



pretoria (regional)

The Pretoria regional delegation has existed in its present form since 1995. It keeps a close eye on the domestic situation in the countries covered and helps refugees and asylum seekers restore family links severed by conflict. It promotes ratification of IHL treaties and their national implementation and encourages the incorporation of IHL into military and police training and into secondary school and university curricula. The ICRC supports the region's National Societies, in cooperation with the International Federation. The ICRC visits detainees in the Comoros, Lesotho and Madagascar.

COVERING

Comoros, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland

EXPENDITURE (IN KCHF)

Protection	968
Assistance	41
Prevention	1,787
Cooperation with National Societies	1,227
General	-

► **4,022**

of which: Overheads 245

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	90%
---------------------------	-----

PERSONNEL

9	expatriates
36	national staff (daily workers not included)

KEY POINTS

In 2007, the ICRC:

- ▶ presented recommendations to the authorities in Madagascar on improving conditions of detention
- ▶ supported the process leading to the passing into South African law of the Red Cross Recognition and Protection of Certain Emblems Act
- ▶ participated officially in the 8th Ordinary Session of the Pan African Parliament of the African Union
- ▶ coordinated the publication of the *African Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law*
- ▶ organized workshops on international human rights law and IHL principles for 110 members of the Lesotho Mounted Police Service
- ▶ trained and monitored tracing staff from the National Societies of Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland

CONTEXT

In South Africa, Jacob Zuma was elected president of the African National Congress at the leadership conference in December. With Mr Zuma continuing to fight allegations of corruption, the party had yet to name its candidate for the 2009 presidential elections. Helen Zille, the mayor of Cape Town, replaced Tony Leon as leader of the Democratic Alliance, the main opposition party. The government committed itself to increasing spending on social issues and on the police service. Land reform remained a key challenge.

The Lesotho Congress for Democracy returned to power in the country's general elections in February. These took place without major incident, but June and July saw mounting internal tensions, and industrial action crippled the country in November.

In Swaziland, the government opposed attempts to test clauses in the new constitution interpreted as permitting the formation of trade unions.

Revisions to Madagascar's constitution increased the powers of newly re-elected President Marc Ravalomanana. The presidential party won September's legislative elections, while the capital, Antananarivo, fell to the opposition in local elections in December.

The Comoros experienced a brief armed confrontation between the national army and the Anjouan *gendarmerie* during the island elections in May, which led to a standoff between the president of the union, Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi, and the self-inaugurated president of Anjouan, Colonel Mohamed Bacar. The African Union (AU) played a mediation role and sent about 250 troops to the islands, eventually imposing individual sanctions on Colonel Bacar and his entourage.

A very high HIV/AIDS prevalence in several of the region's countries continued to cause huge suffering for individuals, families and whole communities, weakening coping mechanisms, overburdening national health and social welfare services, and exacting a high economic cost.

Agriculture in Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland was plagued by persistent drought.

MAIN FIGURES AND INDICATORS

	Total
PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM (All categories/all statuses)¹	
Detainees visited	885
Detainees visited and monitored individually	33
Number of visits carried out	23
Number of places of detention visited	18
RESTORING FAMILY LINKS	
<i>Red Cross messages (RCMs) and reunifications</i>	
RCMs collected	434
RCMs distributed	359
<i>Tracing requests, including cases of missing persons</i>	
People for whom a tracing request was newly registered	24
<i>of whom females</i>	14
<i>of whom minors at the time of disappearance</i>	8
Tracing cases closed positively (persons located)	15
Tracing cases still being handled at 31 December 2007 (people)	86
<i>of which for females</i>	50
<i>of which for minors at the time of disappearance</i>	30
DOCUMENTS ISSUED	
People to whom travel documents were issued	78

1. Lesotho and Madagascar

ICRC ACTION

To convince the Malagasy government to address the situation in the country's prisons, the ICRC had reduced its structural support to the prison administration in 2006 and intensified efforts to engage the assistance of some members of the international community in persuading the government to bring detention conditions in line with internationally recognized standards. In early 2007, the ICRC embarked on a survey of the country's prisons in order to assess detention conditions and ascertain the will of the authorities to remedy the problems. It found that the authorities had taken a number of steps and that there had been some improvement in conditions of detention, although overcrowding remained a serious problem. It pursued dialogue with the main authorities with influence in the penitentiary system, conveying the findings of the assessment to them, and endeavoured to mobilize members of the international community to support efforts by the Malagasy authorities to improve the situation.

The ICRC followed the cases of detainees held in connection with the 1998 armed conflict in Lesotho, and assessed progress made in integrating prison health services into national health coverage.

Together with the region's National Societies, the delegation reinforced and extended the tracing and RCM services to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers did not lose contact with their families. These family-links services were promoted among refugee community leaders and refugee service providers. To enable refugees and asylum seekers to resettle abroad, the ICRC issued them with travel documents, at the request of various embassies and UNHCR.

As part of its continuing effort to build an environment in which action was guided by humanitarian principles and in which IHL was known and observed, the ICRC worked with a variety of stakeholders. It provided national authorities with legal and technical support in their moves to ratify IHL instruments and prepare implementing legislation. Armed and security forces from across the region were offered assistance in integrating IHL and

humanitarian principles into their doctrine, training and procedures. Support took the form of meetings with senior officers or the organization of workshops on IHL integration. Briefings on IHL and the ICRC were also conducted for different audiences, including troops departing on peace-support operations.

The ICRC continued to promote the teaching of the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme in Mauritius, the Seychelles and South Africa to familiarize secondary school students in these countries with humanitarian principles and IHL. It also supported the teaching of IHL in universities throughout the region and sponsored teams of students to take part in international IHL competitions. Contact with the media was maintained in South Africa and extended into Lesotho and Swaziland to increase public awareness of humanitarian issues and encourage accurate reporting on the work of the ICRC. Influential actors were briefed on IHL and the ICRC and promotional materials were produced.

As in past years, the ICRC worked closely with the region's National Societies, providing support for their emergency response, tracing and communication programmes and helping them to revise their statutes to conform with Movement standards.

CIVILIANS

Refugees and asylum seekers were able to stay in contact with relatives in other countries through the tracing and RCM services offered by the delegation and the National Societies in the region. The RCM service was also used by families in South Africa to exchange news with relatives detained abroad.

To increase awareness and use of the tracing and RCM services, refugee community leaders and various refugee service providers, including the Departments of Home Affairs in South Africa and Swaziland, NGOs and policy institutes, were briefed on these Red Cross activities at several official meetings. Networking with

Islamic community organizations helped South African Red Cross Society provincial branches contact Muslim refugee communities in Kwa-Zulu Natal and Eastern Cape.

An assessment of the needs of Zimbabweans migrating to South Africa in terms of family-links services was carried out by the South African Red Cross and the International Federation, with ICRC support.

Refugees and asylum seekers were able to resettle abroad following receipt of ICRC travel documents, issued at the request of various embassies and UNHCR. Meetings with diplomatic representatives in Pretoria helped raise their awareness of the service.

- ▶ 434 RCMs collected from and 359 RCMs distributed to civilians
- ▶ new tracing requests registered for 24 people (including 14 females and 8 minors at the time of disappearance); 15 people located; 86 people (including 50 females and 30 minors at the time of disappearance) still being sought
- ▶ 78 people issued with an ICRC travel document

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

The ICRC visited security detainees individually in Lesotho and Madagascar, monitored detention conditions and held detailed discussions with the authorities on its findings and recommendations.

In Lesotho, the cases of 10 people still detained in connection with the armed conflict in 1998 were followed up through a visit to the Maseru Central Correctional Institution in May. To help maintain general standards of health and welfare, all inmates were provided with hygiene items and cleaning and recreational materials.

During the visit, detailed discussions on HIV/AIDS programmes in prisons were held with the prison service, government representatives and NGOs. The discussions centred on how to advance the programmes and improve the level of health services provided to detainees, including referral procedures. Recommendations were presented to the prison authorities.

At the end of the year, a medical team assessed the impact of the ICRC's HIV/AIDS-related activities in detention facilities in Lesotho between 2004 and 2007. It found that the ICRC's activities to mobilize the government and international organizations, combined with a small prison HIV/AIDS project, had helped change attitudes towards the problem of HIV/AIDS in the penitentiary environment and had gradually led towards the detainee population obtaining access to the health services available to the general population.

The ICRC also held talks with UN agencies in Lesotho and South Africa on the best ways to integrate HIV/AIDS programmes for detainees into the broader programmes and policies of the government and international organizations.

In May 2006, in light of the prevailing conditions and lack of improvement in Madagascar's prisons, the ICRC had reduced its structural support to the prison administration, while intensifying efforts to engage the assistance of some members of the international community in convincing the Malagasy government to bring detention conditions in line with internationally recognized standards.

In 2007, during its assessment of Madagascar's detention facilities, the ICRC noted that, while conditions of detention continued to fall short of internationally recognized standards, there had been some improvement. Measures taken by the Malagasy government included the maintenance of a prison task force, an increase in the 2007 Ministry of Justice budget for health and nutrition in places of detention, and initiatives to reduce prison overcrowding by, for instance, prioritizing the cases of those who had been awaiting trial for extended periods and adopting a new law in May 2007 on pre-trial detention. Nevertheless, prison overcrowding remained a serious problem. Projects to rehabilitate and build new prisons were under way, and three pilot penal camps, aimed at making the penitentiary system self-sufficient in terms of food, were being set up, but progress was slow.

The ICRC pursued its dialogue with the Malagasy authorities, including representatives of the Presidency, the Ministry of Justice and the prison service, presenting them with its observations and recommendations. The Presidency included improvements to detention conditions in its "Madagascar Action Plan". The organization continued to mobilize international support for the authorities' efforts to improve the situation.

- ▶ in Lesotho, 861 detainees visited, of whom 10 monitored individually, during 1 visit to 1 place of detention
- ▶ in Madagascar, 24 detainees visited, of whom 23 monitored individually and 8 newly registered, during 22 visits to 17 places of detention

AUTHORITIES

The countries covered by the delegation, with ICRC technical and legal support, made progress towards the ratification of IHL instruments or the implementation of those to which they were already party. In addition to legislation in preparation:

- ▶ Mauritius ratified the Hague Convention on Cultural Property
- ▶ South Africa adopted the Red Cross Recognition and Protection of Certain Emblems Act

The delegation officially participated in the 8th Ordinary Session of the Pan African Parliament and advised the AU Committee on Justice and Human Rights on ICRC activities and IHL implementation.

Government representatives from 16 countries attended the seventh annual regional seminar on the implementation of IHL, co-hosted with the South African Department of Foreign Affairs in Pretoria.

Representatives from all of the countries covered by the delegation attended the Second Universal Meeting of National IHL Committees in Geneva, Switzerland, which focused on legal measures and mechanisms to prevent disappearances, to clarify the fate of missing persons and to assist their families.

Representatives from Lesotho, Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa and Swaziland attended the Second Commonwealth Red Cross and Red Crescent International Humanitarian Law Conference in New Zealand.

ARMED FORCES AND OTHER BEARERS OF WEAPONS

The chief of staff and senior officers of the Comoros armed forces met ICRC delegates to discuss the potential repercussions of the islands' political standoff in terms of IHL. The military and *gendarmerie* subsequently attended IHL briefings.

The South African minister of defence and senior officers of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) discussed IHL integration with the ICRC, and a brigadier-general was named as the focal point for the matter. South African Air Force and SANDF training courses and exercises received input from the ICRC.

High-ranking officers from Lesotho, Madagascar, South Africa and Swaziland, primarily directors of army training, participated in a five-day workshop in Zimbabwe on IHL integration. Senior military officers from the Seychelles also took part in an IHL workshop and assisted in the delivery of a two-day IHL course for military instructors.

Context-specific briefings on IHL and the ICRC were conducted for:

- ▶ personnel from SANDF peacekeeping contingents prior to their deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan
- ▶ SANDF officers attending the Senior Command and Staff Course
- ▶ the chief instructor of a new SANDF training centre for peace-support operations (also supplied with IHL reference materials)
- ▶ military and civilian staff attending 2 conferences in South Africa

Twenty senior police officers from the Lesotho Mounted Police Service took part in a workshop on international human rights law and IHL principles prior to national elections in February, and a further 90 police officers participated in 3 workshops later in the year.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Contacts were strengthened with the media and other civil society sectors in order to increase public awareness of humanitarian issues and support for the ICRC's activities. Leaders of Islamic communities in the Comoros and Mauritius were informed about the ICRC's activities, as were think-tanks and journalism students in South Africa and journalists in Lesotho and Swaziland. South African print and broadcast journalists received press releases, a newsletter and interviews. Film clips highlighting issues relating to the emblem, small arms and the effects of conflict on women and children were produced.

To familiarize young people with humanitarian principles, the delegation promoted the teaching of the Exploring Humanitarian Law programme in schools throughout the region. In Mauritius, the programme was being piloted in all public schools. In the Seychelles, where it was being integrated into the curriculum, teachers attended training sessions co-organized with the education authorities, and 25 young people were trained as focal points in youth centres. Over 50 teachers attended training sessions on the programme in South Africa.

A network of IHL lecturers at 16 universities throughout the region received support through an electronic newsletter, telephone contact, visits by ICRC delegates and the provision of relevant ICRC publications. With ICRC support:

- ▶ students from the University of Cape Town participated in the 2007 Jean Pictet IHL competition in Spain
- ▶ student teams from Lesotho and Mauritius participated in an IHL competition in Tanzania
- ▶ lecturers from 10 regional universities attended the seventh annual meeting of teachers of IHL in Pretoria
- ▶ 29 academics from 13 different countries participated in the sixth All Africa Course on IHL in Pretoria
- ▶ the *African Yearbook on International Humanitarian Law* published
- ▶ 21 people from countries worldwide participated in the 10th Health Emergencies in Large Populations (H.E.L.P.) course in Pretoria

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

National Societies in the region continued to receive material, training, funds and technical expertise to enhance their programmes to respond to emergencies, restore family links and promote IHL and the Fundamental Principles.

With ICRC support:

- ▶ in the run-up to national elections, Lesotho Red Cross staff trained in the Safer Access approach and branches countrywide received emergency equipment
- ▶ the Malagasy Red Cross began training 1,500 volunteers in order to reinforce its operational capacity
- ▶ over 700 students from 32 high schools participated in a three-month "Soccer against violence" project run by the South African Red Cross in Gauteng province
- ▶ South African Red Cross branch and provincial managers and tracing focal points from Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland attended tracing workshops
- ▶ dissemination sessions held by National Societies for their personnel and the general public, training materials produced, radio shows broadcast, events to mark World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day held, newsletters distributed and the Internet used to promote IHL and the Fundamental Principles and the red crystal emblem
- ▶ in South Africa, the National Society's newly recruited dissemination officer and 7 provincial dissemination focal points received training
- ▶ all of the region's National Societies sent delegations to the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Switzerland
- ▶ the Lesotho Red Cross approved revisions to its statutes

The National Societies of the Comoros and Lesotho appointed new secretaries general.

The ICRC, the International Federation, National Societies working in the region and the French Red Cross-led Plateforme d'Intervention Régionale pour l'Océan Indien (PIROI) continued to coordinate their activities.