996, continued its tour of Russian cities, including Volgograd, Astrakhan, Omsk, and Vladivostok. The exhibition, intended to promote understanding of humanitarian law and knowledge of Red Cross activities for war victims, drew thousands of visitors, among them high-ranking representatives of the authorities and the armed forces and children taking part in the ICRC schools programme. Media coverage and round-table discussions further enhanced its impact.

As in the past, cooperation with the Russian Red Cross Society concentrated on two main areas: operational support for Red Cross branches in the northern Caucasus, including the districts of Stavropol and Krasnodar, and material

*promoting humanitarian law among the armed forces*

*dissemination at universities*

*schools programme*

*dissemination for the general public*

<sup>4</sup> See the ICRC's 1997 Annual Report, pp. 210-212.

*cooperation with the  
National Society*

assistance for the National Society's tracing services and dissemination programmes. The Moscow delegation also coordinated cooperation programmes with the tracing services of the National Societies in all 15 newly independent states.

In autumn, after new funds became available for compensating the victims of Nazism, the Russian Red Cross tracing and information service saw a sharp increase in its workload, with thousands of people requesting assistance in obtaining the necessary documentation.

**MOSCOW**  
Regional delegation



- covered salaries and part of the running costs of the Russian Red Cross Society's tracing services, and provided technical and organizational support;
- organized the third annual round table for tracing officers from 13 CIS countries;
- continued to finance the 2-monthly magazine of the Russian Red Cross, which is widely distributed throughout the country's different regions (10,000 copies per issue);



- held the fourth international course on the law of armed conflict in Moscow, attended by 17 officers from CIS countries;

### IN 1998 THE ICRC:

- enabled 13 senior Defence Ministry officials from nine newly independent states to take part in the second Russian-language humanitarian law course in San Remo, Italy;
- organized 46 seminars for 5,000 members of the armed forces and police throughout the Russian Federation;
- financed the publication of a manual on the law of armed conflict in English and Russian, and distributed 3,000 copies to military academies;
- under the schools programme, held 15 seminars to train teachers in the use of the ICRC textbooks; distributed 7,000 copies of the second experimental sixth-grade textbook;
- took part in 13 regional academic conferences on human rights, humanitarian law and conflict resolution across the Russian Federation;
- brought the travelling exhibition *People and War* to 4 cities, attracting some 23,000 visitors;
- held seminars on the implementation of humanitarian law for representatives of the authorities, federal institutions, members of parliament and the Russian Red Cross;
- submitted comments on the draft federal law "On the Russian Red Cross Society and the Use of the Emblem of the Red Cross in the Russian Federation".

## Northern Caucasus

Mounting internal tensions and rampant banditry in many of the northern Caucasus republics continued to destabilize the entire region. In Chechnya in particular the situation went from bad to worse, with abductions and brutal killings, an assassination attempt on the President, repeated government reshuffles, and religious tensions leading to bloody clashes. Meanwhile, in the Prigorodny district of North Ossetia, outbreaks of violence involving looting and the burning of buildings further delayed the already difficult process of arranging for the return of the displaced Ingush population, despite concerted efforts on the part of the authorities of the republics of Ingushetia and North Ossetia and of the Federal government. The situation on the Daghestani-Chechen border was equally volatile, with weekly reports of raids, shoot-outs and abductions of civilians and militiamen. In Daghestan itself, armed groups openly defied the government in the capital Makhachkala, and clashed with Daghestani Interior Ministry troops in the Buynaksk region. In the summer, the Mayor of Makhachkala survived a bomb attack which left 18 dead and over 80 wounded.

Given this deteriorating security environment, the ICRC continued to rule out a permanent expatriate presence in Chechnya, Daghestan, Ingushetia and North Ossetia, having withdrawn from the region in 1996 following the murder of six delegates at the Novye Atagi field hospital.<sup>5</sup> The Nalchik sub-delegation (Kabardino-Balkaria) continued to supervise and coordinate the programmes carried out by local ICRC staff in cooperation with the local Red Cross committees. Delegates conducted weekly one-day visits to Vladikavkaz (North Ossetia), and sporadic missions to Chechnya, Daghestan and Ingushetia, to keep track of the situation and humanitarian needs and to monitor ongoing ICRC activities.

<sup>5</sup> See the ICRC's 1996 Annual Report, p. 198.



*cooperation with the  
National Society*

*efforts to restore family links*

*fostering public awareness*

*contacts with the federal  
armed forces in the northern  
Caucasus*

*support for health activities*

*Grozny blood bank*

Cooperation programmes were initiated in the republic of Kalmykia in January, and in May the ICRC opened an office in Stavropol to serve as a base for carrying out programmes in Adygea and Karachayevo-Cherkesskaya, and in Stavropol and Krasnodar districts. When humanitarian needs arose as a result of natural disasters, the ICRC also provided some emergency assistance in cooperation with the other humanitarian agencies involved.

The ICRC kept up its efforts to ascertain the fate of prisoners visited by the ICRC during the Chechen conflict by submitting names to the authorities and informing the families accordingly. With the assistance of the local Red Cross committee, the ICRC continued to forward Red Cross messages to and from Chechnya, where normal communications were still severely disrupted.

In view of the recent conflicts and the prevailing instability in the region, the ICRC attached great importance to fostering public awareness of the Geneva Conventions and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and gaining widespread acceptance of the ICRC's work and personnel. A particular effort was made to develop contacts with the media. Articles and interviews on Red Cross activities and the law of armed conflict appeared in the military press and regional newspapers and programmes on the subject were broadcast on State radio and TV.

At the beginning of the year, an agreement aimed at promoting the law of armed conflict among all army units stationed in the region was signed by the commander of the northern Caucasus military district and the head of the Nalchik sub-delegation. The agreement provided for army officers and troops to attend presentations on Red Cross principles and activities and on basic rules of the law of armed conflict. Presentations were given to units of the Ministries of the Interior and Defence stationed in Adygea, Kabardino-Balkaria, North Ossetia and Kalmykia, and in Stavropol and Krasnodar districts.

As in the rest of the Russian Federation, the schools programme continued. Delegates visited schools throughout the region, meeting Ministry of Education representatives and regional coordinators to chart the progress of the programme.

To help medical facilities meet the needs of the population, the ICRC made substantial ad hoc deliveries of medicines throughout the year. Hospitals in Grozny continued to receive medicines on the same basis, while emergency medical supplies were delivered to Daghestan after clashes in Makhachkala and again in the summer to help control outbreaks of typhoid and cholera. In Kabardino-Balkaria, the ICRC supplied hospital kits to a medical centre for internally displaced people from Chechnya and to the Republican Hospital in Nalchik.

The fully renovated blood transfusion centre in Grozny was equipped and furnished before finally opening in the summer. The first statistics showed that approximately 350 donors were giving blood every month. The delegation continued to support the blood bank by providing medical supplies.

## IN 1998 THE ICRC:



- delivered 241 Red Cross messages from Chechnya to destinations mainly in the CIS, and forwarded 150 to Chechnya for distribution by the local Red Cross;



- contributed 545 tonnes of relief (comprising 1 food parcel, 1 hygiene kit and 5 kg of wheat flour per person) to the social welfare programmes of the 8 republican committees of the Russian Red Cross Society, for monthly distributions to over 3,000 vulnerable people;
- in Ingushetia, regularly provided urgently needed assistance (jerrycans, kerosene stoves, blankets and candles) for 2,310 internally displaced persons living in camps and for needy local inhabitants in remote mountain villages;
- distributed, on a one-off basis, food parcels, hygiene kits and blankets to 150 Ingush families forced to flee from an outbreak of violence in the Prigorodny district in September;
- regularly distributed food parcels, hygiene kits and wheat flour to 314 internally displaced persons from Chechnya housed in sanatoriums in Nalchik, Kabardino-Balkaria;
- carried out one-off food and non-food distributions for the victims of floods in Krasnodar district (which

affected some 4,200 families) and in Stavropol district (providing 380 food parcels and 979 non-food kits for about 1,300 families), and for landslide victims in Chechnya;

- in Adygea, provided 200 families with gas and kerosene stoves, kitchen sets, hygiene kits, food parcels and blankets after heavy spring rain caused severe damage;
- in Chechnya, under the bread programme, supplied 889 tonnes of wheat flour, enabling 10,500 beneficiaries to collect 12 loaves of bread per month from state bakeries;



- delivered ad hoc and emergency medical supplies to 8 hospitals in Chechnya, Kabardino-Balkaria and Daghestan;
- supported the visiting nurses programme, run by local Red Cross committees, under which 2,020 beneficiaries received home care from 155 nurses;
- provided large quantities of testing material and blood bags for the blood bank in Grozny;



- provided basic equipment such as tools, pumps and spare parts to the Grozny water board to help it maintain the sewage system;
- serviced 6 tanker trucks donated in 1997 to Grozny district adminis-

trations at the ICRC workshop in Nalchik;

- provided 15 submersible pumps and distributed chlorine to disinfect water reservoirs in villages around Khasavyurt, Daghestan;



- organized a 2-week training seminar at the new ICRC office in Stavropol to familiarize local employees with the ICRC, the red cross emblem and humanitarian law;
- provided home-care training for 30 nurses working in the visiting nurses programme, and trained 16 nurses as instructors in basic home care;



- gave 30 presentations on the ICRC and humanitarian law to 1,300 officers and soldiers of the Interior and Defence Ministries stationed in Adygea, Kabardino-Balkaria, North Ossetia, Prigorodny, Vladikavkaz, and Kalmykia, and in Stavropol and Krasnodar districts;
- organized an exhibition entitled *Humanity and War* in Elista, Kalmykia, which attracted over 2,500 visitors, following which presentations on humanitarian law were given to schoolchildren and university students, soldiers and officers.

*help for the elderly  
and housebound*

Throughout the region, the situation of elderly and internally displaced people remained extremely precarious, owing to the breakdown of the social system and the irregular payment of retirement pensions. The ICRC continued to provide financial and material support for the visiting nurses programme managed by local branches of the Russian Red Cross in eight republics of the Northern Caucasus. Under the programme, elderly and housebound people are visited in their homes by nurses dispensing medical care, hot meals and food parcels. Thirty nurses selected from all ten Red Cross branches in the northern Caucasus and southern Russia received intensive training in basic home care and first aid. Sixteen of them were chosen to receive further training as instructors.

*social assistance  
for vulnerable groups*

The ICRC continued to support the social welfare programmes of the eight republican committees of the Russian Red Cross, which in 1998 provided 3,239 vulnerable people with monthly food and non-food supplies. Krasnodar and Stavropol districts received assistance every three months (4,800 beneficiaries). Other regular and ad hoc distributions were made to the needy, to landslide and flood victims and to internally displaced persons throughout the region.

*bread programme in  
Chechnya*

In Chechnya, where the situation of vulnerable groups in urban areas remained particularly difficult, the ICRC, in cooperation with the Chechen Red Cross, continued to provide 10,500 local residents with 12 loaves of bread per month.<sup>6</sup>

*building up water  
and sanitation systems*

Water-supply and sewage systems remained in a dire state in many towns and villages in Chechnya, in particular in Grozny. Water was still being distributed by private tanker trucks, plus the six trucks which the ICRC had donated to the district administrations in 1997. The ICRC continued to maintain production at Grozny's main pumping station. In Daghestan, the ICRC delivered 15 submersible pumps which were installed in the villages around Khasavyurt, significantly reducing the risk of water-borne diseases in the area. As in 1997, chlorine was distributed to disinfect water reservoirs in these villages and in camps for internally displaced people in the Khasavyurt area.

*cholera prevention campaign*

At the end of April, the ICRC launched an information campaign to prevent cholera in Chechnya and Daghestan, as it had in summer 1997. A TV spot was broadcast, and posters and leaflets were displayed in hospitals and other public places.

<sup>6</sup> See the ICRC's 1997 Annual Report, p. 218.



# Southern Caucasus

## ARMENIA/ AZERBAIJAN

In 1998, Armenia and Azerbaijan were still in the throes of economic and political transition, begun after the break-up of the Soviet Union. In Armenia, economic growth was stifled by a lack of foreign investment and by the trade embargo imposed by Azerbaijan and Turkey because of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. Meanwhile, the potential exploitation of the oil wealth of the Caspian Sea, which was expected to boost Azerbaijan's economy, had not yet begun to fulfil its promise of national prosperity. During the year, political crises led to the fall of the Armenian government, while presidential elections in Azerbaijan were denounced as fraudulent by the opposition. In Armenia, attacks on political leaders and the assassination of public figures such as the Prosecutor General contributed to the general climate of insecurity.

Against this backdrop of political and economic instability, the Nagorny Karabakh conflict remained deadlocked. Although the parties continued to be committed to the 1994 cease-fire agreement, intermittent shelling and firing and numerous casualties were reported from both sides of the northern border between Armenia and Azerbaijan and along the cease-fire lines in the Karabakh region. Despite diplomatic efforts by the OSCE\* Minsk group, the parties did not waver from their respective positions. Four years after the end of hostilities, the need for emergency assistance was superseded by rehabilitation and development requirements. The ICRC accordingly scaled down its assistance activities and concentrated on restoring food security to communities affected by the conflict and building local capacities.

\* OSCE: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe



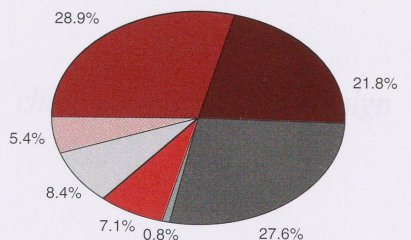
*prisoners captured in relation  
to the Nagorny Karabkh  
conflict*

*security and common law  
detainees*

*Red Cross messages*

## ARMENIA/AZERBAIJAN

Total expenditure in 1998:  
**Sfr 9,664,187**



- Protection/tracing
- Relief
- Health activities
- Cooperation with the National Societies
- Promotion/dissemination
- Operational support
- Overheads

In Azerbaijan, Armenia and Nagorny Karabakh, the ICRC continued to visit 27 persons detained in connection with the conflict to assess their living conditions and treatment. As in past years, all detainees visited were given the opportunity of exchanging Red Cross messages with their families. Despite continued negotiations between the parties to the conflict, held under the aegis of the OSCE, there was no comprehensive release of detainees. However, during the year, six persons regularly visited by the ICRC were released and returned to their families in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia, with ICRC assistance.

In Armenia and Nagorny Karabakh the ICRC had access to the entire prison population (around 6,500 in Armenia and under 200 in Nagorny Karabakh), including security detainees and common law detainees. In Azerbaijan, negotiations with authorities for access to all detainees yielded no results.

The flow of Red Cross messages between family members separated by the conflict dwindled over the year with the resumption of normal postal services between Nagorny Karabakh and the outside world. Most of the messages handled by the ICRC were exchanged between detainees and their families. Red Cross messages remained a vital link for detainees and for separated relatives.

Although large-scale conflict ended in May 1994 with the signing of the cease-fire agreement, the ICRC received 170 new tracing requests from families still searching for relatives who had gone missing either before 1994 or in subsequent front-line incidents. After lengthy negotiations between Azerbaijan and Nagorny Karabakh, the mortal remains of four soldiers killed in front-line incidents in 1997 were finally exchanged under ICRC supervision.

The tuberculosis (TB) treatment programme run by the ICRC at the prison hospital in Baku was given a considerable boost by the signing of a tripartite cooperation agreement, after lengthy negotiations, between the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health and the ICRC, defining the respective responsibilities of each in ensuring the implementation of a TB programme in accordance with WHO\* guidelines. Under the agreement, Penal Colony No. 3 was turned into a "TB zone", and DOTS\* was adopted as the sole form of treatment. The ICRC was assigned responsibility for the quality of the treatment, for provision of technical assistance to facilitate proper implementation of WHO procedures, and for exercising strict control over the use of the TB medicines it provided. The colony was renovated and opened in July, and subsequently the number of patients being treated increased fourfold. The cumulative mortality and abandonment rates remained stable at 10.4% and 11.9% respectively. During the year 443 patients

\* WHO: World Health Organization

\* DOTS: Directly observed treatment, short course strategy

were included in the programme, 369 of them after the opening of Colony No. 3. Nearly a thousand patients have been admitted since the programme began in June 1995.

The ICRC prosthetic/orthotic centre for war amputees in Baku, run in co-operation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, continued to fit patients with prostheses and orthoses and to provide crutches free of charge. During their treatment, the amputees were accommodated in an ICRC-run dormitory. In January, a formal two-year training course began for 16 prospective prosthetic/orthotic technicians from different parts of Azerbaijan.

The number of war casualties steadily decreased after the cease-fire of 1994 and has remained stable over the past two years. Following an evaluation of the assistance requirements of the five military hospitals treating the war-wounded, it was decided to end all surgical assistance to these facilities in August 1998, as the authorities were now in a position to provide the necessary supplies. The ICRC continued to facilitate the referral of amputees from front-line districts to its rehabilitation centre in Baku.

To prevent shortages of essential medical and surgical supplies in Nagorny Karabakh, the ICRC visited and distributed assistance to hospitals treating landmine victims and other war-casualties, and civilian medical facilities in remote areas. A health delegate visited each facility and held informal training sessions on common health problems.

In view of the gradually improving situation, the need for humanitarian assistance declined during the year and focus was placed instead on restoring the population's self-sufficiency. In Armenia, the German Red Cross replaced the American Red Cross in February in running the delegated assistance project covering 16 villages and one town in the north-eastern border region, while in Azerbaijan, some 5,300 beneficiaries in the eight front-line districts received ICRC/American Red Cross assistance. The ICRC continued to help 43 villages in Nagorny Karabakh. In all three areas, the last bulk food distributions were made in spring. At the same time, seed potatoes, wheat seed and vegetable seed kits were distributed to farmers in order to increase agricultural production. Furthermore, seed multiplication programmes were carried out so as to make good-quality seed more widely available in the region and to spread knowledge of multiplication techniques. After the harvest, a quarter of the seed potato yield was returned to the ICRC for future distribution and one fifth was distributed to families in the villages.

These projects helped restore a degree of food security, although the potato and wheat harvests suffered as a result of drought. In Nagorny Karabakh in particular, a one-off flour distribution had to be carried out in five villages before the winter. A spare parts programme for agricultural machinery in Nagorny Karabakh enabled the farmers to increase the area cultivated and the yield per

*rehabilitating the war-disabled*

*health assistance*

*restoring self-sufficiency*

*water for front-line districts  
and Nagorny Karabakh*

*food and non-food assistance  
for kindergartens*

*assistance to primary  
and secondary schools*

*implementation of  
humanitarian law*

*promoting humanitarian law  
among the armed forces*

hectare. The population in the villages receiving ICRC assistance increased by 1.3 per cent, mainly owing to the return of ex-refugees from Armenia and Russia.

As part of the comprehensive strategy to restore self-sufficiency to the population, water and sanitation work continued in nine villages in Nagorny Karabakh, with the aim of ensuring that villages directly affected by the conflict had sufficient water for household and irrigation purposes. As planned, the projects were completed in November and the remaining material was handed over to the water board. The ICRC cooperated closely with Médecins sans frontières Belgium which was initiating a water and sanitation project in Nagorny Karabakh along the lines of the ICRC programme.

The ICRC and the German Red Cross kept up deliveries of supplementary food and other items to 14 kindergartens receiving 700 children in the north-eastern border region of Armenia. This helped ensure the survival of the kindergartens, as well as lightening the financial burden for the villages and families concerned. Furthermore the ICRC, in cooperation with the Armenian Red Cross Society and the villagers, renovated six more kindergartens in the villages most severely affected by the conflict in the north-east. By the end of the year, over 300 children were attending these kindergartens in salubrious conditions.

Repairs on eight schools in the four northern front-line districts in Azerbaijan, which began in 1997, were completed with the support of local communities. The children were able to resume their education in optimum conditions in September 1998. School kits, winter coats and boots were also distributed to needy families in the front-line districts of both Armenia and Azerbaijan, and in Nagorny Karabakh.

In Armenia and Azerbaijan, the commissions in charge of drawing up the new penal and penal procedure codes received comments and recommendations from the ICRC Advisory Service relating to the incorporation of international humanitarian law. In Armenia, the ICRC gave a number of presentations and held seminars on the implementation of humanitarian law for Ministry of Justice officials.

The Armenian Ministry of Defence continued its cooperation programme with the ICRC in 1998, on the basis of a new long-term concept of cooperation. The main objectives pursued in 1998 were to increase awareness of the law of armed conflict, to make it a compulsory subject in teaching and training programmes, and to provide appropriate training for instructors.

Contacts with the Azeri Ministry of Defence were maintained, in particular following participation of the Chief of Operations of the Azeri Ministry of Defence at the 68th course on the law of armed conflict at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, San Remo. A liaison officer for the promotion of this body of law among the armed forces was appointed by the Ministry of the Interior. As a result of these developments, a number of seminars on the law of armed conflict

- Protection/training
- Relief
- Health activities
- Cooperation with the National Societies
- Promotion/dissemination
- Operational support
- Overheads

were held for officers and instructors at military schools, and presentations were given for troops.

In Nagorny Karabakh, the ICRC conducted a one-day seminar for about 60 officers of the Karabakhi army and distributed dissemination material to four military units.

In Armenia two universities were offering humanitarian law as a separate subject in their curriculum by the end of the year and eight universities were offering some hours on humanitarian law as part of other courses. During the year the ICRC gave presentations on humanitarian law at conferences on human rights and humanitarian law organized for lawyers, teachers and students across Armenia.

*dissemination to universities*

Contacts were also maintained with universities and other academic institutions in Azerbaijan, where humanitarian law was already being taught at Baku State University. The ICRC gave presentations on humanitarian law at seven institutes and faculties in Baku, reaching some 200 students and lecturers. Two people from Azerbaijan attended the humanitarian law course in Tashkent and subsequently returned to teach humanitarian law at Baku State University. Throughout the year, several courses focusing specifically on humanitarian law were introduced at a number of academic institutions.

In Nagorny Karabakh, the ICRC gave presentations on humanitarian law and ICRC activities at five universities.

Under agreements with the respective Ministries of Education, a new textbook for sixth-grade schoolchildren introducing the basic principles of humanitarian law was prepared during the year. An evaluation of the fifth-grade textbook, which had already been distributed in schools in 1997,<sup>7</sup> revealed positive results. A series of teacher-training seminars was held on the use of the textbooks.

*extending the schools programme*

The ICRC's first mine-awareness programme in the Caucasus, begun in 1997 and carried out in the form of a project delegated to the Swedish Red Cross, continued with support from the Azeri authorities. The programme alerted over 500,000 displaced persons and residents of front-line areas to the danger of landmines and unexploded ordnance. Mine-awareness training sessions were held for teachers, schoolchildren and community leaders, who also received related material for distribution. In addition, the ICRC chaired and played a coordinating role in monthly meetings of UN agencies and NGOs on mine action.

*mine-awareness programme in Azerbaijan*

The ICRC continued to provide financial and technical support for the tracing and dissemination departments of the Armenian Red Cross and the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan, and cooperated with them in relief projects.

*cooperation with the National Society*

<sup>7</sup> See the ICRC's 1997 Annual Report, p. 221.

## IN 1998 THE ICRC:



- in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorny Karabakh, regularly visited 27 people detained in connection with the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, and transferred 6 released detainees to Armenia, Azerbaijan or Russia;
- in Armenia, conducted comprehensive visits to 10 places of detention and regularly visited 29 security and common law detainees;
- in Nagorny Karabakh, conducted comprehensive visits to 2 prisons and supplied basic medicines, dressing materials, books and clothing;
- provided treatment for 443 patients enrolled in the ICRC-run tuberculosis treatment programme for detainees at the prison hospital in Baku;



- collected 1,588 Red Cross messages and distributed 1,464 between detainees and their families and between relatives separated by the conflict;
- collected 170 tracing requests from families of missing persons;
- supervised the exchange of the mortal remains of 4 Azeri and Armenian soldiers;



- in Armenia, by means of a project delegated to the German Red Cross, distributed 192

- tonnes of cereals, 43.6 tonnes of vegetable oil, 50 tonnes of sugar, and 49,000 jar lids to some 9,400 families (about 29,000 people) living in 16 villages and 1 town along the north-eastern border with Azerbaijan;
- under the agronomy programme in Armenia, distributed 297 tonnes of seed potatoes and 3 tonnes of fertilizer and pesticides;
- in Nagorny Karabakh, distributed some 320 tonnes of wheat flour, 45 tonnes of vegetable oil, 143 tonnes of sugar and 84,000 jar lids to the 41 villages most severely affected by the conflict;
- under the agronomy programme in Nagorny Karabakh, distributed some 72 tonnes of seed potatoes, 20 tonnes of wheat seed, 5,507 vegetable seed kits and 68 tonnes of fertilizers and pesticides;
- provided spare parts for the repair of 14 combine harvesters, 21 caterpillar tractors, 6 ploughs and 2 mills in the 41 villages supported by the ICRC in Nagorny Karabakh;
- in the front-line districts of Azerbaijan, by means of a project delegated to the American Red Cross, provided some 9,500 vulnerable families with over 270 tonnes of food and 16 tonnes of other supplies; under the agronomy programme, distributed 291 tonnes of seed potatoes and 9,242 seed kits;

- jointly with the German Red Cross, supplied 750 children at 14 kindergartens with food, teaching materials and clothes in Armenia; supplied stationery kits to 20 Armenian schools with 5,215 pupils;
- in cooperation with the Armenian Red Cross, supplied 3,167 of the most needy adults and children in 14 north-eastern border villages with new jackets and boots;
- distributed stationery to 1,791 pupils from the most vulnerable villages previously assisted by the ICRC in Nagorny Karabakh;
- rehabilitated 22 schools in Azerbaijan;



- provided medical material for 10 military and civilian health facilities treating the war-wounded in Azerbaijan and Nagorny Karabakh and essential supplies for civilian dispensaries in Nagorny Karabakh;



- in Baku, manufactured 318 prostheses, including 52 for mine victims, and 118 orthoses; fitted 190 new amputees with prostheses and 79 new patients with orthoses;
- manufactured 995 pairs of crutches for the State-run prosthetic/orthotic centre in Baku and the recently opened centre in Dushanbe, Tajikistan;



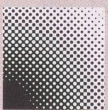
- in Nagorny Karabakh, restored the water supply for 4,000 people in 15 villages; distributed gas welding machines and arranged for 1-3 people per village to follow maintenance and repair courses given by welders;



- held regular working meetings on tracing methods with the head of the Azeri Red

Crescent tracing department;

- trained 2 new staff members of the Azeri Red Crescent to work as regional dissemination officers;
- financed the renovation and extension of Azeri Red Crescent Society headquarters in Baku;
- together with the Armenian Red Cross, organized 2 training seminars for branch managers and regional dissemination officers;



- in Armenia, conducted 2 seminars for 20 officers from the military academy and air-force instruction centre respectively;

- enabled a senior officer of the armed forces of Azerbaijan to take part in the 68th San Remo course on the law of armed conflict, and another officer to participate in the fourth international course on the law of armed conflict in Moscow;
- gave presentations on the law of armed conflict for the troops of the Ministry of the Interior of Azerbaijan;

- in Nagorny Karabakh, held a 1-day seminar for about 60 officers of the Karabakhi army, and distributed materials on the law of armed conflict to 4 military units;

- held training seminars for over 1,000 teachers on the use of the schools programme textbooks in Armenia and Azerbaijan;

- in Azerbaijan, published and distributed 7,300 copies of the 5th-grade textbook for schools in Nakhichevan; in Armenia, reprinted 8,000 copies of the 5th-grade textbook in response to the unforeseen return of Armenian families from the crisis-stricken Russian Federation;

- in Armenia, gave presentations at 31 conferences on human rights and humanitarian law attended by over 500 lawyers, teachers and students;

- gave presentations and held courses on humanitarian law at 10 institutes and faculties in Baku, reaching over 200 students and lecturers;

- arranged for 2 lecturers from Baku State University to attend the humanitarian law course in Tashkent;

- enabled a team of students from the law faculties of Yerevan and Baku State Universities to take part in the ICRC-organized De Martens humanitarian law moot court competition in St Petersburg;

- in Nagorny Karabakh, gave presentations on humanitarian law and ICRC activities in the region at five universities, with 213 participants;

- in Armenia, held a seminar on the implementation of humanitarian law, organized jointly with the Armenian National Assembly State Legal Commission, and gave a presentation about the ICRC and humanitarian law to Ministry of Justice officials;

- arranged for 2 Armenian prosecutors to take part in the ICRC seminar on national implementation of humanitarian law in Moscow;

- printed the Armenian and Azeri translations of the Geneva Conventions;

- showed the travelling photo exhibition *People and War* in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Nagorny Karabakh to some 13,500 visitors;



- since the mine-awareness campaign was launched in October 1997, gave

talks at 459 schools, trained 8,300 teachers and distributed 113,000 exercise books, 120,000 brochures and 6,800 posters.

# GEORGIA



In 1998 Georgia succeeded in consolidating its political and economic stability, notwithstanding a series of potentially disruptive events: the assassination attempt on the President, the taking hostage of four United Nations military observers near the front line with Abkhazia, and renewed fighting in the Gali region. Meanwhile, in Abkhazia, the economic embargo led to a sharp deterioration in living conditions and the collapse of the social welfare system. Security conditions remained tense owing to widespread crime and violence.

For the last four and a half years, Georgia and the breakaway region of Abkhazia had been trying to settle their differences at the negotiating table, but at the end of 1998 the situation remained deadlocked, despite the efforts of various international mediators to find a solution to the conflict. The main problems to be solved relate to the status of Abkhazia and to the future of some 250,000 people

displaced from Abkhazia to Georgia following the fighting in 1993. In May 1998 violent clashes between Abkhaz forces and Georgian irregulars along the cease-fire line, in the Gali district, caused some 40,000 people to cross over to the Zugdidi region of western Georgia for safety. The clashes, the most serious recorded since the cease-fire was signed in May 1994, reflected rising frustration over the stalled peace process. Recent rounds of talks between the Georgian government and the Abkhaz authorities did not yield the expected results, and protocols on the return of internally displaced persons and on an economic programme for Abkhazia remain to be signed.

In 1998, the newly established Committee for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law, comprising representatives of the legislative, the executive and the judiciary, human rights ombudsmen and members of the Georgian Red Cross Society, produced a report containing proposals and recommendations for amendments to Georgian legislation. In line with an ICRC

*Committee for the  
Implementation  
of International  
Humanitarian Law*



report on the subject submitted earlier in the year, the Committee's report recommended the inclusion of measures repressing breaches of humanitarian law in the future penal code (to be adopted in 1999), the adoption of appropriate measures for implementing the law on the red cross emblem (passed in October 1997), and the dissemination of humanitarian law.

In 1998, the ICRC again had access to all people detained in connection with the conflict or for security reasons in Georgia and in Abkhazia, and also to penal law offenders (a total of 10,000 detainees in Georgia, and 600 in Abkhazia). During the year, visits were conducted to all permanent and temporary places of detention in Georgia and Abkhazia, including police stations and the pre-trial detention centre of the Georgian Ministry of State Security.

The ICRC delivered ad hoc medical and material assistance to places of detention, and provided disabled detainees with prosthetic/orthotic services.

Under the family visits programme, launched in late 1996, the ICRC arranged for three detainees to be visited by their relatives, whom it provided with accommodation and transported across the front lines. Red Cross messages and family parcels were regularly exchanged between detainees and their families, providing detainees with substantial moral and material support.

The tuberculosis control project in the Georgian penitentiary system entered its second phase after a tripartite cooperation agreement was finally signed between the ICRC, the Ministry of Interior Affairs, and the Ministry of Health. This phase began with an intensive one-week training seminar, organized by the ICRC and WHO, on the diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of TB patients, and the principles and implications of DOTS. The first TB-infected prisoners were subsequently admitted to the Xani penitentiary hospital outside Tbilisi. By the end of the year 316 patients were under treatment, with an average of 15 new patients every week. Systematic early detection of TB cases in prisons started in November 1998, and a health education campaign was launched for all patients under treatment. The ICRC provided technical assistance and materials for renovation work on the Xani penitentiary and for sanitation work to improve the water-supply and sewage systems.

At the beginning of the year the ICRC renewed its cooperation agreements with the health authorities for the duration of the internationally recognized two-year diploma courses for prosthetic/orthotic technicians, which started at the rehabilitation centres in Tbilisi (11 students) and Gagra (7 students) in February. The course includes practical training in producing artificial limbs, fitting patients, and theory classes. The students' newly acquired practical skills allowed both workshops to maintain a steady monthly output of lower-limb prostheses. Under the prosthetic/orthotic programme in places of detention, the five remaining amputee prisoners were fitted with prostheses. The fitting of amputees in the Gali region was suspended from May to November because of the hostilities.

*access to detainees and family visits*

*combating tuberculosis*

*concern for minority groups*

Owing to the political and economic situation, the security environment in Abkhazia remained extremely volatile. The civilian population was subjected to acts such as looting, burning of homes and robbery. These incidents were generally of a criminal nature and not, to the ICRC's knowledge, specifically aimed at minorities. Minority groups nonetheless remained potentially more vulnerable than the general population and the ICRC continued to monitor their situation regularly and to report to the local and regional authorities when appropriate.

*family links*

The ICRC continued to organize family reunifications involving transfers of people out of Abkhazia, mostly to Georgia. Requests for family reunification came mainly from single, elderly and frail people (the average age of the remaining Georgian population in Abkhazia is over 70), who found living alone too difficult.

*Red Cross messages*

The ICRC's Red Cross message network remained the only reliable means of written communication for people living in Abkhazia, with 56,385 messages being exchanged in the course of the year. Even though telephone lines were restored between Abkhazia and Georgia at the beginning of 1998, the Red Cross message system continued to play a vital role, enabling numerous families in Abkhazia to restore or maintain contact with relatives in Georgia or other countries of the CIS.

*food distributions and community kitchens*

Relief programmes again focused on Abkhazia, whose regional economy remained paralysed by the blockade and structural and economic problems. ICRC food and non-food assistance continued for 50,000 beneficiaries in urban and rural areas. Although the entire population was affected, vulnerable groups such as the elderly, the disabled, orphans and large families were the hardest hit. Following two surveys conducted in 1997, efforts were made throughout the year to fine-tune and target dry food distributions more accurately.

The need for assistance in western Georgia increased in May because of the resumption of hostilities in the Gali district, which caused 30,000-40,000 people to seek refuge in the Zugdidi region. To meet immediate needs, the ICRC supplied food parcels and blankets from its emergency stocks in Tbilisi.

*agronomy programme to restore self-sufficiency in Abkhazia*

Under the agronomy programme in Abkhazia, which aims at restoring self-sufficiency to as much as the population as possible, seed distributions were carried out in rural areas, with technical advice provided by the ICRC's local agronomist. After the harvest, 6,300 beneficiaries in 16 rural villages no longer required food aid. The Finnish Red Cross community kitchens continued to provide hot meals for the most vulnerable members of the population throughout the country. As in 1997, three collective farms in Abkhazia received wheat seed, seed potatoes and fertilizer from the ICRC, which then purchased part of the yield for the community kitchens. Meanwhile, under the Swedish Red Cross home assistance programme, carried out in cooperation with local Red Cross branches, elderly housebound people throughout Abkhazia received meals and basic health care in their homes.

As in previous years, assistance continued for hospitals treating the displaced population and the war-wounded, including victims of landmine explosions in western Georgia and Abkhazia. In the second half of May, the ICRC stepped up medical and surgical supplies to all hospitals and diversified its activities in response to the renewed outbreak of fighting in the lower Gali region. Diagnostic equipment and drugs were supplied to mobile medical units set up by the Ministry of Health to cope with the influx of displaced people in South Zugdidi, as well as to health centres. The ICRC continued to support the surgical unit at the main polyclinic in Zugdidi, which serves some 60,000 internally displaced persons, in order to keep it prepared for future emergencies.

The ICRC also offered doctors at the polyclinic regular supervision and training in standard diagnostic procedures and treatment protocols, in accordance with WHO recommendations.

Because of the ongoing economic embargo on Abkhazia, many health facilities had no reliable sources of medical or surgical supplies and depended entirely on ICRC assistance. The ICRC continued to supply five hospitals with surgical material, increasing its deliveries during the crisis at the end of May. It also continued to provide three polyclinics and one dispensary in Sukhumi with essential medical supplies and to hold refresher seminars for doctors. A qualitative survey of primary health-care facilities early in the year showed that working conditions in the polyclinics were very poor and that the quantity of medicines supplied needed to be increased. After meetings with staff at the various polyclinics, it was agreed that members of vulnerable groups (mostly Russians and Georgians aged 60 and above) who had ID cards for the ICRC community kitchen programme or the ICRC home assistance programme and who could not afford to pay for health care, should receive free treatment. In March, the ICRC laboratory technician carried out a comprehensive evaluation of blood transfusion practices at the Sukhumi Blood Transfusion Service and six other hospitals.

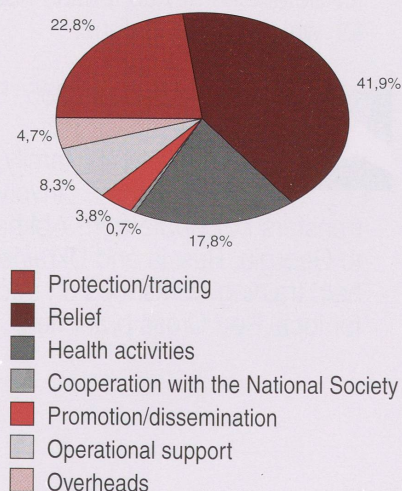
After lengthy preparation, the textbook for seventh-grade pupils (aged 12-13) was printed in September<sup>8</sup> and introduced in a trial phase in 26 schools in Tbilisi and the provinces. A survey showed that 89% of teachers in Georgia and Abkhazia had used or were using the textbook for sixth-graders, which had been introduced in 1996. Training seminars for teachers were held in Zugdidi and Sukhumi on the use of the sixth- and the forthcoming seventh-grade textbooks. At the request of the local authorities, and with the agreement of the Georgian Minister of Education, textbooks in Russian were introduced for sixth-grade pupils in South Ossetia.

The first full course on humanitarian law started for third-year law students at Tbilisi State University, and six classes on humanitarian law were held for fourth-year law students. The ICRC focused on preparing reference documentation in

### *assistance for hospitals treating the war-wounded*

#### GEORGIA

Total expenditure in 1998:  
Sfr 18,813,339



<sup>8</sup> See p. 231.

IN 1998 THE ICRC:



- visited 341 detainees (including 115 registered for the first time), of whom at least 196 are considered to be security detainees, in 35 places of detention run by the Georgian authorities; interviewed 40 former detainees to obtain further information about the living conditions and treatment in prisons;
- visited 61 detainees (including 37 registered for the first time), of whom at least 21 are security detainees, in 11 places of detention run by the Abkhaz authorities;
- arranged for 3 family visits to detainees across the front lines;
- together with the WHO, held a 1-week training seminar for prison medical staff involved in the tuberculosis control project;
- provided treatment for 215 patients enrolled in the ICRC-run tuberculosis treatment programme for detainees at Xani prison hospital, which began in June;

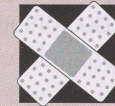


- forwarded 56,385 Red Cross messages;
- organized 42 family reunifications involving transfers of people from Abkhazia to Georgia, Russia and Ukraine;
- held training workshops on tracing for local Red Cross branches;



- in Abkhazia, provided some 33,000 beneficiaries in 11 towns and 18,000 in 57 villages with wheat flour, sugar, vegetable oil, yeast, soap and individual parcels every 2-3 months as needed;
- as part of the agronomy programme, distributed over 367 tonnes of seed potatoes, 19 tonnes of maize seed and 18,890 vegetable seed kits to 17,883 inhabitants of 57 Abkhaz villages;
- to help people build up reserves of food, supplied food preservation kits to 17,833 inhabitants in 57 Abkhaz villages;
- supplied 1,735 tonnes of food for the 23 canteens run by the Finnish Red Cross in Abkhazia, which provided 6,000 people with 1 hot meal per day (2,200 calories);
- distributed seed and fertilizer to 3 collective farms in Abkhazia, purchased part of their harvest and used it to supply the community kitchens;
- provided 14 schools in Abkhazia with 1,020 school kits, 600 pairs of boots, and jackets;
- helped 760 elderly housebound people in six regions of Abkhazia through the Swedish Red Cross home assistance programme;
- after the resumption of hostilities in the Gali region, distributed food

parcels and blankets to 30,000 displaced people (7,000 families) around Zugdidi; provided 18,000 displaced people (4,350 families) with stoves, kitchen sets, jerrycans, plastic sheeting and clothes;



- assisted 6 medical facilities which treated 528 war-wounded in western Georgia and Abkhazia;
- assisted 3 polyclinics and a dispensary in the Sukhumi district by providing medical supplies and enabling local health staff to carry out 110,126 outpatient consultations and home-care visits;
- held regular training workshops for doctors on standard diagnostic procedures and treatment protocols in accordance with WHO recommendations;
- carried out a comprehensive evaluation of blood transfusion practices at the Sukhumi Blood Transfusion Service and 6 other hospitals;



- in the Tbilisi and Gagra workshops, manufactured 670 prostheses, including 124 for mine victims, and fitted 354 amputees with artificial limbs;



- provided the Georgian Red Cross with technical and financial support for its tracing and dissemination activities;
- organized a 2-day seminar to bring National Society staff up to date on the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and humanitarian law;
- showed the travelling photo exhibition *People and War* in five cities throughout Georgia and Abkhazia, attracting some 12,000 visitors;
- for the first time, organized monthly press briefings in cooperation with the Federation of Georgian Journalists;
- produced video clips and 7 short films on ICRC activities in Abkhazia, in cooperation with national television.



- submitted a report to the National Committee for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law proposing amendments to Georgian legislation, including measures to repress violations of humanitarian law;
- held four presentations on humanitarian law for 65 Abkhaz officers and 40 soldiers;
- held information sessions for potential bearers of weapons, reaching 955 teenagers in their last years of compulsory schooling in Abkhazia and 265 in the Zugdidi region;
- distributed 1,000 textbooks for sixth-grade pupils in South Ossetia and organized teacher-training seminars;
- held dissemination sessions on the work of the ICRC for different target groups, including 230 medical personnel;
- held 12 dissemination sessions for national staff of the delegation in Tbilisi and in Zugdidi;

*humanitarian law courses at  
universities*

Georgian for existing and forthcoming courses. This included revision of the translation of the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols, and preparation of a draft version of a practical manual on humanitarian law with Tbilisi State University. The ICRC established initial contacts with the university's journalism faculty with a view to introducing a course on humanitarian law. The ICRC delegates carried out dissemination sessions at the universities of Tskhinvali, South Ossetia, and Sukhumi, Abkhazia.

*contacts with the Ministry of  
Defence*

The ICRC maintained contacts with the Georgian Ministry of Defence to discuss cooperation in promoting humanitarian law among the armed forces. The Ministry continued its analysis of the ICRC's proposals. In Abkhazia, a one-day seminar on the law of armed conflict was conducted for 20 high-ranking officers.

*cooperation with  
the National Society*

The ICRC kept up its technical and financial support for the dissemination, tracing and information services of the Red Cross Society of Georgia. To cope with the growing workload, the tracing service posted a tracing officer in each region. The authorities had still not adopted alternative symbols for those misusing the red cross emblem, for example pharmacies, and the ICRC and the Georgian Red Cross decided to resume the national awareness campaign on the use of the protected emblem.

# Central Asia

## TAJIKISTAN

Some progress was made in 1998 in implementing the provisions of the "General Agreement on the Settlement of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan", signed in June 1997 by the government and the (UTO).<sup>\*</sup> The armed conflict had officially ended, and there was a decline in the incidence of armed clashes and of acts of violence against civilians. Furthermore, nearly all UTO combatants in Afghanistan, numbering about 3,500, had been repatriated by the end of September, as stipulated in the protocols to the General Agreement. Nonetheless, a number of crucial issues remained unresolved. The amnesty law enacted as part of the peace process provided for the release of all fighters captured by government and opposition forces, but it was difficult to ascertain how many had actually been freed. The humanitarian situation of the repatriated UTO fighters and their families who registered in assembly areas to be demobilized remained a matter of concern. The ICRC provided medical assistance in the assembly areas for 3,848 former fighters.

The peace process was overshadowed by a series of crises throughout the year. The situation remained extremely volatile, as witnessed by the murder of four UNMOT<sup>\*</sup> members in July 1998, which led to the withdrawal of all international staff from the Tavildara/Garm region until November. Tensions ran high throughout the year in the Kofarnikhon area, east of Dushanbe, where repeated clashes between local opposition groups and government units claimed a number of civilian victims. Relations between the government and the opposition soured further in September following the assassination of a major opposition figure and key



*the peace process*

*situation still volatile*

\* UTO: United Tajik Opposition

\* UNMOT: United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan

advocate of peace. However, at the end of the year, when a large armed force led by an insurgent colonel attacked Khodjent in the Leninabad Oblast in the north of the country, government and UTO troops joined forces to take control of the situation. This was the worst outbreak of violence since the signing of the peace agreement, leaving hundreds of civilians and servicemen dead or wounded, and causing large-scale damage to houses and infrastructure.

These events occurred against the backdrop of an alarming rise in crime, with murders, robberies, abductions, and car hijacking reported in Dushanbe every week.

Despite numerous contacts at the highest levels, access was still not granted to detainees held by the government on the grounds that Tajik legislation allows no outside contacts whatsoever for detainees under investigation. The ICRC was thus unable to ascertain the inmates' treatment and living conditions at first hand. Delegates were nonetheless present in the prisons daily during the first half of the year to monitor the food programme.

Launched two years ago in 14 Tajik prisons, the nutritional programme for detainees was ended in June 1998. In a final report to the penitentiary authorities, the ICRC noted that the nutritional situation had improved slightly wherever it was monitored regularly, but emphasized that the overall result was still disappointing in view of the large amounts of food provided. The report also drew the authorities' attention to the persistent health problems in prisons. The authorities assured the ICRC that they were providing the prison health services with additional financial resources which should improve the situation. In order to help guarantee proper feeding of the prison population in the months after the nutritional programme had ended, the ICRC set up a one-off agronomy programme under which agricultural supplies were distributed to farmers who agreed to give part of the crop to the penitentiary services. An ICRC agronomist monitored these operations until after the harvest, which yielded less than expected owing to adverse weather conditions.

The ICRC began the year by distributing basic medicines and dressing material to the main military and civilian hospitals in Dushanbe, where supplies were running short because of security precautions taken after the events of November 1997.<sup>9</sup> Throughout 1998, the ICRC was regularly asked to provide hospitals in Dushanbe and opposition-held areas with surgical and emergency medical material, as supplies were insufficient to treat all the people wounded in repeated clashes and skirmishes between armed groups. After being severely hampered by the harsh winter weather at the start of the year, the two medical assistance projects in the Karategin and Tavildara valleys, initiated in November 1997,

<sup>9</sup> See the ICRC's 1997 Annual Report, p. 233.



successfully kept two central hospitals and six minor hospitals supplied with essential drugs and helped maintain hygiene until activities were suspended as a result of the murder of the four UNMOT staff members. The resumption of the projects in November was greeted with relief by the local population and authorities, as the shortage of medicines in the hospitals had become a serious concern. The health delegate also worked with local medical staff to improve nursing care and the management of pharmaceutical supplies.

As Tajikistan had no adequate facilities to provide treatment for the country's estimated 3,000 amputees, the ICRC rehabilitated a prosthetic/orthotic centre in Dushanbe, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Security and the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan. Repair work on the centre continued throughout 1998, and raw materials were procured to manufacture and repair artificial limbs. The orthopaedic department of Karabola hospital agreed to carry out stump revisions if needed, the ICRC providing the necessary surgical material, when the centre opens in 1999.

Heavy snowfalls in the winter and spring rains caused the worst natural disaster to strike Tajikistan in 30 years. The districts of Garm in the Karategin valley and Vose in the south were hit by floods and landslides which caused about 100 deaths, injured dozens of people and made several thousand homeless (government estimates). Elsewhere, buildings, roads, bridges, irrigation systems and thousands of hectares of farmland suffered extensive damage. The ICRC supplied the population with relief goods through the Tajik Red Crescent. During repeated outbreaks of fighting, the ICRC provided food and non-food relief items to families who had lost their main breadwinners or their homes, as well as contributing to the National Society's assistance programme and community kitchens.

After the February and June earthquakes in the region of Rostaq, northern Afghanistan, the ICRC delegation in Dushanbe contributed personnel, vehicles and equipment to the relief operations run by its colleagues over the border.

The ICRC kept up its efforts to have the law of armed conflict incorporated in training courses and applied by the various armed forces present in Tajikistan. Cooperation programmes were established with the Russian Border Guards and CIS peace-keeping forces, as well as with the UTO battalion deployed in Dushanbe under the terms of the peace agreement. Throughout the year the ICRC gave presentations and held seminars on the law of armed conflict for these groups and provided them with teaching materials. Meanwhile, the academies of the Ministries of Defence and of the Interior, the Presidential Guard and the Tajik Border Troops introduced the law of armed conflict into their training programmes. The ICRC made recommendations for the syllabus, held seminars for instructors and officers, provided teaching aids, and cooperated in the production of a training manual.

*project for the war-disabled*

*assisting the civilian population*

*dissemination to the armed forces*

*implementation of humanitarian law*

With technical advice from the ICRC, the Tajik government completed the revision of the penal code, adopted in May, which now incorporates a number of aspects of humanitarian law, including punishment for war crimes committed in international and internal armed conflicts. In June, the ICRC submitted an assessment of the draft Tajik Code of Penal Procedure from the standpoint of humanitarian law to the Minister of Justice and the Chairman of the Supreme Court. The ICRC took part in the working group preparing a new "Commentary on the Penal Code of the Republic of Tajikistan". At the end of the year, a report by the ICRC Advisory Service on International Humanitarian Law was delivered to the authorities, encouraging the creation of a national committee for the implementation of humanitarian law.

*courses for students and schoolchildren*

Cooperation with the Ministry of Education continued, as did working contacts with the faculties of law at Tajik State University and Khodjent State University, which were holding courses on humanitarian law for the second year running. The newly established Russian-Tajik (Slavonic) University and the Tajik Tax Law Institute introduced humanitarian law into the curricula of the law and journalism faculties. The ICRC cooperated closely with the chairs of Penal Law at the different universities to ensure that humanitarian law was adequately covered in courses on penal law, in accordance with its inclusion in the new Tajik Penal Code. Lecturers from six law faculties attended an international conference on the teaching of humanitarian law organized by the ICRC regional delegation in Tashkent.

After successful completion of the pilot phase of the schools programme<sup>10</sup> in several schools in Dushanbe and southern Tajikistan, the textbook was revised and adopted as the official textbook for the compulsory eighth-grade "educational hour". The ICRC and the Tajik Red Crescent Society signed an agreement with the Ministry of Education making use of the manual compulsory for the next five years.

*cooperation with the National Society*

The ICRC worked closely with the Tajik Red Crescent, in particular with the five branches in the Karategin and Tavildara valleys, in carrying out joint relief activities for the most vulnerable population groups. Following the clashes in the Leninabad Oblast in November, the local Red Crescent branch and the ICRC worked together in identifying needs and in distributing food, non-food and medical supplies. The ICRC continued to provide training and other support in the areas of tracing and dissemination.

<sup>10</sup> See p. 231.

## IN 1998 THE ICRC:



– collected 170 Red Cross messages from civilians and detainees and distributed 172;

- under the nutritional rehabilitation programme covering some 7,000 detainees, provided essential medicines, vitamin tablets, over 423 tonnes of cereals, 190 tonnes of pulses, 40 tonnes of vegetable oil, and some 8.5 tonnes of soap;
- delivered 638 tonnes of seed potatoes, 1.6 tonnes of wheat seed, over 166 tonnes of fertilizer and pesticides and 35 tonnes of diesel to the penitentiary services for distribution to the farms involved in the agronomy programme for prisons;

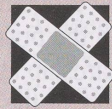


– distributed 9,864 food parcels, 81 tonnes of wheat flour, 2,633 blankets and 1.3 tonnes of

other relief supplies to the victims of avalanches and landslides in the Karategin and Tavildara valleys, jointly with the National Society;

- supplied 7.5 tonnes of high-energy milk and enriched biscuits, 218 rolls of plastic sheeting, 3,055 kg of clothing, 100 tents and 9 tonnes of soap for victims of the two Afghan earthquakes;
- after outbreaks of fighting around Dushanbe, provided families who had lost their breadwinners or their homes with 409 mattresses, 663 blankets, 149 pairs of shoes, 3,800 kg of flour, and 306 family parcels;
- following clashes in Khodjent in November, distributed 12 tonnes of

food and 3.4 tonnes of non-food items to 225 families (1,125 persons) whose homes had been destroyed;



– carried out monthly drug distributions to five rural hospitals in Garm district and 1 central hospital in

Tavildara;

- provided medical assistance for 3,848 demobilized UTO fighters in the assembly areas;
- in the aftermath of clashes in the Kofarnikhon area, supplied hospitals in and around Dushanbe with medical materials;
- supplied 8 hospitals in the Leninabad Oblast with emergency assistance for the treatment of some 400 wounded after fighting erupted in the region in November;



– carried out repair work on a building to be used for a prosthetic/orthotic centre in Dushanbe;



– held regular meetings with the National Society and the Federation, so as to ensure a coordinated response to needs arising from both conflict situations and natural disasters;



– arranged for 2 representatives of the Tajik Ministry of Justice to take part in the first course on implementation organized by the

ICRC's Advisory Service at the Moscow regional delegation;

- held 3-day courses on humanitarian law for officers and soldiers under the authority of the Tajik Ministries of Defence and of the Interior, and for Russian border troops; financed publication of teaching materials (2,500 copies);
- organized a 3-day course for 34 Ministry of Security instructors and officers on human rights and humanitarian law for police and security forces;
- held an introductory seminar on humanitarian law for 20 military commanders of the UTO;
- supported the production of 20,000 copies of the booklet "Rules of Behaviour in Combat for the Tajik Interior Troops" and posters explaining the use of the red cross and red crescent emblems;
- completed the Tajik translation of *Basic Rules of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols*, and distributed 5,000 copies to academic institutions and the Tajik armed and security forces;
- supported the introduction of a new course entitled "The Mass Media and Armed Conflict" at the faculties of journalism and interpreting of the Tajik State University;
- printed 150,000 copies of the schools programme textbook and 5,000 copies of the teachers' manual for distribution throughout the country.

# TASHKENT

## Regional delegation

(Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan)

The Central Asian States covered by the Tashkent regional delegation were all severely affected in 1998 by the economic crisis in east Asia, the collapse of the Russian economy, and a sharp fall in the prices of raw materials. The majority of the population experienced increased hardship as the social welfare system continued to disintegrate. In addition, governments in the region were concerned about political and military developments in Afghanistan and had to deal with the problem of Afghan and Tajik refugees.

The Tashkent regional delegation continued to pursue the three major goals of disseminating international humanitarian law, strengthening the operational capacity of the region's National Societies, and providing logistic support for the ICRC operation in Tajikistan.

*humanitarian law and  
national legislation*

The ICRC continued to provide advice and technical support to governments with a view to having international humanitarian law incorporated into national legislation. In all four countries covered, the ICRC carried out studies of the new or amended penal codes from the standpoint of humanitarian law and informed the relevant government departments of the results. In Kyrgyzstan, an ICRC report on the state of implementation of humanitarian law in the national legislation of Kyrgyzstan was submitted to the government. Also in 1998, the Kyrgyz government passed a resolution to formally ratify the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols. Representatives of the Kyrgyz and Turkmen governments took part in a seminar on the implementation of humanitarian law, organized by the ICRC in Moscow.

*significant developments in  
military training*

To promote the formal inclusion of the law of armed conflict in teaching and training programmes at all levels of the armed forces, and hence its application in military operations, the ICRC invited high-ranking officials from the four countries covered by the delegation to take part in international courses and conferences on international humanitarian law. In particular, senior Defence Ministry representatives from Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan attended the Russian-language course on the law of armed conflict in San Remo, while their Kazakh and Kyrgyz counterparts attended an ICRC Conference for Heads of Military Training in Geneva. Upon his return from this conference, the Deputy Defence Minister of Kyrgyzstan took a number of measures to include this body of law in army training programmes. Two senior officers from the Kyrgyz Ministry of the Interior and the National Guard respectively attended the regional course on the law of armed conflict conducted by the ICRC in Moscow in October.

In the meantime, the ICRC ran one-week training courses on the law of armed conflict for armed forces instructors at the academies of the Ministries of Defence

and of the Interior and the National Guard in Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan. The Ministries began preparing teaching manuals, with ICRC advice, to be used in the official training programmes for the armed forces.

In May 1998, the ICRC and the Ministry of Defence of Kyrgyzstan signed a co-operation agreement on the teaching of the law of armed conflict. As a result, a ten-hour course on the subject was included in the armed forces training programmes from September 1998. In the autumn, an ICRC delegate gave two presentations to instructors from the Ministry of Defence Academy in Tashkent, with a view to introducing training programmes on the law of armed conflict for the armed forces.

Regular contacts were maintained with universities in all four countries, with the twofold aim of having humanitarian law included as a substantial component of all academic courses on international law and of setting up specialized courses on the subject at selected universities. Kyrgyz and Uzbek universities offered specialized courses on humanitarian law to students of law and international relations for the first time, while such courses continued at Kazakh and Turkmen State Universities for the second year. In Kazakhstan, a standard curriculum on humanitarian law was drawn up with ICRC support and distributed by the Ministry of Education to all law faculties in the country as part of the official programme. A similar standard programme is now being set up in Kyrgyzstan. In all four countries, the ICRC provided training and support for lecturers and guidance for postgraduate students. The regional delegation also organized seminars and talks for students at various universities and other academic institutions, on both national and regional levels.

Efforts to familiarize schoolchildren with the fundamental humanitarian principles and Red Cross/Red Crescent values were pursued in 1998.<sup>11</sup> In Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, training courses and seminars for teachers were held to prepare for the introduction of a compulsory secondary school course on civics entitled *Man and Society*. A course textbook, prepared by the ICRC delegation and a team of local consultants, was introduced in a trial phase in Uzbekistan.

In November, a headquarters agreement was signed by the ICRC and the Turkmen government, making it easier to provide logistic support from Turkmenistan to ICRC operations in Afghanistan. Furthermore, in October, the regional delegation opened a small office in the Uzbek town of Termez, on the border with Afghanistan, for the same purpose.

The National Societies of the region continued to receive support in developing and promoting their activities, notably in the areas of dissemination and tracing, and in raising their public profile. In particular, the ICRC helped them organize projects for local volunteers and tracing and dissemination seminars, which were held on both national and regional levels.

*courses in academic circles*

*schools programme*

*headquarters agreement with Turkmenistan*

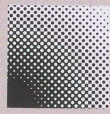
*cooperation with National Societies*

<sup>11</sup> See p. 231.



- signed formal cooperation agreements on tracing and dissemination activities with the National Societies of the 4 Republics;
- provided financial and technical support for dissemination activities in the 4 countries, and supported National Society translations of several ICRC publications into the national languages;
- gave the region's National Societies training and guidance for the restoration of family links;
- organized a workshop to provide the 4 National Societies of the region with training in humanitarian law and the Fundamental Principles of the Movement;
- in all 4 countries, financed a number of small projects at the end of the year, such as production of a 1999 calendar, distribution of New Year gifts to deprived children, and provision of furniture for a socio-medical centre and sports equipment for inmates of a prison for young offenders;
- in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, financed the furnishing and equipping of conference rooms in the newly renovated National Society premises, to be used mainly for dissemination sessions on humanitarian law and the Movement;

## IN 1998 THE ICRC:



- in all 4 countries, held training courses and gave presentations on the law of armed conflict for armed forces instructors of the Ministries of Defence and of the Interior and the National Guard;
- helped prepare training manuals on the law of armed conflict at the academies of the Ministries of Defence and of the Interior and the National Guard in Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan;
- held a specially designed 1-week training course on the law of armed conflict for the Kazakh officers of the Central Asian peace-keeping battalion, at the request of the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- in Kyrgyzstan, organized a 3-day seminar on humanitarian law and its national implementation for high-ranking representatives of the executive, the judiciary, and academic circles;
- signed a cooperation agreement with the Tashkent State Law Institute formally introducing humanitarian law into the official teaching programme;
- organized a round-table discussion for professors of international law in Bishkek, after which 2 Kyrgyz universities decided to introduce humanitarian law into their teaching programmes;

- together with the Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan, carried out 7 2-day training courses for teachers involved in the trial phase of the schools programme, which involves about 200 teachers and around 6,000 pupils;
- in Kazakhstan, drew up a strategy with a team of local consultants to introduce lessons on humanitarian law and the ICRC into a compulsory secondary school course on civics;
- in cooperation with the Uzbek Red Crescent Society, showed the *People and War* photo exhibition in Tashkent, which attracted over 4,000 people during 10 days;



- at the invitation of the Kazakh Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Defence, organized a seminar on anti-personnel mines and the Ottawa treaty, which was attended by about 50 officials from different ministries.

