

PRETORIA (regional)

COVERING: Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, Swaziland



ICRC regional delegation

The ICRC has worked in South Africa since the early 1960s, opening a regional delegation in Pretoria in 1978. It visits detainees of particular concern in Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland, monitoring their conditions, and helps refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants restore contact with relatives. It also works with local actors to address urban violence among South African youth. It promotes IHL treaty ratification and national implementation and supports the incorporation of IHL into military training and university curricula, particularly in South Africa, given its regional influence. The ICRC supports the region's National Societies in building their capacities.

KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS IN 2015

- ▶ Migrants restored/maintained contact with their relatives through phone calls, RCMs and other National Society/ICRC family-links services.
- ▶ Detainees, including migrants, in some places of detention in Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland had their treatment and living conditions monitored during ICRC visits.
- ▶ Peacekeeping troops, South African border control officers and Swazi police enhanced their understanding of IHL, international human rights law and other pertinent norms during briefings/workshops.
- ▶ South Africa ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention on Cultural Property.
- ▶ The Southern African Development Community and the ICRC signed a memorandum of understanding, committing themselves to jointly promoting IHL and addressing humanitarian issues.

EXPENDITURE IN KCHF

Protection	635
Assistance	-
Prevention	698
Cooperation with National Societies	420
General	24
Total	1,778
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	108

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	68%
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PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	6
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	23

YEARLY RESULT

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

MEDIUM

PROTECTION	Total
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)	
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	282
RCMs distributed	277
Phone calls facilitated between family members	5,991
People located (tracing cases closed positively)	44
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)	
ICRC visits	
Detainees visited	7,557
Detainees visited and monitored individually	19
Number of visits carried out	14
Number of places of detention visited	9
Restoring family links	
RCMs collected	7
RCMs distributed	2
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative	18

CONTEXT

South Africa remained influential, politically and economically, within the region and throughout Africa. It participated in diplomatic initiatives regularly and contributed troops to peacekeeping missions abroad. It continued to host regional organizations, such as the Pan-African Parliament, the regional offices of several humanitarian agencies, an extensive diplomatic community, think-tanks and major media agencies.

Socio-economic issues persisted in the countries covered. There was an increase in violence directed towards migrants in South Africa. In Swaziland, protests against government policies and limited public services occurred, accompanied by the presence of police/military personnel and reports of pre-emptive arrests.

Lesotho held national elections two years ahead of schedule, with the support of the Southern African Development Community (SADC); however, political instability persisted.

Botswana generally remained stable.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The regional delegation in Pretoria focused its efforts on promoting a broader understanding of humanitarian issues, in particular the protection of vulnerable migrants; it also continued to reinforce the ICRC's position as a reference organization on IHL for political/military authorities and other influential actors in the region. The delegation provided family-links services and essential household items to migrants, and visited detainees in selected places of detention.

The ICRC pursued dialogue with the authorities on issues of humanitarian concern, including those related to migration. It helped migrants throughout the region restore/maintain contact with their families via phone calls and other family-links services. In South Africa, it also worked with the South African Red Cross Society to provide migrants affected by violence (see *Context*) with essential household items. Having shifted its priorities to focus on promoting the protection of vulnerable migrants, the ICRC did not pursue initial plans to continue supporting local efforts to mitigate urban violence in South Africa.

Migrants held at the only retention facility in South Africa, and detainees in selected places of detention in Lesotho and Swaziland, were visited by the ICRC. During these visits, conducted in accordance with the organization's standard procedures, delegates monitored the treatment and living conditions of these migrants/detainees. Afterwards, they shared their findings and if applicable, their recommendations confidentially with the authorities. In Swaziland, the ICRC also supported the authorities' efforts to improve the management of prisons: two officials from the country's correctional services learnt more about prison management at an ICRC course abroad and, based on ICRC assessments/recommendations, the authorities took steps to boost the productivity of farms in three prisons.

Efforts to promote respect for IHL and foster support for neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action across the region continued. South African National Defence Force (SANDF) personnel bound for peacekeeping missions abroad were reminded of IHL/international human rights norms during predeployment briefings conducted by the ICRC. During regional peacekeeping

exercises, the ICRC provided technical guidance and made presentations on IHL, international human rights law and other applicable norms, with a view to advancing the incorporation of these principles into peacekeepers' training and operations. At a seminar hosted by the SADC/ICRC, experts from throughout the region discussed best practices for ensuring access to health care during peace-support missions.

The ICRC pursued dialogue with the SANDF and the South African Police Service (SAPS) on incorporating IHL/international human rights law in their training programmes and on issues related to migration. It organized briefings for Swazi police officers on international human rights norms applicable to their work.

The ICRC continued to promote the incorporation of IHL in domestic legislation, and lent its expertise to the authorities and national IHL committees. South Africa ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention on Cultural Property. Representatives of 16 African governments discussed IHL implementation at an annual seminar hosted by South Africa's Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) and the ICRC; they drafted a pledge that was deposited at the 32nd International Conference.

Meetings/events with/for national authorities, members of civil society, diplomatic representatives and regional/international organizations facilitated discussions on IHL and various humanitarian issues. The ICRC and the SADC signed a memorandum of understanding, committing to continue their coordination and cooperation on promoting IHL and addressing humanitarian issues. Students/lecturers added to their knowledge of IHL in courses and competitions organized with local partners.

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

CIVILIANS

The ICRC pursued dialogue with authorities across the region on various issues of humanitarian concern, including the difficulties faced by migrants, the use of force in law enforcement operations and humanitarian principles in general (see *Actors of Influence*).

Migrants reconnect with their relatives using family-links services

Migrants in the region re-established/maintained contact with their families through family-links services provided by the National Societies/ICRC. In Swaziland, migrants at the Malindza refugee camp made phone calls to their relatives in their countries of origin or elsewhere. Migrants in the east coast of South Africa, staying in temporary shelters after being displaced by violence arising from communal tensions, also contacted their families through phone calls; hygiene items and clothing distributed by the South African Red Cross Society, with ICRC support, helped ease their conditions.

The region's National Societies pursued efforts to improve their family-links services. In five districts of Swaziland, from where people frequently migrated to South Africa, needs for family-links services were assessed by the Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross Society with ICRC support; the findings helped the Swazi National Society plan a more effective response.

Ninety-four people were able to resettle elsewhere or rejoin their families thanks to travel documents issued by the ICRC in coordination with UNHCR.

Plans to pursue further engagement in addressing urban violence in South Africa – following the completion in 2014 of a project with a local NGO to mitigate young people's exposure to violence – were put on hold, as the ICRC shifted its focus to helping assist and protect vulnerable migrants.

Discussions were pursued, for example, with a network of South African experts in medico-legal and forensic sciences to explore the possibility of developing a regional forensic training hub and addressing the obstacles to identifying the remains of deceased migrants.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Detainees receive ICRC visits to monitor their treatment and living conditions

People held in selected places of detention in Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland received ICRC visits conducted in accordance with the organization's standard procedures, during which their treatment and living conditions were monitored. They included security detainees in Swaziland and people of various nationalities detained at the only holding facility for migrants in South Africa; the latter were interviewed about their migration routes and about specific issues of humanitarian concern.

After these visits, detaining authorities received feedback and, if necessary, recommendations during confidential discussions with ICRC delegates. Dialogue was pursued with the authorities in Lesotho, with a view to visiting, in accordance with standard ICRC procedures, soldiers detained by the armed forces on suspicion of mutiny.

The migrants detained in South Africa restored/maintained contact with their relatives using ICRC family-links services. Detainees in Lesotho stayed in touch with their families through phone calls provided by the Lesotho Red Cross Society and the ICRC. Migrants detained in Lesotho improved their sanitation with the help of ad hoc distributions of hygiene items.

Swazi prison authorities take steps to improve food production for detainees

In Swaziland, the authorities pursued measures to improve the living conditions of detainees, with ICRC support. Two correctional officials learnt more about prison management at an ICRC-organized course in Switzerland. Some prisons alleviated the effects of overcrowding with the help of ICRC-donated bunk beds.

At three correctional centres that were set up as farms, the authorities drew on the findings/recommendations of an ICRC assessment and took steps to improve the productivity of the farms, with a view to increasing detainees' food supply and to reduce or eliminate their dependence on government funding. Their efforts were bolstered by donations of seed and tools from the ICRC; training for the farm managers was discussed.

The Correctional Services Bill, which was drafted with ICRC input, was submitted to the office of the attorney general for discussion in parliament.

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Peacekeepers learn more about IHL and other pertinent norms

At predeployment briefings, some 1,700 SANDF peacekeepers bound for missions abroad strengthened their grasp of IHL, international human rights law and related matters, such as the importance of protecting health-care providers and preventing sexual violence.

Peacekeeping forces learnt more about these topics at ICRC-supported regional exercises, which helped strengthen the incorporation of IHL and other norms in their training/operations. Officers and troops from various countries furthered their understanding of applicable law and humanitarian considerations for peacekeeping operations at the Combined Joint African Exercise held in Botswana; during preparations for this event, trainers from the Botswana Staff College and the SANDF drew on ICRC expertise and guidance, particularly on such topics as ensuring the protection of civilians. Officers taking part in a regional exercise aimed at developing the capacity of the African Standby Force also benefited from ICRC expertise/guidance.

The SADC Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre continued to receive support from the ICRC; at a Health Care in Danger workshop organized by the SADC, military health-care professionals from 11 countries discussed best practices for ensuring access to health care during peace-support operations.

Dialogue with South African security forces includes migration-related issues

Efforts were pursued to strengthen the dialogue with South Africa's military, particularly its Joint Operations Division, and police forces. In line with the ICRC's increased focus on assisting vulnerable migrants, relations with the SAPS were reinforced through meetings with senior officers of its Border Control Operational Coordination Committee and a visit to a border post.

Twenty-five SANDF senior officers, and troops attending courses at the SANDF training centre, enhanced their knowledge of IHL, internationally recognized standards applicable to law enforcement and the Movement's work at ICRC-organized workshops/presentations. Some 50 Swazi officers learnt more about these matters at briefings conducted by the Swazi Red Cross/ICRC at a police training centre.

South Africa ratifies IHL-related treaties

National authorities throughout the region were encouraged – through meetings, provision of informational materials and other means – to incorporate IHL into domestic law and ratify related treaties. National IHL committees continued to draw on ICRC expertise in this regard; they also drew on its support to prepare for the 32nd International Conference. South Africa ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention on Cultural Property.

Representatives from 16 African countries discussed the implementation of IHL and compliance with it, as well as their preparations for the 32nd International Conference, at an annual seminar hosted by the DIRCO and the ICRC. They drafted a regional pledge for further cooperation, which was deposited at the International Conference.

The SADC and the ICRC agree to strengthen cooperation in promoting IHL

The SADC and the ICRC signed a memorandum of understanding aimed at improving coordination and strengthening their relationship, particularly through regular meetings on humanitarian issues and cooperation on activities to promote IHL.

Dialogue between the Pan-African Parliament and the ICRC continued, including at a round-table where they discussed developing their partnership further.

National authorities and members of civil society in the countries covered, and the diplomatic community in Pretoria, discussed pressing humanitarian issues and developments in IHL during meetings with the ICRC and at workshops/other events organized/attended by the ICRC. The discussions covered such topics as the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, the protection of health-care services during conflict and the Arms Trade Treaty. Dialogue on protracted conflicts and post-conflict recovery was initiated with the Policy, Research and Analysis Unit of the DIRCO.

Academics bolster their ability to teach IHL at a regional meeting

University students/lecturers furthered their understanding of IHL with the help of ICRC-produced newsletters and other reference materials. Post-graduate students and academics from 13 countries added to their knowledge of IHL, and strengthened their ability to teach it, at an annual course hosted by the University of South Africa and the ICRC.

At an annual meeting, lecturers from the region discussed the teaching of IHL and familiarized themselves with ICRC activities. Three university students demonstrated their knowledge of IHL at a regional moot court competition (see *Nairobi*).

The delegation's engagement with the media was limited as a result of internal restructuring.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

National Societies in the region bolstered their operational capacities and pursued organizational development with technical and financial support from ICRC. The Lesotho Red Cross Society, for example, deployed emergency response teams during the elections in February. The Swazi Red Cross carried out communication activities with ICRC support; a bill granting it formal recognition was submitted to the government for comment.

Both National Societies carried out assessments of their capacities to restore family links and respond to disasters, which helped them identify ways to strengthen these. The South African Red Cross Society continued, with the support of the ICRC, to reorganize itself in order to better comply with domestic legislation on non-profit organizations. The National Societies prepared for the 32nd International Conference with support from the International Federation and the ICRC; the South African and Swazi National Societies helped their governments prepare for the event.

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			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)					
Red Cross messages (RCMs)			UAMs/SC*		
RCMs collected		282	3		
RCMs distributed		277			
Phone calls facilitated between family members		5,991			
Names published in the media		20			
Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons			Women	Girls	Boys
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered		50	17	9	4
People located (tracing cases closed positively)		44			
Tracing cases still being handled at the end of the reporting period (people)		121	19	28	8
<i>including people for whom tracing requests were registered by another delegation</i>		10			
Documents					
People to whom travel documents were issued		94			
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)					
ICRC visits			Women	Minors	
Detainees visited		7,557	84	351	
			Women	Girls	Boys
Detainees visited and monitored individually		19			
Detainees newly registered		5			
Number of visits carried out		14			
Number of places of detention visited		9			
Restoring family links					
RCMs collected		7			
RCMs distributed		2			
Phone calls made to families to inform them of the whereabouts of a detained relative		18			

*Unaccompanied minors/separated children

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: ASSISTANCE		Total	Women	Children
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)				
Economic security (in some cases provided within a protection programme)				
Food commodities	Beneficiaries	8		
Essential household items	Beneficiaries	906		
Cash	Beneficiaries	4		