

ACTIVITIES OF THE ICRC REGIONAL DELEGATION FOR THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

FACTS & FIGURES

JANUARY–DECEMBER 2024



Meeting between
ICRC President
Mirjana Spoljaric
and the High
Commissioner
for Human Rights
Mrs Moskalkova.

MAIN HIGHLIGHTS

- Following the escalation of hostilities in the **Kursk region** in August, in collaboration with the Russian Red Cross (RRC), our main operational partner, the ICRC provided **assistance to 31,000 vulnerable people** and supported the RRC in **reconnecting families**. In its role as neutral intermediary and in coordination with relevant authorities, the ICRC teams in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine participated in the **repatriation of 46 Russian civilians** originally from Kursk region, accompanying them from Sumy in Ukraine, through Belarus, back to Russia, in November.
- In September, **ICRC President Mirjana Spoljaric was in Moscow** to discuss the humanitarian consequences of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, as well as ongoing armed conflicts in the world. She met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Lavrov and his Deputy Mr Vershinin, the High Commissioner for Human Rights Mrs Moskalkova, the Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights Ms Lvova-Belova, and the President of the Russian Red Cross Mr Savchuk. Mrs Spoljaric also attended the Eurasian Women's Forum in Saint Petersburg.

Throughout the year:

- **Safe cross-border passages of around 100 vulnerable persons** were facilitated by the Moscow delegation, a significant increase compared to 2023. Additionally, in 2024, the ICRC supported **the movement of several dozen children** joining relatives in Ukraine and in Russia.
- **Over 36,000 calls** were answered by the ICRC hotline in Moscow, the vast majority related to families looking for their relatives. The ICRC delegation in Moscow **increased its capacity to respond to families of the missing**. The team grew from 12 to 35 staff.
- **75th Anniversary of the Geneva Conventions** was marked with 3 high-level events in Moscow, and in Minsk.
- The ICRC delegation in Moscow also **supports ICRC teams in Donetsk and Luhansk** to respond to humanitarian needs, through dialogue and logistical support.

FACTS&FIGURES



PRISONERS OF WAR & THEIR FAMILIES

Since 2022:

11,000 personal messages (written and oral) delivered by the ICRC and National Societies to prisoners of war (PoWs) and their families in Russia and Ukraine. These exchanges of family news are possible thanks to ICRC visits to PoWs (the number of messages exchanged doesn't reflect the number of PoWs held in the international armed conflict).



MISSING PEOPLE & THEIR FAMILIES

Since 2022:

43,000 open cases of people reported missing to the ICRC by their families.

10,800 families informed by ICRC delegations and National Societies about the fate of their missing loved ones in Russia and Ukraine.

In 2024, **over 36,000 calls** have been answered by the ICRC team in Moscow, the vast majority related to families looking for their relatives.



FALLEN SERVICEMEN

The ICRC regularly acts as a neutral observer in the process of **handover and repatriation of deceased servicemen** between the two sides.



VULNERABLE CIVILIANS, INCLUDING CHILDREN

Safe cross-border passage of around 100 people with vulnerabilities was facilitated by the delegation.

Several dozen children joined family members in Ukraine and in Russia, with the support of the ICRC, in cooperation with Russian and Ukrainian authorities, including the office of the Presidential Commissioner for children's rights, and officials of Qatar.

Repatriation of 46 Russian civilians originally from Kursk region, with ICRC teams accompanying them from Sumy in Ukraine, through Belarus, back to Russia, in coordination with Russian and Ukrainian authorities.



DISPLACED PEOPLE

In partnership with the Russian Red Cross:

– over **14,500 vulnerable people** in Russia benefitted from cash assistance.

– **4,218 children** from 1-4 grades received school kits and clothes vouchers.

– As a response to escalation of hostilities in Kursk, **25,000 vulnerable people** received pharmacy vouchers. On top of that, **31,000 vulnerable people** also received pre-paid bank cards.

192 persons benefitted from a vocational training programme, which finances trainings and courses.

In Belarus, cash assistance delivered to **2,353 vulnerable displaced people**, in partnership with the Belarus Red Cross.



LOGISTIC HUB FOR ASSISTANCE TO DONETSK AND LUHANSK

53 trucks delivering assistance were sent to Donetsk and **17 trucks** to Luhansk to support ICRC's response to humanitarian needs, including more than **40,000 food parcels, 32,500 hygienic parcels**, as well as health, forensics and construction items and material.



COOPERATION WITH RUSSIAN RED CROSS (RRC)

24 million RUB allocated for emergency stocks of 4 RRC's branches; 2.5 million RUB to improve safe space in the RRC Belgorod branch building.

463 First aid trainings for 9,536 adults given by the RRC Belgorod branch (2 first aid instructors supported by the ICRC).

Over 750 RRC volunteers and staff attended more than **70 sessions** on International Humanitarian Law (IHL), the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and its Fundamental Principles.

10 video episodes of the Discussion Club were produced, promoting the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and IHL.



DIALOGUE WITH AUTHORITIES AND POLITICAL ACTORS

In 2024, the ICRC was in regular contact with its key Russian interlocutors, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights, the State Duma, Federation Council, and Moscow City Government among others.

More than 50 Russian and Belarusian interlocutors attended ICRC event on August 12th to mark the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. A round-table was also co-organised with the Presidential Academy (RANEPA).

ICRC participated in 4 Russian presidential forums – Eurasian Women's Forum, Eastern Economic Forum and Saint Petersburg International Economic and Legal Forums.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs & affiliated universities

The ICRC held regular meetings with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Legal Department. Beyond that:

Participation in **5 Diplomatic Academy Ambassadorial Round-tables** on the conflict between Russia and Ukraine. MGIMO and Diplomatic Academy students were addressed on ICRC's neutral humanitarian work and humanitarian diplomacy and MGIMO "**Russia-Africa What's Next Forum**" was addressed on food security. MFA and MGIMO also participated in ICRC events.

Ministry of Defence

Beyond the daily open channels between the ICRC and the Russian MoD:

10 lectures and 2 workshops held at **2 IHL sessions** of officers' advanced training in the Combined Arms Academy of the Armed forces of the Russian Federation, training of over 20 participants in IHL.

Regular formal meetings held with MoD on protection issues related to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

High Commissioner for Human Rights' Office

Besides regular interactions and operational cooperation, the ICRC attended the **International Ombudsmen Conference** in October 2024, hosted by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Ministry of Emergency Situations (EMERCOM)

Five engagements in Moscow and Geneva, including expertise exchange with ICRC's Health Unit, attendance of **the Integrated**

safety & security exhibition forum; as well as bilateral technical meetings.

In Belarus

The Minsk mission engages regularly with relevant authorities on IHL and other humanitarian issues, as well as on the humanitarian operations taking place in Belarus. This included:

Participation in the **Minsk International Security Conference and Minsk Migration Conference**.

A high-level round-table organised on the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions.

2 working-level meetings with State Border Committee and State Border Institute representatives.

3 seminars on IHL and ICRC activities for the State Border Committee in Brest and in Minsk, as well as for the representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Minsk.

2 IHL dissemination trainings to 30 students of the Military Faculty of the Belarus State University and to 30 students of the Military Faculty of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Academy.



RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (ROC)

Almost **10,000 items of medical consumables and equipment** donated to ROC St. Alexiy Hospital.

More than 10,000 items of material assistance donated, including construction materials, jerrycans, and stainless steel kettles to the Church Charity and Social Ministry Department.

Four sessions conducted for **more than 100 volunteers and Church employees** on mine risk awareness

Took part as panel speaker in the **XXXII International Christmas Educational Readings**.



ENGAGEMENT WITH REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Collective Security Treaty Organisation

Participation in the **Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) working group on Afghanistan, in Rock-2024 exercise and staff talks** and **the 15th meeting** of the CSTO Coordinating Council for Emergency Situations in Kazakhstan.

Organized 2 training sessions on forensics with CSTO Joint Staff.

The head of the ICRC Moscow delegation met with **CSTO deputy Secretary General Mr Masadykov**.

Interparliamentary assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA-CIS)

The observer status was obtained in November 2024.

The ICRC attended **3 meetings of the IPA-CIS permanent commissions**, addressing one of them on the humanitarian situation in Gaza, and a plenary session.

The ICRC Emergency Travel Document was presented, recommending IPA CIS to adopt model guidelines on the acceptance of this document.

BRICS

More than **25 engagements with BRICS stakeholders** during the year of Russian chairmanship, including from Higher School of Economics, Rosmolodezh', State Duma, Federation Council, Center for African Studies, MGIMO. ICRC teams attended BRICS Legal Forum.



ACADEMICS AND EXPERT COMMUNITY

ICRC attended **4 flagship international legal conferences**: the St. Petersburg International Legal Forum, BRICS Legal Forum, Eurasia International Legal Conference, Kazan Legal Forum 2024.

The ICRC spoke at **4 international legal events** hosted by the National Association for International Information Security (NAIIS), MGIMO, the North Caucasus Federal University and South Federal University.

Over 70 academics and experts attended a round-table co-organised with **RANEPA** for the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions.

26 teams of students from 9 countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) participated in the **XXV Martens Moot IHL competition**. **3 teams** from Belarus and Russia participated in the **Jean Pictet IHL competition**.

More than 40 academics, think-tank experts and political interlocutors attended ICRC's round-table on Humanitarian

Diplomacy, with speakers from the ICRC, MGIMO, State Duma, IPA-CIS and the Russian Orthodox Church.

29 academics attended a round-table presenting an ICRC report on the theme of Artificial intelligence in armed conflicts.

Participation in **more than 20 events** organised by MGIMO University, the Diplomatic Academy, Russian International Affairs Council, Valdai Club and PIR-Centre/Trialogue Club.

26 journalists participated in **the ICRC's training for media professionals**, co-organised with the Russian Humanitarian Mission.



FORENSIC EXPERTISE

ICRC experts participated in **10 conferences and congress** with governmental bodies, including the "December readings on forensic medicine" of the Department of Forensic Medicine of the RUDN University and the Conference of Forensic Medical Experts organised by the Interregional Thanatoradiological Society of Russia.

Meetings held with various Russian academic institutions such as the Faculty of Law of Lomonosov Moscow State University and the Department of Forensic Medicine of the Russian National Medical University.



PRIVATE SECTOR AND CYBER/DIGITAL

The ICRC held **8 meetings**, including with European Business Association, UralChem, Yandex, and Bi-Zone. ICRC spoke at the NAIIS Cyberstability Conference and attended BiZone's Cyberpolygon in Riyadh.



DIPLOMATIC CORPS

The ICRC discussed humanitarian issues with **dozens of embassies**, including Algeria, Angola, Belarus, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holy See, India, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Jordan, Luxembourg, Mozambique, Netherlands, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, South Africa, Sudan, Switzerland, Syria, Türkiye, United Arab Emirates, United States, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.



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