

The multiple tasks and activities of the UN often have implications of a humanitarian nature. Operating since 1983, the ICRC delegation to the UN serves as a support and a liaison for ICRC operational and legal initiatives. The delegation conveys the ICRC's viewpoint, keeps abreast of trends and developments relating to humanitarian issues and promotes IHL.

KEY RESULTS/CONSTRAINTS

In 2013:

- ▶ the UN General Assembly adopted the Arms Trade Treaty, with the ICRC providing input on IHL-related language and on the consideration of various other humanitarian issues
- ▶ the UN secretary-general's reports and UN General Assembly resolutions referred to the goals of the Health Care in Danger project, while including ICRC recommendations on humanitarian access and other protection-related goals
- ▶ key actors at the 68th session of the General Assembly considered – in view of ICRC statements – IHL with regard to UN priorities such as humanitarian coordination/access, and IDPs, women and children in conflict
- ▶ UN agencies/bodies, including the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office of Legal Affairs, shared with the ICRC their views on peacekeeping guidelines/policies, particularly in relation to IHL

YEARLY RESULT

Level of achievement of ICRC yearly objectives/plans of action

HIGH

EXPENDITURE (in KCHF)

Protection	-
Assistance	-
Prevention	2,252
Cooperation with National Societies	-
General	-

2,252

of which: Overheads 137

IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Expenditure/yearly budget	97%
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PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	3
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	10

CONTEXT

The UN and the diplomatic community continued to deal with thematic global issues, including children in armed conflict, sexual violence in armed conflict, and other broad protection-related concerns. Strengthening coordination and leadership and establishing partnerships also figured prominently on the UN's agenda. Policy debates on humanitarian action tackled, *inter alia*, the operational relevance of humanitarian principles, access and consent for humanitarian activities, and partnerships among those conducting such activities, as well as how these issues applied to integrated missions.

The UN Security Council deliberated, among other things, on the situations in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (hereafter DRC), Iraq, Israel and the occupied territories, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic (hereafter Syria) and Yemen.

With the mounting humanitarian crisis in Syria, the Security Council adopted a resolution on chemical weapons and issued a presidential statement on the humanitarian situation in the country.

Upon the authorization of the Security Council and host States, peacekeeping missions to the DRC and Mali were granted more "robust" mandates, as illustrated by the creation of an intervention brigade in the DRC, enabling them to use force at the tactical level. The Council passed a resolution renewing the mandate of African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), which remained under African Union command.

The UN encouraged the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, which was adopted by the General Assembly in April; it also tackled a number of other weapon-related challenges. In particular, the consequences of nuclear weapons gained renewed attention during the High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament that took place at the margins of the 68th Session of the General Assembly in September.

ICRC ACTION AND RESULTS

The ICRC's New York delegation maintained regular contact with UN bodies, member States and observers, and civil society organizations in order to ensure IHL's prominence in discussions on emerging humanitarian issues, raise awareness of humanitarian concerns in operational contexts and themes on the UN's agenda, and enlist support for neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action. It also continued to offer its expertise on matters within its remit to UN bodies and member States, and drew on its contacts to stay abreast of humanitarian, political and legal developments relevant to its work.

The ICRC's interactions took place at various levels, including during the ICRC president's missions to New York. As a permanent observer at the UN, the ICRC was a regular presence at Security Council and General Assembly debates and other events, including the 68th Session of the General Assembly. It also had monthly meetings with the president of the Security Council and regular bilateral/multilateral meetings and events involving UN officials and representatives of member States.

Its privileged position as an expert briefer at the Security Council's three open debates enabled the ICRC to address Council members and highlight priority issues, such as those relating to the Health

Care in Danger project, the regulation of the use and trade of weapons, and IHL compliance. At the General Assembly session, and at events on its margins, the ICRC urged that humanitarian access and impediments to it be viewed through the lens of IHL and that protection for women and children during armed conflict be strengthened, including with regard to sexual violence. It also pursued cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA).

Several UN reports, resolutions and other documents and products incorporated ICRC-suggested language and recommendations. For instance, through its dialogue with different key actors and its statements in the run-up to the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, the ICRC contributed to reinforcing the humanitarian objective of the treaty and strengthening its IHL-related provisions. The UN secretary-general's reports took into account the ICRC's input on addressing attacks against patients and medical personnel and facilities in armed conflict, humanitarian coordination and access to people in need, and other protection-related matters. Security Council resolutions on peacekeeping missions and on sexual violence also paid heed to the ICRC's suggestions, as did a General Assembly resolution on strengthening humanitarian coordination.

ICRC delegates delivered briefings on specific issues, including on field operations, deepening understanding of IHL and the ICRC's mandate, clarifying the organization's position on key issues from a strictly humanitarian perspective and reaffirming the relevance of its neutral, impartial and independent approach to its operations on the ground.

The ICRC continued to coordinate closely with other organizations, UN-affiliated consortia and Movement partners. It also maintained contact with New York-based NGOs and think-tanks. Its contacts with UN-accredited media and academic institutions helped increase awareness of and interest in the ICRC's humanitarian concerns and activities.

AUTHORITIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY

UN bodies and member States consider IHL and humanitarian challenges

As a permanent observer at the UN, the ICRC helped position IHL and the importance of protecting civilians at the forefront of discussions on contemporary humanitarian issues. It engaged with the UN and its bodies, agencies and member States at various fora, including at the highest levels, and provided input on matters within its thematic and operational expertise.

Thus, it served as an expert briefer to the Security Council on three occasions – at two debates on the protection of civilians (February and August) and one on small arms and light weapons (September). The ICRC highlighted the need to protect people seeking/providing medical care, the importance of a strong Arms Trade Treaty, and IHL compliance. In formal statements to the General Assembly, the ICRC emphasized the significance of humanitarian coordination and access, the protection of women and children in armed conflict, the regulation of weapons, the rule of law and universal jurisdiction.

UN reports/resolutions address safe delivery of health care, regulation of weapons

As several States had also expressed their support for the goals of the Health Care in Danger project and the corresponding resolution adopted during the 31st International Conference,

the UN secretary-general's report, as well as the presidential statement on protecting civilians in armed conflicts adopted by the UN Security Council, referred to the need for parties to armed conflict to respect medical personnel and facilities, in keeping with their obligations under IHL.

A separate report of the UN secretary-general on strengthening humanitarian coordination, as well as a related resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly, used ICRC-suggested language and recommendations on the protection of medical services, humanitarian access to people in need and other protection-related matters. Other resolutions – e.g. relating to peacekeeping and to victims of sexual violence – were adopted, with ICRC input on IHL and the humanitarian impact of such issues.

Throughout the year, the ICRC stressed the importance of regulating the trade and use of weapons; its efforts contributed to the UN General Assembly's adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty in April. In the run-up to and during the final diplomatic conference on the treaty, ICRC input helped to strengthen the treaty's IHL-related provisions and to make its humanitarian concerns more explicit. Bilateral and group briefings for representatives of over 60 States stressed the importance of considering the humanitarian dimension of the arms trade. In further support of regulating weapon use, the ICRC vice-president appealed to States to end the use of nuclear weapons when he spoke at an event on the sidelines of the General Assembly session in September.

The ICRC and the DPKO reinforced their cooperation, jointly organizing their fourth annual workshop. They brought each other up to date on challenges and policy developments and discussed the applicability of IHL to peacekeeping operations in specific contexts. The OLA participated in the workshop and set out the UN's legal position.

At the Second Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Enforced Disappearance, States were encouraged to ratify and/or implement the Convention and were made aware of an ICRC-developed model law in this regard. The UN's Rule of Law Unit sought the ICRC's advice on following up on the pledges made by States at the last high-level debate on the rule of law; they received input based on the pledging system of the International Conference.

ICRC president, other high-level officials highlight importance of IHL in bilateral/multilateral events

Over the course of several official missions to New York, the ICRC's president met senior UN officials and State representatives, including the entire Security Council, to discuss humanitarian issues/challenges, ICRC operations in contexts on the UN's agenda, and the ICRC's positions from a strictly humanitarian perspective. Other bilateral/multilateral interaction occurred between the ICRC and influential actors such as the UN secretariat, humanitarian focal points of member States and, on a monthly basis, the rotating president of the Security Council. Such contacts, including those that took place at the margins of the General Assembly session, helped enhance key actors' understanding of various issues from an IHL perspective and fostered their support for incorporating IHL and other matters of humanitarian concern in resolutions, reports and debates (see above).

Many officials received updates on the ICRC's major operations; these briefings underscored the ICRC's humanitarian concerns and the relevance of the organization's neutral, impartial and independent approach and its on-the-ground impact on operations.

Diplomats and academics also learnt about the ICRC's action and the challenges affecting the wider humanitarian community through the ICRC president's participation in events hosted by the International Peace Institute and the President of the Swiss Confederation. Over 90 State representatives added to their knowledge of IHL and ICRC operations at the 30th Annual Seminar on IHL for Diplomats co-organized by the New York University School of Law and the ICRC.

Humanitarian actors coordinate activities

Meetings with the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee, at high and working levels, facilitated coordination of humanitarian activities and enabled the ICRC to monitor pertinent developments/policies, emphasize the importance of principled humanitarian action, and declare its priorities and concerns. Regular contacts with Movement partners, NGOs, think-tanks and UN-affiliated humanitarian organizations enhanced understanding of each other's roles and positions on pertinent issues and of the ICRC's distinct mandate. Some organizations consulted the ICRC on IHL-related matters.

Dialogue with States and organizations of regional influence expanded as part of efforts to engage all stakeholders with bearing on humanitarian issues.

Meanwhile, the aforementioned exchanges fed into the ICRC's own analysis of thematic issues and operational concerns.

Wider public learns about humanitarian principles and the Movement

UN-accredited media received ICRC press releases and publications to keep them updated on humanitarian and IHL-related developments, resulting in more accurate coverage of ICRC activities. Future lawyers, leaders and decision-makers enriched their knowledge of IHL at briefings and panel discussions for graduate students at various universities. The delegation also increased its social media presence and broadened its targeted communication initiatives.