



# armenia

The ICRC has been working in Armenia since 1992 in relation to the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. It focuses on addressing the issue of missing persons and the problems of detainees held in connection with the conflict, detained for security reasons or otherwise vulnerable, and monitors the situation of communities along the Line of Contact. It supports the authorities in bringing the spread of tuberculosis in prisons under control. It also promotes the national implementation of IHL and its integration into the training of the armed and security forces and into university and school curricula. The ICRC works to strengthen the capacities of the Armenian Red Cross Society.

## EXPENDITURE (IN CHF ,000)

Protection	966
Assistance	1,257
Prevention	879
Cooperation with National Societies	203
General	-

► **3,306**

of which: Overheads 202

## IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	96.5%
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## PERSONNEL

6	expatriates
57	national staff (daily workers not included)

## KEY POINTS

### In 2005, the ICRC:

- ▶ submitted a set of proposals to the authorities with a view to clarifying the fate of persons missing in relation to the Nagorny Karabakh conflict and ultimately to providing answers to their families; conducted a name-by-name comparison of the ICRC's list of missing persons with the authorities' and a local NGO's lists in order to reach a consolidated list;
- ▶ participated in the repatriation of 3 Azerbaijani POWs detained in Nagorny Karabakh in connection with the conflict;
- ▶ visited 16 places of detention to monitor conditions, including the functioning of the health system, and maintained support to the TB control programme in prisons;
- ▶ supported IHL training for the armed forces; held the first national IHL moot-court competition and the second national IHL essay competition for law students as part of its efforts to promote IHL.

## CONTEXT

Armenia cultivated its diplomatic ties with both the United States and Russia, although relations with Moscow became strained when plans were announced to double the price of Russian natural gas. Cooperation with Iran increased significantly in the fields of energy (construction of a gas pipeline), transport and culture. At the same time, Yerevan intensified its dialogue with the European Union (EU) by beginning negotiations on an Armenia-EU joint action plan within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

In November, amendments to the 1995 Armenian Constitution were adopted as a result of a nationwide referendum. The opposition denounced fraud and called for the cancellation of the results. The Council of Europe regretted that serious incidents had marred the poll but declared it in compliance with international standards.

Eleven years after a ceasefire was concluded in the Nagorny Karabakh conflict, encouraging developments seemed to take place within the framework of the Prague Process. The presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan held talks twice during the year, and the foreign ministers met numerous times. According to a statement by the 13th Ministerial Council of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), adopted in December 2005, talks on the resolution of the conflict were poised to make the transition from negotiation to decision. The OSCE Minsk Group, mediating between the two sides, expressed hope

that a breakthrough might be achieved in 2006 leading to a lasting settlement.

At the same time, tensions were reported throughout the year along the international border/Line of Contact, particularly in the spring. The authorities of both Armenia and Azerbaijan continued to use militant rhetoric for domestic consumption.

Following a proposal by Azerbaijan for a new UN resolution entitled "Situation in the occupied territories", an OSCE fact-finding mission took place in January 2005 to assess the issue of settlements. The mission found evidence of the presence of settlers in the territories examined but – excepting Lachin – did not determine that such settlements resulted from a deliberate policy by the Armenian authorities.

## MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)		CIVILIANS AND PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM		
Detainees visited	2,939	<i>Economic security, water and habitat</i>		
Detainees visited and monitored individually	76	Food	Beneficiaries	1,070
Number of visits carried out	50	Essential household items	Beneficiaries	320
Number of places of detention visited	16	Water-supply schemes and sanitation systems (completed projects)	Beneficiaries	7,230
RESTORING FAMILY LINKS				
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>				
RCMs collected	148			
RCMs distributed	113			

## ICRC ACTION

The fate of people missing as a result of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict continued to be the major focus of the ICRC in Armenia. To help resolve this issue, the ICRC pursued efforts to foster a dialogue between all parties concerned, reminding them of their obligations under IHL and presenting them with proposals on ways to advance the process.

The ICRC enjoyed a constructive relationship with the Armenian authorities and was granted full access to all detainees held in connection with the conflict. In all places of detention visited, the organization continued to focus on vulnerable groups, including those serving life sentences, foreigners, women and juveniles. The ICRC maintained its support to the extensive tuberculosis (TB) control programme in prisons, while working towards its eventual handover to the Ministry of Justice.

Following tensions along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan in spring 2005, the ICRC carried out two assessment missions to the Tavush region to better understand and gauge the impact of the situation on the civilian population. Accordingly, it decided to step up its presence in the area in 2006.

As anticipated, the promotion of IHL remained a priority for the ICRC in Armenia. It kept in regular contact with the authorities regarding the national implementation of relevant IHL treaties and continued to support the work of military IHL instructors and the integration of IHL into military doctrine and training. Given the ongoing reform of the Armenian education system, the ICRC recommended that IHL be included in the school curriculum as a mandatory subject and that the authorities take over ownership of the programme within two years. The ICRC also continued to support the teaching of IHL in Armenian universities.

The ICRC maintained its close working relationship with the International Federation and the Armenian Red Cross Society with the aim of strengthening the National Society's capacities.

## CIVILIANS

## Missing persons

Thousands of families remained without news of the fate or whereabouts of relatives missing as a result of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. The ICRC conducted a name-by-name comparison of its list of missing persons with the authorities' and a local NGO's lists and contacted the families of those people who were not on its own list in order to reach a consolidated list. By the end of the year, the ICRC's list of missing persons from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorny Karabakh contained 3,478 names.

- ▶ 467 new tracing requests registered

The ICRC presented all parties with a memorandum outlining proposals for addressing the issue of the missing in a comprehensive fashion. The Armenian authorities welcomed this initiative, and the organization pursued its dialogue with them on implementation of the proposals. These pertained to the ongoing work of the relevant commissions and the creation of multilateral mechanisms, the collection and management of information on the missing, the recovery and identification of human remains and psychological support for the families of the missing.

Although the authorities lacked experience in ante-mortem data collection, they expressed their readiness to uphold the process and requested support and training from the ICRC in doing so. The ICRC also initiated discussions with various actors capable of playing a role in ante-mortem data collection and later in the identification process. By year's end, the data form was finalized, forensic specialists identified

and a dialogue initiated with the Armenian Red Cross Society on cooperation in future data collection.

A first assessment of the legal and financial situation of families of the missing, completed by the ICRC, found that the families of missing soldiers received some level of compensation, while the families of missing civilians received no benefits. With the ICRC's support, the Fund Against Violation of Law, a local NGO, provided school materials to 94 children of missing persons, as well as psychological assistance to the families.

## Family links

The RCM network remained the only way for a number of people from Abkhazia, Azerbaijan and other countries to stay in touch with relatives in Armenia.

- ▶ 93 RCMs distributed and 113 RCMs collected

## PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

The ICRC continued to visit people held in connection with the conflict in Nagorny Karabakh and to monitor the conditions of detention and treatment of detainees. It participated in the repatriation of three Azerbaijani POWs detained in Nagorny Karabakh in relation to the conflict.

The ICRC had unrestricted access to places of detention under the authority of the Ministry of Justice and the State police service. Recommendations made by the ICRC following its visits were acknowledged by the authorities and acted upon where possible. The organization was also allowed to visit places of detention under the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence.

The ICRC maintained its focus on the plight of the most vulnerable groups in the Armenian penitentiary system, including

those serving life sentences and foreigners. The material and psychological conditions of female and juvenile detainees, particularly during pre-trial isolation, were also monitored as a priority. The ICRC presented the authorities with a report on the conditions of detainees sentenced to life imprisonment.

As part of its cooperation with other humanitarian actors, the ICRC welcomed the involvement of the Civil Society Monitoring Group for Penitentiary Institutions in checking the conditions in pre-trial places of detention under the Ministry of Justice.

- ▶ 2,939 people visited, including 16 newly registered and 76 monitored individually, during 50 visits to 16 places of detention
- ▶ 20 RCMs distributed to detainees and 35 RCMs collected
- ▶ 160 family visits organized for 62 people either serving life sentences or detained for security reasons

### TB control programme

TB remained a grave threat to the health of detainees in Armenia. The ICRC continued to support the Ministry of Justice in expanding the TB control programme to all detainees in the country, using the directly observed treatment, short course (DOTS) method. The organization monitored the programme and advised the authorities on its implementation.

New TB treatment units were opened in three Criminal Executive Institutions with the support of the ICRC. These units provided TB services to some 200 pre-trial detainees, by conducting screenings on entry and giving DOTS treatment to those diagnosed with TB.

The ICRC supported the Ministry of Justice in the rehabilitation and equipping of a TB microscopy laboratory. Infrastructure was created for the isolation and treatment of patients detected with TB, while toilet and shower facilities were refurbished and drainage and sewage systems rehabilitated. In addition, the organization supported the Ministry's health-care services through the provision of supplementary drugs, medical materials and personal protection articles.

In cooperation with WHO, the ICRC organized regional training in TB surveillance, monitoring and supervision, sponsoring the participation of doctors from the Armenian Ministry of Justice, as well as from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Doctors and nurses from the Ministry of Justice, along with laboratory

staff from the Ministry of Health, benefited from a variety of specialized training sessions and workshops supported by the ICRC.

In line with WHO recommendations, the ICRC encouraged the authorities also to take HIV/AIDS into account and stressed the importance of combating TB and AIDS jointly.

- ▶ 57 detainees integrated into the TB control programme, of which 34 newly detected cases
- ▶ 22 doctors and nurses from the Ministry of Justice trained in TB diagnosis and treatment
- ▶ 4,000 leaflets addressing the stigma of TB, produced by the ICRC and distributed by the Armenian Red Cross Society during a public awareness campaign relating to World TB Day

### WOUNDED AND SICK

To improve treatment of victims of mines and explosive remnants of war, the ICRC sponsored the participation of three surgeons from the Armenian Ministry of Defence, along with four from Azerbaijan and three from Nagorny Karabakh, in its annual regional war-surgery seminars in Sochi, Russia.

### AUTHORITIES

In its efforts to promote the implementation of relevant IHL treaties, the ICRC pursued its dialogue with the national authorities regarding Armenia's accession to the Rome Statute. It also translated into Armenian and published a collection of materials on the International Criminal Court. In addition, the ICRC monitored progress towards Armenia's accession to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its protocols, the Ottawa Convention and the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention on Cultural Property. The National Assembly ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

With the support of the ICRC, two national studies were completed on the compatibility of Armenian law with international treaties and norms governing the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict, on the one hand, and with IHL provisions related to missing persons, on the other hand.

A round-table on the Hague Convention on Cultural Property and its protocols and the status of its implementation in Armenia was organized jointly by the ICRC and the Armenian Association of International Law.

### ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

Working to promote IHL among the Armenian armed forces, the ICRC continued to focus its efforts on instructing military specialists and integrating IHL into military doctrine and training.

IHL was taught as an integral part of the curriculum at the Military Institute of the Ministry of Defence, where more than 200 cadets attended 40 hours of IHL teaching. IHL was also included in the programme of the advanced officers' courses.

- ▶ 12 heads of battalion from the Armenian armed forces took part in an IHL course organized jointly by the ICRC and the Ministry of Defence
- ▶ 50 regimental commanders and 45 deputy commanders attended 2 IHL dissemination sessions conducted by the ICRC
- ▶ the chief of staff of the 3rd Army Corps participated in the 111th Military Course in San Remo and 1 officer coach and 4 cadets from the Military Institute participated in the General Skobelev IHL competition co-organized by the ICRC and the Russian armed forces in Ryazan, Russian Federation
- ▶ 4 officers took part in the 33rd and 35th Senezh IHL courses co-organized by the ICRC and the Russian armed forces in Solnechnogorsk, Russian Federation
- ▶ 3,500 posters and 50,000 leaflets, produced by the ICRC and containing extracts from the *IHL for Commanders* code of conduct manual were delivered to the Ministry of Defence for distribution

### CIVIL SOCIETY

In a bid to target specific audiences in Armenia, the ICRC maintained regular contact with specialized media outlets. For example, all ICRC-issued information on its IHL programme for university students was published in two education weeklies. The ICRC's TB control programme in prisons was regularly highlighted in the Ministry of Health's weekly publication. ICRC representatives gave interviews to Armenian TV news programmes, and the

Ministry of Defence made a TV report on IHL teaching in the armed forces and the ICRC's role in it.

With educational reform well under way, the ICRC sought to include IHL in new secondary-school curricula. The secondary-school IHL programme marked its 10th anniversary, and the ICRC seized the opportunity to present the Ministry of Education with a summary of its major achievements and an analysis of teachers' and pupils' perceptions. The organization continued to reinforce national capacity to teach IHL and proposed that the authorities assume ownership of the programme as of 2007. To this end, a methodological guide for trainers was designed and produced, while teacher-training seminars intensified nationwide.

The ICRC's university programme focused on building local capacities in the field of IHL teaching. Moreover, some 2,000 volumes of ICRC/IHL-related publications in Armenian and Russian were distributed to universities and libraries. Further IHL promotion among future leaders and decision-makers took the shape of a first national IHL moot-court competition and a second national IHL essay competition for law students, both events co-organized by the ICRC and the Armenian Association of International Law.

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

The ICRC, in coordination with the International Federation, continued to provide support to the Armenian Red Cross Society, particularly for its tracing, dissemination and first-aid programmes.

To ensure the proper registration and follow-up of tracing requests addressed to the National Society, the ICRC helped create and install a database. It also sponsored the participation of the head of the National Society's tracing service in a specialized round-table in Moscow. Capacity-building efforts were enhanced through three tracing seminars and two dissemination seminars for National Society staff. A handbook containing dissemination guidelines was one of several National Society publications produced with ICRC support.