

## 2009: A special year for the Red Cross

We are already way into the year 2009 and the regular activities of the Regional Delegation are well on track. However, 2009 marks a very special year for the ICRC and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. First of all, it is 150 years since the battle of Solferino took place in what is today Italy. The aftermath of this battle inspired Henry Dunant to propose relief societies to care for the wounded on the battlefield and to establish international rules to

remain insufficient without requiring full compliance from all parties to all conflicts. It was for this reason that they drafted the First Article Common to the four Geneva Conventions, requiring plainly that all nations respect and ensure respect for the four Conventions in all circumstances. Although the four conventions have attained universal acceptance, parties to armed conflicts often disregard or openly flout International Humanitarian Law.

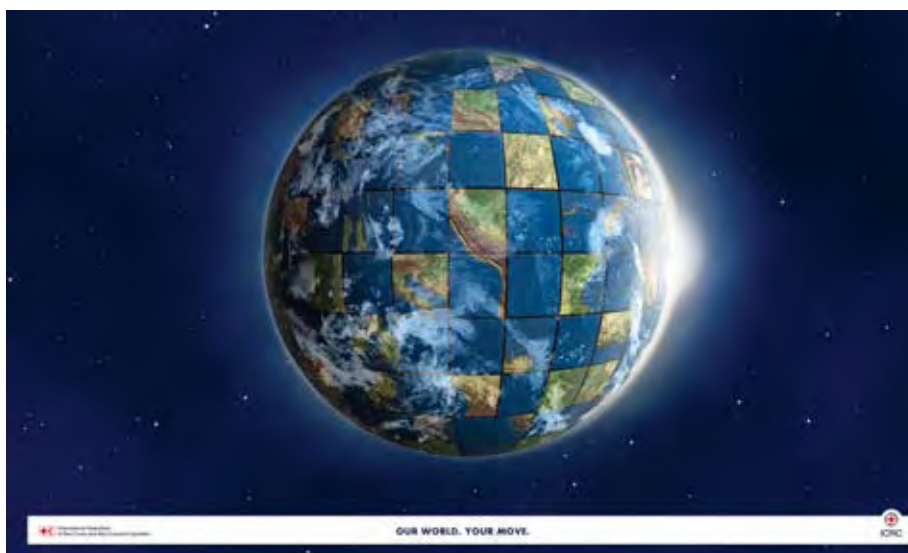
Let us then honour the anniversaries

it is the act of individuals that makes a difference and contributes to alleviate the suffering of their fellow human. The Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement through its unique network of millions of volunteers and staff endeavours to promote those moves and whenever they are needed.

Last but not least, Kenya through the Kenya Red Cross Society will in November 2009 be the first African country to host the General Assembly of the International Federation and the Council of Delegates. These important meetings will bring together delegates from all National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC and will contribute to heighten the profile of the Movement in Kenya and the region. Beside its normal cooperation with the KRCS, the delegation will also contribute to the preparation and success of these major events.

I hope that we as a Movement can continue to count on your interest and support.

**Christoph Luedi**  
Head of Regional Delegation



Red Cross and Red Crescent movement: 150 years of moving the world. ICRC/2009

protect them. His proposals ultimately led to the foundation of the Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement.

2009 also marks both the 60th anniversary of the four Geneva Conventions and the 110th Anniversary of the International Conference that led to the Hague Conventions. These two great bodies of international humanitarian law limit the destruction of war and protect humanity during armed conflict. While we commemorate these anniversaries, we are aware that war continues to plague humanity, leading to untold suffering and human misery.

This is especially true in the Horn, Eastern and Great Lakes regions of Africa, where devastation due to armed conflicts remains inestimable. The authors of the Geneva Conventions were aware that setting down formal rules of war in an international treaty would forever

of the Geneva Conventions and the Hague Conventions through renewed commitment to the humanitarian basis on which they are founded. Let us continue to call on all peoples to "respect and to ensure respect" for them wherever and whenever they find themselves facing war.

Moreover, this year the Movement is celebrating the 90th anniversary of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The Federation was created in order to enhance cooperation and coordination among all National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

All these anniversaries are commemorated nationally and internationally with a great variety of events under a worldwide campaign titled **Our world – Your move**. The main aim of the campaign is to demonstrate that today, like after the battle of Solferino,



|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Solferino : Looking back              | 2   |
| Mt Elgon widows project               | 3&7 |
| Logistics Nairobi                     | 4   |
| Mt Elgon seeds and tools distribution | 5   |
| Humanity of the Red Cross             | 6   |
| News Briefs                           | 8   |

# Remembering Henry Dunant: 150 years of a Legacy

The year was 1859. Henry Dunant, a Swiss Businessman, was passing through Solferino in Italy, when he witnessed a horrific battleground. More than 300,000 men from the French and Austrian armies stood facing each other ready for battle.

After more than 12 hours of fighting, 6,000 men lay dead, 42,000 wounded. The cries of the wounded calling for help or just a little water could be heard all through the battlefield. The role of the combatant was over; that of the medical services had just begun.

Immediately, Dunant threw himself body and soul into lending assistance to the wounded. He gathered the town's women and children and began cleaning wounds, wetting parched lips, and tending to bandages. The medical surgeons meanwhile were operating at Castiglione's hospital, situated in the nearby town. The entire town of Solferino was immediately transformed into a hospital for the wounded who had nothing but straw to lie on.

On several occasions, Dunant was overwhelmed by feelings of utter inadequacy. "The moral sense of the importance of human life, the humane desire to lighten a little the torments of these poor wretches...the furious and relentless activity which a man summons up at such moments: all these combine to create a kind of energy which gives one a positive craving to relieve as many as one can."

Many lives were saved by the simple town folk who had volunteered their time, services and effort to help the wounded. Others turned their homes into hospitals to accommodate at least one of the recovering soldiers. They could not do everything.

Henry Dunant would later write of the things that he had witnessed in a book 'A memory of Solferino'. Dunant

wrote in painstaking detail some of the scenes before him. "The condition of the wounded defied imagination: they lacked food, water and aid... Many soldiers would later die through lack of assistance

prevent, or at least alleviate the horrors of war?

In 1863, four years after Dunant's book was published, a conference was held, which recommended the setting up of national relief societies and asked the governments to give them protection.

In 1864, another diplomatic conference was held. Participants at this meeting drew up the "Geneva Convention for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded in armies in the field".

This convention is the first of what is today known as the Geneva Conventions, a set of rules of war that help countries fight within certain agreed practices.

Because of Dunant's sacrifice and ideas, a humanitarian organization was formed - the International Red Cross which today is a symbol of humanity the world over.

2009 marks 150 years since that first war that led to the idea of the International Red Cross Movement. This year we take time to honour Dunant and the legacy he founded many years ago.

The world today faces many modern Solferino's characterised by different states of violence affecting us. We laud the spirit of Dunant present in so many individuals who are making a difference in their communities and beyond. We at the Red Cross are extending this invitation to all individuals through a global call, 'Our World, Your move'.

Dunant wrote, "All can, in one way or another, each in his own sphere and within his own limitations, do something to help the good work forward." Your Solferino could be your local community or beyond. By making a move to alleviate the cause of conflict in that place and help those in need, you will be making a difference. All it takes is one simple act of willingness.



than had perished on the battlefield itself".

In his book, Dunant gave two very pertinent recommendations:

Would it not be possible, in time of peace and quiet, to form relief societies for the purpose of having care given in the wartime by zealous, devoted and thoroughly qualified volunteers?

Secondly, is it not a matter of urgency, since unhappily wars cannot always be avoided, to press forward in a human and truly civilized spirit the attempt to





Mackline Chematwe with her son at Kipsigor Village. The ICRC supported her to begin this business. ICRC/ANNE MUCHEKE/2009

## Financial boost turns widows from paupers to profits.

The economic landscape in Mt Elgon is slowly changing shape. Within every village is a trading centre with shops run by women or their elder daughters. It has not always been this way.

Evelyn Chemutai runs a thriving business selling dry maize. She has seven children to look after on her own after she was widowed in 2007 and had to flee her home in Chebyuk in search of a safer area. With no income and no land to till, Chemutai spent the first few months of 2008 as a casual labourer in people's farms.

Linnet Chebet, another widow is running a small hotel in Burkewo village in Mt Elgon. The house that serves as the hotel is partitioned with the back room playing home to her five children. Customers walk in and out, enjoying a simple meal of matoke (bananas) and porridge while her daughter makes chapatti on the charcoal stove adjacent. Her family also eats off the same food they cook for the hotel making it a double win for Linet.

Business is a new interest for most of these women but it has turned out to be a

lifesaver. For a long time, the people of Mt Elgon in Kenya's Rift Valley relied on the produce from their land for sustenance.

The region's stability was shattered by violence that forced many residents to flee to safer areas separating them from their only source of livelihood. Many women were widowed by the violence leaving them in charge of their homes. The situation was dire as some had up to 12 children left in their care by their husbands and no income to live on.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), working in the region, realised there was a need and stepped in to assist the widows.

"We identified 100 widows who were directly affected having lost their husbands because of the violence. These women were given some money to start a business which would allow them to be self sustainable in the end," says Joanna Trindade, the ICRC head of office in Bungoma.

Money was allotted in two phases. Under the first phase, each widow was given 5,000Kshs (equal to 63 dollars) to start a business. Monthly house rents

are charged at 500Kshs, one tenth of the amount they received, so the figure was substantial enough to start a business.

After a certain agreed period, usually between 4 to 6 weeks, the widows were assessed to see what they did with the money. If they had done something sensible with the money, the widow was then given a final instalment of Kshs 3,000.

Evelyn tells excitedly of her business growth. "The day I received my money, I found a trader selling maize, which I purchased and began trading with. I sold all the maize and bought more and in less than two weeks, I doubled my initial amount," she explains.

With her profits, she bought a cow and hired land from a neighbour to grow crops. When the ICRC field officers came back, they were impressed with her progress and added the Kshs 3,000 they agreed. Together with the principal amount, Evelyn made a tidy profit of 15,000Kshs (190 USD), a figure she is proud of.

*Continued on pg 7*

# Logistics Nairobi: Supporting Africa and beyond

Nairobi, Madagascar and Zimbabwe are miles apart from each other. Even further are Indonesia and Pakistan, countries far off in the Asian continent.

To the staff at the logistics centre (LON) of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Nairobi, these countries are not mere geographical locations. Each is a destination, accounted in terms of tonnes of assistance items needed, flight preparations and a host of other intricate details.

In the last few months, LON has airlifted more than 40 tonnes of emergency supplies to Zimbabwe. In April, a consignment carrying 27 tonnes

of the consignment was distributed to ICRC-supported health facilities.

Following an outbreak of violence in Madagascar, the ICRC sent in medical supplies, which were delivered to referral hospitals, and health centres according to the need.

The medical supplies dispatched from LON consisted of four war-wounded kits, 70 wound-dressing kits, 50 stretchers and a dispensary tent. In 2008, hospitals in the Rift valley received medical supplies to support their operations in the wake of the post election violence that rocked the region.

For years, LON has been supporting

a glimpse into ICRC's role as a neutral and independent intermediary. The organisation was working at the request of the farmers of the occupied Golan area with the approval of the Syrian and Israeli authorities.

Across the border from Kenya, several drivers have been supporting the Kampala delegation while others are transporting goods to Bukavu, Goma, Kigali, reaching all the way to Zimbabwe by road.

ICRC delegations rely on LON for emergency supplies and are hardly ever disappointed. Systems are in place ensuring there is enough stock to respond to any emergencies in the countries LON serves.

"Our efficiency is based on how quickly we are able to respond to emergencies," says Beat Mosimann the Head of Logistics Centre. "We always stock enough supplies in our warehouses to cater for an average of three months standard items needed. This prepares us to handle emergency requests from the countries that we serve," he adds.

An example of this is in 2004 when the ICRC was the first humanitarian organisation to arrive in Sri Lanka to assist victims of the tsunami. Dispatches from LON took only three days to arrive in the country.

Kenya's geographical positioning makes it the best choice for LON's warehouse especially when it comes to transportation. Supplies are sent by land, air or sea using the most effective means. The vast road network linking Nairobi to various African countries

means that consignments can easily be transported by road. The port of Mombasa is equally strategic for transporting ICRC's products via the Indian Ocean especially to far off continents.

The logistics centre is the largest such ICRC facility in the world operating three warehouses; two in Nairobi and one in Mombasa with a combined capacity of 7,000 metric tonnes.



Loading medical supplies for dispatch to Madagascar at LON offices in Nairobi. ICRC/ALFRED GRIMM 2009

of assistance that included blankets, cooking stoves, stainless steel pots and high-energy biscuit rations were sent to the country.

13 tonnes of medical supplies were dispatched to Beatrice Infectious Diseases Hospital and other polyclinics in the densely populated suburbs of Harare in December. These included a complete cholera kit containing about 4,000 litres of rehydration fluids, infusion sets, antibiotics, needles and gloves. Part

more than 12 delegations with a wide range of goods and services necessary for their operations. Many of these are in Africa although the assistance goes as far as Pakistan, Indonesia and Lebanon according to the need.

Requests to the logistics centre go beyond the normal supply chain system. Three drivers have just returned from Israel, where they assisted in transporting apples between the occupied Golan and the Syrian checkpoint. This task provides



# It's a ripe harvest for residents of Mt Elgon

The hills of Mt Elgon are covered in green, interspersed with the yellowing of dry maize stems bundled together. It is harvest time and the donkeys ferrying sack loads of potatoes, onions and healthy green peppers fill the roads from the farm to the market.

Residents like David Aramisi were farmers in Cheptais division of Mt Elgon, living off the food they once sold until violence disrupted their activities. David left his village, one of those most affected by the violence, and moved to Naivasha, almost 600 kms away. There, he worked as a fisherman for several months and only returned home after hearing that security had returned to the area.

Unfortunately, he could not settle in Cheptais as his home had burnt down and the situation was still unstable. He therefore settled in Chepkirieng, a small village at the foot of the mountain. Today David earns a living as a shopkeeper selling groceries, plastic shoes and foodstuffs. He also sells beans from a sack at the corner of his shop.

The beans are surplus from a harvest of seeds distributed by the Red Cross. "The harvest has been good because we planted most of the seeds given to us," he states. David's family used part of the beans for their own consumption but saved a sack to sell at the shop.

"The crop has yielded well, supported by the urea and fertilizer the Red Cross provided," says Issa Sirmoi, a young man who is also a member of the village committee.

In a nearby farm, Issa gestures to a plantation of young beans, explaining this is the second crop planted from an initial harvest. All around are homesteads, some he explains are deserted but most



Red Cross volunteers assisted by Mt Elgon residents offload seeds and tools for distribution in the area. ICRC/ALFRED GRIMM 2009

are harvesting maize from seeds they received from the Red Cross.

Further, up in Chepkube, Vincas Chemogoi sits outside his homestead, his granary full of food. Outside on a gate made of wooden poles, beans hang out to dry, their tips tied together. His wife and children are harvesting vegetables from the garden, a stone's throw away.

Theirs is a lush area, where the mountain borders Uganda and the telephone signals switch networks. The climate here is perfect for growing food. It rains almost every afternoon, yet the temperatures are friendly, getting warmer at the foot of the mountain.

The barn is full of maize waiting to be ground into flour, to make ugali, a staple for the local people. Vincas is soft spoken and beneath his silence, is a guarded wariness of strangers. It has been a difficult time for the people here. Vincas explains that he had to flee to the foot of the mountain and only returned home at the end of June, after calm had been restored.

"I bought this plot where my family lives. The original owner left and abandoned it so I took it up and paid some money," he informs.

David is content that he has some food to feed his family, from the seeds planted in March. He adds that this is the second harvest from the crop; the first one was in August.

At Toiyendet, Jackline Chemutai welcomes us to her home proud to show us a crop she is about to harvest. The maize on her farm is growing well and the spring onions have matured, ready to be picked. She has eight children and her husband is out tending to the cattle on a small area of land they have rented.

"This crop has been our salvation. I already harvested in August and used the money to buy soap, salt and send our oldest son to school," says the soft-spoken woman. Her son, a lanky fellow stands nearby, a baseball cap on his head and transistor radio in hand, showing that modernity is not lost with the youth of the area.

The skies open and it begins to rain. One man calls out from a nearby homestead, "Come and see our carrot crop as well, we are about to harvest," he implores. His wife proudly shows carrots and onions planted from seeds they were given. Nearby, sweet potatoes and pumpkin leaves grow in abundance.

Obviously, Mt Elgon has enviable conditions for farming but the residents say they still live in fear. "We have the best land in the country fit for growing crops but we do not sleep well. We do not know about tomorrow," they say.



A farmer stands with the remnants of his healthy maize crop after harvest. ALFRED GRIMM 2009

# Humanity of the Red Cross



Jane Chepsoi who received treatment after Red Cross officials assisted her. CRC/ALFRED GRIMM 2009

**In the line of duty, Red Cross workers sometimes come across situations that test their own humanity. In Mt Elgon, they not only assisted those affected by the violence, but also helped one woman restore her dignity in society. In this case, it was from their own pockets.**

Jane Chepsoi unknowingly carried a dead foetus in her for two years. She would have remained that way had it not been for the timely intervention of Red Cross workers. In her Mt Elgon home, the situation was too dangerous for her to seek medical attention and when calm was restored, she had no money to visit the local clinic.

"I used to get bad backaches and stomach pains about four times a month. I would also bleed heavily but then I thought it was the usual women's issues," she explains. With no medical assistance, Jane would take painkillers and get on with her life but doing small chores at home was a challenge.

People thought she had been bewitched and neighbours shunned her. Her husband eventually abandoned her, as he could not comprehend what was happening to his wife.

When the ICRC working together with the Kenya Red Cross began the distributions in Mt Elgon, neighbours urged her to seek help from the officials.

"I approached the Red Cross people with this big stomach and told them of my predicament. They immediately referred me to Webuye district hospital for a check-up," she states. The team was touched by her plight and used their own finances to ensure this woman was treated.

***"I approached the Red Cross people with this big stomach and told them of my predicament. They immediately referred me to Webuye district hospital for a check-up," she states.***

Doctors at the hospital did a scan and realised that Jane had been carrying a dead foetus in her womb for the last two years. They immediately wrote a letter recommending urgent surgery to remove the foetus.

The Red Cross officials booked her for an operation at the Moi teaching and Referral Hospital in Eldoret,

more than an hours drive away. The next time Jane woke up; she was in a hospital bed and had a huge bandage around her stomach. On consulting with the doctor, she maintained that she had no money to pay the bill.

"You should be grateful for the Red Cross people. Never mind about the bill, it has been settled. This foetus would have killed you if you had stayed with it any longer," he told her.

Jane was later driven to Bungoma where she recuperated at the district hospital. Her medical expenses were paid up to the day she was discharged from the hospital, from personal finances paid by the Red Cross team in Bungoma.

Today, Jane is healthier and her stomach is back to normal. "The Red Cross people restored my dignity and I can now face the community," she states happily. Her story is corroborated by Martin Geiywa, one of the committee members helping to validate beneficiaries in Kapsambu area.

However, she has not been able to go back to her farm and plant as the strains from the surgery prevent her from doing any physical labour. Instead, she relies on neighbours and well-wishers to give her food. Her only need is to get back to normal so that one day she can collect her children from Baringo where they live with her mother.



From pg 3

Evelyne recently purchased a plot of land which and has already constructed a home for her children. Four of her seven children are in school and she is embarking on her new dream; to open a shop and stock more than just maize in the new area she is moving too.

Linet intends to purchase her own plot of land with the 3,000Kshs she received later, to which she will add her current profit. "Right now I am farming on land leased out by others but I want to buy my own plot on which I can plant the vegetables I used to prepare my meals," she says.

David Kamama, an ICRC field officer who has been working with the widows states that many of them have put to good use the money they received from the ICRC.

"It has been fulfilling working with them especially seeing them move from a place of despair to self-sustenance," he states.

Here are other stories as told by some of the beneficiaries:

#### **Mackline Chematwe**

Mackline runs a small grocery shop in Kipsigor village of Mt Elgon. With no income, five children of her own and three orphans to look after, she was at her wits end. Initially, she worked at a tea factory where she earned a tin of dry maize for her dues. Now Mackline sells children's clothes, and other groceries in her shop, thanks to the boost she received. Her daughter is now in school and they have even bought a calf, which will supply milk to the family with time.

#### **Everlyne Cherop**

As the first of her husband's three wives, Cherop bore him 12 children. She fled her home after her husband was abducted in 2006. With the money she received from the ICRC, she purchased groceries, which she sold to the people nearby. Her shop began as a small entity but it is now a large business and the only one in surrounding areas selling bread, often deemed a luxury commodity in the region. Her children all go to school except the eldest, who has completed high school and helps in the shop. The room in which they live is rented and Cherop would like to buy some land nearby to cultivate.

#### **Florence Namai**

In a little centre, Namai's hotel takes



Everlyne Cherop, one of the beneficiaries at her shop in Mt. Elgon. ICRC/ANNE MUCHEKE/2009

prominence in the middle of the village. Locals proudly refer to it as the 'porridge' shop as anyone thirsty can easily have a mug which satisfies hunger pangs as well. Outside, a large cooking pot holds up to twenty litres of porridge that will all be served by noon.

Namai has nine children to take care of with the earnings from her shop. Like others, she has not seen her husband

for more than a year and the family has not buried his body. As one of the beneficiaries of the ICRC's assistance money, she opened the hotel that began by selling porridge and githeri (mixed dish of maize and beans). Today, she sells a variety of foods and makes a sizeable profit to keep her children in school and the business running.

Carol Chemkin is only twenty years old, an orphan and guardian to several of her siblings. She lost both parents to the violence and had to move from Chebyuk, one of the areas most affected by the violence in Mt Elgon.

"There was a point my life seemed meaningless. I wondered how I could move on with this great burden," she states. Unlike the other widows who speak candidly, of dates and times when they saw their husbands for the last time, Carol shuts her pain inside.

Today, she is a budding entrepreneur who sells just about everything from groceries to phone cards, maize and vegetables. Although Carol is not a widow, her case was exceptional as she was left the sole guardian of the family. The ICRC considered her plight and those of the children around her and decided to offer similar assistance as that of the widows.

With the initial 5,000Kshs given, Carol started selling vegetables from a makeshift table next to the road. With time, she had made enough profit to restock her initial items and build a shelter for her business. It is made of timber and corrugated iron sheets but it works well enough for a shop.

Her current concerns are how to pay school fees for her siblings who are studying far away from home. Her immediate sibling who is in secondary school occasionally helps her out at the shop until they are able to sort out her fees as well.

Carol is grateful. "The children have something to eat these days and my business is doing well. The headmaster who was living here gave us his house so we will not be kicked out, she says optimistic about the future.



Carol Chemkin, whose case was taken up for her exceptional circumstances. ICRC/ANNE MUCHEKE/2009

# News Briefs

## ICRC holds photo exhibition

The Nairobi Regional Delegation is holding a photo exhibition 'Our World at War' to highlight the specific challenges faced by people in situations of armed conflict. The venue will be the Kenyatta International Conference Centre (KICC) from 1-3rd May and Alliance Française from 4 – 7th May.

On display is a contemporary exhibition featuring five of the world's best-known war photographers - James Nachtwey, Chris Morris, Ron Haviv, Joachim Lafodged and Franco Pagetti. This collection looks at the impact of displacement, families separated by war and sexual violence as well as on those individuals working to make a difference. It features various contexts in which the ICRC is working – Afghanistan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Georgia, Haiti, Lebanon, Liberia and the Philippines

Also featured will be archive images tracing the ICRC's history since 1850. The pictures portray inhumanity in war and humanity's ability to react with care and compassion.

In addition, the ICRC will publish a book *Humanity in War*, a moving and inspiring collection of more than 200 photographs from the ICRC archives dating back to the 1860s.

## Kenya: Students represent Kenya at international humanitarian law competition

Nairobi (ICRC) – Two universities sent teams of three students each to represent Kenya at this year's Jean Pictet Competition on international humanitarian law. The competition took place in Evian-les-Bains, France, between 28 March and 4 April.

This was the first time that two teams from Kenya – from the University of Nairobi and the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) – took part in the competition. Only three African teams were selected for the event. Both teams from Kenya

were sponsored by the ICRC delegation in Nairobi.

Ida Okoth, Lillian Makanga and Elizabeth Chesire represented CUEA, while Daniel Mburu, Samuel Njoroge and Lydiah Wamucii competed on behalf of the University of Nairobi. Both teams had submitted their applications separately to the Jean Pictet panel and were accepted based on their knowledge of international law.

The teams both did very well at the competition with Nairobi University reaching the semi finals.

"This was a once in a lifetime experience for us," says Lillian Makanga of CUEA. "What was particularly interesting for me was learning the process in which a piece of law is taken through debates until its final implementation as a treaty," she adds.

The group also learnt to simplify legal arguments by summarizing case laws and

(ICRC) warned that the specific health-care needs of women are often ignored or insufficiently taken into account in war situations. "People wounded in fighting are given priority for medical treatment, but women, even pregnant mothers, are often given scant attention despite their special needs," said Nadine Puechguirbal, the ICRC's adviser on issues relating to women and war.

"International humanitarian law stipulates that the specific health-care needs of conflict-affected women must be met, including in places of detention," explained Ms Puechguirbal. "Parties to a conflict have an obligation to comply with the law and do everything possible to ensure that women receive the health care they require."

During the recent conflict in Gaza the lives of numerous women were put at risk when ambulances couldn't get through to

them because of the fighting. The conflict also prevented women in labour from reaching a safe place to have their babies. Women are currently facing the same difficulty in Somalia, where the death rate of pregnant women and newborn babies is among the highest in the world. According to UNICEF, only nine women in a hundred thousand actually make it to a



Students from Catholic and Nairobi University with ICRC Head of Regional Delegation - Christoph Luedi (right) and IHL delegate David Maizlish (left). ICRC/PEDRAM YAZDI 2009

avoiding jargon. "Now we can present an argument and a layman will understand the context," says Elizabeth Chesire.

The Jean Pictet Competition is the premier international humanitarian law competition. It brings together students representing universities and military academies from all over the world.

## Women need safer access to health care in war situations

Geneva (ICRC) – In the run-up to International Women's Day, 8 March, the International Committee of the Red Cross

hospital to give birth in Somalia.

The ICRC is addressing the specific health needs of women in war-torn countries around the world by supporting hospitals and basic health-care services. In some countries, such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it is making counselling services available to victims of sexual violence. "The first priority after a rape is to obtain medical care," explained Charlotte, a Red Cross volunteer providing counselling. "But medicines can only treat the body. The victims of these attacks bear invisible, psychological wounds."



**ICRC Nairobi Regional Delegation, Denis Pritt Road, PO Box 73226, Nairobi, Kenya.**

Tel: (+254) 20 272 3963. Fax: (+254) 20 271 3003. E-mail: [nairobi.nai@icrc.org](mailto:nairobi.nai@icrc.org)

**ICRC Dar es Salaam Mission, PO Box 23421, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.**

Tel: (+255) 222 668 552. Fax: (+255) 222 667 797. E-mail: [mob\\_dar.nai@icrc.org](mailto:mob_dar.nai@icrc.org)

**ICRC Djibouti Office, Rue Ras Mekonnen, Apt No 4, PO Box 2527, Djibouti.**

Tel: (+253) 352 611. Fax: (+253) 352 156. E-mail: [nairobi.nai@icrc.org](mailto:nairobi.nai@icrc.org)

**Offices in: Kigoma and Bungoma**

**BULLETIN** Text: Anne Mucheke Editors: Anne Kilimo and Nicole Engelbrecht Graphic Design: Elaine N. Muigai

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization with an exclusively humanitarian mission to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. It also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. The founding of the ICRC in 1863 led to the evolution of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

For further information, visit our website at [www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org)



**ICRC**