



# serbia and montenegro (including kosovo)

The ICRC works throughout Serbia and Montenegro, including Kosovo. It supports the families of missing persons in their efforts to shed light on the fate of their relatives, providing them with the necessary psychological, legal and material assistance. In Serbia and Montenegro, the ICRC intercedes with the government and donors for the most vulnerable IDPs from Kosovo to receive social security benefits and implements income-generating projects to help IDPs become self-sufficient. In Kosovo, the ICRC monitors the situation of particularly vulnerable members of minority communities, including displaced people, and makes representations on their behalf, when needed, to the relevant authorities. Together with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the ICRC encourages the Red Cross structures in Kosovo to work together on programmes through a joint working group.

## EXPENDITURE IN CHF

Protection

**4,098,233**

Assistance

**10,313,825**

Preventive action

**1,499,025**

Cooperation with National Societies

**1,575,033**

General

-

► **17,486,116**

of which: Overheads **1,066,925**

## PERSONNEL

**Belgrade delegation**

**10** expatriates

**136** national staff

**Pristina mission**

**6** expatriates

**50** national staff

## KEY POINTS IN 2004

- The first meeting of the ICRC-chaired Working Group on the Missing took place, involving officials from Belgrade and Pristina; the third edition of the *Book of Missing Persons in Kosovo* was published and circulated.
- The ICRC responded quickly to the March riots, both in Kosovo and in Serbia; it built up an emergency-response capacity in Kosovo.
- A temporary cash assistance programme was implemented for the most vulnerable IDPs in Serbia and Montenegro awaiting inclusion in the social security system.
- The ICRC ceased all direct assistance programmes for IDPs at the end of the year.
- A pilot Exploring Humanitarian Law project was completed in Belgrade secondary schools; the concept was accepted by the education authorities in Kosovo.
- Visits to detainees continued; the number of detainees of ICRC concern increased following the March riots in Kosovo.

## CONTEXT

The year was marked by an upsurge of ethnic violence in Kosovo in March, which left some 20 dead and 900 wounded. Around 800 mostly Kosovo Serb houses and around 30 Orthodox churches and monasteries were destroyed or damaged, and up to 4,000 people were displaced, of whom some 2,000 mostly Kosovo Serbs remained displaced at the end of 2004. The violence deepened the divisions between the two main ethnic groups in Kosovo and led to a radicalization of the Belgrade authorities' position on the Kosovo issue. While direct dialogue between officials in Pristina and Belgrade was initiated in the first quarter of the year, it remained stalled until the end of the year following the March events.

On the broader political front, 2004 saw Serbia and Montenegro enact a number of important reforms, including some aimed at modernizing and streamlining the military, the police and State security. Belgrade came under increasing pressure to overcome hurdles to the country's restoration of relations with the international community, especially regarding cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague.

The Serbian government implemented a number of reforms to accelerate the process of European integration. The country showed small signs of economic recovery, such as a six per cent growth in GDP. Unemployment, however, continued to hover at around 30%.

In Montenegro, a 17-month boycott ended when the opposition parties returned to parliament. Montenegro also brought in significant reforms in the army, almost halving the number of troops.

The general elections in Kosovo, held late in 2004, were largely boycotted by Kosovo Serbs. Whilst the composition of the Assembly did not alter radically, the elections led to changes within the ruling coalition. Kosovo also undertook major reforms, including the creation of three new ministries, the first transfer of full municipal authority to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG), coinciding with the withdrawal of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) from two municipalities, and a change in the command structure of the Kosovo Police Service (KPS).

## ICRC ACTION

The ICRC continued to support families of missing persons in their quest to find out what happened to their loved ones. It also offered advice and expertise to the authorities in charge of the exhumation and identification of human remains. The third edition of the *Book of Missing Persons in Kosovo* was published and circulated. In Pristina, the ICRC chaired the first meeting of the Working Group on the Missing, which brought together official delegations from Belgrade and Pristina.

Following the March violence in Kosovo, the ICRC quickly increased its operational capacity, working with the Red Cross structures in Kosovo to distribute food and non-food aid to people affected and stepping up its activities for detainees.

After negotiating with the Ministry of Social Affairs for the inclusion of the most vulnerable IDPs from Kosovo in the social welfare system, the ICRC implemented a temporary cash assistance programme for 7,261 families (around 36,500 people) to tide them over until they could begin receiving State benefits. In addition, before the ICRC wound up all of its direct assistance programmes in the country at the end of 2004, 1,738 households (8,690 people) benefited from grants, vocational training or micro-credit schemes.

The ICRC pursued its cooperation with the National Society, including the local Red Cross structures in Kosovo, building its capacities to carry out assistance and dissemination activities. The ICRC also assisted in the restructuring of the Presevo branch in southern Serbia.

## CIVILIANS

### Helping to shed light on the fate of missing persons

#### Kosovo conflict

In 2004 the ICRC launched the third edition of the *Book of Missing Persons in Kosovo*, containing 3,272 names of people who went missing during the events that occurred in Kosovo between January 1998 and December 2000. It also included the names of people who disappeared in relation to events in southern Serbia in 1999 and between November 2000 and August 2001. The book was distributed widely in the region.

By the end of the year the ICRC still had 3,054 tracing requests on record, including 31 cases opened in 2004. It had also col-

lected 18 questionnaires containing ante-mortem data.

Since the end of 2003, the remains of 183 people exhumed from mass graves in Serbia had been returned to Kosovo, following inspection by the UNMIK Office on Missing Persons and Forensics (OMPF). Of these, 130 were identified and handed over to their families in 2004. In addition, the remains of 191 people were exhumed/identified in Kosovo and handed over to their families, including 19 from Serb and other minorities and 22 from Serbia.

The ICRC continued to offer psychological support to families of the missing and arranged for psychologists to attend information meetings in Kosovo held by OMPF for the families of the 183 people identified and transferred from Serbia to Kosovo. Together with Red Cross volunteers, the ICRC was present during reburials in Kosovo, as well as during transfers of human remains from and to Kosovo, providing support to the families and monitoring the organization of the events. On the Serbian side of the Merdare administrative border, the ICRC was there to support 23 displaced families from Kosovo when the remains of their relatives exhumed in Kosovo were handed over to them.

In March in Pristina, the ICRC chaired the first meeting of the Working Group on the Missing, in the framework of the UN-sponsored Vienna dialogue. It also welcomed the visit by a delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which met families of missing persons ahead of preparing a report on the missing in the Balkans.

Meanwhile, the ICRC worked closely with associations of families of missing persons throughout the region, offering both technical and financial support and advice.

- in Kosovo, 10 psychological-support workshops held, involving 150 families of persons missing as a result of past conflicts
- in Serbia and Montenegro, 19 psychological-support workshops held, involving 396 family members of persons who went missing during the conflicts in Kosovo, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

#### Croatia conflict 1991–95

The ICRC worked with the authorities to speed up the identification of bodies exhumed in Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro and their return to the families. It

was present as an observer at the exhumation of 77 bodies in Serbia. Bone samples were taken for DNA testing by the Belgrade Military Medical Academy, with experts present from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In three cases, the identities were confirmed by the families, with a further 18 confirmed through DNA tests. In addition, the ICRC collected 290 ante-mortem questionnaires and passed them on to the authorities in Belgrade.

The ICRC continued to cooperate with associations of families of the missing as a result of past conflicts, offering psychosocial support where needed.

#### Protecting vulnerable civilians

The ICRC maintained its network of contacts throughout the country, monitoring the situation of particularly vulnerable people. It carried out regular visits to minority enclaves in Kosovo to assess needs. After the March riots, the ICRC distributed food, hygiene products and other essential items to people worst affected. It provided similar assistance to IDPs either directly or via the Red Cross structures in Kosovo. Throughout the year the ICRC made numerous representations to the local and international authorities concerned regarding problems faced by minority communities, mostly involving security, access to health care and the living conditions of IDPs.

#### Boosting economic security of IDPs

The ICRC launched a one-year cash assistance programme for destitute IDP families, providing each with 30 euros a month to tide them over until they were covered by the social welfare system. In a similar programme for the most vulnerable IDP families in Montenegro, the ICRC paid half of the 30 euros per month per family, while the other half was paid by the Montenegrin authorities.

- 5,761 IDP households (29,000 individuals) in Serbia given cash assistance
- 1,500 IDP households (7,500 individuals) in Montenegro given cash assistance

The ICRC supported three main types of income-generating project for vulnerable IDPs – in-kind grants, vocational training and micro-credit schemes – all of which were concluded at the end of 2004. Vocational training typically involved courses in driving, cosmetics, hairdressing, massage or food preparation and serving.

- ▶ in-kind grants made to 1,120 households: 563 for agricultural or livestock projects, 557 for craft or service projects
- ▶ 358 people provided with vocational training
- ▶ 260 loans made to entrepreneurial IDPs in Nis, Kragujevac and Kraljevo

Both the cash assistance and income-generating programmes were due to be evaluated in 2005.

Following the unrest in Kosovo in March, the ICRC extended its field coverage, improving living conditions for IDPs in temporary accommodation, informing them of developments, increasing security at return sites and enhancing access to utilities and health services.

- ▶ 2,500 IDPs provided with food and/or essential household items
- ▶ 8,000 vulnerable residents provided with wheat flour through the two local Red Cross structures

In late 2004 the ICRC implemented a small-scale winter assistance programme for vulnerable minority displaced families in Kosovo.

## PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Under an agreement signed by the authorities in Belgrade and Zagreb in 2004, 42 Serbs serving sentences for war crimes in Croatian prisons were to be allowed to complete their prison terms in Serbia.

In Serbia and Montenegro, the ICRC carried out seven visits to four places of detention, registering 50 detainees, including those accused of war crimes.

In Kosovo, the ICRC conducted 31 visits to 11 places of detention. Visits were also carried out to detention centres run by the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR). Books and games were distributed in four places of detention.

The ICRC maintained close contact with the detaining authorities, especially following the March violence in Kosovo, which led to the arrest of 186 people, of whom around 20 remained in custody.

## WOUNDED AND SICK

With the Basic Healthcare Services Pilot Project (BHSP), taking over the mana-

gement of all 23 *ambulantas* (primary-health-care facilities) in Kraljevo, the ICRC continued to gradually hand over the project. The BHSP aimed to introduce a more modern style of health care, including concepts such as families registering with a particular practice and doctor to maintain consistency in the professional relationship, computerization of the medical records (including developing software), and an internationally recognized general practice codification in the health information service. The collaborative basis of this process was formalized in contracts signed by the Serbian Ministry of Health, the Republican Health Insurance Fund and the ICRC. Another component of the project was an initiative to help adults give up smoking.

Together with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, the ICRC organized the final workshop on Health Financing in Serbia and Output-Based Contracting of Primary-Health-Care Services in Belgrade.

## AUTHORITIES

In Serbia and Montenegro, the ICRC kept in regular contact with high-level representatives of the national and international authorities to discuss various humanitarian issues, including the missing, detention-related activities and the cessation of the ICRC's direct assistance programmes. A meeting with the Serbian prime minister marked a breakthrough in re-establishing dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina on the missing. Following discussions in Belgrade, the relevant authorities reaffirmed their support for the ICRC's chairing of the Working Group on the Missing.

A legal study entitled *The families of the missing in Serbia and Montenegro – their needs and rights in relation to the law* was published and submitted to the authorities in Belgrade. It contained a set of recommendations for improving administrative practice and promoting legislative changes and served as a basis to launch a legal campaign on the issue.

The ICRC organized a round-table of experts and government officials in Belgrade to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

In Kosovo, meetings were held with the president of the Kosovo Assembly, the prime minister, and seniormost officials

of the PISG and UNMIK, including the special representative of the UN secretary-general. All expressed their full support for the ICRC's role in the Working Group on the Missing.

Contacts with UNMIK were strengthened, in particular through a meeting to discuss training by the ICRC of both international and local UNMIK staff.

- ▶ presentations on the ICRC, IHL and human rights law conducted for a range of audiences, including for 15 OMPF outreach officers and 13 deputy directors of civilian prisons

## ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

### Promoting IHL in the armed forces

The delegation held a series of meetings with KFOR to familiarize the force with the ICRC's mandate, working methods and activities. In addition, it gave a presentation on these topics for 40 KFOR officers in Peja/Pec.

Following the signing of a cooperation agreement between the ICRC and the Ministry of Defence of Serbia and Montenegro, the ICRC, along with the Red Cross of Serbia and Montenegro, organized the first IHL course for officers of the armed forces.

An expert panel on IHL decided that the ICRC should contribute to IHL courses at the National Centre for Peacekeeping Missions and that IHL would be recommended as a separate exam at the Military Academy. The Ministry of Defence agreed to distribute the IHL teaching file and the Serbian translation of the *Fight it Right* manual.

- ▶ IHL courses and presentations held for officers of the Serbian *gendarmerie*, the navy of Serbia and Montenegro and the National Centre for Peacekeeping Missions in Belgrade and for US KFOR personnel at the Camp Bondsteel military base in Kosovo
- ▶ 2 representatives of the Serbia and Montenegro Ministry of Defence attended an IHL course at the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (IIHL) in San Remo, Italy

### Enhancing knowledge of human rights law and IHL among the police forces

A number of training sessions on IHL and human rights law were held for members of

the different police forces in Serbia and Montenegro. These included:

- 25 police officers from the Montenegrin Border Police, Special Police and Anti-Terrorist Police and for officers serving under the Serbian Ministry of the Interior;
- 15 police officers from police districts and the Ministry of the Interior of Montenegro and 15 officers of the Serbian *gendarmerie*.

Cooperation with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) intensified, and the ICRC participated in the second round-table on police education reform in Serbia, organized by the authorities and supported by the OSCE.

The ICRC maintained good relations with the KPS, giving two presentations for over 500 police cadets and KPS students. ICRC participation in the training of future KPS Special Units was also secured for 2005.

## CIVIL SOCIETY

The main focuses of the ICRC delegation's communication strategy in 2004 were: the launch of the *Book of Missing Persons in Kosovo*; the ICRC's decision to chair the Working Group on the Missing; the cash assistance programme for vulnerable IDPs; and ICRC action in relation to the March riots in Kosovo.

In Serbia and Montenegro, the ICRC held a series of four weekend workshops on IDP issues for more than 50 journalists and editors from both print and broadcast media. It also fostered contacts with the press in Kosovo and kept selected journalists updated on its activities.

Contact was maintained with the coordinator's office of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC). Two IHL training sessions were undertaken for 41 KPC officers, while a KPC officer attended an IHL course at the IIHL in San Remo.

### Introducing young people to IHL

An evaluation of the Exploring Humanitarian Law pilot project, which involved some 500 students from 16 Belgrade secondary schools and a police cadet school, undertaken in December 2003, indicated that the programme had been favourably received by both students and teachers. An external evaluation of the programme, carried out by the Centre for Evaluation in Education and Belgrade University's Institute of Psychology, revealed a positive correla-

tion between the level of IHL knowledge and students' attitudes towards humanitarian engagement, social responsibility and concern for other people. Implementation of the programme was due to start in 2005 in the southern part of the country where Albanians and Serbs coexisted.

With the National Society, the ICRC organized a summer camp on biotechnology, weapons and humanity, involving 90 adolescents from Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia.

In Kosovo, a meeting was held with the Minister of Education, Science and Technology and other officials to push forward the integration of the Exploring Humanitarian Law modules into school curricula, as well as the drafting of a memorandum of understanding to this effect.

### Promoting the study of IHL at university

The third national IHL moot-court competition, organized by the ICRC in Belgrade, brought together teams from the military and police academies, as well as students from local universities.

The first regional IHL course for advanced students and junior lecturers was also held in Belgrade. It was jointly organized by the ICRC, the Red Cross of Serbia and Montenegro and Belgrade University's faculty of political science. The four-day course involved 40 students from major university centres in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro.

Selected sections of *How does law protect in War?* were translated and published in Serbian.

In Kosovo, a team of law students from Pristina University took part in the Jean Pictet moot-court competition in France, while another team participated in a regional IHL moot-court training session in Ohrid, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In addition, the ICRC maintained and developed regular contacts with academics at Pristina University, donating an IHL library to the law faculty's human rights centre.

## NATIONAL SOCIETY

In Belgrade, the ICRC signed an agreement with the tracing agency of the Red Cross of Serbia and Montenegro concerning its involvement in the collection of ante-

mortem data related to 140 cases from the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The National Society organized a refresher course for the emergency-response units of five branches in areas bordering Kosovo, to which the ICRC contributed financial and technical support, particularly in relation to the Safer Access approach (see *Glossary*).

In Kosovo, the joint working group of the two Red Cross structures met to discuss moves towards creating a single structure (known as the "One Red Cross"). In 2004, however, the focus was reoriented to cooperation in specific programme areas. Following the violence in March, the meeting schedule was interrupted.

During and after the violence in March, the ICRC, as lead agency for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Kosovo, ensured that the Red Cross structures in Kosovo and international Movement partners were kept informed of operational activities and security issues. Both local Red Cross structures were provided with food and non-food parcels for distribution to IDPs.

The ICRC continued to strengthen the capacities of staff and volunteers of the Red Cross of Kosovo (RCK) to provide an efficient tracing service. With ICRC support, the RCK tracing coordinator trained branch secretaries and volunteers in Kosovo. In addition, the coordinator took part in the annual meeting of National Society tracing services from Europe, North America and Australia held in Geneva in October.

To upgrade the disaster-response capacities of the RCK, the ICRC provided expertise and financial support to its Disaster Management Committee, assisted in the construction of a temporary tented warehouse and trained staff in shelter management.

The ICRC financially supported the RCK communication department to help it to enhance its communication activities on humanitarian issues, the Movement and the Fundamental Principles and to expand its team of field communication officers.

Responsibility for the mine-action programme was handed over to the RCK. Regular mine-risk education meetings took place throughout the year, run by 70 Red Cross volunteers from villages affected by mines and other explosive remnants of war.

- 33 mine-risk sessions conducted for a total of 1,213 children