

**INTEGRATED APPEAL OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND CRESCENT MOVEMENT  
IN RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS IN THE BALKANS**

***Advance notice***

**Work for an overall budget and for proper co-ordination with the upcoming UN consolidated appeal being in full progress, it is today estimated that the integrated appeal of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement will amount to well over 100 million Sfr.**

**INTRODUCTION**

Little over a year after it began, the crisis in Kosovo has taken a dramatic turn for the worse. After the failure to reach a settlement at the end of the Rambouillet talks, there was a marked deterioration in the security situation, with daily acts of violence being carried out, including what appeared to be deliberate attacks against civilians, arrests and abductions, as well as the targeting of public places. Both the Yugoslav and Serbian forces, engaged in a build-up of their capacity, and the Kosovo Liberation Army appeared to be preparing for renewed offensives.

On 23 March 1999, the secretary-general of the North-Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) authorized the launching of air operations against targets in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Since then, there has been a double crisis unfolding in the region: the NATO bombing campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on the one hand, and the operations of the Yugoslav and Serbian security forces in Kosovo on the other.

Since 24 March, the impact in humanitarian terms has been devastating. The immediate issue at stake throughout the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has been the security of civilians, of the wounded, in other words of those not, or no longer, taking part in the conflict. The violence occurring inside Kosovo has reportedly led to selective killings and to the lives of countless persons being at risk. The absence of any international humanitarian agencies means that independent assessments of these critical developments are difficult to make. However, there is grave concern for the plight of civilians in Kosovo, where up to a million persons might be directly or indirectly affected in days and weeks to come.

Furthermore, the number of displaced persons and refugees arriving in Albania, in the Republic of Montenegro, in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is growing by the hour and has reached an estimated total of 140,000. These people are often in a state of profound shock, devastated at having had to abandon their homes and staring hopelessly into an uncertain future. Their immediate concern is for the fate of their relatives who remained behind. Most of them have arrived with very few personal belongings. Their arrivals are the expression of the increasingly regional dimension of the crisis.

Meanwhile, civilians in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are also facing growing hardship, spending night after night in air-raid shelters, fearful of the intensity of the air operations and concerned about the safety of relatives and neighbours.

There is currently no sign that the Yugoslav government or the NATO are willing to put an end to their military operations. The worry of ever increasing humanitarian consequences is thus a very real one.

## **CURRENT RED CROSS/RED CRESCENT ACTION**

### ***Federal Republic of Yugoslavia***

Faced with these distressing developments, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), opted to remain present and operational throughout the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Regrettably, on 29 March, the ICRC was compelled to withdraw its international staff from Pristina, owing to the deteriorating security environment. The objective remains to seek the highest degree of proximity possible with the victims of these events with the aim of providing them with assistance, and where possible protection. To achieve this objective, a systematic dialogue is being sought with all parties involved and recognition of the necessity to preserve a space for an independent humanitarian response.

Particular emphasis has been placed in recent days on the medical supplies to hospitals, the distribution of relief to an estimated 20,000 displaced persons, in particular in the Republic of Montenegro, in co-operation with the Yugoslav Red Cross. The ICRC has also offered its services in relation to visits to prisoners of wars, in conformity with the 3rd Geneva Convention.

The Yugoslav Red Cross, assisted by the International Federation, is continuing distributions to assist 232,000 refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, living in Serbia and Montenegro. In addition, disaster preparedness funds have been made available to help the YRC prepare for and respond to the needs caused by the current crisis in the country.

### ***Albania***

From the outset of the new influxes, the Kukes branch of the Albanian Red Cross, with the support of the International Federation and the ICRC, has provided assistance to many of the estimated 90,000 new arrivals. In the last week, 48 MT of relief items have been dispatched to Kukes and food and blankets have been distributed. Food parcels have also been sent to Lezhe and Elbasan. The refugees are being transported to Tirana and other locations; some will stay with host families but many will be accommodated in newly-established collective centres. Over 16 MT of food has been distributed to refugees in the new collective centres, as well as blankets, mattresses and other relief items. All remaining stocks of relief items are now being distributed, including 6,000 blankets, 23,000 food parcels and 30,000 hygiene parcels. In addition, the Albanian Red Cross/International Federation are continuing their distributions of food and non-food items for half of the 18,500 refugees who arrived in 1998.

### ***Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia***

Since the beginning of March 1999, it is estimated that more than 25,000 refugees have crossed the border into the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) from Kosovo, joining an estimated 5,000-10,000 Kosovo refugees who have been in FYROM for several months. From the outset of the new influx of refugees into FYROM, the Macedonian Red Cross, supported by the International Red Cross, has provided assistance to the newly arrived refugees. Joint Red Cross teams have been monitoring the borders, and the Macedonian Red Cross has registered all the refugees for humanitarian assistance. It has established medical teams at first aid posts at the two main border crossings (Blace and Tabenov) and distributed food, blankets, mattresses and hygiene parcels.

### ***Bosnia and Herzegovina***

The International Federation and the Red Cross of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina have been assisting 4,000 of the 10,000 refugees who arrived in Bosnia in 1998 at four collective centres with food, hygiene articles and baby kits. Since the arrival of over 5,000 new refugees from the Sandjak region of Serbia in the last week, the Federation has begun procuring blankets and food for this additional caseload - most of whom are expected to be accommodated with host families.

## **PRELIMINARY OBJECTIVES**

In light of these events, the ICRC and the International Federation have adopted an integrated and regional approach to respond to the serious humanitarian concerns immediately affecting several hundreds of thousands persons. Both institutions are convinced that the situation calls for the combined participation of all components of the Movement to respond with speed and flexibility.

In that regard, a Steering Group has been established to ensure the general co-ordination of the operations of the Movement. In close consultation with the National Societies of the region, the Steering Group is currently developing a global strategy and a plan of action. This process will result in the launching of an integrated appeal of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to be submitted shortly to Participating National Societies and the international community.

### ***THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA***

^ Undertake every step to contribute to the protection of civilians inside Kosovo. Under the present circumstances, this will require the setting up of tracing structures, in particular in the Republic of Montenegro, to collect information from refugees and displaced persons about the fate of persons who have remained behind.

^ obtain access to persons held by the Yugoslav and Serbian authorities, both in connection to the year-long crisis in Kosovo and to the possible detention of military personnel.

^ Ensure the provision of medical assistance and relief for internally displaced persons in Montenegro and Serbia.

^ ensure the provision of medical supplies to hospitals and branches of the Yugoslav Red Cross throughout the country and of relief or water and sanitation items, to deal with needs resulting from the conflict.

^ continue to provide essential hygiene sets to meet the needs of 225,500 of the most vulnerable refugees from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina presently settled in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; baby hygiene parcels to 8,100 refugee mothers with new-born babies; and cleaning kits for 780 refugee collective centres.

^ continue to support social welfare services benefiting refugees and the socially vulnerable.

^ support the Yugoslav Red Cross and its ability to respond to needs arising from the conflict.

^ support the institutional development of the Yugoslav Red Cross, including branch-level income-generating projects, health and youth.

## ***ALBANIA***

^ establish a tracing structure to collect information from refugees that would allow the ICRC to make interventions with the Yugoslav authorities with regard to the whereabouts of persons left behind and presently unaccounted for.

^ provide immediate emergency relief assistance for refugees for three months (April-June 1999) to include emergency shelter, blankets, mattresses, food parcels, hygiene parcels, clothing and shoes.

^ provide basic food and non-food relief items for refugees for six months (July-December 1999).

^ ensure the provision of additional medical supplies to hospitals and branches of the Albanian Red Cross, and where needed of water and sanitation material, to deal with needs among refugees.

^ provide social welfare / psychological support / school kits for refugees for six months.

^ support the Albanian Red Cross in its ability to respond to the consequences of the conflict in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

^ expand the capacity of the Albanian Red Cross headquarters and branches, including the strengthening of its disaster preparedness capabilities.

## ***FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA***

- ^ establish a tracing structure to collect information from refugees that would allow the ICRC to make interventions with the Yugoslav authorities with regard to the whereabouts of persons left behind and presently unaccounted for.
- ^ provide immediate emergency relief assistance for refugees for three months (April-June 1999) to include blankets, mattresses, hygiene parcels, clothes and shoes.
- ^ provide basic non-food relief items for refugees for six months (July-December 1999).
- ^ ensure the provision of additional medical supplies to hospitals and branches of the Macedonian Red Cross, and where needed of water and sanitation material, to deal with needs among refugees.
- ^ provide social welfare / psychological support / school kits for refugees for six months.
- ^ support the Macedonian Red Cross in its ability to respond to the consequences of the conflict in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
- ^ expand the capacity of the Macedonian Red Cross headquarters and branches, including the strengthening of its disaster preparedness capabilities.

### ***BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA***

- ^ provide food and non-food relief items to 10,000 refugees in collective centres and host families for nine months.
- ^ support the local Red Cross entities and help to build their capacity so as to effectively support the refugee caseload in addition to existing beneficiaries.

### ***CO-ORDINATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES***

Both the ICRC and the International Federation have been working in close co-ordination, in the concerned countries, with a range of local and international agencies, including in particular the UNHCR, MSF and others. They will continue to seek a pro-active and transparent relationship with the major humanitarian actors, in view of achieving structured consultation mechanisms in the field and at headquarters.

### ***Scope, time frame and desired contribution pattern towards integrated appeal of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement***

Both the International Federation and the ICRC have included programmes linked to the Kosovo crisis in their 1999 Emergency Appeals. The total appeal figure of the Federation amounted to Sfr 14.008 million (programmes "Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" and "Kosovo

refugees"), while the ICRC's three concerned country programmes (Albania, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) amounted to a global appeal figure of Sfr 33.979 million.

In view of the recent developments in and around the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the subsequent decision by the International Federation and the ICRC to adopt an integrated and global approach, the following funding procedures are suggested:

as announced in their joint statement issued on 31 March 1999, the International Federation and the ICRC will launch an integrated appeal of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement;

it will cover the time period 1 April to 31 December 1999, i.e. all contributions received or pledged in the form of written confirmation prior to 31 March 1999 will still be considered as individual contributions to either the International Federation or the ICRC 1999 Emergency Appeals in conformity with the respective organization's allocation stipulated by the donor;

the new Appeal will cover the International Federation and ICRC's field programmes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia itself and the neighbouring countries of Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It may also cover some expenses incurred in other countries for activities which are directly linked to the Kosovo crisis (e.g. refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina);

donors are encouraged to contribute to this forthcoming appeal as a whole without specific country or institutional earmarking. While in-kind donations will be needed, the more urgent requirement now is to ensure the maximum amount of operational flexibility and speed for cash contributions;

a precise appeal figure will be issued as soon as the ongoing assessments, security and political constraints permitting, are terminated. Based on the present evolution of the situation in and around Kosovo it can, however, be easily assumed that it will be **double, or even triple the combined Federation and ICRC 1999 Emergency Appeals, which already amounted to approximately Sfr 50 million** without considering the recent events.

Donors are kindly requested to respond rapidly with cash contributions. They should be made to the ICRC which is administrating all funds obtained for this new appeal. **Please use our special account UBS SA, PO BOX 2770, CH - 1211 GENEVA 2, Code swift: UBSWCHGG12A, Account Nr: CO-129,986.3 "Balkan crisis"**

For further information, please contact the ICRC External Resources Division or the Operations Funding and Reporting Department of the International Federation.