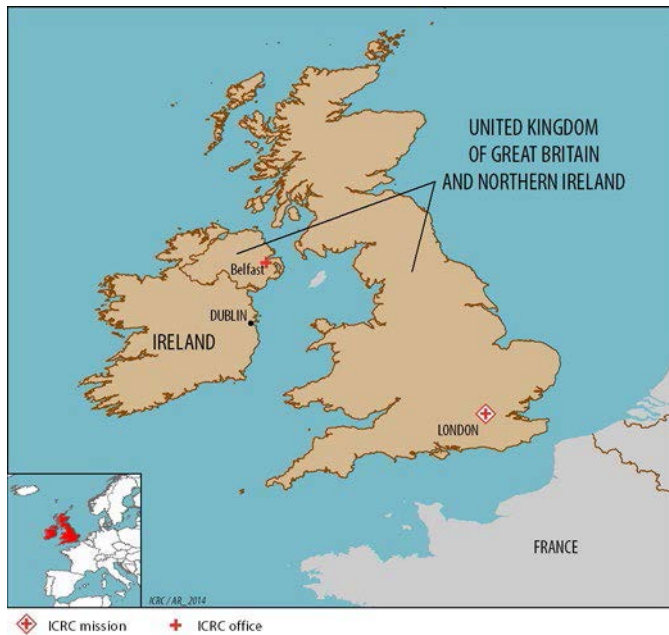


LONDON

COVERING: Ireland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



Set up in 2003, the London mission focuses on pursuing humanitarian diplomacy and facilitating ICRC operations in the field. Through contact with the British government, armed forces, members of parliament, think-tanks, the media and international NGOs, it seeks to secure broad support for IHL and ICRC and Movement operations. It has similar contact with the Irish authorities and is developing its cooperation with the armed forces. The mission operates in partnership with the British Red Cross on a range of common areas, while cooperation with the Irish Red Cross is concentrated on IHL and issues related to Movement coordination.

YEARLY RESULTS

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

HIGH

KEY RESULTS AND CONSTRAINTS

In 2014:

- ▶ British parliamentary committees reflected IHL considerations in a report on UK defence policies and received ICRC input on violence affecting health care during armed conflict
- ▶ at events and via multimedia platforms, policy-makers and members of academic, legal, humanitarian and diaspora circles discussed operational and other issues, with the ICRC providing expert opinion
- ▶ detainees at 2 prisons in Northern Ireland, particularly those held in relation to the past conflict or the current situation, received visits to monitor their treatment and living conditions
- ▶ some 4,000 people affected by past or ongoing violence in Northern Ireland benefited from counselling, mediation services and other forms of assistance from 12 ICRC-supported community-based organizations
- ▶ the British Red Cross and the ICRC maintained their partnership – renewed through a 2014–16 framework agreement – in addressing humanitarian needs and pursuing humanitarian diplomacy

PROTECTION	Total
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM¹ (All categories/all statuses)	
ICRC visits	
Detainees visited	72
Detainees visited and monitored individually	72
Number of visits carried out	2
Number of places of detention visited	2

1. Owing to operational and management constraints, figures presented in this table may not reflect all activities carried out during the reporting period.

EXPENDITURE (in KCHF)

Protection	1,163
Assistance	-
Prevention	1,105
Cooperation with National Societies	527
General	-

2,794

of which: Overheads 171

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	117%
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PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	2
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	12

CONTEXT

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (hereafter UK) continued to play a major role in international affairs. It participated in multilateral military operations in Iraq; it ended its combat operations in Afghanistan in October 2014. The country maintained a generous international aid programme and showed leadership on key issues, including: humanitarian support for people affected by the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic (hereafter Syria) and prevention of sexual violence in armed conflict. Emergencies elsewhere – in the Central African Republic (hereafter CAR), South Sudan and Sudan, for instance – were also on the UK's international agenda.

In Northern Ireland, sectarian violence, fuelled by intercommunal tensions, the 2012 flag protests and the legacy of past conflict, persisted.

The security alert level in the UK in relation to potential acts of international "terrorism" was upgraded to 'severe', mainly owing to the situation in Iraq and in Syria.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

In 2014, the ICRC consolidated its position as a key source of reference on IHL and humanitarian issues. Through interaction with the authorities, civil society and the wider public, the ICRC promoted the development of informed positions on humanitarian issues, encouraged policy/decision-making that took humanitarian considerations into account and enlisted support for the Movement. It pursued activities to address humanitarian needs created by armed conflicts and other situations of violence, including in Northern Ireland.

Through bilateral meetings, high-level visits and briefings, ICRC representatives kept government departments, parliamentary committees and other influential bodies up to date on the humanitarian situation and ICRC operations in contexts of military or diplomatic interest to the UK. The ICRC submitted written evidence – on violence endangering patients and health services during armed conflict – to a parliamentary inquiry into the UK's international activities to strengthen health systems. Reports published by a parliamentary committee that reviewed the UK's defence framework included evidence provided by the ICRC in 2013. These reports reflected the organization's views on strengthening IHL implementation and on the development/use of new weapons and means and methods of warfare.

Dialogue with the Ministry of Defence and the UK armed forces continued to focus on operational and policy concerns, including military detention practices and the conduct of hostilities. ICRC presentations – on the protection of medical services during armed conflict, for instance – helped military personnel enrich their knowledge of humanitarian issues and broaden their awareness of ICRC activities. Discussions were ongoing with the pertinent authorities on potential ICRC visits to people detained under anti-terrorist legislation.

Contact with a broad network of stakeholders from various groups, and authorities in Belfast, Dublin and London, enabled the ICRC to raise awareness of the humanitarian needs arising from past and ongoing violence in Northern Ireland. Such efforts also helped clarify the neutral, impartial, independent and humanitarian nature of the ICRC's response. The ICRC supported 12 community-based organizations that helped people cope with the consequences of ongoing

violence and the legacy of past conflict. Efforts to resolve the cases of persons still missing in connection with past conflict continued, but little progress was made. The ICRC pursued its confidential dialogue with various parties concerned in order to gain insight into the situation of detainees held in relation to the violence in Northern Ireland. Following meetings with the authorities, it secured permission to conduct visits, according to its standard procedures, to monitor the treatment and living conditions of detainees at the Maghaberry and Hydebank Wood prisons. The visits were carried out in November and December, with a view to sharing feedback/recommendations to the authorities.

The ICRC engaged with circles of influence in Ireland and the UK by organizing/attending events and undertaking initiatives that covered operational and IHL-related issues, including addressing sexual violence in armed conflict. These events drew attention to the plight of conflict-affected people worldwide, communicated key messages based on IHL and humanitarian principles, and secured support for the Movement's activities. Multimedia content, disseminated via print, broadcast and digital platforms, relayed humanitarian messages to a wider audience.

The ICRC's partnership with the British Red Cross continued, both locally and globally. Renewed with a 2014–16 framework agreement, it covered promotion of IHL, institutional cooperation and international activities. The Irish Red Cross Society and the ICRC continued to cooperate on areas of mutual interest and relevance, particularly IHL dissemination.

CIVILIANS

Communities in Northern Ireland continued to deal with intercommunal tensions, the legacy of past conflict and continuing violence, in which young people were often involved. Dialogue with the authorities in Belfast, Dublin and London, and networking with civil society organizations, paramilitary groups and other stakeholders, focused on humanitarian needs arising from the violence and on ways to address them. For instance, at an ICRC-facilitated round-table, the authorities and other stakeholders discussed sexual violence in relation to past conflict and the prevailing situation. Contact with these actors also promoted humanitarian principles and fostered understanding of the ICRC's neutral approach and activities in Northern Ireland.

Violence-affected people access support from community-based organizations

Twelve community-based organizations working to mitigate the effects of the violence in Northern Ireland received ICRC financial and technical assistance, enabling them to provide various forms of support to some 4,000 individuals. For example, through these organizations' projects, some 560 vulnerable young people accessed individual counselling, advice on safe behaviour, and training and other activities that helped boost their employment opportunities; this helped prevent their involvement in violence. More than 1,300 former detainees and members of armed groups received support for coping with psychological and social needs born of past conflict; 405 individuals targeted by paramilitary groups benefited from mediation services. More broadly, the organizations' initiatives contributed to a decrease in the number of recorded attacks on police/emergency vehicles, the level of street violence and intercommunal tensions in the areas they covered.

Six of the 17 people officially known as 'the disappeared', who had gone missing during past conflict, are still unaccounted for; their

cases remained under investigation. Dialogue with key stakeholders – the Independent Commission for the Location of Victims’ Remains, the British and Irish authorities, relatives of the missing, the victims’ organization WAVE Trauma Centre and armed groups – aimed to facilitate the exchange of any information that could help in locating remains, but little progress was made.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Detainees at two prisons in Northern Ireland receive ICRC visits

In Northern Ireland, the ICRC continued, through dialogue with various parties concerned, to seek insight into the situation of people detained in relation to past conflict and the current violence; it focused on those held in separate wings of the Maghaberry maximum security and Hydebank Wood prisons. Dialogue on this basis was maintained with the Department of Justice and the Northern Ireland Prison Service; a third report on humanitarian issues relayed to ICRC delegates was submitted to them.

Following these efforts, and other meetings, the authorities granted the ICRC permission to visit, according to its standard procedures, the detainees in these two prisons. Thus, 82 detainees at Maghaberry, and 3 at Hydebank Wood, had their treatment and living conditions monitored during visits carried out by ICRC delegates in November and December, respectively. Comprehensive reports on the ICRC’s feedback and, where necessary, recommendations were being prepared for sharing with the authorities.

Discussions continued with the authorities concerned on potential ICRC visits to people held on suspicion of “terrorism” in the rest of the UK.

Dialogue with the Permanent Joint Headquarters and military commands and units focused on military detention policies and practices (see *Actors of influence*). The ICRC supported training activities and contributed to policy/legal analyses – for instance, in connection with the revision of guidelines for military detention abroad.

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Bilateral meetings, and briefings and high-level visits from ICRC representatives, kept the authorities and parliamentarians in the UK up to date on humanitarian needs, operational challenges and ICRC activities in contexts such as Afghanistan, the CAR, Iraq, South Sudan and Syria, as well as in Northern Ireland (see *Civilians* and *People deprived of their freedom*). Dialogue also emphasized the need for decision-making that took humanitarian principles into account and supported IHL and neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action; where pertinent, these officials were encouraged to take action. Both Ireland and the UK ratified the Arms Trade Treaty.

Discussions continued with the UK authorities on the identification of the remains of Argentinians in the Falkland/Malvinas Islands.

UK parliament draws on ICRC expertise for reviewing the country’s policies

Interaction with the UK parliament, the Department for International Development, the Ministry of Defence, and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office continued to broaden and deepen. Key parliamentary committees and government departments drew on the ICRC’s expertise for humanitarian policy-making and IHL-related issues.

The ICRC submitted formal evidence to an inquiry, by the parliament’s International Development Committee, into current and

future UK activities to strengthen health systems in developing countries. It drew attention to the violence endangering patients and medical services/workers during armed conflict and the protection afforded to them by IHL – issues covered by the Health Care in Danger project. ICRC contribution to the Defence Select Committee’s 2013 parliamentary inquiry, into existing and future defence and security policies, was reflected in the committee’s reports. The committee echoed the ICRC’s views on the importance of strengthening IHL implementation and on the need for careful assessment of the humanitarian consequences of developing/using new weapons and means and methods of warfare.

Dialogue continued with the UK Ministry of Defence on operational/legal matters and policies related to the conduct of hostilities: for instance, in connection with the UK’s participation in multilateral air strikes in Iraq, and with operations before its troops’ withdrawal from Afghanistan. Discussions also covered the ICRC’s offer to contribute to post-engagement reviews on lessons learnt during the operation in Afghanistan. Members of the British armed forces learnt more about IHL, the protection/provision of health care during armed conflict, other humanitarian issues and ICRC activities through presentations at military colleges and training institutions.

Networking efforts with various parties in Northern Ireland concentrated on the humanitarian consequences of past conflict and current violence (see *Civilians*). Discussions with the Police Service of Northern Ireland covered law enforcement policies, and helped police officers enhance their understanding of the ICRC’s humanitarian action in the area. Contact with paramilitary groups focused on perceived punishment practices.

Ireland’s Defence Forces expressed interest in developing joint activities with the ICRC – for instance, predeployment training in IHL for its troops and workshops for ICRC staff on responding to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear emergencies.

Events and media engagement enrich discussions of IHL and humanitarian issues

Authorities, policy-makers, think-tanks, legal experts, academics, NGOs, diaspora networks and other circles of influence exchanged views on a wide range of issues at events organized/attended by the ICRC, which provided input, based on its field experience, on humanitarian needs in contexts experiencing armed conflict or other situations of violence.

In June, at a summit hosted by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, humanitarian and development professionals discussed ways to tackle sexual violence in armed conflict; the ICRC described its policies and activities in this regard. During an event on the state of international law, local/foreign lawyers, journalists and government officials heard the ICRC’s president, at the invitation of the UK authorities, describe the contemporary challenges confronting IHL. At a workshop organized by the British Red Cross, the Muslim Charities Forum and the ICRC, representatives of Islamic NGOs furthered their understanding of IHL. In Ireland, during a round-table hosted by the Irish Red Cross, government officials, civil society representatives and the ICRC shared their views on the humanitarian response to sexual violence in armed conflict. Other events covered topics such as: humanitarian action and security in conflict-affected countries, multilateral military operations, the Health Care in Danger project, cyber warfare and autonomous weapons.

Public communication initiatives provided additional channels to: promote IHL; relay key messages about and foster support for humanitarian action among decision-makers; and broaden awareness of the Movement's work. Various audiences learnt more about humanitarian issues and ICRC activities, particularly in Northern Ireland, through articles, videos and updates posted on the ICRC's website and social media platforms. An interview with the ICRC's director-general, on the difficulties of doing humanitarian work in today's conflicts, was broadcast on BBC television, reaching viewers worldwide.

Dialogue was maintained with the Irish Red Cross, including on its efforts to develop its international operations department. The Irish Red Cross continued its IHL dissemination activities, and hosted, with ICRC support, a round-table on sexual violence in armed conflict.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Partnership with the British Red Cross – renewed through a new 2014–16 framework agreement – continued locally and globally. Cooperation on operational and institutional priorities covered, among others: assistance for conflict- and violence-affected people, including in Northern Ireland; promotion of humanitarian principles, IHL and the Movement; support for the goals of the Health Care in Danger project; application of the Safer Access Framework to the British Red Cross's domestic and overseas activities; and information sharing and coordination. The British Red Cross/ICRC continued to update the online customary IHL database (see *International law and policy*).

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS: PROTECTION		Total			
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM ¹ (All categories/all statuses)					
ICRC visits					
Detainees visited	72	Women	Minors		
		Women	Girls	Boys	
Detainees visited and monitored individually	72				
Detainees newly registered	72				
Number of visits carried out	2				
Number of places of detention visited	2				

1. Owing to operational and management constraints, figures presented in this table may not reflect all activities carried out during the reporting period.