

KUALA LUMPUR (regional)

COVERING: Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore



⊕ ICRC regional delegation ⊕ ICRC office

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	173
Assistance	-
Prevention	1,877
Cooperation with National Societies	416
General	-

▶ **2,467**

of which: Overheads 151

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	85%
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PERSONNEL

Expatriates	10
National staff (daily workers not included)	19

KEY POINTS

In 2010, the ICRC:

- ▶ assessed health, water and sanitation facilities in 3 Malaysian immigration detention centres holding around 3,000 foreign migrants
- ▶ conducted a seminar on the notion of direct participation by civilians in hostilities for 25 senior Malaysian army officers
- ▶ held a pre-deployment briefing for the Singaporean police force and, with the Royal Malaysia Police, organized a workshop on international policing standards for 31 senior officers
- ▶ with the Malaysian Attorney-General's Chambers, organized a workshop for government officials on the protection of cultural property in armed conflict
- ▶ strengthened its dialogue with the Japanese authorities through a series of meetings with high-ranking officials, notably from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economy, Trade and Industry
- ▶ together with the Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore, organized a workshop on the protection of civilians for 28 representatives of think-tanks from East and South-East Asia

Having worked in Malaysia since 1972, the ICRC opened its regional delegation in Kuala Lumpur in 2001 and an office in Japan in 2009. It works with governments, regional bodies, experts and National Societies to promote humanitarian issues and gain their support for its activities. It encourages the ratification and implementation of IHL treaties and the incorporation of IHL into military training and academic curricula. The delegation hosts the ICRC's regional resource centre, which supports delegations in East and South-East Asia and the Pacific in promoting IHL and strengthening support for the ICRC's humanitarian action and cooperation within the Movement.

CONTEXT

Japan, Malaysia and Singapore remained politically and economically stable and influential within Asia and globally.

The presence of large numbers of migrants, both documented and irregular, gave rise to increased public and political debate in Malaysia and Singapore. The Malaysian authorities announced their intention to reduce the number of documented migrant workers by a quarter over the next three years and launched a

five-year national action plan to combat people trafficking. At the same time, they took steps to improve management of and security in immigration detention centres, including setting up a new department within the Home Affairs Ministry to address the humanitarian needs of detained migrants.

Internationally, Japan was one of the largest donors to relief efforts in earthquake-stricken countries such as Haiti and Chile and continued to aid nations affected by conflict. Both Malaysia and Singapore contributed forces to UN peacekeeping missions.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS			
PROTECTION			
CIVILIANS (residents, IDPs, returnees, etc.)			
Red Cross messages	Total	UAMs/SCs*	
RCMs collected	34		
RCMs distributed	173		
Documents			
People to whom travel documents were issued	87		
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses) ¹			
ICRC visits	Total	Women	Minors
Number of visits carried out	3		
Number of places of detention visited	3		
Restoring family links	Total		
RCMs collected	2		
RCMs distributed	2		

* Unaccompanied minors/separated children

1. Malaysia only

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The Kuala Lumpur regional delegation continued to focus on promoting IHL and humanitarian principles in the countries covered and enhancing understanding of and support for the ICRC's humanitarian action in the region and worldwide.

Regular contacts with the Malaysian Immigration Department and first-ever meetings with top officials from the Home Affairs Ministry gave rise to nascent dialogue on the situation of detained foreign migrants in Malaysia. The ICRC assessed health, water and sanitation conditions in three immigration detention centres, sharing the findings and recommendations confidentially with the authorities. This led to government-financed structural improvements in the centres, planned ICRC assessments in more centres in 2011, and a pilot project proposal, drawn up with the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, to help detainees in one centre restore contact with their families. In meetings at the end of the year, the Malaysian Prisons Department expressed its willingness to see the ICRC start visiting, according to its standard procedures, people held in prisons and to hold joint training seminars for prison staff in 2011.

Cooperation with the Malaysian Home Affairs Ministry was further expanded through a workshop on the management of human remains held jointly with the Civil Defence Department.

Thanks to the opening of an ICRC office in Japan in February 2009, ties with the authorities, the military, academia and the media

were strengthened, including through a visit of the ICRC director of operations at the beginning of 2010. This helped to enhance the profile of the organization in the country and consolidate cooperation with the Japanese Red Cross Society. Several workshops, seminars and symposia organized with partner institutions led to increased understanding of the ICRC's mandate and work, as well as of humanitarian action in general.

Following an ICRC mission to Brunei Darussalam, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the ICRC organized a workshop for ministry officials on the 2007 Geneva Conventions Act.

The region's armed forces continued to work with the ICRC to further the integration of IHL into their doctrine, training and operations. The ICRC also nurtured media and civil society contacts, while pursuing efforts to promote IHL in schools and universities as a means of raising awareness of humanitarian issues among future decision-makers.

As in past years, the ICRC worked with the National Societies of Japan, Malaysia and Singapore to promote IHL through capacity building and joint dissemination activities. In all three countries, the National Societies received support in using the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme.

Families in Malaysia restored or maintained contact with relatives detained/interned abroad via the ICRC/Malaysian Red Crescent RCM network, while the ICRC continued to help the National

Society build its tracing and family-links capacities, including in the areas of human remains management and restoring family links in disasters.

Cooperation with the International Federation's Asia Pacific Zone office was maintained through regular meetings.

The delegation's regional resource centre, established in 2003, continued to support the efforts of ICRC delegations in East and South-East Asia and the Pacific to enhance their prevention activities. These included promoting IHL and other humanitarian standards in the region, networking with think-tanks and other stakeholders in the diplomatic arena, and participating in meetings of Asian regional organizations, particularly the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (see *Jakarta*).

CIVILIANS

People made use of the Red Cross and Red Crescent family-links network to re-establish and maintain contact with relatives detained/interned or residing abroad, mainly in countries affected by conflict or other situations of violence. This included families of Malaysian nationals held in the US internment facility at Guantanamo Bay Naval Station in Cuba, who stayed in touch with their relatives by means of RCMs. With ICRC-issued travel documents, 87 refugees were able to travel to countries that had accepted them for resettlement. Three former detainees obtained copies of detention certificates through the ICRC, which they needed to support their applications for asylum-seeker status with UNHCR.

To strengthen its capacity to provide family-links services, including for migrants and refugees and in case of natural disaster, the Malaysian Red Crescent held training courses for members of its branches in Kuala Lumpur, Sabah and Sarawak and promoted the RCM service among the general public, with ICRC support. At an ICRC-supported workshop, members of the Malaysian Civil Defence enhanced their knowledge of the management of human remains in emergencies so as to be able to inform families of the deaths of relatives.

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

Following discussions between the Malaysian Immigration Department, the Ministry of Health and the ICRC at the end of 2009 on the management of health issues in custodial settings, the ICRC conducted assessments of living conditions, in particular health, water and sanitation facilities, in three immigration detention centres in western Malaysia holding around 3,000 foreign migrants. The findings and recommendations, shared confidentially with the Immigration Department and the newly established Department for Depot Administration, provided a basis for dialogue with the authorities at various levels on further action necessary to improve conditions of detention and treatment. As a first step, the government provided additional

financial resources for training, equipment and repairs to the 13 centres nationwide, in particular with respect to water and sanitation. ICRC assessments of other immigration detention centres and projects to help improve health services, water supply and general living conditions for detained migrants were discussed for 2011.

During the assessments, a number of inmates in all three immigration detention centres expressed the wish to contact relatives. One case was referred to the Malaysian Red Crescent for follow-up, while, after tracing them successfully, the ICRC enabled three children to exchange news with their detained parent. Together, the Malaysian Red Crescent and the ICRC developed a pilot project proposal to help detainees in one centre re-establish and maintain contact with their families, with the aim of expanding the service to other centres in due course. The proposal was accepted by the relevant authorities and implementation was set to begin in January 2011.

Two senior prison officials gained new expertise on the management of prison infrastructure at an ICRC regional workshop in Indonesia (see *Jakarta*). Seventy senior prison officers attending an ICRC presentation learnt about the organization's work on behalf of people deprived of their freedom.

In meetings at the end of the year, the Malaysian Prisons Department expressed its willingness to see the ICRC start visiting, according to its standard procedures, people held in prisons and to hold joint training seminars for prison staff in 2011. The last ICRC visits had been conducted in 1994.

AUTHORITIES

The countries of the region pursued efforts to implement IHL, with ICRC technical support. Malaysian government officials reviewed the protection of cultural property in armed conflict at a workshop organized by the Attorney-General's Chambers to promote ratification of the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention on Cultural Property. In Brunei Darussalam, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the ICRC held a workshop on the 2007 Geneva Conventions Act. Malaysia and Singapore sent representatives to the third Universal Meeting of National IHL Committees held in Geneva, Switzerland (see *International Law and Cooperation*).

Government officials, as well as staff of ASEAN national secretariats, became more aware of humanitarian issues and the relevance of IHL and humanitarian principles through regular dialogue with the ICRC and by attending ICRC-supported events. These included: training sessions for diplomats from 20 countries at the Malaysian Institute of Diplomacy and Foreign Relations, for Malaysian judges at the Judicial and Legal Training Institute, and for members of the national IHL committee's new secretariat; a presentation on the notion of direct participation by civilians in hostilities at the Singaporean Foreign Affairs Ministry; and a symposium on humanitarian assistance, focusing on Afghanistan, co-organized with the Japanese Foreign Affairs Ministry.

In Japan, relations were strengthened with the authorities, notably the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economy, Trade and Industry, in particular during a visit by the ICRC director of operations. Dialogue was also developed with members of parliament.

Discussions continued between the Singaporean authorities and the ICRC on the potential signing of an agreement on the use of logistics facilities in the country in the event of a humanitarian emergency in the region.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

With ICRC support, the Japanese Self-Defense Forces and the Malaysian armed forces started assessments of the status of IHL integration into military doctrine, training and operations with a view to boosting this process.

Members of the region's armed forces attending command and staff colleges and training centres or participating in various multilateral military events and exercises learnt more about their obligations under IHL and the ICRC's mandate and activities during briefings and events. In Malaysia, 25 senior army officers discussed IHL and the notion of direct participation by civilians in hostilities during a seminar organized by army headquarters. At a symposium convened by the Japanese National Institute for Defence Studies, a wide audience discussed peace operations, new weapons and the protection of civilians.

Malaysian and Singaporean police officers preparing for UN peacekeeping missions attended ICRC pre-deployment briefings.

As part of the ongoing operational dialogue with the Royal Malaysia Police, the ICRC conducted a briefing for senior police officers on IHL and international standards for law enforcement. Subsequently, 31 high-ranking police officers from across the country attended a workshop on the same topics organized with ICRC support.

Three senior officers from Japan, Malaysia and Singapore took part in the fourth Senior Workshop on International Rules governing Military Operations held in Lucerne, Switzerland (see *International Law and Cooperation*).

CIVIL SOCIETY

The general public in Japan and Malaysia enjoyed access to multimedia material on IHL and humanitarian issues in local languages. Journalists worked with the ICRC to cover topical subjects and received help in contacting ICRC delegations worldwide. Malaysian media professionals learnt about IHL at a training workshop.

Think-tanks and NGO networks in Japan and Islamic organizations in Malaysia developed dialogue with the ICRC on topics of common interest. Some 28 representatives of leading

think-tanks from East and South-East Asia reviewed and discussed the protection of civilians and related issues of current concern in the region at a workshop organized with the Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore.

In Malaysia, although the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme had been formally handed over to the Ministry of Education and the Malaysian Red Crescent in June 2009, both partners continued to receive ICRC advice and training support. In Japan, the National Society completed classroom trials of the translated modules and trained teachers. Instructors from the Singapore Red Cross Society, which planned to incorporate the programme into its revised youth syllabus, were familiarized with the methodology at an ICRC workshop.

Leading universities in Japan, Malaysia and Singapore continued to integrate IHL teaching. Japanese academics received ICRC input towards developing an intensive course for postgraduate students. Academics, researchers, and government and military officials from 11 countries enhanced their expertise at the fifth South-East and East Asian Teaching Session on IHL, held at the National University of Malaysia. Students increased their understanding of IHL at ICRC-supported moot court and debating competitions, workshops and lectures.

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The Malaysian Red Crescent strengthened its capacity to provide tracing and family-links services (see *Civilians*), including for detained migrants (see *People deprived of their freedom*). It participated in an ICRC/Cambodian Red Cross Society regional meeting on the subject in Phnom Penh, Cambodia (see *Bangkok*) and, with other National Society representatives from across Asia, learnt more about tools and techniques for restoring family links in disasters and emergencies at an ICRC workshop in Kuala Lumpur.

The Malaysian Red Crescent built up its IHL resource centre, receiving publications and other material support from the ICRC. Strengthened ties between the Japanese Red Cross and the ICRC were reflected in joint public communication on humanitarian issues and the setting up of an ICRC sub-site within the National Society website.

The Japanese Red Cross contributed to relief operations following the earthquake in Haiti, dispatching nine staff members to take part in medical assistance efforts.

The region's National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC discussed issues of humanitarian concern, including migration and natural disaster, at the 2010 Southeast Asia Organizational Development Forum, hosted by the Brunei Darussalam Red Crescent Society. Movement coordination was ensured through regular meetings between the ICRC and the International Federation's Asia Pacific Zone office.

The Malaysian Red Crescent reviewed its statutes, with support from the International Federation and the ICRC.