



# INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS MOSCOW DELEGATION



## FOREWORD

Russia and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) share a long history, dating back to 1867 when Russia acceded to the original Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded in Armies in the Field. That same year, one of the first voluntary societies to care for wounded soldiers was formed in the Russian Empire. The Russian Red Cross Society, now more than 150 years old, remains our closest partner in the country and, like the ICRC, is proud to be among the more than 190 members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Over the years, Russia has taken an active role in developing international humanitarian law, and these developments govern conduct in armed conflicts even today.

The ICRC's regional delegation in Moscow is celebrating its 30th birthday in 2022, making it as old as the Russian Federation itself. The delegation is one of our key humanitarian diplomacy hubs around the world, building dialogue with the Russian authorities, academic and expert circles, and other influential people and organizations in order to support our mission to protect and assist people affected by armed conflict and other violence around the world.

Like any other diplomatic hub, we talk to political and military decision makers on how we can use our experience and expertise, to make a difference to the lives of people affected by humanitarian crises



around the globe. We organize and take part in national and international forums that Russia attends and seek to find solutions to pressing concerns, such as how to better protect health workers and essential services, and limit the impact of urban warfare and new technologies on people's lives.

Our ultimate goal remains what it has always been: to alleviate human suffering in wars and help people to rebuild their lives.

Ikhtiyar Aslanov  
Head of Regional Delegation  
Moscow

## PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW (IHL)

Russia was one of the pioneers of IHL. The contribution of Fyodor Martens (1845–1909), a Russian diplomat and legal scholar, to the development and promotion of IHL is well known. Indeed, Russia was the instigator behind many major developments in international law to protect civilians in war and prohibit the use of inhumane means and methods of warfare.

In Russia, Belarus and Moldova, the ICRC promotes the integration of IHL into military doctrines and training, participating as an expert and observer in a variety of military exercises, such as ZAPAD 2021. We interact with national policymakers to promote important international treaties and ensure that domestic legislation includes, and develops in accordance with, IHL rules.

The ICRC's regional delegation engages with academic institutions, in particular law faculties and their students, through conferences, publications, moot-court competitions and various forms of support to ensure continued research on IHL and discussions on topical IHL issues. We also facilitate access to legal content in Russian, including through the International Review of the Red Cross — the oldest international publication devoted to humanitarian law in the world, founded in 1869.





## HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY

Because of our neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, we can go where many others cannot — helping people affected by armed conflict and other violence even in the most inaccessible places in the world. In Moscow, we discuss these people's needs and concerns through the dialogue we maintain with state officials, practitioners and researchers. Our discussions cover many issues, including the protection of civilians and

respect for IHL, modern weapons and warfare, use of new technologies and tracing missing people.

We interact with the authorities, civil society, scholars and the media through round tables, exhibitions, conferences, competitions and training events. The regional delegation also hosts a dedicated space — the Humanitarium — which welcomes Russian and international scholars,





experts and practitioners. The ICRC also takes part in key Russian-led international events, such as the annual Moscow Conference on International Security or the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum, both of which offer a platform for discussing humanitarian issues.

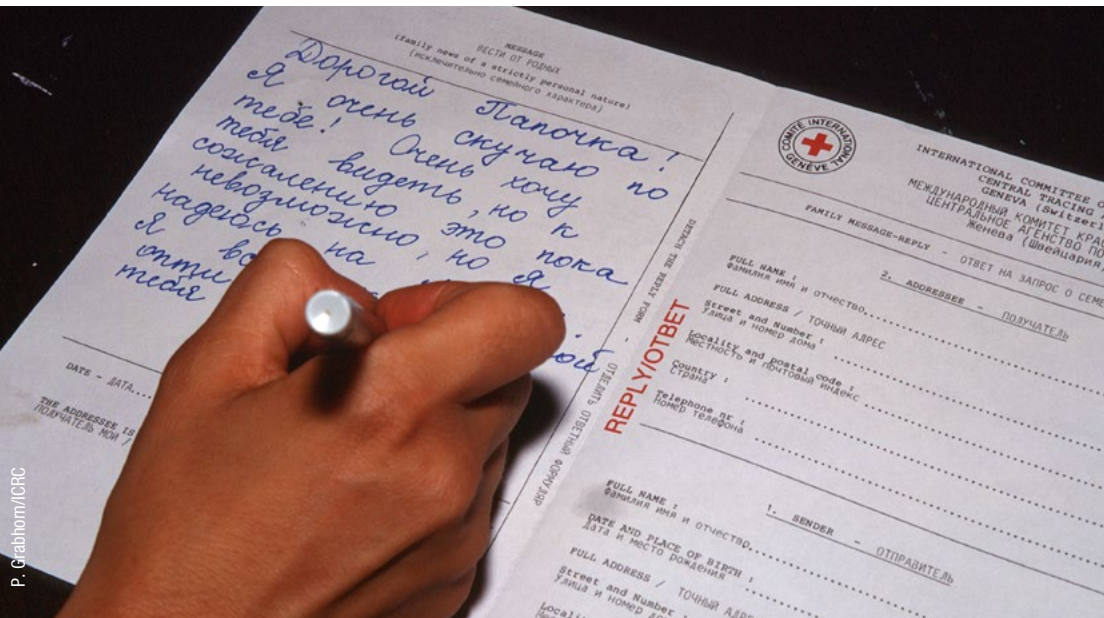
The ICRC cooperates with the regional institutions Russia is a member of, such as the Collective Security Treaty

Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States, helping member states to step up integration of IHL into their domestic policies and activities. All these efforts translate theory — knowledge, analysis and opinions — into concrete practice that helps people, whether they be in Afghanistan, Ukraine, Syria or Nagorno-Karabakh.

# REUNITING FAMILIES

When someone goes missing, it can be devastating for their family, who do not know where they are or what has become of them. Together with local partners, the ICRC's regional delegation in Moscow helps family members who have lost contact with loved ones as a result of armed conflict, natural disasters or migration, to get back in touch with them and, where possible, be reunited. This work — restoring family links — is one of the ICRC's core services.

We also provide technical expertise to support forensic services, so that if a person is found dead, their remains can be identified and returned to the person's family for a proper funeral. We also provide psychosocial support to families.





## COOPERATION WITH NATIONAL RED CROSS SOCIETIES

The ICRC works with the National Red Cross Societies of the region to promote humanitarian values and raise awareness about IHL and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

In Russia and Belarus, we strengthen the capacity of our local Red Cross partners to deliver first aid, respond to emergencies, restore family links and address the needs of vulnerable people.

From the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ICRC supported the response of the Russian and Belarus National Red Cross Societies, e.g. by providing personal protective equipment for their staff and volunteers, informing people about

protective measures such as social distancing, and distributing essential aid to the most vulnerable members of society.

The ICRC has also provided technical expertise to the Russian Red Cross on a draft federal law regulating the status of the National Society, and to the Belarus Red Cross on increasing its acceptance among the civilian population and its access to those in need.

In planning projects to strengthen National Societies and ensure an effective humanitarian response, the ICRC cooperates and coordinates with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

## MISSION

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 armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC 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 Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It directs and coordinates the international activities conducted by the Movement in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.

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**International Committee of the Red Cross**  
Regional Delegation for the Russian Federation,  
Belarus and Moldova  
13/1 Grokholsky per.,  
Moscow, Russia, 129090  
T +7 495 626 54 26  
[moscow@icrc.org](mailto:moscow@icrc.org)

