



armenia

The ICRC has been working in Armenia since 1992 in relation to the Nagorno 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 under control in prisons. 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 KCHF)

Protection	798
Assistance	952
Prevention	768
Cooperation with National Societies	249
General	-

► **2,767**

of which: Overheads 169

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	92%
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PERSONNEL

6	expatriates
54	national staff (daily workers not included)

KEY POINTS

In 2006, the ICRC:

- ▶ through a visit by President Jakob Kellenberger, reaffirmed its intent to continue to provide relevant humanitarian services in the southern Caucasus and stressed the necessity of making progress on the issue of missing persons in the region;
- ▶ approached families of persons missing in relation to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict to open tracing requests, and prepared the ground for ante-mortem data collection;
- ▶ visited detainees to monitor their treatment and living conditions and maintained support to the tuberculosis control programme in prisons; visited 1 Azerbaijani POW and facilitated the repatriation of 1 civilian interned in relation to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict;
- ▶ maintained support to the Armenian Red Cross Society, particularly for its dissemination and tracing activities;
- ▶ contributed to enhancing knowledge and understanding of IHL among the national authorities and armed forces, and organized the 2nd national IHL moot court competition and the 3rd national IHL essay competition.

CONTEXT

The Armenian economy continued to show two-digit growth, largely driven by the construction sector, even though the deterioration in relations between Georgia and the Russian Federation had a slowing-down effect on Armenian trade.

Armenia sought to pursue a balanced foreign policy, strengthening ties with the Russian Federation, the United States, the European Union (EU) and the Islamic Republic of Iran. President Robert Kocharian visited Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, in July to discuss regional issues. The “gas crisis” with the Russian Federation, its principal energy supplier, ended in April with the signing of a new deal. Meanwhile, Armenia received a five-year USD 236 million grant from the United States within the framework of the Millennium Challenge Account in order to reduce poverty and foster development in rural areas. Armenia and NATO reinforced their links by concluding an agreement within the Individual Partnership Action Plan.

The EU reviewed the mandate of its new Special Representative for the South Caucasus. It confirmed its commitment to assist Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in implementing political and economic reforms and focused its mandate on conflict resolution, including through promoting the return of refugees and IDPs. In November, the EU and Armenia adopted a five-year plan of action within the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Given that no elections were scheduled to take place in 2006 in either Armenia or Azerbaijan, the year was portrayed by many as “a unique window of opportunity” to make progress towards a settlement of the 18-year Nagorno Karabakh conflict. Despite three meetings between the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan, making a total of eight since 2003, and the intense shuttle diplomacy led by the co-chairmen of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, there was no significant breakthrough.

On the front line, tensions rose in spring and autumn. Numerous ceasefire violations were reported by both sides, and casualty figures increased mainly among the ranks of soldiers. The conflict was still an important factor influencing domestic politics in both Armenia and Azerbaijan, which continued to employ military rhetoric.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)		PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM		
Detainees visited	2,870	<i>Economic security, water and habitat</i>		
Detainees visited and monitored individually	73	Habitat structures	Beneficiaries	7,080
Number of visits carried out	29			
Number of places of detention visited	11			
RESTORING FAMILY LINKS				
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>				
RCMs collected	29			
RCMs distributed	45			

ICRC ACTION

In April, ICRC President Jakob Kellenberger visited the southern Caucasus and met the highest authorities in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. In Armenia, the main focus of the talks was on the fate of persons missing as a result of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict.

The impact of ongoing tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the population living along the international border continued to elicit the ICRC's attention. Regular field missions enhanced the organization's already well-developed presence established through programmes conducted in partnership with the Armenian Red Cross Society.

The ICRC continued to monitor the conditions of detention and treatment of people deprived of their liberty, in particular certain categories of detainees more vulnerable than others. It maintained its support to the Ministry of Justice in strengthening its medical services in prisons, especially the tuberculosis (TB) control programme, in relation to which the ICRC concentrated on building the capacity of the authorities in preparation for the phase-out of its involvement planned for 2008.

Efforts were pursued to familiarize the relevant authorities with IHL issues and to obtain their support for IHL implementation. As part of this process, the ICRC facilitated dialogue between Armenian experts and government officials and foreign and international experts. It continued to support the work of IHL instructors in military educational institutions by providing technical expertise and training. It cooperated with the education authorities and closely followed education reforms with the aim of providing the support needed for the integration of IHL basics into the secondary school curriculum. The ICRC also worked to enhance IHL knowledge among university students and to reinforce relations with the media and other key elements of civil society.

The ICRC continued to support the Armenian Red Cross Society in strengthening its capacity, particularly in IHL dissemination and tracing activities. It also laid the groundwork for an operational partnership in the collection of ante-mortem data from the families of persons missing in connection with the Nagorny Karabakh conflict.

CIVILIANS

In an effort to better understand the situation faced by conflict-affected populations and follow up on individual cases, the ICRC conducted regular field missions and expanded contacts with the local population and the civilian and military authorities in the front-line regions.

Moreover, it strengthened relations with regional branches of the Armenian Red Cross Society and contributed financially to basic first-aid courses organized for the local population. Dialogue was also reinforced with other humanitarian organizations working in these areas.

Missing persons

The consolidation of the ICRC's list of persons missing in relation to the Nagorny Karabakh conflict with that of the authorities continued through direct contacts with families. By the end of the year, the ICRC's list of missing persons from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorny Karabakh totalled 4,176 names (for details see *Azerbaijan*).

The Armenian and Azerbaijani State Commissions on Missing Persons pursued dialogue with the ICRC on the implementation of proposals outlined by the ICRC in its January 2005 memorandum. The highest authorities of Armenia formally committed themselves to implement the memorandum. The Armenian State commission underwent profound internal changes, bringing a fresh impetus to its activities related to missing persons. Both State commissions took part in the European

Workshop on National Mechanisms and Legal Measures to Prevent Disappearances, Clarify the Fate of Missing Persons and Support their Families held in September in Brussels, Belgium. Prior to this, an informal meeting between the two State commissions, in the presence of the ICRC, enabled a discussion to take place on ways to re-establish more regular information exchange and periodic working meetings.

Preparations for ante-mortem data collection went ahead, with implementation in partnership with the Armenian Red Cross Society scheduled for 2007. An assessment of the quality of legal, social and mental health services offered by local organizations to families of missing persons was completed with a view to defining the basis of a future referral system. Work continued to identify specialists, in particular archaeologists and anthropologists, who could be involved at a later stage in the process of identification of human remains. A new study with recommendations on the compatibility of Armenian legislation related to missing persons with international treaties and norms was also completed.

Family links

RCMs remained the only means for a number of family members separated by conflict to communicate with each other.

- ▶ 20 RCMs collected from and 41 distributed to civilians in Armenia

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

One Azerbaijani POW was visited in Yerevan, and one civilian interned in relation to the Nagorny Karabakh conflict was repatriated to Azerbaijan.

The ICRC continued to enjoy unrestricted access to all places of detention under the authority of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Justice and the State police

service. Recommendations made by the ICRC were generally acknowledged and acted upon by the authorities of the places of detention within the limits of available resources.

While focusing on the individual situations of security detainees, women and minors, as well as on vulnerable and foreign detainees in need of assistance, the ICRC continued to address problems in detention places from a broader perspective. Thanks to rehabilitation projects implemented in five detention centres, detainees enjoyed better health and sanitary conditions. Contacts were strengthened with the social and psychological services to enhance their growing capacity to address detainees' needs, while considerable efforts were made to improve cooperation among State and non-State bodies dealing with detention matters. The Ministry of Justice, together with the ICRC, organized a first-of-its-kind workshop aimed at fostering dialogue between various ministries and NGOs on issues related to health care and social and psychological support in detention places. The ICRC continued to monitor the treatment of detainees, the preservation of contacts with their families and respect for basic judicial guarantees. Cooperation was strengthened with international organizations such as the OSCE and the Council of Europe, as well as with civil society groups active in this domain and organizations providing legal counselling.

- ▶ 2,870 detainees visited, 73 of whom monitored individually, including 3 newly registered, during 29 visits to 11 places of detention
- ▶ 9 RCMs collected from and 4 distributed to detainees
- ▶ 178 family visits organized for 64 people serving life sentences or detained for security reasons

TB control programme

TB remained one of the principal challenges faced by the medical services of the Ministry of Justice. The Armenian authorities continued to receive ICRC support to strengthen the managerial capacity of the medical services and to integrate the TB control programme in prisons into the national TB programme. Meetings, workshops and round-tables served to cultivate partnerships between concerned organizations and reinforced the links between detention facilities and nearby civilian TB services. Joint supervision visits to detention centres took place, and a public awareness campaign was organized on World TB Day. The TB Working Group of the Ministry of

Justice, established in January 2006, held several meetings and developed its capacity, aiming for a gradual handover of responsibility for TB control activities in the penitentiary sector from the ICRC to the authorities. To ensure uninterrupted standard treatment for detainees infected with TB, places of detention received drugs and laboratory supplies on an ad hoc basis in times of shortage. The penitentiary service started to prepare organizational infrastructure for the treatment of multi-drug-resistant forms of TB in the future.

Training of medical and laboratory staff of the penitentiary service took place in collaboration with the national TB programme, facilitating their participation in national and international training programmes, and a medical resource centre was created in the penitentiary hospital. All medical and surgical units in Ministry of Justice detention facilities received safety boxes for sharps disposal, while TB departments received materials for respiratory protection and ultra-violet lights. A memorandum of understanding between the ICRC and the Ministry of Justice on the organization of TB education sessions for detainees and staff in detention centres was signed.

- ▶ 4,000 leaflets on TB produced and distributed, 3 television broadcasts on the TB control programme and an ICRC-produced video clip on TB detection and treatment shown on the State television channel on World TB Day
- ▶ over 1,800 detainees and prison staff members screened for TB through clinical questioning and chest X-rays during a mass TB detection campaign in May
- ▶ 7,080 detainees benefited from rehabilitation work conducted in their places of detention (e.g. cells, showers, toilets, laboratories)
- ▶ 3 Ministry of Justice doctors participated in the East European and Central Asian AIDS Conference in Moscow, Russian Federation
- ▶ 2 Ministry of Justice doctors participated in the European Network on Drugs and Infection in Prisons Conference in Ljubljana, Slovenia

WOUNDED AND SICK

Four surgeons from the Ministry of Defence participated in a war-surgery seminar organized by the ICRC in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation. Since 2002, 15 Armenian war surgeons have been trained.

AUTHORITIES

The authorities of Armenia pursued dialogue with the ICRC concerning accession to and ratification and implementation of IHL treaties, in particular Additional Protocol III. Upon the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the ICRC facilitated the translation of Additional Protocol III into Armenian.

The Armenian authorities ratified the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention on Cultural Property and the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

High-level officials from judicial and academic circles learned the importance of implementing IHL provisions and customary law through participation in a regional round-table. Twenty-three judges participated in a seminar on enforcement of IHL provisions by Armenian national courts.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

The Ministry of Defence and the ICRC maintained a high-level dialogue to foster the incorporation of IHL into military doctrine, education and training. The military authorities decided to establish an IHL working group, comprising representatives of different departments of the Ministry of Defence, with a view to reinforcing coordination. In addition, the Ministry of Defence and the ICRC agreed to formalize their cooperation by adopting a joint plan of action for 2007.

IHL was taught at the Military Institute (40 hours) and in the advanced officers' courses of the Ministry of Defence (30 hours). IHL was also included in the tactical training of all military units of the Armenian armed forces.

With the ICRC's support, 3,000 copies of the second part of the IHL instructor's manual were printed in Armenian.

- ▶ 1 officer-coach and 3 cadets from the Military Institute participated in the 6th Yaroslav the Wise IHL competition in Odessa, Ukraine
- ▶ 1 officer from the Department of Engineering Troops and 2 from the Military Institute participated in 2 Senezh IHL courses in the Russian Federation

- ▶ 12 deputy company and battalion commanders from the Armenian armed forces attended a four-day IHL instructors' course organized jointly with the Ministry of Defence

CIVIL SOCIETY

To raise public awareness of and support for IHL, several initiatives targeting the media and academia were taken.

Media

- ▶ 16 national media representatives participated in a workshop on IHL and the protection of journalists in armed conflict
- ▶ 2 newsletters produced, one on ICRC activities in Armenia and the other on the "Women and War" exhibition mounted in Yerevan

Schools

- ▶ basic elements of IHL were included in the new secondary school curriculum
- ▶ 128 teachers of military discipline attended 6 seminars conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Education

Universities

- ▶ 4 university teams participated in the 2nd national IHL moot court competition
- ▶ 11 law students from 3 universities participated in the 3rd national IHL essay competition
- ▶ IHL integrated into the curriculum of the Law Department of the American University of Armenia
- ▶ 33 law students from 9 higher-education institutions participated in national IHL events organized jointly with the Armenian Association of International Law
- ▶ 6 law students attended ICRC-organized IHL summer schools

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The focus of cooperation between the Armenian Red Cross Society and the ICRC continued to be on enhancing the capacity of the National Society in coordination with the International Federation. One dissemination and two tracing seminars took place, as well as two dissemination coordination meetings for the chairpersons, staff and volunteers of the National Society's regional and community branches.

The National Society and the ICRC continued to lay the groundwork for an operational cooperation project relating to the collection of ante-mortem data from the families of persons missing as a result of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict.