

ACTIVITIES OF THE ICRC REGIONAL DELEGATION FOR
THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

FACTS AND FIGURES

MAY–AUGUST 2025



MAIN HIGHLIGHTS

- From June 11 to 16, ICRC forensic teams participated in a **large-scale repatriation of fallen servicemen between Russian and Ukraine**, upon the request of the Parties. Technical advice and material support were provided to allow for the dignified return of the human remains.
- From June 30 to July 8, **the new ICRC Director of Operations, Yasmine Praz Dessimoz, paid a first visit to Moscow**, where she met with the Russian High Commissioner for Human Rights, Tatiana Moskalkova, and the President of the Russian Red Cross, Pavel Savchuk. She also visited Donetsk and Luhansk.
- On June 10 and 11, **a regional conference on international humanitarian law (IHL), the Martens Readings**, was held in Saint-Petersburg. Over 100 participants included leading scholars from Belarus, China, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Uzbekistan, as well as representatives of Belarusian and Russian authorities, the CSTO, IPA CIS and ICRC headquarters. Thematic sections covered the ICRC's latest IHL Challenges Report, sessions on history of IHL, teaching and research in the field of IHL, as well as a youth section.
- On May 16th, the ICRC participated for the first time in the **Russia-Islamic World Kazan Forum** and held humanitarian dialogue with Sheikh Ravil Gainutdin, the Chairman of the Russian Council of Muftis, head of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Russia.
- On June 18 to 21, the ICRC attended **the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF)** and spoke on ICRC's experience during the Second World War and the relevance of IHL today at a MGIMO-organized panel.
- In June, the ICRC addressed **a large-scale scam targeting families of servicemen and the missing**. Families were informed on ICRC's social media (over 3 million views), as well as by authorities, the Russian Red Cross, influencers and media. The frauds' profiles were blocked in cooperation with technology companies.

FACTS AND FIGURES



PRISONERS OF WAR AND THEIR FAMILIES

Since 2022:

The ICRC has visited **more than 7,100 prisoners of war (POWs)** on both sides, though mainly in Ukraine.

More than 20,900 personal messages (Red Cross messages and oral messages/salamats) were delivered by the ICRC and National Societies to prisoners of war and their families in Russia and Ukraine. The number of messages exchanged does not reflect the number of POWs held.



MISSING PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

Since 2022:

- **154,200 open cases** of people from both sides of the front-line reported missing to the ICRC by their families
- **14,800 families informed** by ICRC delegations and National Societies about the fate of their missing loved ones

From May to August 2025, **over 15,000 calls** have been answered by the ICRC team in Moscow with enquiries on POWs and the missing.



FALLEN SERVICEMEN

8 simultaneous repatriation operations of deceased servicemen between Russia and

Ukraine were monitored by the ICRC as a neutral observer. Technical advice and material support were also provided.



VULNERABLE CIVILIANS, INCLUDING CHILDREN

Safe cross-border passage of almost 200 people with vulnerabilities was facilitated by the delegation, including civilians originally from Kursk repatriated from Ukraine back to Russia. These operations are coordinated with Russian and Ukrainian authorities, including the office of the Russian High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Almost two dozen children joined close family members in Ukraine and in Russia with the support of the ICRC, in cooperation with Russian and Ukrainian au-

thorities, including the office of the Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights and officials of Qatar.



DISPLACED PEOPLE

In partnership with the Russian Red Cross:

- Over **11,870 vulnerable people** in Russia benefitted from cash assistance
- **68 persons** benefitted from a vocational training programme, which finances trainings and courses
- **31 persons** benefitted from the pilot Micro-Economic Initiatives programme, receiving a grant to start their small ventures and generate income

In Belarus, over 1,090 vulnerable people displaced due to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine received cash assistance, in partnership with the Belarus Red Cross. In July, **a pilot Micro-Economic Initiatives programme** was launched with grants to start small ventures.



LOGISTIC HUB FOR ASSISTANCE TO DONETSK AND LUHANSK

3 trucks delivering assistance were sent to Donetsk and **7 trucks** to Luhansk to support ICRC's response to humanitarian needs, including **5,120 hygienic parcels, over 220 poultry kits, and 51 tons of construction items and materials**, as well as health and forensics items.



COOPERATION WITH RED CROSS PARTNERS

Russian Red Cross (RRC)

Emergency stocks worth 21 million rubles (approx. 201,380 CHF) for 4 RRC branches (Belgorod, Kursk, Rostov-on-Don and Voronezh regions) were provided in the form of food vouchers.

More than **3,300 people** altogether participated in **132 first aid trainings** organized by the RRC Belgorod branch (2 first aid instructors supported by the ICRC).

The ICRC continued to cooperate with the RRC Restoring Family Links (RFL) team on jointly working on **the cases of civilians who went missing** in relation to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

ICRC continued offering technical support to the RRC RFL team who took part at the **annual Family Links**

Network conference with the East Eurasia National Societies in May.

The ICRC provided its legal expertise to the Russian Red Cross, with regard to **the draft law on the RRC**, currently examined by the State Duma, and to **the Government regulations on the use of the Red Cross emblem** due to be adopted in the wake of the RRC law.

Belarus Red Cross (BRC)

In May, Belarus Red Cross representatives, with the ICRC's support, took part in **the 2025 Family Links Network conference with the East Eurasia National Societies** in Tashkent.

In July, the ICRC and BRC signed an **Amendment on cooperation in the field of Restoring Family Links**, aiming at further supporting families who are looking for relatives gone missing due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict and other conflicts.



DIALOGUE WITH AUTHORITIES AND POLITICAL ACTORS

The ICRC was in regular contact with its key Russian interlocutors, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights, the State Duma, the Federation Council, among others.

In May, the ICRC participated in **the St Petersburg International Legal Forum**.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and affiliated universities

In May, the ICRC attended **a scientific conference** organized by the MFA's Diplomatic Academy.

Regular confidential and bilateral dialogue with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued in this period.

Ministry of Defence

Daily open channels between the ICRC and the Russian MoD have continued.

High Commissioner for Human Rights' Office

Besides regular interactions and operational cooperation:

- during the **meeting between the ICRC's Director of Operations and the High Commissioner for Human Rights**, a wide range of topics were dis-

cussed, including issues related to prisoners of war and missing persons.

- Tatyana Mosalkova and her colleagues visited the ICRC's Restoring Family Links office in Moscow**, where ICRC staff assist families of servicemen who have lost contact with their loved ones due to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Federation Council and State Duma

In May, at **the Russia-Islamic World Forum**, on a high-level panel organized by the Council of Federation, the ICRC presented its economic security and livelihood programmes supporting women-headed households in the Middle East.

In June, the delegation engaged with multiple parliamentary advisors and deputies, discussing humanitarian issues related to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, as well as BRICS engagement.

In Belarus

The Minsk mission engages regularly with relevant authorities on IHL and other humanitarian issues, as well as on the humanitarian operations taking place in Belarus. This included:

- In May, the ICRC conducted **a seminar for the representatives of the legal service of the State Border Committee**;
- In June, representatives of Belarusian government bodies took part in **the Martens Readings** (Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice, Interior Ministry, Ministry of Foreign Affairs);
- In June, a number of meetings and events with MoD representatives took place, according to the annual Plan of cooperation.



RELIGIOUS CIRCLES

In June, at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF), the ICRC engaged with the **Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia** and the **Buddhist Traditional Sangha of Russia** for the first time.

In August, the ICRC held two training sessions on Risk Awareness and Safer Behavior in areas contaminated by explosive remnants of war for around 60 volunteers of the **Russian Orthodox Church Hospital of St. Alexey** in Moscow, who travel to work in areas directly affected by the conflict.



REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO)

On May 13, the ICRC participated in **the CSTO working Group on Afghanistan**, presenting the humanitarian situation in the country.

Interparliamentary assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS)

As part of the **IPA CIS working group on the new concept of migration**, the ICRC delegation submitted its proposals on the strategy.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

From August 21 to September 3, ICRC Moscow took part in a two-week seminar on **Enhancing the Humanitarian Aid Capacity of SCO Member States**, organized by the Training Center of the Red Cross Society of China.



ACADEMICS AND EXPERT COMMUNITY

From May to August, **the ICRC attended four events organized by think-tanks**, engaging with experts at platforms provided by RIAC, the Trialogue Club, the Valdai Discussion Club. The topics of discussions varied from non-proliferation and international relations to digital thematic.

In June, the ICRC took part in **the Euro-Asian Law Congress in Ekaterinburg**. Engagement with academia continued in July at the annual meeting of **the Russian Association of International Law (RAIL)**.

In August, the ICRC joined representatives of Russian authorities and academia for a **ceremony celebrating F. F. Martens's 180th anniversary** in St Petersburg.



FORENSIC EXPERTISE

In May, the ICRC Forensic team was invited to the Inter-Regional Scientific and Practical Conference with international participation, titled "Topical issues of Forensic Science and Practice" that took place in Kirov.



PRIVATE SECTOR AND CYBER/DIGITAL

At SPIEF, the ICRC met with the BI.ZONE, cybersecurity company and attended several sessions on the development and use of AI technologies.

Also, in August 2025, ICRC attended the OFFZONE conference on practical cybersecurity.



DIPLOMATIC CORPS

The ICRC maintains ongoing exchanges with **Moscow's diplomatic corps** throughout the year, including Australia, Austria, Canada, Cameroon, China, Dominican Republic, Germany, France, India, Ireland, Israel, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Palestine, Qatar, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, Türkiye, United Kingdom, Yemen.

We help people around the world affected by armed conflict and other violence, doing everything we can to protect their lives and dignity and to relieve their suffering, often with our Red Cross and Red Crescent partners. We also seek to prevent hardship by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and championing universal humanitarian principles.

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