

MOSCOW (regional)

COVERING: Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation



ICRC regional delegation ICRC sub-delegation ICRC mission ICRC office

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KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS IN 2016

- ▶ Dialogue with the Russian authorities and the ICRC focused on the importance of humanitarian action around the world, particularly in relation to the armed conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and the Ukraine crisis.
- ▶ People displaced by the Ukraine crisis to Belarus, Crimea and south-western Russia met their basic needs with essential supplies or vouchers provided by the ICRC, with help from the pertinent National Societies or the local authorities.
- ▶ Migrants, including asylum seekers and refugees, in St Petersburg obtained legal consultations and other aid from the Russian Red Cross, which received ICRC funding. Several minors were accommodated at a National Society shelter.
- ▶ In Chechnya, families of missing persons received psychosocial support from the Russian Red Cross and the ICRC. With ICRC funding, a Russian NGO processed DNA samples from missing persons' relatives.
- ▶ People held in connection with the situation in the northern Caucasus, and migrants detained in facilities across Belarus, restored or maintained contact with their relatives through National Society and/or ICRC family-links services.
- ▶ The national authorities, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States kept up discussions with the ICRC on integrating IHL provisions into military doctrine, training and operations.

EXPENDITURE IN KCHF

Protection	2,932
Assistance	6,263
Prevention	3,164
Cooperation with National Societies	1,541
General	114
Total	14,013
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<i>855</i>

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	83%
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PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	17
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	134

Opened in 1992, the Moscow delegation combines operational functions in the Russian Federation with regional functions. It supports families of missing persons and, with the Russian Red Cross Society, works to protect and assist vulnerable conflict- and violence-affected populations, including people displaced by the Ukraine crisis. It helps build the capacities of the region's National Societies, particularly in the fields of emergency preparedness and restoring family links. In the countries covered, it promotes implementation of IHL and other norms relevant to the use of force, and fosters understanding of the ICRC's mandate and work.

YEARLY RESULT

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

HIGH

PROTECTION	Total
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)	
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	14
RCMs distributed	7
Phone calls facilitated between family members	7
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)	11
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)	
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	7
RCMs distributed	15

ASSISTANCE	2016 Targets (up to)	Achieved
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)		
Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)		
Food commodities	Beneficiaries	36,000
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	36,000
Vouchers	Beneficiaries	4,500
WOUNDED AND SICK		
Hospitals		
Hospitals supported	Structures	35
Physical rehabilitation		
Patients receiving services	Patients	10

CONTEXT

The Russian Federation maintained its influence in the region, notably through the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and its Interparliamentary Assembly (IPA CIS) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). It continued to play a prominent role in international affairs, particularly as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. The Russian Federation was also a member of the Normandy Quartet, along with France, Germany and Ukraine, and took part in the work being done by the Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine – comprising representatives from the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe – and its sub-groups, to settle the conflict in eastern Ukraine (see *Ukraine*).

People who had fled the Ukraine crisis – according to official sources, more than 1 million to the Russian Federation and 160,000 to Belarus – remained unable to return, owing, among other reasons, to the volatility of the situation in eastern Ukraine. The status of Crimea remained the subject of a political and territorial dispute between the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

The republics of the northern Caucasus continued to struggle with the consequences of past conflicts, including the issue of missing persons.

The Russian Federation continued its military operations in support of the government in the Syrian Arab Republic (hereafter Syria; see *Syrian Arab Republic*). It also contributed to international political and diplomatic efforts that led to a new ceasefire agreement at the end of the year.

The Republic of Moldova (hereafter Moldova) contributed peace-support troops to the NATO-led Kosovo Force.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC's regional delegation in Moscow maintained its dialogue with civilian and military authorities on the importance of humanitarian action around the world; this included high-level discussions in Moscow between the Russian authorities and senior ICRC officials, including the ICRC's president. In Aleppo and Damascus (Syria), Geneva (Switzerland) and Moscow (Russian Federation), the Russian authorities and the ICRC discussed humanitarian issues related to the conflict in Syria.

The ICRC maintained its visibility in the region as a neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian organization, notably through media coverage of its activities, and events with civil-society organizations. In March, the delegation inaugurated the Moscow Humanitarium, a centre for communication and research on humanitarian issues.

The ICRC continued to help people displaced by the Ukraine crisis meet their immediate needs. In south-western Russia and Crimea, it provided people with food and other essentials monthly with the help of the local Red Cross branches or the local authorities; some beneficiaries assisted in aid distributions. In Belarus, displaced people obtained basic supplies using vouchers distributed on a monthly basis by the Red Cross Society of Belarus, with ICRC funding and technical support.

People in the Russian Federation got in touch with family members in Ukraine, including detainees, through RCMs and

phone services. People with relatives missing in connection with the Ukraine crisis availed themselves of National Society and ICRC tracing services.

Migrants across the region, including asylum seekers and refugees, benefited from various forms of National Society and ICRC assistance. In St Petersburg, thousands of them obtained legal consultations and other aid at a centre run by the Russian Red Cross Society with ICRC support. In Belarus, detained migrants reconnected with their families using phone services run by the Belarusian Red Cross, with ICRC funding.

The ICRC continued to scale down its activities in the northern Caucasus, closing its office in Daghestan and downsizing its sub-delegation in Chechnya. Nevertheless, vulnerable people benefited from some aid. For instance, missing persons' families received psychosocial support from the Russian Red Cross, which the ICRC continued to provide with funding and technical guidance.

People detained in connection with past conflicts in the northern Caucasus, in facilities far from their homes, reconnected with their relatives through ICRC-facilitated family visits and/or parcel deliveries.

Doctors from Crimea strengthened their skills through advanced training, funded by the ICRC, at Russian universities or clinics. Hospitals in Crimea and Rostov Oblast were provided with reference materials on war surgery.

Dialogue with the region's armed forces, the CSTO and the CIS – on integrating IHL provisions into military decision-making – continued. The CSTO and the ICRC held their second annual staff talks, involving headquarters-level discussions on, *inter alia*, humanitarian matters and ICRC operations in contexts of common concern.

The ICRC continued to promote IHL implementation in the region, working with the IPA CIS on a set of model regulations, derived from IHL, for CIS Member States. The IPA CIS adopted a set of recommendations, drafted with the ICRC, on implementing legal frameworks related to the goals of the Health Care in Danger project.

The Belarusian Red Cross, the Red Cross Society of Moldova and the Russian Red Cross remained the ICRC's main partners in delivering humanitarian services in the region. They continued to develop their organizational and operational capacities with ICRC assistance.

CIVILIANS

Displaced people meet their most pressing needs

People displaced by the Ukraine crisis received various forms of ICRC assistance. Some 15,600 people (7,600 households) in south-western Russia, and around 18,800 people (9,500 households) in Crimea, were supplied monthly with food and household and hygiene items. They also received additional food for the holidays, and households with school-going children were provided with school supplies.

About 2,400 vulnerable people (800 households) in Krasnodar Krai and the Republic of Adygea eased their living conditions with the help of a one-time distribution of blankets, cooking

utensils and other essentials. On two occasions, some 750 people (280 households) who had fled the armed conflict in Syria, and had resettled in the Republic of Adygea, received food and hygiene items.

All assistance was distributed by the local Red Cross branches in Crimea, Krasnodar Krai and the Republic of Adygea, and by the local authorities in Rostov Oblast. Some of the beneficiaries participated in the aid distributions as Red Cross volunteers.

In Belarus, some 3,600 people (1,500 households) displaced from Ukraine obtained essential supplies with vouchers distributed on a monthly basis by the Belarusian Red Cross, with ICRC funding and technical support.

In Daghestan, around 900 vulnerable people (270 households) displaced by natural disasters, or by the Ukraine crisis, met their basic needs with the help of a one-time distribution of food and hygiene items.

A primary-health-care programme proposed by the ICRC, for people displaced to Crimea by the Ukraine crisis, was awaiting the authorities' approval.

Vulnerable people in the northern Caucasus receive psychosocial support

In Chechnya, some 270 families of missing persons benefited from psychosocial support provided by the Russian Red Cross, which received funding and technical guidance from the ICRC. Beneficiaries subsequently reported an improvement in their emotional well-being.

Vulnerable children in North Ossetia participated in recreational activities at an ICRC-supported centre, run by the Russian Red Cross. The Danish Red Cross and the ICRC carried out an assessment of the centre to evaluate the effectiveness of its services and determine how the Russian Red Cross could run it autonomously in the future. The assessment's findings were to be discussed with the parties concerned.

The ICRC discussed the issue of missing persons with a Russian NGO working on the matter, and participated in some of the NGO's events. The NGO processed DNA samples from 50 relatives of missing persons, with ICRC funding.

Having completed, in 2015, an ICRC-supported multi-year project to collect data on the needs of people injured by mines and explosive remnants of war, the Russian Red Cross branch in Chechnya prepared a report to present its findings to the authorities. Plans to support weapon-clearance activities in the countries covered were delayed by other operational priorities, particularly in connection with the escalation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (see *Armenia and Azerbaijan*).

People reconnect with relatives in Ukraine

People in the Russian Federation used RCMs and phone services to get in touch with relatives in Ukraine, including detainees. Relatives of people who had gone missing in relation to the Ukraine crisis availed themselves of National Society and ICRC tracing services.

The National Societies of Belarus, Moldova and the Russian Federation continued to develop their capacities in providing family-links services, with financial and technical assistance

from the ICRC. For example, in St Petersburg, Russian Red Cross personnel working with migrants, including asylum seekers and refugees (see below), learnt more about restoring family links for people separated by conflict, migration or disaster through ICRC training. Personnel from 15 other branches received similar training conducted by the Russian Red Cross headquarters and the ICRC. In June, the ICRC organized a regional meeting for family-links specialists from the Belarusian Red Cross and the Russian Red Cross.

Vulnerable migrants obtain legal and other aid

Some 11,000 migrants, including people displaced from Ukraine, accessed legal consultations at a Russian Red Cross centre in St Petersburg; around 3,000 similar consultations were provided through a National Society hotline. Particularly vulnerable individuals were provided with food, clothing and/or hygiene items; some 20 people, including 9 minors, were accommodated at a National Society shelter. These activities were carried out with ICRC financial support.

ICRC-issued travel documents enabled fifteen people to travel to third countries for resettlement.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

People detained far from their homes receive visits from their relatives

Detainees held in relation to past conflicts in the northern Caucasus, in penal colonies across the Russian Federation, benefited from ICRC-facilitated family visits and/or parcel deliveries. Some 420 detainees were visited by relatives; 52 detainees received parcels of food and/or household and hygiene items from their families.

Several detainees got in touch with their relatives through RCMs.

Detained migrants restore or maintain contact with their families

More than 400 migrants detained in facilities across Belarus were visited by the Belarusian Red Cross, which received financial and technical support from the ICRC. They reconnected with their relatives through ICRC-funded phone services run by the National Society. Particularly vulnerable migrants met their basic needs with the help of food, clothing and hygiene items provided by the National Society, with the ICRC's financial assistance.

WOUNDED AND SICK

Doctors boost their skills through ICRC-supported training

A total of 28 doctors from Crimea, including 2 displaced by the Ukraine crisis, reinforced their skills through advanced training at Russian universities or clinics; the ICRC covered their training fees and/or travel costs.

ICRC-supported repairs to medical equipment helped four health facilities in Crimea restore their diagnostic capacities. Reference materials on war surgery were given to 60 hospitals in Crimea and Rostov Oblast; a medical school in Crimea received computers. Communications equipment donated by the ICRC strengthened the ability of five emergency-response teams in Crimea and the northern Caucasus to respond to urgent needs.

The ICRC remained ready to facilitate access to prosthetic/orthotic services for people displaced by the Ukraine crisis, but received no requests for such assistance.

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

High-level dialogue emphasizes humanitarian concerns

The ICRC's discussions with the Russian authorities – for example, during visits to Moscow of the ICRC's president, director-general and other senior personnel – highlighted the importance of humanitarian action worldwide. The ICRC sought the authorities' support for its work, particularly in relation to the armed conflict in Syria and the Ukraine crisis.

In Aleppo, Damascus, Geneva and Moscow, the Russian authorities and the ICRC discussed humanitarian issues related to the conflict in Syria. This facilitated, *inter alia*, the evacuation of some 35,000 people from eastern Aleppo in December.

The Belarusian authorities and the ICRC began discussions towards a headquarters agreement.

Contact with the authorities in Chechnya and Daghestan resumed.

Media and civil society raise public awareness of humanitarian issues

The ICRC maintained its visibility as a neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian organization through media coverage of its work, including its activities for people affected by the Ukraine crisis. For instance, interviews with ICRC officials visiting Moscow (see above) helped increase public awareness of humanitarian concerns. Two associations of Russian journalists and the ICRC began work on an online IHL course for media personnel assigned to conflict areas.

In March, the Moscow delegation inaugurated the Moscow Humanitarium, a centre for communication and research on humanitarian issues. The centre offered over 1,500 books on IHL, many of them in Russian, for researchers' use and hosted several round-tables with academics and think-tanks on various IHL topics.

During his visit to Moscow, the ICRC's president participated in a panel discussion at an international scholars' club on the humanitarian challenges posed by hybrid warfare. At a conference of Russian scholars and policy experts on migration, ICRC representatives drew attention to the humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities of migrants, including asylum seekers and refugees.

National and regional authorities discuss the incorporation of IHL in military training

The ICRC kept up its dialogue with the region's armed forces, the CSTO and the CIS on integrating IHL provisions into military doctrine, training and operations. Military officials from CIS Member States and representatives of the CSTO and CIS Counter-terrorist Centre discussed the incorporation of IHL in military education at a seminar organized by the Belarusian defence ministry, the CIS Council of Defence Ministers and the ICRC.

The Russian Federation's central military administration engaged in discussions with the ICRC on humanitarian matters in connection with the armed conflict in Syria.

The Russian Ground Forces, with ICRC technical assistance, continued to conduct advanced IHL training for senior officers. At a seminar organized by the Russian defence ministry and the ICRC, military psychologists discussed the prevention of IHL violations through the provision of psychological support during

military operations. The Russian armed forces' legal service integrated IHL-related modules into workshops for military legal advisers.

Following an agreement with the Moldovan army, the ICRC began assisting in IHL training for Moldovan peacekeeping troops bound for Kosovo. In Belarus, plans to help military academics draft recommendations for integrating IHL into military decision-making were cancelled, as some requirements for such drafting were not in place.

With ICRC support, senior Belarusian, Moldovan and Russian military officers participated in an advanced IHL course in San Remo.

The CSTO and the ICRC held their second annual staff talks in June, involving headquarters-level interaction between the two organizations. Discussions covered, *inter alia*, humanitarian matters and ICRC operations in contexts of common concern. In August, the ICRC participated in a CSTO peace-support exercise in Belarus.

At a round-table organized by the diplomatic academy of the Russian foreign-affairs ministry and the ICRC, Russian government representatives discussed legal issues related to the use of private military and security companies in armed conflict. Russian experts participated in an ICRC project to update the commentaries on the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their 1977 Additional Protocols.

Regional body adopts recommendations for domestic law to protect health care during armed conflict

Discussions with the IPA CIS, on IHL implementation in CIS Member States, continued. These included a meeting between the IPA CIS's secretary-general and the ICRC's president. In October, the IPA CIS and the ICRC held a conference for CIS Member States on the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear and conventional explosive weapons.

The IPA CIS adopted recommendations, drafted with the ICRC, on implementing legal frameworks related to the goals of the Health Care in Danger project, and transmitted these to CIS Member States' parliaments. It worked with the ICRC on a set of model regulations, derived from IHL, for CIS Member States' armed forces.

Academics contribute to IHL development

The national IHL committees of Belarus and Moldova, and observers from the Russian Federation, participated in the fourth universal meeting of such committees in Geneva, Switzerland (see *International law and policy*), with ICRC support.

A draft law on the National Society and the use of the red cross emblem, submitted in 2015, remained under consideration by the Russian parliament.

Belarusian, Moldovan and Russian students participated in regional and international IHL events, with ICRC support.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

National Societies strengthen their organizational and operational capacities

With ICRC assistance, and using the Safer Access Framework, the region's National Societies continued to develop their

emergency response capacities. Russian Red Cross branches in the northern Caucasus bolstered their emergency preparedness with ICRC-funded simulation exercises, some of which were conducted with local authorities. Belarusian Red Cross trainers conducted first-aid training, facilitated by the ICRC, for the Moldovan Red Cross and the St Petersburg branch of the Russian Red Cross. Staff from Russian Red Cross branches in the northern Caucasus learnt more about volunteer management through ICRC-funded training.

In Crimea, the local Red Cross branches, with ICRC support, provided first-aid training to some 2,200 volunteers, social workers and local authorities. Branch personnel enhanced their external-communication capacities through ICRC training.

Belarusian Red Cross and Russian Red Cross officials met with Ukrainian Red Cross Society representatives and the ICRC in Minsk, Belarus, in January; the Russian Red Cross and the Ukrainian Red Cross signed an agreement to coordinate their activities.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)					
RCMs and other means of family contact			UAMs/SC		
RCMs collected		14			
RCMs distributed		7			
Phone calls facilitated between family members		7			
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		39	1		
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		8			
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)		11			
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		2			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		2,512	89	12	75
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		21			
Documents					
People to whom travel documents were issued		15			
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)					
RCMs and other means of family contact					
RCMs collected		7			
RCMs distributed		15			
Detainees visited by their relatives with ICRC/National Society support		424			
People to whom a detention attestation was issued		1			

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: ASSISTANCE		Total	Women	Children
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)				
Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection or cooperation programme)				
Food commodities	Beneficiaries	36,027	15,275	13,470
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	38,427	16,235	14,430
Vouchers	Beneficiaries	3,649	1,715	1,095