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ICRC media brief February 2012

Advance notice of ICRC activities and events, plus information on new footage, films and photos.

AFRICA

South Sudan: Inter-community violence in Pibor county, Jonglei state, has left thousands of people displaced and many wounded. The ICRC is working with the South Sudan Red Cross Society to help health-care facilities cope with an influx of casualties. Find out more about the activities of the ICRC surgical team in Malakal Hospital and about the airlift of wounded patients in an operational update and a photo gallery that will be published by mid-February. For further information, please contact Jean-Yves Clémento, ICRC Geneva, at jclemento@icrc.org or on +41 79 217 32 17 or +41 22 730 22 71.

Somalia: In a news release issued on 2 February, the ICRC regrets the decision of the Harakat Al-Shabaab Al Mujahideen to terminate the agreement which allowed the organization to deliver emergency food aid in the centre and south of the country. The ICRC remains fully committed to helping Somalis. Read more on <http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/news-release/2012/somalia-news-2012-02-02.htm>.

February marks 20 years of ICRC support for Keysaney Hospital in Mogadishu. Find out more in a news release and photo gallery to be posted soon on our website. For further information, please contact Jean-Yves Clémento, ICRC Geneva, at jclemento@icrc.org or on +41 79 217 32 17 or +41 22 730 22 71.

Democratic Republic of the Congo / South Sudan: 36 children who had been separated from their families amid armed conflict or other violence in the region were returned to their homes by the ICRC, the DRC Red Cross and the South Sudan Red Cross. More information will be available in a news release to be issued in early February alongside a photo gallery. For further information, please contact Marie-Servane Desjonquères, ICRC Geneva, at mdesjonqueres@icrc.org or on +41 79 536 92 58.

Niger, Mali: As a result of poor harvests in several countries of the Sahel region, many people will face economic hardship in the coming months, especially those who never recovered from the food crisis and economic downturn of 2009-2010. In northern Mali, the situation is exacerbated by the lack of security, which compels many people to flee their villages for safer areas where they set up home in harsh conditions. More information about the ICRC's response will be available in a news release and in TV footage to be issued in

mid-February. For further information, please contact Steven Anderson, ICRC Geneva, at sanderson@icrc.org or on +41 79 536 92 50.

Central African Republic: In some areas of north-eastern Central African Republic, the ICRC, together with the Central African Red Cross Society, is striving to assist several thousand displaced civilians affected by sporadic violence between armed groups. More information will be available in an operational update to be issued later this month. For further information, please contact Marie-Servane Desjonquères, ICRC Geneva, at mdesjonqueres@icrc.org or on +41 79 536 92 58.

Senegal: At the Grand Magal in Touba, which attracts over three million pilgrims, a local association assists people separated from their relatives with, this year, the support of the ICRC. Find out more in a feature story that will be issued in early February. For further information, please contact Steven Anderson, ICRC Geneva, at sanderson@icrc.org or on +41 79 536 92 50.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Libya: Almost a year after the violence first erupted, the ICRC continues to help needy civilians and detainees. For the first time since June 2011, family reunifications are being organized. Read more in an operational update and in a feature story to be issued in the course of the month. For further information, please contact Steven Anderson, ICRC Geneva, at sanderson@icrc.org or on +41 79 536 92 50.

Bahrain: After civil unrest broke out in Bahrain last year, resulting in numerous arrests, the ICRC started visiting detainees to assess their conditions of detention and their treatment. In an interview to be published on our website, Gérard Peytrignet, head of the ICRC regional delegation in Kuwait, explains more about these visits. For further information, please contact Hicham Hassan, ICRC Geneva, at hihassan@icrc.org or on +41 79 536 92 57.

Syria: In an interview to be published on our website, Béatrice Mégevand-Roggo, the ICRC's head of operations for the Near and Middle East, back from a visit to the country, talks about the humanitarian consequences of the violence and the ICRC's main concerns. For further information, please contact Hicham Hassan, ICRC Geneva, at hihassan@icrc.org or on +41 79 536 92 57.

Yemen: The ICRC and the Yemen Red Crescent Society are working together to respond to the most acute humanitarian needs across the country. Read more in an operational update to be published in early February. For further information, please contact Hicham Hassan, ICRC Geneva, at hihassan@icrc.org or on +41 79 536 92 57.

Israel and the occupied territories: All through last year, the ICRC continued to monitor the humanitarian consequences of Israeli policies and practices in the occupied territories. It shared its findings confidentially with the Israeli authorities. Read the update on the humanitarian situation and the ICRC's activities on our website. For further information, please contact Hicham Hassan, ICRC Geneva, at hihassan@icrc.org or on +41 79 536 92 57.

LATIN AMERICA

Mexico: Health-care workers on the front line: over the past three years, risks to health-care workers treating the wounded and the sick in the Mexican city of Ciudad Juárez have increased. Attacks on facilities and patients have become more common in this city of 1.5 million on the US border, hindering patients' access to health care. "Four masked men walked into a public state medical centre in the city. They pointed their guns at us and at the

patients in the waiting room. We dropped to the floor and one of the men found the intended victim and shot him dead," said Francisco from the Ciudad Juarez branch of the Mexican Red Cross. Read the full story on our website, <http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/feature/2012/mexico-feature-health-care-danger-2012-01-30.htm>. For further information, please contact Steven Anderson, ICRC Geneva, at sanderson@icrc.org or on +41 79 536 92 50.

Violence preventing the safe delivery of health care amid armed conflict or internal unrest is one of the most serious, yet least recognized humanitarian challenges in the world today. To find out more, please visit www.icrc.org/eng/what-we-do/safeguarding-health-care/?banner or contact Bijan Frederic Farnoudi, ICRC Geneva, at bfarnoudi@icrc.org or on +41 79 536 92 59.

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Afghanistan: Improving water supply and sanitary conditions: Qoliobchakan, on the heights above Kabul, is home to around 15,000 people displaced by the 30-year conflict in Afghanistan; many of them are from the Panshir valley. For many years, the community used to fetch its water from a hand pump located at the base of the hill, near a cemetery... Read the full story on our website, at <http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/feature/2012/afghanistan-feature-2012-01-31.htm>. For further information, please contact Christian Cardon, ICRC Geneva, at ccardon@icrc.org or on +41 79 251 93 02 or +41 22 730 36 26.

OTHER TOPICS

Protection and safety of journalists: Over the past 12 months, at least 60 media professionals working in war zones or other areas affected by violence, including 50 in Libya alone, have requested and received some kind of assistance through the ICRC hotline for journalists on dangerous assignment. Read more about the hotline and the protection afforded to journalists under international humanitarian law in an interview to be posted on our website. For further information, please contact Dorothea Krimitsas, ICRC Geneva, at dkrimitsas@icrc.org or on +41 79 251 93 18.

DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE ICRC

ICRC website: www.icrc.org

ICRC media room: www.icrc.org/eng/media-room/index.jsp

ICRC video newsroom: www.icrcvideonewsroom.org

For ICRC news footage, contact Jan Powell at jpowell@icrc.org or Didier Revol at drevol@icrc.org

For films and archive footage, contact Marina Meier at mmeier@icrc.org or Florence Zurcher at fzurcher@icrc.org

ICRC photo collection: www.icrc.org/eng/resources/photos/index.jsp

For photos, contact Fania Khan Mohammad at fkhan@icrc.org, Sabine Haberler Kreis at shaberler@icrc.org or Thierry Gassman at tgassmann@icrc.org.

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