

# PRETORIA (regional)

COVERING: Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, Swaziland



The ICRC has worked in South Africa since the early 1960s, opening a regional delegation in Pretoria in 1978. It visits migrants at an immigration detention centre in South Africa, and other detainees within its purview in Lesotho and Swaziland to monitor their treatment and living conditions. The ICRC also helps vulnerable migrants restore contact with relatives, and helps facilitate efforts to clarify the fate of missing migrants. It promotes IHL and supports the incorporation of the law into military training and university curricula, particularly in South Africa. The ICRC supports the region's National Societies in building their capacities.

## KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS IN 2016

- ▶ Migrants, including those detained, contacted relatives through Movement family-links services. South African authorities worked to improve their capacities in identifying migrants' remains, with ICRC support.
- ▶ In view of planned changes to South African immigration policy, the authorities and the ICRC discussed matters related to detention conditions for migrants, particularly compliance with internationally recognized standards.
- ▶ Swazi correctional authorities sought to make more food available for detainees by improving the productivity of prison farms; they drew on ICRC recommendations and received material assistance to this end.
- ▶ Peacekeeping troops and South African Police Service officers advanced their understanding of IHL, international policing standards and other applicable laws and norms, during briefings and workshops led by the ICRC.
- ▶ African government officials discussed IHL implementation at a seminar held with ICRC help. Lesotho became party to the Arms Trade Treaty, and to Protocols IV and V to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

## EXPENDITURE IN KCHF

Protection	777
Assistance	-
Prevention	878
Cooperation with National Societies	541
General	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,227</b>
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	<i>136</i>

## IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	87%
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## PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	7
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	24

## YEARLY RESULT

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

**MEDIUM**

PROTECTION	Total
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>	
<b>Restoring family links</b>	
RCMs collected	372
RCMs distributed	327
Phone calls facilitated between family members	3,660
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)	8
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>	
<b>ICRC visits</b>	
Detainees visited	5,658
Detainees visited and monitored individually	12
Number of visits carried out	18
Number of places of detention visited	7
<b>Restoring family links</b>	
RCMs collected	18
RCMs distributed	2
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	14

## CONTEXT

Migration within the region gave rise to various socio-economic issues for both migrants and their host countries. South Africa received more asylum applications than it could process, which made it difficult for many migrants to remain within the country legally. Migrants often lost contact with their families during their journey; many were further displaced by violence resulting from socio-political tensions in their host communities. In July, South African authorities published a document that proposed various changes to existing immigration policies; their plans included setting up processing centres near border areas to accommodate asylum seekers while their status was being determined.

South Africa continued to remain influential throughout the continent. It took part regularly in diplomatic initiatives and contributed troops to peacekeeping missions abroad. South Africa also continued to host the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and other regional organizations, as well as an extensive diplomatic community, regional offices of the UN and other humanitarian agencies, think-tanks and major media organizations.

Protests and strikes occurred occasionally and led to violence, for example, in Swaziland. Political instability persisted in Lesotho.

## ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC's delegation in Pretoria maintained its efforts to foster broader understanding of humanitarian concerns, particularly issues facing migrants. It also continued to reinforce the ICRC's position as a reference organization on IHL for national authorities and other influential actors in the region. The delegation made preparations for the inclusion of Angola and Mozambique among the countries it covers, beginning in 2017.

The ICRC helped migrants throughout the region in locating and connecting with their relatives, and supported efforts to ascertain the fate of missing migrants and provide answers to their families. Together with the National Societies, it enabled migrants, including those detained, to contact their family members through phone calls and other family-links services. The ICRC also helped South African authorities bolster their capacities in identifying unclaimed human remains, with a view to helping resolve cases involving missing migrants. To this end, it designed a pilot project with the authorities to collect and centralize ante/post-mortem data, and provided the national police force and a government-run mortuary in Johannesburg with technical and material assistance. It also supported the efforts of authorities and forensic professionals in South Africa to develop the country as a regional hub for forensic expertise. The ICRC helped organize a training course at which participants from various countries learnt more about the role of forensics in humanitarian action; it also arranged training sessions on the subject for troops.

The ICRC visited migrants held at the largest retention facility in South Africa and detainees in selected places of detention in Lesotho and Swaziland. ICRC delegates monitored the treatment and living conditions of these migrants or detainees and, afterwards, shared their findings and, if applicable, recommendations confidentially with the authorities. The ICRC supported – through such means as training – the efforts of authorities in Swaziland to improve prison management and detainees' living conditions. Swazi correctional authorities drew on ICRC recommendations to increase the productivity of prison farms, and received ICRC material assistance for improving food security in prisons.

Efforts to promote respect for IHL and other related laws, and foster support for neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, continued throughout the region. South African National Defence Force (SANDF) personnel bound for peacekeeping missions abroad learnt more about IHL during predeployment briefings conducted by the SANDF with ICRC support. Officers from the South African Police Service (SAPS) and Swazi police officers learnt more about international policing standards at briefings held by the African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum (APCOF), for which the ICRC provided technical advice. The South African Development Community (SADC) and the ICRC agreed upon a plan of action on further cooperation between the two organizations, for example through organizing training courses for troops.

The ICRC held meetings and other events with national authorities, members of civil society, diplomats, and regional and international organizations which facilitated discussions on IHL and various humanitarian issues. Dialogue with the authorities on subjects of mutual concern was further developed, notably through meetings held during the ICRC president's visit in October; in light of the planned changes in South African immigration policy, the topics discussed included concerns related to the detention of migrants. Students and lecturers added to their knowledge of IHL during courses and competitions organized by the ICRC or with its help. Members of the media reported on issues of humanitarian concern, and on Movement activities, using information provided by the ICRC.

With ICRC technical and financial support, the region's National Societies continued to bolster their capacities, particularly in the restoration of family links and organizational development. The ICRC continued to coordinate its activities with National Societies and other Movement partners.

## CIVILIANS

The ICRC engaged authorities across the region in dialogue on various issues of humanitarian concern, including the difficulties faced by migrants (*see Actors of influence*). Dialogue with Swazi authorities and security forces on the use of force during law enforcement operations was put on hold owing to other priorities of the regional delegation.

### Migrants contact their relatives using family-links services

People displaced within the region, including migrants, located and reconnected with their families through family-links services provided by National Societies and the ICRC. In South Africa, migrants staying in temporary shelters after being displaced by violence arising from communal tensions contacted their relatives through RCMs and phone calls. People at a camp in Botswana used family-links services provided by the Botswana Red Cross, with ICRC financial and technical support, to exchange messages with relatives. Migrants trying to locate relatives in their countries of origin lodged a total of 74 tracing requests.

At the UNHCR's request, the ICRC issued travel documents for 102 Somali migrants bound for resettlement in the United States of America.

National Societies in the region bolstered their capacity to implement family-links activities through ICRC training.

### South African forensic professionals develop their ability to identify migrants' remains

South African forensic professionals – in particular, the national government's Forensic Pathology Services (FPS) – and the SAPS

worked to bolster their capacities in forensics with ICRC support, with a view to helping resolve tracing cases involving missing migrants. The FPS-run mortuary in Johannesburg, Gauteng province – where hundreds of sets of human remains remained unclaimed from the authorities – used specialized equipment from the ICRC to improve their management of the unidentified remains. Following consultations with academics, the authorities and the ICRC designed a pilot project to facilitate the identification of those human remains. In particular, the project's focus would be the collection of data – ante-mortem data from tracing requests, and post-mortem data – and their entry into a centralized database for processing.

The authorities and forensic professionals continued efforts to develop South Africa as a regional hub for forensic expertise, with ICRC support. At a training course organized jointly by the University of Pretoria, the Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team and the ICRC, participants – government officials, security forces personnel, members of the judiciary, and forensic professionals – from nine African countries deepened their knowledge of best practices in humanitarian forensics, and the role of forensics in helping families affected by violence and natural disaster to learn the fate of their missing relatives. Military personnel from various countries also learnt more about forensics during ICRC training sessions.

## PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

### Detainees contact their relatives through phone calls

The ICRC visited, according to its standard procedures, people held in selected places of detention in Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland, to monitor their treatment and living conditions. These people included security detainees in Swaziland, and people of various nationalities detained at Lindela centre, the largest immigration detention facility for migrants in South Africa. At the Lindela centre, migrants were interviewed about their migration routes and about specific issues of humanitarian concern; ICRC delegates also assessed their access to good-quality health care.

After the visits, detaining authorities were provided with feedback and, if necessary, recommendations for ensuring that detainees' conditions were in line with internationally recognized standards. Notably, authorities at the Lindela centre and the ICRC discussed ways to improve migrants' access to health care. The ICRC pursued dialogue with the authorities in Lesotho, with a view to visiting soldiers detained by the armed forces on suspicion of mutiny.

The migrants detained in South Africa contacted their relatives through phone calls facilitated by the ICRC. Detainees in Lesotho, meanwhile, stayed in touch with their families through phone calls organized by the Lesotho Red Cross Society and the ICRC; some detainees also received hygiene items to help them cope with their circumstances. Migrants held at Botswana's only immigration

detention centre benefited from family-links services provided by the Botswana Red Cross, which received ICRC technical support; the ICRC joined National Society teams in their visits to the facility.

### Swazi correctional authorities improve the productivity of prison farms

In Swaziland, prison authorities maintained their efforts, with ICRC help, to improve detainees' living conditions. Detainees' food supply having been affected by a regional drought, correctional officials were given material assistance for improving food security in prisons.

At three correctional centres that were set up as farms, authorities continued to draw on ICRC recommendations – formulated based on the findings of an assessment it conducted – to improve the productivity of these farms, with a view to increasing detainees' food supply and reducing their dependence on government funding. These efforts were supplemented by ICRC donations of seed and tools. Prison staff strengthened their ability to implement agricultural projects at a workshop organized by the Swazi correctional services and the ICRC.

Approval of the Correctional Services Bill, which was drafted with the ICRC's input, remained pending.

## ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

### Police forces in the region familiarize themselves with international policing standards

Some 750 SANDF peacekeepers bound for missions abroad furthered their understanding of IHL and related issues, including the protection of civilians, at predeployment briefings and during field exercises and courses conducted by the SANDF with ICRC support. Armed forces from around the region were similarly briefed during training sessions conducted with ICRC help. SAPS personnel familiarized themselves with international policing standards at courses organized by APCOF with technical input from the ICRC.

The ICRC maintained its efforts to expand its network and strengthen cooperation with the authorities and other influential groups in the region. It notably provided input to the APCOF regarding guidelines on pre-trial detention.

The SADC's military health service and the ICRC agreed on a plan of action to improve their cooperation, for example through organizing training courses for troops regarding the proper management of human remains. SANDF officials participated in the peer-review process for the updated commentaries to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, and attended a senior workshop abroad for military officers (see *International law and policy*).

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM	Botswana	Lesotho	South Africa	Swaziland
<b>ICRC visits</b>				
Detainees visited	783	773	2,293	1,809
<i>of whom women</i>	168		58	21
Detainees visited and monitored individually		8		4
Number of visits carried out	1	2	11	4
Number of places of detention visited	1	1	1	4
<b>Restoring family links</b>				
RCMs collected	12		4	2
RCMs distributed			1	1
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	9		5	

## **Lesotho ratifies the Arms Trade Treaty and other IHL-related treaties**

National authorities across the region were encouraged – through meetings, provision of informational materials and other means – to incorporate IHL in domestic law and ratify related treaties. National IHL committees continued to draw on ICRC expertise in this regard. Lesotho became party to the Arms Trade Treaty, and to Protocols IV and V to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

Representatives from 15 African countries discussed the implementation of IHL and compliance with it at an annual seminar hosted by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation of the South African government and the ICRC.

## **South African authorities and the ICRC discuss issues related to the detention of migrants**

South African authorities and the ICRC maintained their dialogue on issues of mutual concern, such as the humanitarian consequences of regional conflict and other violence, and the difficulties faced by migrants. Notably, these matters were also discussed at high-level meetings during the ICRC president's visit in October. Particularly in light of government plans to revise immigration policies, South African authorities – such as officials from the home affairs department – and the ICRC discussed matters related to detention conditions for migrants, especially compliance with internationally recognized standards. The South African government and the ICRC signed an amended headquarters agreement in December.

Discussions between the PAP and the ICRC, on further developing their cooperation, continued. ICRC briefings for parliamentary committee members helped them learn more about the issues affecting women during armed conflict.

National authorities and members of civil society throughout the region, the diplomatic community in Pretoria, and South African think-tanks and academics with a key role in influencing government policies met at regional and international round-tables, workshops, and other events organized or attended by the ICRC; there, they discussed such issues as nuclear disarmament and the ICRC's activities in the Lake Chad region, Somalia and South Sudan. Members of the judiciary from various African countries familiarized themselves with IHL during a regional course, held jointly by the ICRC and other humanitarian actors.

## **Academics learn more about teaching IHL**

During an annual course hosted by the University of South Africa and the ICRC, academics and post-graduate students from various African countries discussed IHL, including in relation to contemporary events; this helped them update their knowledge on the subject and enhance their ability to teach it. Lawyers and law academics learnt more about promoting respect for IHL through ICRC-led discussions at an international conference. An event planned for South African law lecturers was postponed.

Members of media based in South Africa were provided by the ICRC with updates on humanitarian issues and Movement activities, for example in South Sudan and Somalia, thus helping them report on these topics and bring wider attention to them. Public interest in humanitarian issues and the ICRC's activities was given a boost by the coverage of press conferences held during the ICRC president's visit.

## **RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT**

National Societies in the region bolstered their operational capacities and pursued organizational development with technical and financial backing from the ICRC.

With ICRC support, the South African Red Cross Society worked towards improving its managerial capacities; it also drafted a memorandum of understanding – on the provision of health care and the respect due to the red cross emblem – for the review of national health authorities.

The region's National Societies delivered family-links services and carried out communication activities with the help of training and other support from the ICRC. In South Africa, the National Society and the ICRC developed a pilot project to provide family-links services to migrants at the border with Zimbabwe.

Engagement with the region's National Societies on the application of the Safer Access Framework was limited, owing in part to their focus on responding to needs brought about by a regional drought.

The ICRC continued to coordinate its activities with those of Movement partners and other humanitarian actors, to maximize impact and avoid duplication of effort.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
<b>CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)</b>					
<b>RCMs and other means of family contact</b>			UAMs/SC		
RCMs collected		372	12		
RCMs distributed		327	5		
Phone calls facilitated between family members		3,660			
Names published in the media		1			
<b>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</b>			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		85	23	19	3
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		3			
Tracing cases closed positively (subject located or fate established)		8			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		168	40	31	16
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		13			
<b>Documents</b>					
People to whom travel documents were issued		102			
Official documents relayed between family members across borders/front lines		1			
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>					
<b>ICRC visits</b>			Women	Minors	
Detainees visited		5,658	247		
			Women	Girls	Boys
Detainees visited and monitored individually		12			
Number of visits carried out		18			
Number of places of detention visited		7			
<b>RCMs and other means of family contact</b>					
RCMs collected		18			
RCMs distributed		2			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		14			

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: ASSISTANCE		Total	Women	Children
<b>PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)</b>				
<b>Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection programme)</b>				
Food commodities	Beneficiaries	8		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	781		
Vouchers	Beneficiaries	2		
<b>Health</b>				
Visits carried out by health staff		1		
Places of detention visited by health staff	Structures	1		