

Western and Central Europe and the Balkans

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School lunches are distributed to children in war-torn Sarajevo.

ICRC/P. Grabhorn

**Western and Central Europe
and the Balkans**

ICRC delegations:

Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia,
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Former
Yugoslav Republic of
Macedonia

Staff

ICRC expatriates¹ : 129
National Societies¹ : 67
Local employees² : 665


Total expenditure

Sfr 117,434,807

Expenditure breakdown

	Sfr
Protection/tracing:	15,499,435
Relief:	52,137,847
Medical assistance:	30,118,725
Cooperation with National Societies:	1,335,978
Dissemination:	2,295,471
Operational support:	10,650,363
Overheads:	5,396,988



 ICRC Headquarters

ICRC / AR 12.94

WESTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE AND THE BALKANS

¹ Average figures calculated on an annual basis.

² Under ICRC contract, as at December 1994.

In 1994 the ICRC was obliged to strengthen its presence in Western and Central Europe and the Balkans in order to respond to new crisis situations, launch dissemination and information programmes and develop cooperation with the international organizations present in the region. Cooperation with National Red Cross Societies also took on a new dimension in 1994.

The fighting continued in Bosnia-Herzegovina and tension remained high in the United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs) in Croatia. Owing to the difficulty in finding global political settlements, the peoples of the former Yugoslavia were unable to regain their stability, and the ICRC maintained a large number of staff in the Balkans so that it could continue to assist all the victims of the various conflicts.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina a large-scale reconstruction programme in Sarajevo and Mostar and a gradual return of refugees had been expected, but the situation on the front lines remained relatively static during the year. For the civilian population this meant a total lack of freedom of movement, which prevented the return of internally displaced people to their homes. The ICRC thus had to take steps to enhance respect for civilians, especially minorities, and to assist thousands of victims of the fighting or of repression. Despite the efforts of the international community and the institution, it unfortunately proved impossible to persuade certain actors in the conflict to relinquish the aim of establishing homogeneous ethnic areas in the regions under their control. The practice of "ethnic cleansing", which took on different forms but remained unacceptable, was thus pursued in some parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

To meet new needs arising largely from the prolongation of the conflict, the ICRC asked some 15 National Red Cross Societies to help it distribute emergency aid and set up rehabilitation programmes, mainly in the medical and sanitation sectors. This rehabilitation effort in the midst of an emergency is in line with the policy of continuity that the ICRC wants to establish in this type of situation, to help the population survive in conditions of decency and dignity.

The ICRC presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the UNPAs facilitated dialogue between the various international protagonists in the field concerning the distribution of tasks. The ICRC's independent approach enabled it, at a time when NATO was threatening to intervene, to maintain a presence throughout the territory with the necessary guarantees from all the parties to the conflict, which recognized its neutral and independent position.

Close ties were maintained with UNHCR and UNPROFOR in order to avoid duplication of effort, particularly in the distribution of aid, and to guarantee the efficacy of humanitarian negotiation, which must be kept separate from discussion on political and military matters. There were also regular*

* UNPROFOR: United Nations Protection Force

exchanges of views with representatives of European bodies (ECMM,* ECTF,* CSCE*) and non-governmental organizations in the field in an attempt to harmonize their respective activities.

The ICRC kept a considerable number of staff in the Republic of Croatia, in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including Kosovo, Sandzak and Montenegro, and in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia so as to continue its humanitarian work, particularly in places of detention, and to develop contacts and set up dissemination and information programmes.

Several missions were conducted to other countries of Central Europe and the Balkans. These countries, especially those suffering from the indirect effects of the conflicts in the region, were beset by instability and economic difficulties. The ICRC maintained regular contacts with National Societies and governments with a view to setting up dissemination programmes and preventive activities.

In Turkey, the ICRC followed developments in the humanitarian situation with regard to the conflict in the south-east of the country and stepped up its efforts to be allowed to carry out its mission in this region. The escalation of the conflict, reported by official circles in Turkey, obliged the ICRC to insist on the need for its presence by virtue of Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions. This had unfortunately not been accepted by the end of the year.

Elsewhere in Europe, close contacts were maintained with the governments of countries which the ICRC President or staff members had visited or whose representatives had been received at headquarters. Regular meetings were also held with ambassadors accredited to the United Nations in Geneva, either to present the ICRC's emergency appeals to them or to alert them, as representatives of the international community, to particularly serious situations in humanitarian terms.

The ICRC also strengthened its relations with European bodies such as the European Union, which gives substantial support to its humanitarian work, and entities such as the CSCE and the Council of Europe which are in a position to exert influence on the parties to ongoing conflicts, with a view to improving respect for international humanitarian law. The ICRC attaches special importance to these relations, as humanitarian action would be considerably slowed down without the moral and financial support of the States party to the Geneva Conventions.

Finally, the ICRC closely followed the renewed dialogue between the parties involved in Northern Ireland and the implications for its activities. ICRC delegates conducted a visit to prisoners there in April 1994.

* ECMM: European Community Monitoring Mission

* ECTF: European Community Task Force

* CSCE: Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe

Western Europe

As part of its effort to bring about a humanitarian mobilization, the ICRC maintained close contact with the governments and National Red Cross Societies of Western Europe and constantly alerted them to the plight of war victims in less fortunate parts of the world. The institution's President, Vice-Presidents and Directors, members of the Committee (the ICRC's governing body) and the delegates concerned with the region carried out frequent missions to foster dialogue with the various States and their National Societies and strengthen cooperation with them. The ICRC representatives gave numerous talks and seminars, aimed at spreading knowledge of international humanitarian law and the ICRC's work worldwide, for academic, political, military and religious circles, diplomats, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions and the media and communications sector. A particularly important event was the sixth annual course on international humanitarian law, organized by the ICRC's Legal Division and the Swiss Red Cross at the Swiss Red Cross training centre in Nottwil, Switzerland, from 31 August to 10 September. More than 30 French-speaking advanced law students from 14 countries around the world attended.

In the course of his activities on the diplomatic front, the ICRC President focused on a number of topics in addition to operational matters, notably the follow-up to the 1993 Conference for the Protection of War Victims and the ICRC's determination to work towards a ban on landmines and blinding weapons through the Review Conference of the 1980 United Nations Weapons Convention, due to take place in 1995. While urging governments to take the political action necessary to restore peace, the President stressed the need to leave room for independent humanitarian action and underlined the ICRC's specific role as a neutral intermediary.

The President's missions throughout the year included official visits to Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Sweden, and to San Marino and the United Kingdom (see below). In Austria and France, he met the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Health and Defence of each country, as well as other senior government officials and representatives of international organizations. In Paris, the President also had meetings with the Minister of State for Human Rights and members of the National Assembly. While in Paris in May for celebrations marking the 75th anniversary of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the ICRC President had the opportunity to review the institution's operations with the President of the Republic. The President also travelled to Bonn to pay the traditional visit to the capital of the State holding the presidency of the European Union. Here he

had meetings with the Federal Minister of Economic Cooperation and Development, the two Ministers of State and other high-ranking officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Secretaries of State for Defence and the Interior and the chairmen of various parliamentary committees. During his official visit to Italy he met the Heads of State and Government, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Health and Defence, and other senior government officials and members of parliament. The topics on the agenda included adoption of the new statutes of the Italian Red Cross. The ICRC President also had meetings with the Secretary for Relations with States of the Holy See and other Vatican officials. In Sweden he had talks with the Minister of Development Cooperation, the Minister of Defence, senior officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, and the Director General of the Swedish International Development Authority.

As in the past, the ICRC maintained close contact with the Swiss Federal authorities in Bern. In December the ICRC's Executive Board went on its annual mission to Bern, the Swiss capital, where the ICRC President, accompanied by the institution's two Vice-Presidents and three Directors and his assistant, had a series of discussions with the Federal authorities. They met the President of the Confederation, the Head and the Secretary of State of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Director for Development and Humanitarian Aid and the Swiss army Chief of Staff.

During each mission, the President had contacts with National Society representatives at all levels. He emphasized the importance of cooperation within the Movement, while seeking to clarify the distinct roles to be played by its individual components. The forthcoming 26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent was another central topic. In all the countries he visited the ICRC President gave press conferences and interviews on radio and television.

Throughout the year, the President received the Heads of State and high-ranking government officials of a number of Western European countries at ICRC headquarters, including the Prime Minister of the Republic of Iceland and the Head of the Swiss Federal Department of the Interior (January), the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (February), the Secretary for Relations with States of the Holy See (June) and the President of Portugal (November).

ANDORRA

On 3 and 4 March, at the request of the joint ICRC/Federation Commission for National Society Statutes, representatives of the two organizations

conducted a mission to ascertain whether the Andorra Red Cross met the conditions necessary for official recognition as a National Society. The Andorra Red Cross, in existence since 1980, had not yet been recognized as the Principality of Andorra did not attain sovereign statehood until March 1993.

SAN MARINO

The ICRC President visited San Marino at the beginning of April and gave an address at the inauguration of the two new "Capitani Reggenti" (Heads of State). During his visit the government announced that it had deposited the instruments of ratification of the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions with the Swiss Federal authorities in Bern. The ratification took effect as from 5 October.

UNITED KINGDOM

From 11 to 21 April 1994 a team of ICRC delegates, including a doctor, went to the Maze and Belfast prisons to carry out a follow-up visit, negotiated the previous year, to prisoners held in connection with the events in Northern Ireland. The ICRC has regularly conducted visits, in accordance with its standard procedures, to prisons in the province since 1982. The cease-fire declarations made by the IRA* and by the UVF* and the UFF* (protestant paramilitary groups) at the beginning of September and October, respectively, paved the way for further negotiations aimed at reaching a political settlement in Northern Ireland.

The extensive agenda of the ICRC President's mission to the United Kingdom in October included meetings with the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Minister for Overseas Development and chairmen and members*of parliamentary working groups. The ICRC President raised the question of ratification of the 1977 Additional Protocols by the British parliament.

EUROPEAN UNION

The ICRC actively promoted its relations with ECHO* throughout the period under review.

* IRA: Irish Republican Army

* UVF: Ulster Voluntary Forces

* UFF: Ulster Freedom Fighters

* ECHO: European Community Humanitarian Office

Daily contacts helped to harmonize ECHO's support for ICRC operational activities, and the two organizations maintained a dialogue on broader issues such as the coordination of humanitarian assistance.

At the ICRC's initiative a meeting took place in Geneva in June between ECHO and about 20 of its partners to start reviewing the framework partnership agreement. By the end of the year, more than 140 humanitarian organizations had signed partnership contracts with ECHO.

The ICRC maintained fruitful relations with the European Commission, as evidenced by the extremely rapid response of the Commission's relevant services during the Rwandan crisis.

A development of interest to the ICRC was the establishment, under ECHO's initial impetus, of a diploma in humanitarian action by five European universities. An ICRC legal specialist took part in the course on international humanitarian law given at the University of Aix-en-Provence.

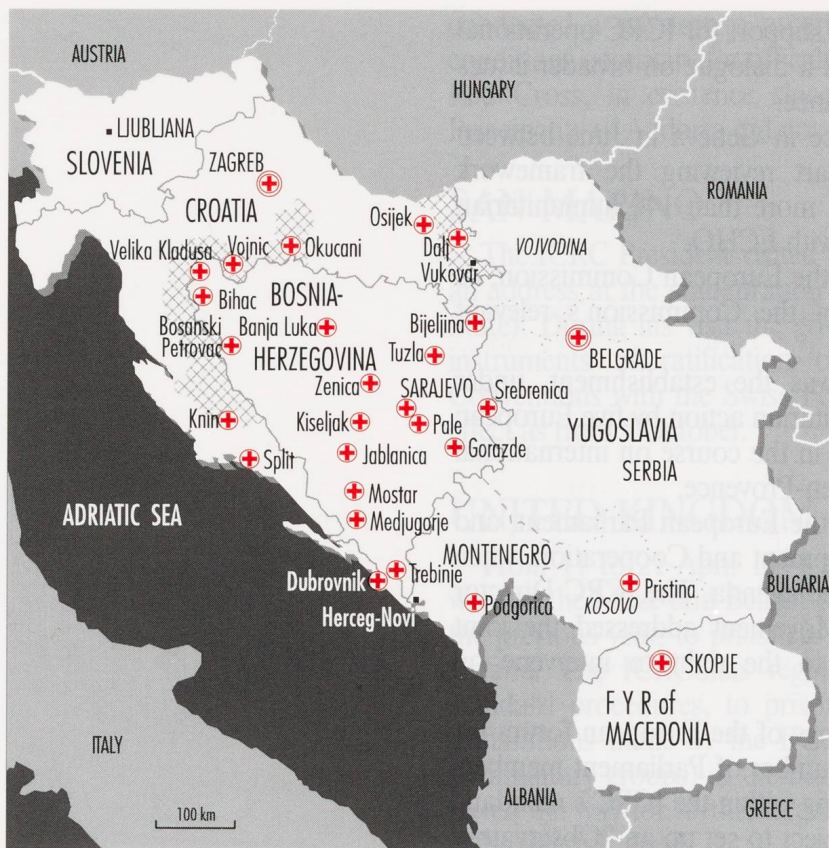
The ICRC also followed the proceedings of the European Parliament, and in particular those of the Committee on Development and Cooperation, when matters of concern to the institution were on the agenda. The ICRC Director for Principles, Law and Relations with the Movement addressed the joint ACP/EU* assembly on questions pertaining to the right to intervene on humanitarian grounds.

The ICRC also took part in the initial meetings of the European forum for the active prevention of conflicts, set up by a number of Parliament members actively involved in matters related to those falling within the ICRC's mandate, and was particularly interested to learn of a project to set up an "Observatory of humanitarian risks" within the European Parliament.

The ICRC President for his part had high-level discussions in Greece and Germany, which presided over the European Union in 1994, and maintained close contacts with the ambassadors of the 12 Member States in Geneva.

The ICRC also took part on numerous occasions in the work of the Red Cross/European Union liaison office, which represents the interests of the National Societies of the 12 Member States and the International Federation. The topics discussed ranged from disaster preparedness and project delegation to transnational cooperation.

* ACP/EU: Africa-Caribbean-Pacific/European Union



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+ ICRC delegation
 + ICRC sub-delegation / office / mission
 ▨ United Nations Protected Areas

The Former Yugoslavia

CONFLICT IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

The year under review was one of promises and setbacks for the people of the former Yugoslavia and all those involved in the arduous task of setting the war-torn region on the road to peace. The declaration of an exclusion zone around Sarajevo in February following a United Nations ultimatum and the establishment of a federation between the Bosnian Croats and the Bosnian government under the Washington accord in March seemed to offer some hope of improving the situation. For a while, the lifting of the blockade around the Bosnian capital and a lull in the fighting eased military pressure on thousands of civilians, and the reopening of many roads relieved the stranglehold on towns and villages in central Bosnia, reducing the need for emergency humanitarian assistance.

However, these hopes were dashed in the second half of the year. Despite international initiatives, such as the establishment of the five-nation Contact Group for Bosnia-Herzegovina in April, an overall peace plan acceptable to all sides failed to materialize, and the conflict continued throughout the territory, except for the central part. Despite the opening of preparatory discussions, the return of internally displaced people and refugees remained an unrealistic proposition. Projects for the reconstruction of Sarajevo and Mostar turned out to be premature in view of the ongoing conflict, and although a number of rehabilitation projects were set up in various places the overall scale of destruction offered little prospect of rapid recovery.

Renewed tensions in August and September brought more hardship for the citizens of Sarajevo, as humanitarian assistance dispatched by road and air reached the city only at increasingly irregular intervals. While able to operate smoothly in the first quarter, aid convoys carrying relief goods for displaced people and other vulnerable groups in the Gorazde and Bihac enclaves

IN 1994 THE ICRC:

- visited over 7,000 detainees;
- handled over six million Red Cross messages;
- regularly provided 297 health facilities with emergency medical supplies and essential medicines for chronic diseases;
- distributed relief supplies to over 1 million people directly affected by the fighting;
- held dissemination sessions for more than 1,400 members of the armed forces and for some 1,800 members of local Red Cross organizations.

remained blocked for weeks in April and August; and as of October the whole of eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina became inaccessible. There was frequent indiscriminate bombing of towns and villages, with general disregard for the safety of civilians and their property. Harassment and expulsion of civilians continued in some areas, and was even stepped up in others.

In an initially successful drive to regain lost territory, on 21 August Bosnian government forces took control of Velika Kladusa, the stronghold of local Muslim militia groups led by Fikret Abdic. The fighting caused some 30,000 Muslim civilians to take refuge in the UNPA* North, where they remained stranded in camps or by the roadside in deplorable conditions. On 29 October new fighting broke out south of the Bihac enclave and rapidly spread to other areas (Trnovo, south of Sarajevo, and Kupres, in central Bosnia), forcing about 18,000 Serb civilians to leave the area and seek refuge around Petrovac and in the UNPA South. Tensions remained high throughout eastern Bosnia-Herzegovina, and particularly around the besieged cities of Srebrenica, Gorazde and Zepa. In November, a Bosnian Serb-led counter-offensive again placed the town of Bihac under siege and made the entire enclave inaccessible to sorely needed humanitarian aid. In December Fikret Abdic's forces recaptured Velika Kladusa, which left only the southern part of the Bihac enclave under the control of Bosnian government troops. At the end of the year thousands of displaced people started pouring back into the largely destroyed town of Velika Kladusa.

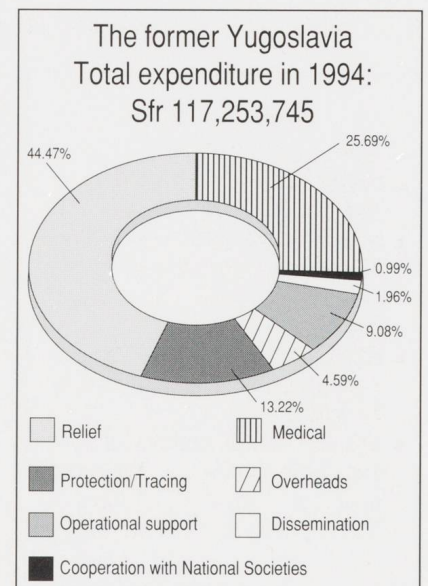
Ensuring unimpeded access to these and all other groups of displaced people in the conflict zones once again became the most pressing humanitarian concern.

The rapid reversal of military fortunes in Bosnia-Herzegovina had left the international community, represented by the United Nations, NATO*, CSCE and WEU*, uncertain as to its future course of action. However, in December matters took an unexpected turn with the initiative of former US President Jimmy Carter to breathe new life into the moribund peace process. Fresh negotiations between the parties resulted in an agreement signed on 31 December, providing for a four-month cease-fire, the withdrawal of troops from some positions, the simultaneous release under ICRC auspices of all detainees and the clarification of the fate of all people still unaccounted for. Some cautious optimism on the eve of the new year was nevertheless mitigated by the uncomfortable awareness that none of the complex political, military

* UNPA: United Nations Protected Area

* NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization

* WEU: Western European Union



and humanitarian issues dividing the former Yugoslavia had yet been resolved. The fact remained that all attempts to impose peace by launching the reconstruction process and promoting the early return of refugees had proved unsuccessful, leaving almost four million internally displaced people and refugees facing the third winter of war. In the ICRC's view, peace-making efforts could only succeed if backed by the international community through a coordinated approach at the political level. Until this was achieved, the institution felt it was the duty of governments to prevent any escalation of the conflict and to lend their full support to emergency programmes.

Activities for the civilian population

ICRC delegates based in 28 delegations, sub-delegations and offices throughout the former Yugoslavia continued to make every effort to provide protection and assistance for the civilian population, the wounded and detainees in accordance with the mandate conferred on the ICRC by the international community. The protection of civilians and detainees remained the institution's highest priority, a daunting task in view of systematic violation of international humanitarian law and denial of access to conflict victims by the warring parties. The ICRC submitted reports to the Bosnian government, Bosnian Croat and Bosnian Serb authorities concerning the protection of civilians, based on observations made by its delegates in their fieldwork between March 1993 and March 1994.

Throughout the year, the ICRC did its utmost to put an end to the unacceptable practice of forced expulsion and to alleviate pressure on the civilian population. Ethnic minority groups were still the main victims of harassment, physical violence, expulsion and forced displacement. ICRC delegates monitored the situation of these groups, particularly in northern and eastern Bosnia, the situation in central Bosnia having stabilized once the federation between the Bosnian Croats and the Bosnian government came into force.

The delegates' protection activities involved visiting endangered communities and individuals at their places of residence, collecting information and pointing out to the appropriate authorities possible problems and any violations of the rights of civilians. To have better access to the civilian population, the ICRC extended its presence in northern Bosnia and opened four more offices in and around Sarajevo. When *in situ* protection efforts proved vain, the ICRC did everything possible to ensure that people who were forced to leave their homes were able to do so in decent conditions. Between July and September most of the Muslim minority of the Bijeljina area, about 6,000 people, were forced to leave and to head towards Tuzla. The expulsions were carried out with great brutality, resulting in two deaths during the last transfer. The ICRC

made numerous representations to the Bosnian Serb authorities, both military and civilian, urging them to stop this practice, or at least to ensure safe transfer. On 18 and 19 September alone more than 2,500 civilians — mostly women, children and elderly people — crossed the front line. ICRC delegates set up a first-aid station close to the front line to receive those arriving from the other side and transported the weakest individuals to Tuzla. In September the ICRC eventually gained access to people who had been arrested during expulsions and made to work at the front lines in the Bijeljina-Lopare region. They registered 220 men in three camps and lodged a protest with the authorities concerned against putting civilians to work in dangerous conditions.

The carnage caused by shelling of the Sarajevo market square in February, the attack on the Gorazde pocket and the killings in the north-western Bosnian town of Prijedor in spring were particularly grim examples of the dangers that had become a way of life for civilians in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The ICRC made constant efforts to draw the attention of the international community to their plight. After the mass expulsions in the Bijeljina region, the ICRC President called a meeting of all Geneva-based diplomatic representatives of the international community at ICRC headquarters on 7 September. In his formal address he spoke out strongly against the brutal harassment, discrimination, hostage-taking, arbitrary detention, forcible displacement, forced labour and other, sometimes worse, forms of ill-treatment suffered by civilians in conflict areas of the former Yugoslavia, and the Muslim population of Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular. The President called on the parties to the conflict to put an end to these practices and reminded all the States party to the Geneva Conventions of their collective obligation to ensure that the provisions of humanitarian law were respected in all circumstances.

Moreover, the ICRC sent a comprehensive memorandum on the issue to the member States of the Contact Group for Bosnia-Herzegovina, the President of the Security Council and the UN Secretary-General. In the document the institution emphasized the humanitarian implications of the forced displacement of civilians and the fact that its representations had gone unheeded.

In 1994 the ICRC provided 28,000 tonnes of food for more than one million displaced people, other vulnerable groups, isolated communities and people in specialized institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the UNPAs. Some 500,000 beneficiaries received winter relief during the early months of the year in the form of blankets, warm clothes, stoves, candles and plastic sheeting. In the spring the institution carried out a seed distribution programme aimed at rendering about 300,000 people self-sufficient for a period of four to eight months, depending on their situation. Around 4,000 tonnes of seed were distributed. Surveys were conducted later in the year to assess the impact of the programme in various regions and identify new needs as winter approached,

particularly among vulnerable groups and destitute people. Beginning in May, the ICRC progressively scaled down its assistance, as conditions had improved owing to earlier distributions and the reopening of many roads and supply lines in central Bosnia. However, the ICRC continued to monitor the general food situation and maintained contingency stocks. Thus, when fighting flared up in the Bihac enclave in June, the institution was immediately able to deliver emergency assistance for displaced people and other civilians affected by the events. This was again the case in August after the fall of Velika Kladusa, and during the last months of the year when hostilities resumed south of the Bihac enclave and elsewhere.

Special programmes

Under its special programmes the ICRC assisted public kitchens serving meals to some 10,000 elderly and handicapped people and provided milk, bread and cheese five days a week for about 44,000 schoolchildren in Sarajevo, on both sides of the divided city. These projects, carried out in cooperation with the local Red Cross, were delegated to the German Red Cross in the course of 1994. In September the ICRC chartered an Ilyushin 76 aircraft to airlift food for the programmes into Sarajevo. In November similar community kitchens for vulnerable groups and schoolchildren were set up by the German Red Cross in Mostar, on both sides of the Neretva river.

The ICRC food aid programme for 3,400 vulnerable people, including hospital patients, in Bihac was handed over to the local authorities in September.

Activities for detainees

As before, the ICRC systematically visited people held by all sides and continuously worked for the release of all those detained in connection with the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In 1994 delegates visited more than 7,000 prisoners in 127 places of detention. During their visits they distributed food and other basic necessities, checked on the psychological and material conditions of detention and gave the detainees the opportunity to exchange news with their families by means of Red Cross messages. They also intervened to put an end to unacceptable practices such as using detainees to carry out dangerous work on the front lines. When detainees were about to be released, ICRC delegates interviewed them in private to make sure they were going to the destination of their choice, and ensured acceptable security conditions during the release operation.

The end of hostilities between the Bosnian Croats and Bosnian government forces led to an agreement, negotiated under ICRC auspices, resulting in the

release in April of practically all the detainees, numbering more than 5,000, held by the two parties, mostly in the Mostar region.

In another agreement signed on 8 June, the Bosnian government and the Bosnian Serb authorities undertook to release some 1,000 detainees they were holding. The ICRC made every effort to urge compliance with this agreement, holding talks at the highest level to ensure its implementation. On 1 October the parties at last agreed to release a number of detainees; in the following week ICRC delegates supervised the operation in which the Bosnian Serb authorities released 177 and the Bosnian government 159 detainees, with the participation of UNPROFOR. For some 200 of them, this was the end of more than two years of detention. However, about two-thirds of the detainees covered by the agreement had still not been freed at the end of the year.

Beginning in June, ICRC delegates visited about 1,500 people detained by Bosnian government forces and breakaway Muslim groups in connection with the internal armed conflict in the Bihac enclave. When hostilities intensified between Bosnian government and Bosnian Serb forces and forces of the self-proclaimed "Republic of Serbian Krajina" during the last quarter, the ICRC again did its best to gain access to all detainees, particularly those who had been captured during the fighting around Bihac and Majevisa. However, the parties to the conflict were reluctant to provide delegates with the necessary facilities. Regular visits nevertheless continued to a number of places of detention elsewhere in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

At the end of the year, while the priority remained to obtain access to all detainees in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the ICRC also stepped up its efforts to secure their release in accordance with the commitments made by the parties. Under point 8 of the 31 December agreement, the latter agreed "to work continuously and simultaneously on processes for the early release of persons detained in relation with the conflict, as well as for the provision and cross-checking of all available information on persons unaccounted for. This work will be undertaken under the auspices of the ICRC, in accordance with its standard procedures. The parties commit themselves to commencing the process by 15 January 1995". The ICRC immediately contacted the authorities concerned to confirm its readiness to visit and register all detainees and to set up the necessary working groups to organize the implementation of the agreement.

Tracing activities

With the exchange of six million Red Cross messages in 1994, the ICRC's tracing service in the former Yugoslavia reached unprecedented levels of activity. Even after telephone lines and postal services had begun to work again

in some parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Red Cross messages remained a major, and in many cases the only channel of communication between the vast numbers of displaced people and refugees and their families. The system could not have functioned without the invaluable cooperation of local Red Cross organizations and National Societies worldwide. The ICRC maintained constant contact with some one hundred National Societies involved in restoring links between family members separated by conflict in the former Yugoslavia. In January it organized a two-day meeting in Geneva for the heads of the tracing services of the 15 most active National Societies.

At the beginning of July the ICRC, together with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), launched *Radio Link*, a radio lifeline designed to help people get in touch with their families when contact could not be made by means of Red Cross messages. The programme was broadcast on short and medium wavebands throughout much of Europe and was taken up by many local radio stations in the former Yugoslavia. With the help of the local media, the ICRC launched an extensive campaign to make the programme known to people living in the region.

Other important activities included reuniting family members separated by conflict and protecting people by transferring them to safer places. In 1994 the ICRC carried out around 2,500 family reunifications and transfers, giving special attention to particularly vulnerable individuals such as children and elderly people living in precarious conditions far from their kin. The institution continued to cooperate with UNHCR and IOM* on a programme aimed at restoring links between former detainees and their families; by the end of 1994 some 1,800 former detainees released under ICRC auspices had been reunited with their relatives under the programme.

Throughout the year the ICRC made several approaches to the relevant authorities regarding the fate of thousands of people who had been missing since the conflict broke out in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and proposed ways of determining their whereabouts.

Medical activities

The health services in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the UNPAs were particularly hard hit by the conflict and remained largely dependent on outside assistance. The Bihac enclave and the enclaves in eastern Bosnia relied entirely on international medical aid. Under its surgical assistance programme covering all the former Yugoslavia, the ICRC regularly furnished medicines and medical supplies such as sterilization equipment, dressing materials, X-ray, blood

* IOM: International Organization for Migration

transfusion and injection kits, disposable surgical supplies, antibiotics and anaesthetics to hospitals and other facilities treating the war-wounded in Bosnia-Herzegovina. ICRC field nurses regularly visited these establishments, most of which were not receiving regular aid from other sources, and distributed supplies according to need. Under another ICRC programme, hospitals in rural areas received vitally important spare parts and basic medical and surgical equipment contributed by the National Societies of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. A third programme, launched in March, provided essential medicines for chronic diseases for health establishments in the enclaves and zones particularly affected by the economic embargo; in other parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina these needs were being met by other organizations. The ICRC was also instrumental in transferring some 120 patients requiring specialized care from Bihac and Banja Luka to health facilities elsewhere.

After thousands of displaced people had returned to Velika Kladusa following the events of mid-December, an ICRC convoy succeeded in reaching the badly damaged town on 26 December, bringing in urgently needed medical aid and water and sanitation materials. The Velika Kladusa hospital received surgical and medical supplies, enabling it to function during renewed fighting in the last days of the year. Although no ICRC relief convoy had managed to enter the Bihac pocket since October, large contingency stocks built up just previously enabled the institution to deliver essential medical and surgical supplies to health facilities in Bihac and other places in north-western Bosnia-Herzegovina. The ICRC also provided such supplies and emergency water storage equipment to hospitals in the Banja Luka area, helping them to cope with the sudden influx of displaced civilians and war-wounded during the last months of the year.

Water and sanitation

The population of many parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the UNPAs continued to be plagued by serious water shortages and problems of access to clean water. Remedying this situation remained an ICRC priority throughout 1994.

The ICRC provided local water services with technical assistance, spare parts and pumps, enabling them to salvage existing installations and improve the quality of drinking water, particularly in the UNPAs and the Banja Luka region. ICRC water and sanitation engineers helped to set up emergency water distribution points in Mostar and Gorazde and to construct and repair water treatment plants and water supply systems in Gorazde, Bosanska Krupa and Donji Vakuf (Srbobran). They also made drinking water safe for two million

people by supplying disinfectant to rural and urban water distribution networks and installing more than a hundred chlorinators. Emergency water supply, sanitation and heating systems were installed in hospitals and places of detention throughout the conflict region. In addition, the ICRC repeatedly urged the Bosnian Serb authorities to abandon the military strategies whereby isolated communities were denied access to water.

During the emergency in Bihac at the end of the year, an ICRC sanitation team set up a 30,000-litre water storage system for the town's hospital and the civilian population. As water became scarce, they added a 15,000-litre emergency storage tank to keep all the hospital wards supplied.

National Societies continued to work alongside the ICRC on water and sanitation programmes that took the form of bilateral projects or project delegations. Their substantial contribution in this field is described below under *Joint projects with National Societies*.

Joint projects with National Societies

In 1994 various National Red Cross Societies continued to support the ICRC's operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the UNPAs. In all, 17 National Societies seconded 171 staff members to the ICRC. They were involved in medical and sanitation projects and relief programmes (see *Activities for the civilian population — Special programmes*) and took part in a number of other activities ranging from tracing to dissemination and information work. The British Red Cross repaired water and sanitation installations in Pale, thus contributing to the supply of drinking water for Sarajevo, and partly refurbished the water and sewage system in Mostar. The Red Cross Societies of Denmark, Germany and Sweden were involved in repairing water distribution systems in Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Derventa and Bihac. In a joint project begun in April 1993, the ICRC and the Norwegian Red Cross set up a new 60-bed rehabilitation centre for patients with spinal cord injuries in Sarajevo. The project included the provision of equipment and staff training. The Norwegian Red Cross launched a similar project at the hospital in Zenica in the autumn. The British Red Cross carried out a haemodialysis programme in the Banja Luka region, and the Netherlands Red Cross contributed a project providing public facilities in Sarajevo with gas-fired heating and a peripheral nerve surgery programme in Bihac.

Cooperation with local Red Cross organizations

The ICRC considerably developed its cooperation with local Red Cross organizations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, increasing their involvement in relief

distributions to displaced people, tracing, medical work and dissemination activities. All delegates in the field kept in touch with the branches to make sure they were given the wherewithal to carry out their tasks, including substantial material support in the form of word-processing and office equipment. At the same time, the ICRC set up a large-scale cooperation project with all local Red Cross branches, aimed at defining their needs and providing support and training to strengthen their capacity to participate in the above-mentioned ICRC activities.

The ICRC also maintained a constant dialogue with the local branches to make sure they observed the Fundamental Red Cross Principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence, and intervened whenever necessary to ensure that Red Cross action was carried out in compliance with these principles.

Dissemination and information

To be in a better position to reach all the victims of the conflict and to encourage respect for the civilian population and improve security for humanitarian workers, the ICRC continued its efforts to make its work and mandate widely known and accepted, especially in conflict areas. It stepped up its information and dissemination campaigns throughout the former Yugoslavia, explaining the basic rules of behaviour in combat, the role of the Red Cross and the importance of respect for the emblem to as wide an audience as possible. Extensive use was made of local television and radio stations to broadcast the ICRC's message, issue information bulletins and give interviews. The ICRC distributed its own TV and radio spots to several media organizations and circulated dissemination material, including ICRC films and publications in the local languages. As part of its cooperation programme, the ICRC also gave constant support to dissemination activities of the local Red Cross branches in the former Yugoslavia.

The ICRC stepped up its dissemination programmes for Bosnian government and Bosnian Croat forces, for the first time reaching most military units. Talks on international humanitarian law were also given frequently for UN contingents stationed in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Local civilian authorities and Red Cross organizations remained the ICRC's main contacts for dissemination purposes in Bosnian Serb-held areas. A series of special seminars was launched for Bosnian Serb police and prison service officers.

The ICRC also sponsored the publication of a book on the institution's experience and the problems it encountered in the former Yugoslavia between 1989 and 1993, entitled *Crimes sans châtime* (*Crimes without Punishment*).¹

¹ M. Mercier, *Crimes sans châtime*, Bruylant, Bruxelles, 1994.

CROATIA

The ICRC had a sub-delegation in Knin, covering UNPA South, an office in Vojnic covering UNPA North, and offices in Okucani and Dalj covering UNPA West and UNPA East respectively. In addition to coordinating ICRC activities in Croatia, the delegation in Zagreb and the sub-delegation in Split served as logistics bases and provided support for the operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Throughout the year the ICRC maintained a dialogue with the Croat authorities and the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on behalf of the families of people still missing after the Croat-Yugoslav conflict, with the aim of shedding light on their fate. In February the ICRC Delegate General for Western and Central Europe attended a meeting in Zagreb, convened by the Vice Prime Ministers of Yugoslavia and Croatia, at which this topic was discussed.

Activities for the civilian population

ICRC delegates actively monitored the situation of minorities in Croatia, including the four UNPAs, and remained prepared to take action on their behalf. Apart from carrying out their regular medical activities (see surgical assistance programmes under *Medical activities*) throughout Croatia and relief work for vulnerable people in the UNPAs, delegates based in Zagreb responded to a number of emergencies arising from the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina, especially during the second half of the year. Thus, at the end of August the delegation provided food and other emergency assistance for the tens of thousands of displaced people from Velika Kladusa who had gathered in camps in Batnoga and Turanj (UNPA North). From the outset, ICRC field nurses took care of their medical needs and distributed medical supplies. After the worst of the crisis had blown over, they continued to provide dressing materials and essential medicines on a regular basis. A sanitation team did everything necessary to ensure a supply of safe water in the camps. Tracing delegates rapidly set up an efficient Red Cross message network for the people in the camps, collecting and distributing thousands of messages between late August and December, when the displaced people left the camps to return home.

When hostilities flared up during the last months of the year, ICRC delegates in Croatia and the UNPAs helped provide emergency relief for large numbers of displaced people who had fled from the Bihac enclave towards Petrovac and Petrovo Selo. They also delivered medical and surgical supplies to more than 50 health facilities in the region to help them cope with the sudden influx of casualties.

Activities for detainees

In January 1994, 26 detainees held in connection with the Croatian-Yugoslav conflict of 1991 were released in accordance with the provisions of the Budapest agreement. Throughout the year, delegates visited and registered people detained by the Croatian authorities and by the authorities of the self-proclaimed "Republic of Serbian Krajina" in the UNPAs and gave them the opportunity to exchange Red Cross messages with their families. In all, ICRC delegates saw some 320 detainees in 120 places of detention.

Medical activities

Under its surgical assistance programme covering all the former Yugoslavia, the ICRC regularly furnished medicines and medical supplies such as sterilization equipment, dressing materials, X-ray, blood transfusion and injection kits, disposable surgical supplies, antibiotics and anaesthetics to hospitals and other facilities treating the war-wounded in Croatia and the UNPAs. Under an exceptional surgical assistance programme, hospitals in rural areas received badly needed spare parts and basic medical and surgical equipment contributed by National Societies. A number of health facilities in the UNPAs benefited from the ICRC programme providing essential medicines for chronic diseases (see *Medical activities*, under *Conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina*).

Cooperation with the National Society and local Red Cross organizations

The ICRC maintained constant contact with the national Red Cross headquarters and local branches in Croatia and with local Red Cross branches in the UNPAs to facilitate cooperation between them and help them respond to assistance, tracing and dissemination needs in the areas they covered. Five training seminars in tracing work were organized for the Croatian Red Cross, which also received substantial material support for its tracing service.

Dissemination

The ICRC signed an agreement with the Croatian armed forces providing for a comprehensive dissemination programme to be carried out for officers and military instructors. Seminars on the law of war were held for members of the Croatian army and for members of the Serb forces in the UNPAs. Briefing sessions on international humanitarian law were also organized for UN contingents in the UNPAs.

A series of training seminars on the role of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and humanitarian law was held for leaders of all branches of the Croatian Red Cross; moreover, the National Society received a number of publications and video programmes for extensive distribution. The ICRC also organized talks for local civilian authorities and police and made increasing use of the local media to reach the widest possible audience.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA (Serbia, Montenegro)

Some 20 expatriates based in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia provided logistic support for the operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. They also developed contacts with the Yugoslav authorities and closely observed the situation in the country. The ICRC maintained a presence in Pristina, in Kosovo, enabling it to monitor developments, strengthen the dialogue with the authorities and visit detainees.

In February the ICRC opened an office in Podgorica, the capital of Montenegro, in order to strengthen contacts with the local Red Cross and carry out tracing activities. The ICRC office in Herceg Novi had been closed four months earlier.

During his mission to Belgrade in April the ICRC President met the President of the Republic of Serbia. The latter expressed his willingness to support ICRC activities in the region, particularly those related to the protection of the civilian population, including minorities.

Activities for detainees

In his meeting with the ICRC President, the President of Serbia also granted the ICRC access to all persons accused of offences against State security, notably detainees sentenced and awaiting trial and those under investigation held under the authority of the presidents of district courts and examining magistrates. In August and September ICRC delegates carried out a series of visits to places of detention in Serbia, including Kosovo, and for the first time in Montenegro, including Sandzak. They saw some 170 detainees held in connection with the situation in 14 places of detention. In December, following the arrest of about 130 policemen of Albanian ethnic origin by Serb security forces in Kosovo, the ICRC immediately began negotiations with the authorities concerned with a view to gaining access to these detainees.

Medical activities

Under its surgical assistance programme covering all the former Yugoslavia, the ICRC regularly furnished medicines and medical supplies such as sterilization equipment, dressing materials, X-ray, blood transfusion and injection kits, disposable surgical supplies, antibiotics and anaesthetics to hospitals and other facilities treating the war-wounded in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Under the ICRC's exceptional surgical assistance programme, hospitals in rural areas received vitally important spare parts and basic medical and surgical equipment contributed by National Societies. The ICRC also provided assistance for orthopaedic centres producing artificial limbs for war amputees in Belgrade and Novi Sad. After identifying needs at the Belgrade blood transfusion centre, which supplies some 60 major medical facilities in the Republic of Serbia with blood and blood products, and the transfusion centre in Podgorica, the ICRC made substantial deliveries of urgently required materials. The Yugoslav Red Cross received some help from the ICRC enabling it to purchase medicines for distribution free of charge to refugees.

Cooperation with the National Society

The ICRC maintained constant contact with the Yugoslav Red Cross to support its tracing and dissemination work. Three training seminars in tracing work were organized for the National Society, which also received substantial material support for its tracing service. In addition, the ICRC stepped in when necessary to ensure the impartiality of all local Red Cross organizations in the conduct of their activities, particularly in Kosovo.

Dissemination

After many efforts, at the end of September the ICRC obtained the agreement of the Federal Minister of Defence to a comprehensive five-year dissemination programme for the Yugoslav armed forces. An officer of the Yugoslav army took part in a training course for military instructors organized by the ICRC in Geneva in October 1994.

ICRC dissemination delegates, together with the National Society, organized several seminars countrywide to spread knowledge of international humanitarian law. They addressed audiences ranging from officials of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Internal Affairs and Defence to academic circles and the general public. The ICRC also arranged for the translation into Serbo-Croat of a book by a former ICRC medical delegate entitled *Warrior without Weapons*.²

² M. Junod, *Warrior without Weapons*, ICRC, 1989.

FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

The ICRC maintained its delegation in Skopje to promote dissemination and tracing work and develop contacts with the authorities of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and neighbouring countries. Thus, negotiations with the Albanian authorities resulting in permission to carry out ICRC visits to detainees in Tirana (see *Albania*) were conducted from Skopje.

ICRC delegates extended their dissemination activities to other countries in the region, including Albania, Bulgaria and Romania. In 1994 the institution increasingly felt the need for a stronger ICRC presence in the Balkans, so as to make international humanitarian law more widely known and to help prepare National Societies in the region to respond to potential emergencies. The delegation in Skopje therefore began to develop a comprehensive dissemination strategy, centred on specific programmes for the armed forces and other audiences and close ties with the media.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Defence, delegates organized several seminars for members of the armed forces. The ICRC also held training courses in humanitarian law for local Red Cross officials and arranged for dissemination material, including audiovisual teaching aids, to be translated into the local language.

Central Europe and the Balkans

The ICRC regularly carried out missions to the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia to foster contacts with the governments and National Societies of these countries and exchange views on developments and ICRC activities in the region. Topics such as conflict-related humanitarian needs and the ICRC's action in the former Yugoslavia ranked high on the agenda. The continuous dialogue enabled the ICRC to establish a network of contacts, develop appropriate dissemination strategies and strengthen efforts in this regard throughout Central Europe. From 2 to 12 August the ICRC, together with the Polish Red Cross, organized the twelfth annual summer course on international humanitarian law in Warsaw. The course was held in English and was attended by more than 30 advanced law students from 20 countries around the world. A member of the ICRC Committee and the President of the Polish Red Cross were present at the opening ceremony. From 28 to 30 November the ICRC regional delegate from Geneva attended the General Assembly of the Red Cross of Romania in Bucharest as an observer. The main items on the agenda were the revision of the National Society's statutes and election of the new leadership.

With the ICRC's financial support, the National Societies of the region produced a number of publications intended to enhance the image of the Red Cross and make their work better known in their respective countries.

ALBANIA

In November a team of ICRC delegates conducted a mission to the southern part of the country to assess the situation of the Greek minority living there. They had contacts with the local authorities and Red Cross branches in the towns of Gjirokaster and Sarande.

At the end of the year, following negotiations with the Albanian authorities, the ICRC obtained permission to carry out visits to five Albanian nationals of Greek ethnic origin who had been sentenced for violations of State security. The visits were due to take place in Tirana at the beginning of 1995.

TURKEY

In the course of the year there was a significant deterioration in the situation in the south-eastern part of Turkey. The government announced the deployment of security forces in the area and reaffirmed its determination to do everything possible to quell the Kurdish opposition. The attention of the international community was drawn to the problems when five Kurdish members of parliament were sentenced to long-term imprisonment by a Turkish court. The ICRC had long been concerned about developments in Turkey and their possible consequences in humanitarian terms for a large number of people; however, despite repeated offers of humanitarian services made by the institution over the last ten years, the crisis zone, unlike most conflict areas in the world, continued to be barred to the ICRC in 1994.

The ICRC made numerous representations to the Turkish government urging it to grant delegates access to the affected region so that they could carry out their humanitarian work for civilians and detainees in compliance with Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions. The institution concentrated on explaining both to the Turkish government and to the Kurdish opposition its role as a neutral and impartial intermediary working on the basis of strictly humanitarian criteria. It emphasized the fact that the ICRC's presence in the field and in places of detention would not affect the legal status of either party, and would have no implications for the recognition of any group. On 27 January the ICRC President and the President of Turkey met in Zurich to discuss the situation in Turkey and the possibility for the ICRC to carry out activities on behalf of displaced people and to visit prisons in the country. The meeting was the first of numerous approaches made by the ICRC throughout the year.

In December, the Kurdish opposition stated its intention to abide by the Geneva Conventions and invited the ICRC to conduct field missions in order to assess humanitarian needs resulting from the armed violence in south-eastern Turkey. Taking note of this step, the ICRC requested the Kurdish side to issue the necessary instructions to combatants to ensure improved respect for the civilian population and notification of all prisoners to the ICRC. In view of the escalating confrontation, the ICRC hoped that both sides would accept its role as a neutral intermediary and allow it to carry out its humanitarian activities outside of political considerations.

Eastern Europe

ICRC activities

Moscow

The Caucasus

ICRC activities

Armenia

Central Asia

ICRC activities

Tajikistan

ICRC activities

Tashkent

Staff

ICRC

National

Local

Total

St 35

Expenditure

Programme

Relief

Medical supplies

Contingencies

National

Disarmament

Operational

Overhead



IC/18/124

PE AND CENTRAL ASIA

1. Average figures calculated on an annual basis.
2. Under ICRC contract, as at December 1994.