

# Latin America

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ICRC/C. Haenni



Families who lose their breadwinners or are victims of attacks, as well as displaced people, receive assistance through the ICRC in Peru.

**Central America**

**ICRC regional delegations:**  
Guatemala City, San José

**South America**

**ICRC delegation:**  
Peru

**ICRC regional delegations:**  
Bogota, Brasilia, Buenos Aires

**Staff**

ICRC expatriates\* : 64

National Societies\*: 1

Local employees\*\* : 129

**Total expenditure**

CHF 15,700,456

**Expenditure breakdown CHF**

Protection/Tracing: 4,586,767

Relief: 751,181

Medical assistance: 1,980,564

Cooperation with

National Societies: 349,725

Dissemination: 847,957

Operational support: 3,234,353

Overheads: 949,909



⊕ ICRC regional delegation    ⊕ ICRC delegation

ICRC / AR 12.93

\* Average numbers calculated on an annual basis.

\*\* Under ICRC contract, as at December 1993.

# LATIN AMERICA

*Colombia and Peru were again plagued by serious violence in 1993, despite the efforts of the governments of both countries to end insurgencies and restore some measure of stability.*

*In the early part of the year the ICRC operation in Peru was still facing a number of difficulties. These included problems relating to authorizations to visit detainees, and a very serious incident involving the recording of a prison interview which was supposed to be confidential. During the year the ICRC consistently sought to restore its relationship of confidence with the authorities and the population, reminding them of the institution's mandate and the importance of its established procedures. These efforts paid off, as by mid-year the institution was fully able to conduct its activities with the cooperation of the authorities.*

*In Colombia, the ICRC continued to expand its delegation, creating a network of sub-delegations and offices extending coverage to most of the country. As it progressively became better established in the field, the ICRC was able to make its methods of work better understood and gain the trust of both the authorities and the population.*

*The ICRC continued its constant restructuring to adapt its presence in the field to current needs and make the best possible use of its resources. At the beginning of 1993, with the peace process in El Salvador well under way, the ICRC decided to close its delegation in San Salvador. Shortly after, in view of the stable situation in most of the sub-region, it was decided to merge the two regional delegations into one, based in Guatemala City, and to close the San José regional delegation with effect from the end of the year. Further restructuring in mid-year placed responsibility for coverage of Ecuador and Venezuela with the regional delegation in Brasilia, thus freeing resources in Bogota for more extensive coverage of the needs in Colombia.*

*Though the situation in most countries of Central America and the Caribbean was calm, extremely serious economic and social difficulties in Cuba and political and social crises in Guatemala, Haiti and Nicaragua remained a cause of concern for the ICRC, and the regional delegations in Guatemala City and San José had to follow these situations closely. The political conflict in Haiti was thought to have been settled by the Governors Island accord, but the agreement could not be implemented and the end of 1993 saw the exiled President no closer to returning to power. In Guatemala, an attempted coup d'état by the President led to tensions in mid-year, but the army's support of the Constitution thwarted the coup and toppled the President.*

*ICRC efforts throughout Latin America, and particularly in the south, were devoted to urging the region's governments to accept and ratify*

*the main instruments of international humanitarian law, including the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions, to recognize the competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission established in accordance with Article 90 of Additional Protocol I, and to ratify the United Nations 1980 Weapons Convention.*

*Because humanitarian law requires enabling legislation and other measures at the national level in order to be effective, the ICRC has made a special point of encouraging the establishment of ministerial commissions for its implementation. The measures adopted by these commissions (which may inter alia include representatives of the ministries of defence, justice, interior, health and education) range from fostering the adoption of laws designed to enforce humanitarian law and to penalize violations, to the teaching of basic principles (such as the significance of the emblem and respect for civilians) at schools and health institutions. By the end of 1993 commissions had been set up in Bolivia and Uruguay and others were being established in Argentina and Chile.*

# Central America

## GUATEMALA CITY

Regional delegation

(Belize, Caribbean, Guatemala, Mexico)

## CUBA

Throughout the year the ICRC maintained contacts with the authorities and the Cuban Red Cross. Among the topics discussed was the establishment of a centre for the dissemination of humanitarian law in Havana. An agreement was reached in October with the National Society, and was signed in Havana on 20 October by the Deputy Secretary General of the Cuban Red Cross and the ICRC Delegate General for Latin America. Under the agreement, the ICRC and the National Society were to open the Red Cross Training and Dissemination Centre, whilst steps were to be taken by the end of the year to find premises and ship dissemination material to Havana.

Other subjects addressed during the ICRC's meetings with government officials included the possibility of ratification by the government of Additional Protocol II and of ICRC visits to detainees, and the situation of Haitian refugees in eastern Cuba. A meeting took place on 28 June between the new Minister of Foreign Affairs and the ICRC President in Geneva and various other high-level contacts were maintained both in Geneva and in Cuba. In October the Delegate General for Latin America went to Cuba to continue these discussions and to finalize and sign the agreement between the National Society and the ICRC regarding the Dissemination Centre. He also had a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs during which the possible resumption of ICRC visits to detainees was discussed.

In January an ICRC doctor conducted a survey of conditions at a camp run by the Cuban Red Cross in Punta de Maisi, at the eastern end of the island. The camp housed hundreds of Haitian boat people awaiting their return to Haiti. Following this mission, limited assistance was given to the Cuban National Society to strengthen its operational capacity.

## Dissemination

In the early part of the year, the ICRC gave its first courses for staff of the Cuban Red Cross. Over 100 members of the National Society attended talks on the Red Cross in Holguin, Santa Clara and Havana, and later in Ciego de Avila, Sancti Spiritus, Cienfuegos and Villa Clara. The ICRC also gave lectures on humanitarian law to students at the University of Havana's Law Faculty.

In mid-year two ICRC delegates and a Spanish military judge working for the Spanish Red Cross gave a course on the law of armed conflict to 35 high-ranking officers of the Cuban armed forces, and in October three delegates took part in Forense 93, a conference on disaster relief which was attended by 220 participants from some 20 Latin American and European countries. The ICRC displayed a photo exhibition on international humanitarian law, which was visited by the President of Cuba and by numerous participants.

## GUATEMALA

Following the failure of the *coup d'état* launched by the President himself at the end of May, the ICRC kept the situation under close observation and maintained high-level contacts with the new authorities. In July, the regional delegate met the new Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence.

The ICRC assisted in holding a dissemination course in May for students at the Military Study Centre in Guatemala City, and a course on humanitarian law was given to high-ranking officers of the armed forces.

## HAITI

The ICRC carried out several missions to Haiti in 1993 to monitor the situation in the country and to maintain high-level contacts with representatives of the highest authorities and of the OAS\*-United Nations mission, the National Society and non-governmental organizations active there. In January delegates carried out a follow-up visit to the National Penitentiary, checking on the conditions of detention and proper use of medical supplies donated by the ICRC in 1992. In addition, they visited the Military Hospital and the General Hospital in Port-au-Prince and met representatives of the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization. During missions carried out later in the year delegates held meetings with the Chief of Staff of the armed forces and with the Prime Minister, discussing the plight of Haitian boat people in Cuba and other countries, the humanitarian situation in Haiti itself, the organization of dissemination activities for the armed forces, and conditions at the National Penitentiary. The ICRC also maintained contacts with the government in exile.

From 14 to 21 April the ICRC held two seminars for about 60 officers of the armed forces based in Port-au-Prince and in the country's nine provinces.

The ICRC sent delegates to the country whenever tension mounted. After the OAS-United Nations mission withdrew and the deadline for the exiled President's return passed, the ICRC stationed a delegate in the country full-time from October through to the end of the year. The ICRC carried out a number of surveys of the situation in the main towns and the National Society's preparedness to deal with emergencies in areas outside the capital, as tension was once again on the rise.

\* Organization of American States.

Delegates stayed in contact with local leaders, representatives of non-governmental organizations and other agencies active in these regions. In addition, the ICRC provided limited logistic support for the Haitian National Red Cross Society.

## JAMAICA

The regional delegate based in Guatemala travelled to Jamaica for three days in March to participate in a seminar organized by the Federation on the future role of National Societies in the Caribbean. During this mission he also took the opportunity to have talks with representatives of the Jamaica Red Cross Society.

## MEXICO

The ICRC maintained contacts with the Mexican authorities throughout the year. The regional delegate met the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in Mexico City in March, and the ICRC President received him at headquarters in June. The main topic of discussion was the possible ratification by Mexico of Additional Protocol II. During the regional delegate's visit to the Mexican capital he also met the new President of the Mexican Red Cross.

## SAN JOSE

### Regional delegation

(Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama)

## COSTA RICA

Throughout the year the ICRC maintained contacts with the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIHR), continuing to cooperate in activities concerned with the dissemination of international humanitarian law, human rights and the condition of people displaced by violence in Latin America. In November a mission sent by an *ad hoc* IIHR group studying the situation of displaced people travelled to Colombia at the request of the Colombian authorities, where it was helped in its work by the ICRC delegation. In January 1994 the conclusions of this mission were to be submitted to the *ad hoc* group, of which the ICRC regional delegation is a member with observer status.

In January, the ICRC took part as an observer in the Latin American regional meeting held in San José in preparation for the Vienna Human Rights Conference in mid-1993.

The ICRC also gave a course on international humanitarian law at the Department of International Relations of the National University of Costa Rica.



In September the ICRC, in cooperation with the Costa Rica Red Cross and the National College of Journalists, organized a two-day seminar on safety for journalists on dangerous missions. It was attended by ten journalists.

At the end of December the ICRC, having decided to restructure its presence in Central America to match the considerable reduction in its operational activities there, closed its regional delegation in San José and assigned responsibility for covering all the countries of Central America and the Caribbean to the ICRC regional delegation in Guatemala City.

## EL SALVADOR

The Delegate General for Latin America and the regional delegate based in San José met the President of El Salvador and the Minister of Foreign Affairs during a mission in June. They handed over to the authorities a report reviewing the twelve years of ICRC activities in the country. A list of some 3,100 people reported missing by their families, allegedly owing to the conflict, was also handed over to the government to help resolve various administrative and legal problems for the families of the missing.

The ICRC also maintained high-level contacts with representatives of the Farabundo Martí Liberation Movement (FMLN).

As from the beginning of 1993, with the closing of the ICRC's delegation, the armed forces included a course on international humanitarian law in their training curriculum. In 1993 the ICRC provided the military with a number of publications to assist in the teaching of international humanitarian law.

The ICRC officially closed its delegation in San Salvador on 15 March 1993. Thereafter, all activities were carried out from the ICRC's regional delegation in San José.

## HONDURAS

In October the Honduran government approached the ICRC delegation in San José with a request to help it deal with an influx of Nicaraguan civilians who had fled over the border following skirmishes between the *recontras* and the Nicaraguan army. The ICRC sent a delegate to the area, where the Honduran Red Cross was providing assistance for the group. A number of civilians had already returned, but the approximately 200 still in Honduras, though wanting to go home to Nicaragua, wished to do so only in the presence of humanitarian organizations such as the ICRC. The ICRC alerted human rights organizations in Nicaragua that the group was about to return and had requested such a presence. As diplomatic relations existed between the two countries, the civilians' repatriation could be organized through the respective governments. The ICRC,

for its part, helped the Honduran National Society to transport the civilians to the border, where they were received by the Nicaraguan authorities in the presence of representatives of human rights groups contacted by the ICRC.

## NICARAGUA

Since the end of 1991 the ICRC's presence in Nicaragua had been limited to orthopaedic activities. Throughout 1993 the ICRC maintained its efforts to ensure that the work of the Erasmo Paredes orthopaedic centre in Managua would continue after the ICRC withdrew from the country. The Ministry of Health issued a ministerial decree on 12 December which created a body to run the centre's activities. The ICRC office in Managua officially closed shortly thereafter, on 17 December 1993.

In 1993 the centre produced 318 prostheses and 897 orthoses, and carried out 108 major repairs to prostheses. The ICRC helped the centre to establish a mobile orthopaedic repair workshop, which reduced costs by making the provision of transport and accommodation for patients living in remote areas unnecessary and enabled needs in such areas to be assessed.

The ICRC also kept track of the situation in the country, maintaining contacts with the authorities and carrying out missions in Nicaragua, particularly after the armed confrontation in Esteli in mid-year and the various incidents involving the taking of hostages. The ICRC furthermore carried out dissemination activities for the National Society and the military. In September a course was organized for 35 supervisory staff of the Nicaraguan Red Cross. In November two courses were held, one for 30 officers of the National Police and the other, the first of its kind, for 40 high-ranking army officers. A general of the Spanish armed forces and judge at the Supreme Court of Spain was invited by the ICRC to direct the seminars. In addition, the ICRC gave a lecture on international humanitarian law at the National University for 150 teachers, professors, law students and human rights activists.

Tracing activities relating to the conflict which ended three years before continued in 1993. The ICRC, together with the families concerned, reviewed 172 tracing requests concerning people separated from their families or reported as missing, and solved 56 cases between January and May. The ICRC also issued 12 certificates of detention to provide administrative assistance to people who had been detained during the conflict.

Apart from the activities mentioned above, the ICRC sent a delegation consisting of the Delegate General for Latin America, the New York-based delegate responsible for relations with international organizations and the regional delegate based in San José to the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, which was held in Managua from 7 to 11 June 1993.

## PANAMA

From 9-13 August an ICRC doctor and two delegates visited 40 detainees held in connection with the United States' intervention in 1989 or arrested since 1990 for security reasons (including three who were seen for the first time) in two prisons (La Modelo and El Renacer) and two hospitals.

During this and other missions the ICRC delegates met government officials and members of the National Society to discuss various dissemination projects, as well as the implementation of international humanitarian law.

Also in August the regional delegate and an ICRC doctor visited the only remaining Panamanian prisoner of war held in the United States at the Miami Metropolitan Correctional Center. Two other detainees visited in May 1992 had meanwhile been released.

## South America

### PERU

Clashes between the government and the two main opposition groups, the Shining Path movement and the MRTA\*, continued to claim lives and cause damage in 1993. Following the arrests of the leaders of the armed opposition in 1992, the government carried on arresting suspected members of the two armed opposition groups in an attempt to dismantle their forces. The number of detainees grew accordingly, and the activities of the MRTA and the Shining Path diminished somewhat. However, the level of internal violence remained high in certain regions, such as the upper Huallaga valley and certain areas of the Junin and Huanuco regions.

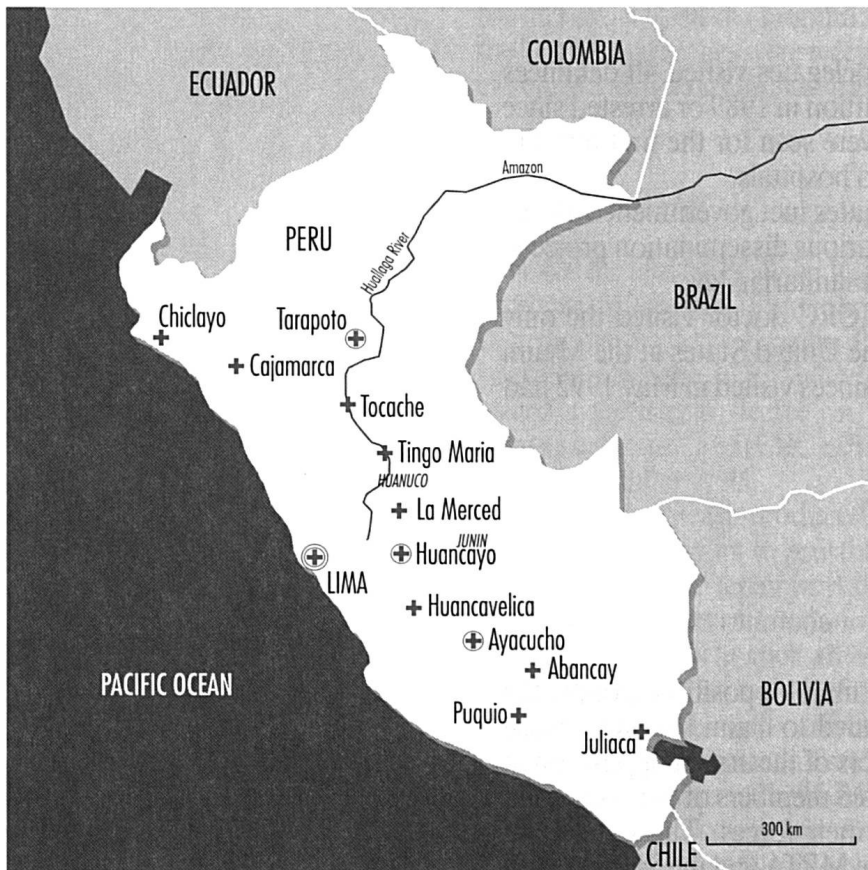
The ICRC was widely present in the country thanks to its three sub-delegations and nine smaller offices, which enabled its delegates and field officers to carry out missions ranging from a few days to three weeks in response to reports of needs for protection or assistance.

### Activities for detainees

The problems encountered in the latter part of 1992 by the ICRC in visiting detainees, and especially those held in detention centres run by the Ministry of Justice, continued to hamper the delegation's activities for detainees at the beginning of 1993. Visits continued, however, to certain other places of detention, notably the anti-terrorist unit (DINCOTE\*\*), police stations run by the Ministry

\* *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru.*

\*\* *Dirección Nacional contra el Terrorismo.*



+ ICRC delegation    
 + ICRC sub-delegation    
 + ICRC office

ICRC / AR 12.93

**IN 1993 THE ICRC :**

- visited 6,295 detainees, including 4,110 for the first time, in 395 places of detention;
- covered the cost of medical care for more than 700 civilian conflict victims;
- provided medical supplies during the 554 visits paid to hospitals, dispensaries and first-aid posts;
- evacuated 368 people to health facilities in main towns;
- held 559 dissemination sessions, reaching over 32,500 people.

of the Interior and military bases. On 11 February 1993 an interview which was supposed to be strictly confidential was published in a Lima magazine. The interview had taken place at the DINCOTE between ICRC delegates and the leader of the Shining Path, who had been arrested in September 1992, and it had apparently been recorded. This serious violation of the conditions set by the ICRC for visits undermined the trust of all parties in the ICRC's impartiality and confidentiality, and the ICRC immediately halted all activities until the government reaffirmed its commitment to respect all the ICRC's criteria for visits to detainees.

High-level discussions to obtain renewed authorization to visit detainees in accordance with the ICRC's customary procedures continued both in Peru and in Geneva, where the Peruvian Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs was received by the ICRC President on 19 February 1993. The discussions centred around the publication and recording of the interview and the renewal of authorizations to visit detainees held in Ministry of Justice prisons. An agreement between the government and the ICRC was

signed by the Prime Minister and the ICRC head of delegation on 4 March, and visits to all places of detention except the DINCOTE resumed on 8 March. Visits to the DINCOTE also began again soon after. For the rest of 1993 the delegation was able to visit all categories of security detainees throughout the country in places of detention run by the armed forces, the Ministry of Justice and the National Police (under the Ministry of the Interior), including the DINCOTE. The ICRC was thus able to keep track of detainees from their initial arrest through the entire detention system.

As part of its programme of visits to detainees, the ICRC issued regular, confidential reports to the highest civilian and military authorities on the conditions of detention and the treatment of detainees. Two summary reports on the ICRC's activities in Peru in 1992 were submitted to the President of the Republic and the respective authorities by the head of delegation in August 1993. One covered the conduct of forces under the Joint Command of the Armed

Forces and the other covered forces under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior. Both reports addressed the protection of the civilian population as well as the treatment of detainees.

During their visits to places of detention, delegates provided toiletries, cleaning products and educational and recreational items for the inmates, as well as medicines for prison infirmaries. They also carried out a special assistance programme for tuberculosis patients at Lurigancho prison, providing about 250 kg of food and some cooking fuel every month. The ICRC covered travel costs for family members visiting their relatives in prison and for some released detainees. About 1,500 tickets were funded each month.

### Activities for the civilian population

The delegation continued dissemination activities designed to remind combatants and armed groups of the provisions of humanitarian law and help ensure respect for them. During their field missions, ICRC delegates recorded allegations of violations of international humanitarian law. When the allegations concerned government forces the ICRC reported them to the proper authorities in its regular confidential reports. Allegations concerning the armed opposition were communicated to the respective parties whenever possible during delegates' visits to detainees and during contacts with the Shining Path and the MRTA in the field.

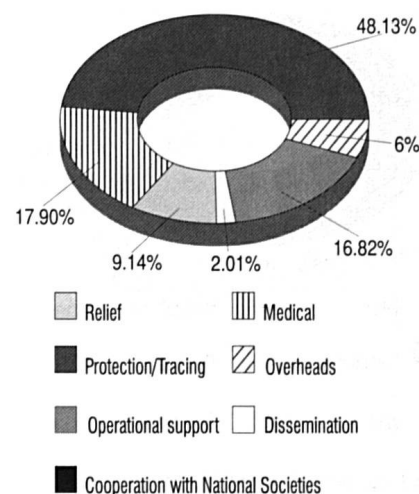
The ICRC provided material assistance to approximately 10,000 people directly affected by the violence, including widows and orphans and displaced people. Civilian victims of the violence received food, blankets, clothing, tools and kitchen utensils. In addition, the ICRC continued to support a programme providing one hot meal a day to about 400 orphans or children of displaced families in Ayacucho. In all, the ICRC provided about 65 tonnes of relief supplies in Peru in 1993.

### Medical assistance

The ICRC paid for the medical treatment of some 700 people injured as a direct result of the violence and undergoing treatment at Ministry of Health facilities and it provided medical supplies to these facilities.

ICRC medical staff took part in visits to places of detention and accompanied field missions, assessing needs in local dispensaries and first-aid posts, evacuating wounded people and providing medicines and other medical supplies. The delegation also took measures to protect Peruvian medical staff from various pressures brought to bear on them by the parties, particularly by making it known that they should enjoy neutral status and must care for the wounded and sick without discrimination.

Peru  
Total expenditure in 1993:  
CHF 8,220,000



In addition, a technician from the Biomechanical Service of the Callao National Rehabilitation Institute, Lima, was trained in the use of polypropylene techniques, thanks to an ICRC invitation to take a course on this technique at the ICRC-CIREC orthopaedic centre in Bogota, Colombia.

### Tracing activities

The ICRC's tracing offices in Abancay, Ayacucho, Cajamarca, Huancavelica, Huancayo, Juliaca, La Merced, Lima, Puquio, Tarapoto and Tingo Maria registered and kept track of detainees and forwarded news of them to their families. They also processed tracing requests and requests for assistance from conflict victims and the families of missing people. These offices received a monthly average of about 3,000 people who came to the ICRC for assistance.

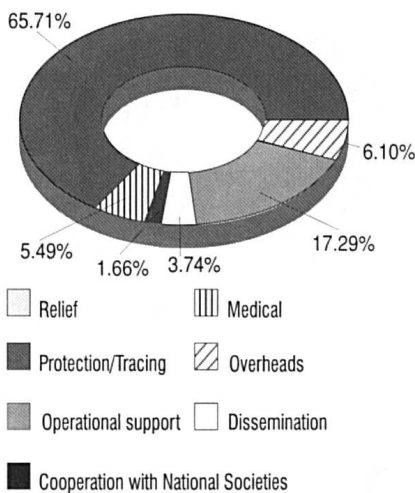
Families of people who disappeared turned to the ICRC for help in finding their relatives. The tracing offices recorded 290 cases of people who disappeared in 1993 allegedly for reasons related to the violence, either captured by government forces or opposition movements or in undetermined circumstances. At the same time, 108 cases were resolved (either the person was found to be alive in detention or released, or details were obtained of the person's death), including eight which had been carried over from the previous year.

### Dissemination

The dissemination of international humanitarian law and the Red Cross principles was among the delegation's highest priorities. The delegation held a monthly average of about 50 dissemination sessions, and reached over 32,000 people, including over 10,500 members of the armed forces and police and about 1,500 members of civil defence units.

In March a four-day specialized course on the law of war was given by the ICRC's dissemination delegate for the armed forces to about 20 colonels, captains and commanders of the Peruvian armed forces.

Bogota regional delegation  
Total expenditure in 1993:  
CHF 3,460,000



## BOGOTA Regional delegation (Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela)

### COLOMBIA

The internal violence between government and armed opposition forces mounted in 1993, especially in the Uraba region, Santander, North Santander, southern Bolivar, southern Cesar, Casanare and Arauca. Late in the year there were also clashes between armed opposition groups favouring and opposing peace talks with the government.

The ICRC again increased its presence in the field, providing additional staff (from 12 expatriates the delegation grew to 15 by year's end) and adding the sub-delegation in Monteria to its sub-delegations in Bucaramanga, Popayan and Villavicencio, which had been opened in the previous two years. As the institution's presence in the field became better known and accepted, the population affected by the violence began to show more confidence in the ICRC as an intermediary for transmitting allegations of violations of humanitarian law to the respective parties.

In August the Ministry of Defence authorized the ICRC to distribute medical supplies to health centres in conflict areas. The delegation began distributing such supplies soon after. In another major development, the ICRC was authorized to organize a course on the law of armed conflict for high-ranking officers of the armed forces.

On 1 September 1993 Colombia acceded to Protocol I additional to the Geneva Conventions.



## Activities for detainees

Although the ICRC had been authorized by the National Council of the Judicial Police since March 1991 to visit detainees held at police facilities throughout the country, it did not have access to detainees held by the armed forces until April 1993, when the *Fiscalía General de la Nación* (an autonomous body established as part of the judicial branch under the 1991 Constitution) granted general permission for ICRC visits to detainees held at all places of detention in Colombia. The delegation thus had complete access to all detainees throughout the country, including those held by the armed forces. The *Fiscalía* also helped the delegation to have more rapid and complete access to the arrest notification system which the ICRC itself had helped establish in 1991.

In 1993 ICRC delegates and doctors carried out a total of 443 visits to 175 places of detention under the authority of the Ministries of Justice and Defence and the Administrative Department of Security (DAS) and to two hospitals.

### IN 1993 THE ICRC :

- visited 1,653 detainees in 175 places of detention;
- held dissemination sessions reaching some 13,100 people including 2,512 members of the armed forces.

They visited 1,653 security detainees, 1,130 of whom were seen for the first time, including 81 who were under interrogation (detainees were generally held under interrogation for a period of less than 48 hours).

During visits to places of detention, the ICRC provided toiletries, recreational items and clothing to inmates and paid for the dental, medical and ophthalmological treatment of 133 detainees. Forty-four prison infirmaries also received medical supplies. The delegation helped ensure proper sanitary conditions in the prisons by providing fumigation equipment, clothing and personal hygiene items. It also paid for the transport of family members to visit their relatives in prison and for detainees to return to their homes. A total of 4,053 transport vouchers were funded.

### Activities for the civilian population

With the opening of the Monteria sub-delegation in October, the ICRC was better able to cover the needs of victims of the violence in the north. Field missions were sent out when reports of clashes reached the sub-delegations, and delegates visited the affected regions to provide assistance and to collect information on alleged violations of humanitarian law. Such allegations were transmitted to the respective parties.

### Tracing activities

As part of its activities to protect civilians, the ICRC handled 93 tracing requests, 68 of which were carried over from previous years and 25 were new cases opened in 1993. Twenty-five of the 93 cases were solved in 1993. In addition, the ICRC tracing office kept track of reports of allegations of violations of humanitarian law.

### Medical assistance

Apart from the medical assistance for detainees referred to above, the ICRC also covered the cost of medical treatment for 74 people, gave medical assistance to displaced people and, beginning in September and with the authorization of the Ministries of Health and Defence, provided assistance (bandages and basic first-aid material) to six health centres and one dispensary in regions affected by the violence.

The ICRC continued to cooperate with the CIREC (Centre for Rehabilitation Surgery) in Bogota. In 1993 the CIREC produced 331 prostheses and 720 orthoses, and fitted 323 and 695 people respectively with these devices. About sixty amputees were fitted with prostheses made of polypropylene. The use of polypropylene was introduced at the centre by the ICRC when the latter began cooperating with the CIREC.



## Dissemination

The ICRC continued its ongoing dissemination activities for the police, the civilian authorities, prison guards, university students, non-governmental organizations, health specialists, journalists and members of the National Society. Many of these dissemination activities were carried out with the cooperation of the Colombian Red Cross Society. Media channels such as the press, radio and television were also used in dissemination efforts.

In July the ICRC took part in a two-day meeting of high-ranking officers of the armed forces in Bogota, which was also attended by the generals responsible for the regions most affected by the political violence. The head of delegation took advantage of this opportunity to present the activities carried out throughout the country by the ICRC. The ICRC's dissemination delegate for the armed forces held a dissemination course for 19 high-ranking air force, navy, army and police officers in September, likewise in the capital.

In addition, the ICRC held regular dissemination sessions for officers and soldiers of the armed forces.

## ECUADOR

The ICRC assisted the National Society in holding a seminar for Red Cross relief workers early in the year. In addition, delegates carried out visits to four places of detention in Quito and Guayaquil in June, and saw 12 prisoners of concern to the ICRC, including nine for the first time. They also handed over limited medical and material assistance to the prisons.

At the end of December ICRC delegates visited 11 detainees (ten Colombians and one Ecuadorian) in Quito. They had been captured following a clash in early December on the border between Colombia and Ecuador and were allegedly members of the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC).

From 4 to 7 October a member of the Committee, the ICRC's governing board, went on a mission to Ecuador to have discussions with the directors of the National Society. He also visited the Red Cross branch in Chimborazo, south of Quito.

## VENEZUELA

The two attempted *coups* of 4 February and 27 November 1992 resulted in the arrest of hundreds of civilians and members of the military. In 1993 the ICRC continued to visit these detainees. In March delegates saw 135 prisoners at four places of detention, including 18 civilians and 74 members of the military detained in connection with the second *coup* attempt, who were visited for the first time, and 43 soldiers held in connection with the first *coup* attempt. The

ICRC also gave humanitarian law courses for civilian authorities and armed forces staff, National Society personnel and university staff and students, *inter alia* at Santa Maria University in Caracas.

Coverage of Venezuela and Ecuador passed from the Bogota regional delegation to the Brasilia regional delegation at the end of the year. In preparation for this change, the regional delegate based in Brasilia and the regional delegate based in Bogota went to Venezuela in mid-October, prior to the elections, to have talks with government officials. Another similar mission was carried out just after the 5 December elections by the delegate based in Brasilia. During these missions the regional delegates had meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the General Director of the Ministry of Defence, representatives of foreign missions and international agencies in Caracas and officials of the Venezuelan Red Cross.

## BRASILIA

### Regional delegation

(Brazil, French Guiana, Guyana, Suriname)

## BRAZIL

The delegation developed contacts throughout the year with various organizations and government bodies, including the Inter-American Juridical Committee of the Organization of American States, the Brazilian Society of International Law, a number of non-governmental organizations and academic circles. Several lectures on humanitarian law were given at Brazilian universities, including the University of Brasilia's Faculties of Law and International Relations and local universities in Minas Gerais and the north-east.

The regional delegate also had talks with representatives of the government and the armed forces. In mid-year the delegation took up high-level contacts with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Justice. A campaign was launched in the press to draw attention to the International Conference for the Protection of War Victims and to encourage participation by the Brazilian government in it. At the Conference, which was held in Geneva from 30 August to 2 September, the government announced that it would recognize the competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission established under Article 90 of Protocol I, and subsequently published this decision in the official gazette. It then officially recognized the Commission's competence in a declaration issued on 23 November.

The regional delegate also met senior officials of Brazil's constituent States, notably the State Secretaries of Justice and of Public Security of Minas Gerais

and the commanders of the military and civilian police academies, and maintained contact with local authorities of Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Ceara States.

Discussions with the armed forces' Chief of Staff, the Chief of Instruction and Chief of Operations addressed the teaching of international humanitarian law within the armed forces. In May the regional delegate took part in the strategy course held by the military academy in Rio de Janeiro, spoke on international humanitarian law and the role of the ICRC and handed over a vast selection of reference documents to the academy. Similar documentation was given to the Naval War College. ICRC staff gave lectures on humanitarian law to about 500 cadets at the Agulhas Negras National Officers Academy in July. At the end of the year the delegation gave briefings on international humanitarian law to military staff assigned to take part in United Nations peace-keeping operations in Angola and Mozambique.

Late in the the year two dissemination sessions were held jointly by the ICRC, UNHCR, the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation. The first was opened in the presence of the Ministers of Justice, Foreign Affairs and the Environment, and took place at the National Congress in Brasilia. About 100 members of the Congress attended presentations covering *inter alia* the adoption of standards of humanitarian law in national legislation, refugee law and human rights law. The second seminar was held in Fortaleza (State of Ceara) and was attended by about 200 participants, most of whom were military police officers from the north-east region.

## SURINAME

In March the regional delegate went on a mission to Suriname, where he met the President of the Republic, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Justice and Health and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. They discussed various topics, including ways to implement international humanitarian law and the situation in the country following the peace agreement concluded at the end of 1992 between the government and opposition groups.

## BUENOS AIRES

### Regional delegation

(Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay)

The ICRC delegation in Buenos Aires organized three major international seminars for countries in South America. From 29 March to 2 April, together with the Ministry of Defence of Uruguay, the ICRC organized a dissemination seminar in Punta del Este for the armed forces of ten countries. High-ranking delegations were sent by the armed forces of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile,

Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela; representatives of the Colombian and Paraguayan governments also attended this seminar, which was inaugurated by the Minister of Defence and the ICRC's Delegate General for Latin America. On 7 and 8 July the presidents and the dissemination service directors of the National Societies of the five countries covered by the regional delegation in Buenos Aires, as well as a delegate from the Federation, attended a workshop in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, to discuss dissemination efforts in the region and to seek ways of ensuring closer cooperation between the ICRC and the National Societies. From 8-10 September the regional delegation in Buenos Aires, in cooperation with the regional delegation in Brasilia, organized an international seminar to discuss measures taken by countries in the region (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay) to implement humanitarian law. Twenty official representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence or Justice of these six countries participated in the discussions.

The regional delegate based in Buenos Aires also took part in May in a Latin American seminar on the application of humanitarian law during war at sea, held in Buenos Aires. The seminar was organized by the University of the Saviour and the Argentine and Spanish Red Cross Societies, and was attended by fifteen representatives of the armed forces of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Spain and Uruguay.

## ARGENTINA

While maintaining high-level contacts with the Argentine authorities with a view to setting up an interministerial commission for the implementation of humanitarian law, the ICRC also organized a number of dissemination sessions, notably for academic circles and the armed forces. In particular, seminars and courses were held at the University of the Saviour, the Foreign Services Institute, the Palomar military college and the University of La Plata, as well as for the security forces under the authority of the Ministry of Defence, including troops and officers about to be sent on United Nations peace-keeping missions to Croatia and Cambodia. In May a mini-course on humanitarian law was given to 31 officers of the armed forces in Comodoro Rivadavia. Courses were also given at a symposium on United Nations peace-keeping operations organized by the Argentine Council for International Relations.

On 8 June the President of Argentina was received by the ICRC President at ICRC headquarters in Geneva. They discussed various matters, including the ICRC's role with regard to conflicts where Argentine troops have been sent in as United Nations peace-keeping forces and the question of alleged violations of international humanitarian law by British forces in the 1982 conflict between Argentina and the United Kingdom.

## BOLIVIA

On 3 March the Bolivian government issued a decree establishing a permanent interministerial commission for the implementation of humanitarian law, chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The ICRC's regional delegate took part in the meetings that this commission held later in the year. The ICRC also maintained high-level contacts with various government ministers, including the Ministers of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Justice, as well as with the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces to urge ratification of instruments of humanitarian law, and in particular the 1980 United Nations Weapons Convention.

The ICRC held a number of seminars and courses on international humanitarian law for the authorities, members of the police and armed forces and academic circles, including police units in the capital, an army division in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, two major universities in the capital La Paz and the private university in Santa Cruz. In November a five-day national training seminar was held for 20 members of the armed forces.

## CHILE

From 16 to 31 March ICRC delegates visited 19 places of detention in Chile and saw 159 detainees, including 47 who were seen for the first time. A report on these visits was handed over to the Minister of Justice and the Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Interior in June.

Throughout the year, the ICRC held talks with the authorities to facilitate the establishment of a commission for the application of humanitarian law, and dissemination activities played a large part in the ICRC's activities. In view of the participation by Chilean troops in United Nations peace-keeping missions, the Institute of International Studies in Santiago organized a seminar on the subject of peace-keeping and humanitarian law, and the ICRC sent a delegate to give lectures and join in the discussions. A seminar for police force instructors was held on 24 March, in cooperation with the Chilean Red Cross, on ways to teach international humanitarian law. In addition, a three-day seminar held in mid-October presented the ICRC and humanitarian law to military lawyers during their training. The delegation organized seminars on humanitarian law at the Santiago naval garrison and for the infantry brigade in Concepcion, as well as for Carabinero cadets. Shorter courses on the same subject were given for the Institute for Police Inspectors, for officers at the military academy, and for the International Law Department of the University of Santiago's Law Faculty.

## PARAGUAY

The delegation took up contact with the new authorities. Meetings were held between the ICRC's regional delegate and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs,

Defence and Justice, and with the President of the Chamber of Deputies and the Chairman of the Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee.

The ICRC also began dissemination to the armed forces in Paraguay. In April it started an eight-lesson course for 60 cadets at the military college in Capiata. In July two dissemination sessions were held for the armed forces; one for cadets at the military academy and another for officers at the main military schools. Talks were also given at the diplomatic academy and a one-day seminar was organized for 36 military jurists, judges and advisers. In October the ICRC gave a three-day introductory course on humanitarian law for 30 naval officers.

## URUGUAY

On 1 March the government published Executive Decree 677, which was promulgated in 1992 and established the National Commission for Humanitarian Law. The ICRC took part in the work of the commission during the year. By the end of the year, the United Nations 1980 Weapons Convention had been submitted to the Senate for ratification.

The delegation gave lectures on humanitarian law at the Catholic University of Montevideo and the Artigas Institute (the diplomatic academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). The seminar at the Artigas Institute was opened by the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In addition, the ICRC and the Uruguayan Red Cross held a joint seminar in June for journalists in the capital. The ICRC delegate based in Buenos Aires also took part in a symposium on peace-keeping, which was attended by 250 officers, civil servants and diplomats, and organized talks on humanitarian law for cadets at the naval school in Montevideo and for officers of the national police force. In December the delegate gave a talk on humanitarian law at the International Relations College of the University of the Republic. The delegation also took part in dissemination activities for troops assigned to United Nations peace-keeping operations.

