

Doc. 11169
31 January 2007

The activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Motion for a recommendation
presented by Mr Hancock and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

1. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was established in 1863 and is at the origin of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
2. It is an impartial, neutral and independent organisation with an exclusively humanitarian mandate to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. It directs and coordinates international and relief activities conducted by the Movement in situations of conflict. It also seeks to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles.
3. The ICRC has a legal mandate under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their additional protocols of 1977 to visit prisoners, organise relief operations, re-unite separated families and similar humanitarian activities during armed conflicts. It also has a mandate under its Statutes to undertake similar work in situations of internal violence where the Geneva Conventions do not apply.
4. The ICRC has a dedicated staff of over 12,000 worldwide, maintaining a presence in 80 countries around the world.
5. According to its most recent annual report, the ICRC in 2005 provided food for a million people and emergency supplies such as tents and blankets for 3 million people. ICRC delegates visited 528,000 people deprived of their freedom in 2,600 places of detention in 76 countries. Working with National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies, it exchanged almost a million messages between family members separated by hostilities and other crises.
6. The ICRC is actively working in many Council of Europe member states. Its work with, amongst others, refugees, internally displaced persons, missing persons and detained persons brings it regularly into contact with the Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly.
7. Against this background, the Parliamentary Assembly recommends to the Committee of Ministers to strengthen co-operation between the Council of Europe and the ICRC, in particular in fields such as conditions of detention, humanitarian assistance for people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence (including refugees and internally displaced persons) and solving the issue of missing persons in Europe.

8. The Parliamentary Assembly recommends to member states to:
- i. ratify, if they have not done so, the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols together with other relevant international humanitarian law instruments.
 - ii. provide ICRC with full support in order for it to carry out its humanitarian mandate
 - iii. provide ICRC with financial support for its onward going activities and in response to its future appeals.

*Signed*¹:

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¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group