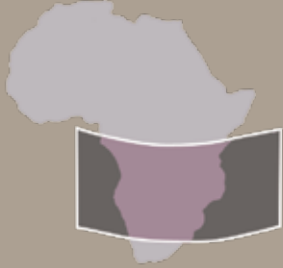




ICRC



Newsletter of the ICRC
Pretoria Regional
Delegation

LOOK OUT FOR...

Red Cross/Red Crescent
Magazine: "Our world. Your
Move." – Issue 3, 2009.

Water and war: ICRC response
This publication looks at key
water and sanitation issues in
conflict-affected countries where
the ICRC works. It analyses
challenges from the point of
view of operational practice,
which has developed and
become more professional as
the years have gone by.

This publication can be ordered
from the website: <http://icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/p0969?opendocument>

**MISSION
Statement**

The International Committee
of the Red Cross (ICRC) is
an impartial, neutral and
independent organization whose
exclusively humanitarian mission
is to protect the lives and dignity
of victims of war and internal
violence and to provide them
with assistance. It directs and
coordinates the international
relief activities conducted by
the Movement in situations of
conflict. It also endeavours to
prevent suffering by promoting
and strengthening humanitarian
law and universal humanitarian
principles. Established in 1863,
the ICRC is at the origin of the
International Red Cross and Red
Crescent Movement.

Themba

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THIRD QUARTER



Regional Delegation, Pretoria signs MoU with PAP

The ICRC Regional Delegation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Pan African Parliament (PAP) at the PAP Headquarters in Midrand. The MoU helps to further strengthen and promote the existing bilateral relationship between the two institutions. It also gives the Delegation an official representation and a more visible presence in the PAP. The ICRC continues enjoying its observer status which is given to very few international organisations.



Morad Boularaf, the Acting Clerk of the Pan African Parliament, and the Deputy Head of Regional Delegation, Pretoria, Kedir Awol sign the Memorandum of Understanding.

The ICRC and the application of IHL to peace support operations

The Peace Missions Training Centre, SANDF Army Training College, Pretoria, hosted a training session for its members who are or will be involved in peace support operations.

Two presentations on the history, role and activities of the ICRC were given by the ICRC representatives, at the request of Major Marion Jansen from the Peace Missions Training Centre at the Army Training College. The audience comprised 32 Majors and Lieutenant-Generals, 20 of whom had already been

deployed in countries including Burundi, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Officers were interested in the work of the ICRC in Burundi, and shared some of their interaction with the ICRC in the field (Darfour, Burundi). The second presentation looked at the issue of the applicability of IHL to peacekeeping troops. The presentation was an excellent opportunity to clarify the mandate of the ICRC, and answer any questions that the participants had.

2009 Anti-personnel Landmines Conference

As part of the Our world. Your move. campaign the ICRC conducted various research initiatives designed to raise awareness of the plight of civilians living in situations of armed conflict and violence. The survey was used to measure the impact of armed conflict on the civilian population in troubled places in the world that are either experiencing armed conflict or suffering its aftermath. The questions covered people's personal experience of armed conflict and violence, and its impact on them.

The results give a powerful insight into the experiences and opinions of civilians coping with some of the most harrowing situations in the world. Details of the results can be viewed on our website at www.icrc.org

Apart from celebrating 150 years since the Battle of Solferino, this year also marks the 60th Anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. In doing its part to ensure that the Dialogue on the Geneva Conventions continues, the ICRC Regional Delegation is using the Conventions as a central theme for a number of seminars and dissemination sessions. Two of such sessions included the lectures given to first year and postgraduate students at the Universities of Johannesburg and the Witwatersrand. Both sessions highlighted the fact that sixty years since their adoption, the spirit of the Geneva Conventions to uphold the life and dignity of the most vulnerable during an armed conflict, is still relevant.

The Delegation was also well represented at the 2009 Anti-personal Landmines Conference, which was co-hosted in Pretoria by the African Union and the South African government, with the assistance of the AU. Read more about the Delegations participation and of that by Peter Herby, Head of the Mine Unit in Geneva.

Since the last edition of Themba, the delegation has said good bye to Chantal Kiburente (Secretariat), who has left to spend more time with her family. We wish to welcome Aline Ntamakemwa who replaces her.

Janine Mosetlhi

The South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation in collaboration with the African Union, and financially supported by the European Union, hosted the 3rd Continental Conference of African Experts on Landmines in Pretoria from 9 September to 11 September 2009.

The aim of the conference was to provide African states with an opportunity to discuss the progress made in ensuring that Africa becomes a mine-free continent. It was also an opportunity for all participants to review the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, which entered into force in March 1999. Ultimately it was an opportunity to adopt an African common position in preparation for the Second Review Conference which will take place from 30 November to 4 December 2009 in Cartagena, Columbia. The Second Review Conference will assess progress made since 2004 and develop new

goals and action plans.

To date the Convention has 156 States Parties, including 49 of 53 African countries. Still to accede are Morocco, Libya, Egypt and Somalia.

The ICRC was represented by Peter Herby (Head of the Mines Unit: ICRC Geneva) and Sarah Swart (IHL Legal Officer: ICRC Pretoria) who both gave presentations at the conference. Peter Herby provided copies of the Appeal and Recommendations on Victim Assistance to States participating in the Cartagena Summit on a Mine Free World. He also gave a presentation on the "Expectations and Views of the International Committee of the Red Cross," under the panel discussion entitled "Toward the Second Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction." Sarah Swart presented on States' Obligation under Article 9 of the Convention to pass legislation implementing the Convention.



Sarah Swart, delivering a presentation on States' Obligations Under Article 9.



Peter Herby, Head of the Mines Unit (ICRC Geneva) and Sarah Swart, Legal Officer (ICRC Pretoria).

Election preparedness

The role of the Red Cross can not be underestimated on election day.

On a cold morning, on the 22nd of April, all across South Africa, over 1,200 South African Red Cross Society (SARCS) volunteers prepared to play their role on election day. At the crack of dawn volunteers arrived to prepare first aid kits, SARCS flags, ID cards, and the vehicles that would be needed on the day. At provincial offices as well as at the National Head Quarters in Pretoria, staff and an additional 600 volunteers arrived to show their support.

As auxiliaries to their Government in the humanitarian field, Red Cross National Societies often play a role during important national events. Plenty of others have to make an early start on polling days; the Electoral Commission, the police, the monitors from the different parties and let's not forget the media. But what is the role of the National Red Cross Society in all of this, especially when the State is well developed and where it has the necessary deployment capacity?

In the best run election there are bound to be queues, sometimes snaking out of sight, and even the fit get tired and dehydrated during the long shuffle forward. The frail and the sick also want to cast their vote but may struggle with the long wait. The SARCS first aid teams attending the April elections helped the frail to move through the voting process and treated dehydration, fainting, epileptic attacks, headaches, sore feet and occasional cuts and bruises. They were also ready to transport people to clinics if required and this service was provided in a few cases. Thousands of South Africans were helped by SARCS on election day 2009, in one of the organisation's biggest actions.



South African Red Cross volunteers and the Head of Regional Delegation, Pretoria, Catherine Gendre.

Happily, the South African election process was overwhelmingly a peaceful one, but another reason for the presence of Red Cross first volunteers on election day, is for them to be on standby just in case of violence or skirmishes. This is also the case during election rallies and political demonstrations. When such situations arise, the National Society mobilizes itself, as was the case during the run up to the 1994 elections, when, with ICRC's support, SARCS provided emergency first aid and evacuation during what were very tense times.

In the Southern African region, most National Societies deploy staff and volunteers for elections. The Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross and the Mozambique Red Cross (CVM) regularly do so. The ICRC is currently working with CVM in preparation for national elections in October. In the run up to elections CVM will seek meetings with the election authority, with all the main political parties, provincial authorities, police and medical services to make sure that their role is understood. This sort of dialogue is vital for coordination and also helps the Red Cross to understand if there are particular risks in one or other area, and to be well prepared with a humanitarian response. CVM will also be refreshing the training of its provincial and branch teams in first aid and planning around logistics, security, communications and reporting. Come election day, it will be another early start for the volunteers, but they will be trained, equipped and ready for action.

ICRC trains the Swazi Royal Police

The Police and Security Forces Delegate from ICRC Nairobi and the Protection Delegate from ICRC Pretoria undertook a visit to Swaziland from 10 to 15 August 2009, in order to carry out a sensitization of International Human Rights Law (IHRL) and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) for the Royal Swaziland Police Officers.

Twenty-four senior officers from the Royal Swaziland Police attended the three day sensitization program on IHRL and IHL held at the Police College in Matsapa. Participants were motivated and interested in the course and were actively asking questions. The representative of the Commissioner who opened and closed the session, thanked the ICRC for its support in this regard and appealed for its continuation by qualifying the ICRC as "a friend in need". The Commissioner called upon all officers to prepare their plan of action on what they have learned. It is noteworthy that basic human rights and humanitarian principles are integrated in their Constitution and Police Act and that the participants are familiar with both.



ICRC

Themba



PRETORIA Delegation

- Head of Delegation:
Catherine Gendre
Protection Delegate /
Deputy Head of Delegation:
Kedir Awol
Head of Communication:
Janine Mosetlhi
Communications Officer:
Tebogo Magashoa
Tracing Officer:
Henrietta Nthathe
Regional Legal Adviser:
Christopher Black
Legal Assistant:
Sarah Swart
Co-operation Delegate:
Michael Myers
Co-operation Officer:
Fazlyn Vries
Legal & Universities:
Garth Abraham
Delegate to the Armed Forces:
Christophe Deschard
Administrator:
Aline Mukambano

CONTACT THE Delegation

If you would like to receive further issues of THEMBA, or to be on the mailing list, please contact the Communications Unit. Or for additional information concerning various ICRC programmes, please contact us at:
Tel: (27) – 12 430 7335/6/7
Fax: (27) – 12 430 4471
E-mail: pretoria.pre@icrc.org
<http://www.icrc.org>



*The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is made up by the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross Red and Crescent Societies and 186 National Societies worldwide.

Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance

The Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Johannesburg, invited the Delegation to participate at its first session on the Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance (DHA). The DHA is a new regional, six-week programme, offered in South Africa by The Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, in association with The Graduate School of Public & Development Management at the University of The Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, and MSF. The course is designed and taught by experts from leading NGOs, International Organisations and Academic Institutions. Some of the objectives are to identify and promote standards of good practice in humanitarian responses; to encourage cooperation and dialogue between governmental, non-governmental, national and international agencies involved in humanitarian action; and to address humanitarian priorities in Southern Africa and the wider continent of Africa.

The participants included humanitarian workers from across the globe, as well as staff of MSF and other humanitarian NGOs, and representatives from South African local and national governments.

The ICRC was requested to provide two days of training on the work of the ICRC and on International Humanitarian Law. The first part of the training was given by Ms Sarah Swart, Legal Assistant at the Pretoria Delegation. The second day of training was presented during a specialised Core Module of the course, entitled Policy and Advocacy, and was intended to give a more detailed explanation of International Humanitarian Law. It was presented by Mrs Janine Mosetlhi, Head of Communication. Overall the participants were very interested in the work of the ICRC, and particularly in its mandate. They were also interested in the principles of International Humanitarian Law.

SARCS Capacity building workshop

The South African Red Cross Society (SARCS) hosted a training workshop at which the ICRC, and two other facilitators assisted in the capacity building of 20 communications, health and youth focal points from SARCS. The training session focused on capacitating the participants to accurately and effectively report on SARCS activities.



South African Red Cross volunteers and Mrs Fazlyn Vries, ICRC Cooperation Officer.

The participants were afforded the opportunity to conduct a practical reporting experience when they visited Daveyton on the East Rand. The participants were tasked

with capturing the Red Cross volunteers in action. They were able to visit with Red Cross Home-based care givers who were conducting door-to-door campaigns on H1N1 awareness, and used their newly acquired photography skills to capture Red Cross volunteers interactions with the community.

The last day of the workshop focused on web writing techniques. The participants were afforded the opportunity to work with a local Web Designer, and thus gain experience on how a webpage works.