



kuala lumpur (regional)

The ICRC began working in Malaysia in 1972 and opened a regional delegation in Kuala Lumpur in 2001. In the countries covered, the ICRC endeavours to involve government representatives, leaders, experts and National Societies in reflection on humanitarian issues and to gain their support for its activities. It encourages the ratification and implementation of IHL treaties and the incorporation of IHL into military training and academic curricula. The delegation hosts the ICRC's Regional Resource Centre, which supports delegations in East and South-East Asia and the Pacific in promoting IHL and strengthening support for the ICRC's humanitarian action.

COVERING

Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	129
Assistance	-
Prevention	1,084
Cooperation with National Societies	183
General	-

► **1,397**

of which: Overheads 85

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	78%
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PERSONNEL

7 expatriates
15 national staff (daily workers not included)

KEY POINTS

In 2007, the ICRC:

- expanded contacts with the region's political authorities and academic circles to broaden exchange and cooperation in the area of humanitarian action and IHL
- supported the first ever Inter-Varsity Debate Tournament on IHL for students in Malaysia and Singapore
- increased cooperation with the Japan Self-Defense Forces and the Malaysian armed forces
- cooperated with the National Societies of Japan, Malaysia and Singapore on the dissemination of IHL in various fora
- facilitated the exchange of greetings and RCMs between detainees, mainly those held in the US detention facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba, and their families in Malaysia

CONTEXT

Natural disasters and the issue of "terrorism" remained high on the agenda in Japan, Malaysia and Singapore, as well as in regional fora.

The three countries pursued their aim of becoming centres for international disaster relief. For example, training for members of the Japan Self-Defense Forces was adapted to include a greater focus on disaster relief, and the Malaysian authorities expressed a wish to set up a coordination centre for disaster relief.

In January, the Japan Defense Agency was upgraded to a ministry, and in the following months defence pacts were signed with Australia and the United States of America.

Demonstrations in Malaysia took place during the run-up to general elections due to be held in early 2008.

Singapore assumed the chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the ASEAN Charter, including provisions on IHL, was signed by its member States in November.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

DOCUMENTS ISSUED	Total
People to whom travel documents were issued	170

ICRC ACTION

The ICRC delegation's activities continued to focus on raising awareness of and increasing compliance with IHL. It maintained contact with the region's authorities to encourage accession to and national implementation of IHL instruments and continued working with the armed forces to advance the integration of IHL into their doctrine and training. It also expanded its network of media and civil society contacts and pursued efforts to promote IHL in schools and academic circles as a way of reaching future decision-makers.

The delegation's Regional Resource Centre, established in 2003, continued to support the efforts of ICRC delegations in East and South-East Asia and the Pacific to enhance their preventive activities. These included promoting the implementation of IHL in the region, intensive networking with Track II diplomacy stakeholders in the region, and participation in meetings of Asian regional organizations.

As in past years, the ICRC worked with the National Societies of Japan, Malaysia and Singapore to develop the promotion of IHL, including through joint dissemination programmes and seminars.

The regional delegation continued to help the Malaysian Red Crescent Society build its tracing capacity by providing training, material and financial support. It also co-organized a tracing seminar in Japan with the Japanese authorities and the Japanese Red Cross Society.

CIVILIANS

Families of Malaysian nationals detained/interned in the US detention facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba were able to stay in touch with their relatives through RCMS.

Refugees and asylum seekers were issued with travel documents enabling them to travel to countries that had accepted them for resettlement.

To help the Malaysian Red Crescent build its family-links capacity, training sessions were held for staff and volunteers at branch and chapter level, including for the new field officer in charge of restoring family links at the national headquarters. As an indication of the National Society's increasing ownership of the family-links programme, several branches organized their own training courses.

- 170 people issued with an ICRC travel document

AUTHORITIES

In all countries covered by the regional delegation, contacts with the political authorities intensified. Many of those who participated in events with the ICRC showed an increased interest in issues relating to IHL.

In Malaysia, progress was made in the creation of a national IHL committee.

Government representatives from Japan and Malaysia attended the Second Universal Meeting of National IHL Committees held in Geneva, Switzerland, which focused on legal measures and mechanisms to prevent disappearances, to clarify the fate of missing persons and to assist their families.

Japan became party to the Hague Convention on Cultural Property and the Rome Statute.

- the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Society of International Law, the Japanese Red Cross and the ICRC organized a seminar on customary IHL in Tokyo
- in Singapore, discussions began with the Ministry of Defence and the National Society on the joint organization, in 2008, of a regional seminar on peace-support operations, family links and complex emergencies
- 25 members of the Malaysian Attorney General's Office and 2 members of the Brunei Attorney General's Office participated in 2 IHL training sessions
- in Japan, 90 representatives of the cabinet secretariat, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, other ministries and local government participated in a tracing seminar organized jointly by the cabinet secretariat, the Japanese Red Cross and the ICRC

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

The Malaysian armed forces and the ICRC co-hosted a regional training seminar on peace-support operations held in Kuala Lumpur in March. The seminar highlighted issues relating to victims of armed conflict and peace-support operations, the role of the ICRC, and civil-military relations. The Malaysian air force continued reviewing existing training curricula in preparation for IHL integration. Following periodic ICRC briefings on IHL, the army medical services included IHL in their junior career course and final exams.

In Japan, representatives of the Joint Staff Office and officers in the Central Readiness Force met with the ICRC for the first time to initiate a dialogue on IHL.

In Singapore, the Ministry of Defence and the Singapore armed forces maintained an operational dialogue with the ICRC. The armed forces of Malaysia and Singapore learned about IHL during regional military exercises run with the ICRC's support, such as the annual Five Power Defence Arrangements.

- Malaysian and Singaporean officers departing on peacekeeping and security operations attended presentations on IHL and the ICRC as part of their pre-deployment briefings
- a basic IHL course and subsequent train-the-trainer course organized by Malaysia's Joint Warfare Training Centre

- ▶ members of the Japan Self-Defense Forces participated in a two-day presentation and classroom exercise on IHL and the ICRC at the Kodaira School

CIVIL SOCIETY

Raising public awareness of IHL and humanitarian issues

The ICRC continued to produce the quarterly *ICRC Bulletin*, a Japanese-language newsletter containing features on the ICRC and humanitarian topics of interest to readers in Japan. Recipients included members of the public and private sectors, think-tanks, academia and civil society.

The ICRC was regularly invited to speak on IHL issues at international and national events in Malaysia.

Media contacts were increased to focus attention on themes such as the use of cluster munitions and anti-personnel landmines and to promote the inclusion of IHL in academic programmes.

Academic circles and secondary schools

Academics in Japan responded favourably to ICRC efforts to promote the integration of IHL into law courses.

In Singapore, members of academic circles participated in a range of events, including a symposium on IHL.

Following extensive preparations and teacher training in previous years, IHL began to be taught in schools in Malaysia as part of the new national civics and citizenship education subject. The ICRC also participated in teacher-training sessions on the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme organized by the Malaysian Ministry of Education.

A regional seminar on the programme was organized, bringing together representatives of education authorities from all over Asia. Participants provided updates on the status of the programme's implementation in their countries and exchanged experiences.

- ▶ in Malaysia, academics and students from 4 universities participated in a national forum on IHL, co-organized by the MARA University of Technology and the ICRC
- ▶ some 200 students from 53 universities and colleges in Malaysia and Singapore participated in the first Inter-Varsity Debate Tournament on IHL, co-organized by the MARA University of Technology and the ICRC
- ▶ the International Islamic University and the Malaysian Red Crescent jointly launched an IHL course with the ICRC's technical support
- ▶ some 80 members of Japanese academic circles participated in a seminar on customary IHL

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Cooperation with the region's National Societies and the International Federation was stepped up in 2007.

The Malaysian Red Crescent received support in building its capacity to provide tracing and family-links services so that it could continue to play its part in national and international disaster-management operations. In addition, existing internal IHL dissemination programmes that aimed to build up a pool of qualified IHL instructors and trainers to staff the National Society's training institute continued to receive financial and other support.

Some 70 young people took part in a role-playing event organized by the Malaysian Red Crescent with ICRC support. Recognizing the event's effectiveness in increasing knowledge of and interest in IHL among young people, the National Society expressed its intention to hold it annually.

Cooperation with the Japanese Red Cross increased, in particular on tracing issues and the promotion of IHL.

- ▶ 18 staff members and volunteers from the Malaysian Red Crescent and the International Federation participated in a training session on the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures, jointly organized by the International Federation and the ICRC