

# INFORMATION BULLETIN



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

## **WESTERN UKRAINE: INFLUX OF IRREGULAR MIGRANTS**

4 June, 2003

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*Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) allocated: CHF 30,000*

*This Bulletin is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. While an appeal is not being considered at this time, unearmarked funds to reimburse the DREF are needed.*

### ***The Situation***

Detention centers for undocumented migrants in the border towns of Mukachevo, Pavshino and Chop (Zakarpattya Oblast, Western Ukraine) are facing an unexpected influx of irregular migrants. This is becoming a serious problem for the Ukraine, especially in Zakarpattya where significant numbers of people are moving to countries in central and western Europe looking for a better life, increased earnings, and asylum from armed conflicts. The Zakarpattya Regional Ukraine Red Cross Society (URCS) has indicated that at the beginning of May there were 320 undocumented migrants detected in Pavshino, 167 of them citizens of China. In total, since the beginning of the year, 609 migrants (225 of them Chinese) have been detained in Zakarpattya which is considered a staging post for undocumented migrants and consequently a high-risk zone for different outbreaks. This is 45 percent higher than for the same period the last year. In the detention centers, as a result of the suspicion of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) among citizens of China, strict quarantine and sanitary controls were applied. It is anticipated that the number of migrants will increase.

There is no a common approach or action to respond to this problem mainly because of the lack of funds. Border troops near where the detention centers are located are not in a position to provide those detained with even the most necessary things such as food, hygiene items, and bedding. Therefore the Red Cross is considered the only organization capable of caring for these people who entered Ukraine illegally and who will be detained 2-3 months or more in extremely poor condition of detention centers.

### ***Red Cross and Red Crescent Action***

The Zakarpattya Regional URCS visits migrants in detention centers in Mukachevo, Pavshino and Chop, defines needs, collects food, clothing, hygiene items from local habitants, and delivers these to migrants. The URCS involves local health care authorities and administration in this work. On agreement with the medical personnel of military units, medication, disinfectants, hygiene items, and food were delivered. Shower rooms were also arranged which decreased the potential of the spreading of infections and led to a stabilization of morbidity among migrants.

However, with the number of irregular migrants growing daily, there is an extreme need in the detention centers for medical supplies, drugs and consumables, disinfectants, hygiene supplies, food, and bed sheets.

These items have been budgeted at CHF 30,000, and a DREF request has been submitted by the URCS to the Federation to enable the purchase and supply of humanitarian aid to the detention centers. The humanitarian aid includes:

- food items (rice, buckwheat, sugar, tea, macaroni, vegetable oil) for Pavshino where frontier guards prepare meals for migrants;
- hygiene items (soap, tooth brushes, toothpaste, shampoo) to be distributed to migrants;
- disinfectants (Ceptodor or Lizoformin) to disinfect the premises where migrants live.

The budget also includes employing one physician and one psychologist to provide medical and psychosocial support to the detained undocumented migrants.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

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*For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.*