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RED CROSS & RED CRESCENT INFORMATION

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This report is published thrice-weekly as a general update on Red Cross Red Crescent activities during the Balkans crisis, targeting primarily the Movement's components and supporters. Today's text can also be found on the internet: www.ifrc.org and www.icrc.org

LATEST EVENTS

Although President Slobodan Milosevic and the Serbian Parliament accepted the peace plan for Kosovo, talks between NATO officers and their Yugoslav counterparts in Kumanovo in Macedonia have now collapsed. Despite the uncertainties in the region, the Red Cross Red Crescent movement continues to emphasize its commitment to and its support for all the victims of the conflict.

At the UN Inter-Agency Meeting for the Revision of the 1999 Consolidated Appeal for the Former Yugoslavia and Albania in Skopje on 4 June there was a review of possible scenarios for the return of refugees to Kosovo where the limited access of humanitarian agencies and limited return of refugees was regarded as the most likely. However, given the breakdown in peace talks, the continued deterioration in Kosovo an additional major outflow of refugees must again be considered a real possibility and the delegation continues to plan accordingly.

The UN is using a planning figure of 1.5 million beneficiaries, including refugees, returnees and displaced people. The danger of land mines is of highest concern. Under any scenario, there will be additional problems with the arrival of winter weather in 17 weeks. At this point both summerisation and winterisation are still unresolved problems.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia)

Over the week-end supplies of water and electricity improved in parts of Belgrade. However, in other parts of Serbia, the water/electricity situation and telephone communications are still difficult.

Relief distribution: Over the week-end, five Red Cross trucks transporting five MT of wheat flour, 5,000 litres vegetable oil, one MT of pasta, 750 kg salt, 375 kg sugar, 130 kitchen sets, 300 blankets, 200 m² of plastic sheeting and four bales of clothing arrived at the Red Cross in Kragujevac. On 4 June, three trucks delivered 69 MT of sugar to the Yugoslavian Red Cross (YRC) warehouse in Belgrade. One Red Cross fuel tanker delivered 22 MT of fuel to Belgrade over the week-end.

On Saturday, for the first time during the current conflict, a Red Cross team in Kosovo was able to carry out relief distributions. The team went northwards from Pristina to the village of Metehi, some kilometres away from Podujevo where a truckload of goods containing 2,240

individual food parcels were distributed. Three Red Cross trucks with 6,720 individual parcels arrived in Kosovo on 5 June.

Delegates also visited the psychiatric hospital in Stimlje on Sunday. Some 350 patients from all the various ethnic communities in the region were housed there, and a donation of 320 individual food parcels was given to the hospital. The Red Cross team also distributed 500 food parcels to displaced persons in the village of Godance, some four kilometres away from Stimlje.

At the end of last week, one Red Cross truck arrived in Pristina containing two surgical units, ringer lactate, sodium chloride and iodine for the Red Cross in Kosovo.

Health: A Red Cross medical delegate from Belgrade went to Krusevac to deliver medical assistance and supplies to the hospital in Krusevac.

A Red Cross health delegate went to Novi Sad on 3 June, for an assessment of the Red Cross humanitarian pharmacy. Essential drugs will be supplied, through the Yugoslavian Red Cross, to this pharmacy. Among the beneficiaries are displaced persons, refugees and social cases.

Last week a wat/san delegate made a follow-up visit to Novi Sad to meet with officials from the Water Board. Plans are underway for the construction of 27 water tanks for potable water as well as two water treatment plants.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Montenegro)

Montenegro is presently hosting some 76,000 displaced persons from Kosovo, with the majority residing in Ulcinj (45,000) and Rozaje (15,000); some 80% are living in host families. The departure rate to Albania has practically ceased at the border crossing for reasons of security.

The Red Cross branch in Ulcinj reported that 919 displaced persons from Djakovica (Kosovo) arrived on 3 June in this already overburdened municipality.

Relief distribution: Monthly distributions of food and non-food commodities are planned for 80,000 displaced over a period of six months. Emergency stocks (20,000 individual parcels, hygiene parcels, blankets, 5,000 jerry cans) will be used for new arrivals and emergency cases. Four trucks delivered food supplies to Montenegro over the week-end.

Health: The Red Cross is working, in cooperation with other humanitarian organisations, to meet the health needs of displaced people, both in the south and the north. Last week a Red Cross taxi shuttle was started it runs from Ulcinj to Bar Hospital.

Shelter: The Red Cross is in the process of identifying a site in Ulcinj suitable for an additional tent camp. Shelter and improvements in sanitation remain the top priorities in Ulcinj.

Social welfare: Psycho-social support centres were opened in Rozaje and Ulcinj to help displaced persons cope with stress.

Tracing: One family reunion within FRY, is planned for next week, a 17-year old boy, who was treated at Stari Slankamen hospital in Vojvodina, will be reunited with his parents who are in Ulcinj. A telephone booth has been installed in the Neptune camp.

Delegations: Joint Red Cross Red Crescent teams are visiting Red Cross branches in order to make in-depth needs assessments.

Outstanding needs: Several Red Cross branches reported that stocks of relief items are insufficient to cover the needs. Supplies which are particularly in demand are sugar, oil, canned food and hygiene articles.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

According to UNHCR for the second time this week, no arrivals were reported through the main Macedonian border crossing at Blace as Serbian authorities enforced a new policy this week of allowing only people with passports to leave. Over the weekend, a small group of refugees went through Tabanovce to return to Kosovo.

The UNHCR reports there are a total of 259,200 refugees living in FYRO Macedonia, and 108,800 in camps. As of 7 June the Macedonian Red Cross has registered 152,738 refugees living in host families. Over the week-end there were 3,652 departures to third countries and 67 transfers to camps in Albania.

Relief distribution: Dispatches from the International Federation's central warehouse on Friday included: 2,200 mattresses, 9,167 blankets, 1,500 hygiene parcels, 200 sheets (donated by Swiss Red Cross), 1,275 MRE's, 1,600 1.5-litre bottles of mineral water, and 480 large protein biscuits. Deliveries included 1,850 mattresses.

Health: The UNHCR has stopped the medical evacuation program as the medical screening process was overwhelmed by refugees seeking to go to third countries. Extremely urgent cases in camp hospitals can still be referred for evacuation, but there will be no open application process.

External Relations, information and publicity: International Red Cross and Red Crescent Information delegates conducted interviews or briefings with the following media over the week-end: Television Suisse Romande, and German TV/2nd channel.

Albania

There were 513 registered entries from Federal Republic of Yugoslavia into Albania over the week-end. The overall figure of refugees (as counted when crossing the border) is 464,767. Figures for tented camps and collective centres have fallen to 80,345 and 97,138, respectively.

The World Bank approved loans totalling U.S.\$69 million dollars to support Albania's economic reforms and to complete an irrigation project.

Relief distributions: Friday's dispatch was as follows; 8,424 French Red Cross food parcels to Durres; 3,640 Swedish Red Cross food parcels and 4,043 French Red Cross food parcels to Tirana; 3,920 Swedish Red Cross food parcels and 23 MT of wheat flour to Fier; 69 MT of wheat flour to Elbasan, and 3,840 Swedish Red Cross food parcels and 24.9 MT of wheat flour to Shkodra.

Registration of ten additional vehicles from the International Federation's fleet has taken place--the overall number is now twelve. The newly-contracted warehouse (capacity of 5500 m²) in Durres is now fully operational.

At the end of week 23, the Red Cross Red Crescent operation's monthly distribution includes 486 MT of wheat flour and 1,333.5 MT of food parcels. The amount of aid distributed last

week fell approximately 200 MT to around 1,800 MT. Some 2,285.5 MT of wheat flour and 2,262 MT of food parcels will be delivered shortly.

Shelter: The Red Cross Red Crescent caseload increased to over 367,000 people including 328,436 refugees with host families and 39,180 host families.

Health: As a result of minor influxes of refugees, fewer patients were recorded over the last week by the Emergency Response Units (ERU). Preparations continued for the upcoming PNS Health meeting to be held in Tirana on 11 June.

Red Cross Red Crescent operations have provided 14 large hospitals around the country with medical provisions. Included in the provisions have been items such as injection sets, infusion sets, suture sets, dressing sets, medicines (such as benzyepenicillin, lexin and normofusin), x-ray film and surgical equipment.

Social welfare: The gathering of information regarding needs has begun and a focus for the programme is being developed. Additional recruitment of delegates is necessary.

Telecommunications: The Austrian ERU completed its mission over the weekend.

Participating National Societies: The week ahead promises to be very busy with planned visits from a number of PNSs and from government dignitaries.

Delegation: The Federation's director of Disaster Response Support arrived to take over the responsibilities of the joint delegation during the Head of Delegation's absence. The Deputy Director of the Europe department arrived to begin preparations for the upcoming joint appeal. Additional members of the team will be arriving from Geneva shortly. This revised joint appeal will take the operation through to the end of the year. A draft will be submitted to the Steering Group by 22 June.

External relations, information and publicity: Arrangements were made with APTN and with a journalist from a Polish daily to visit distributions in the field during the coming week.

Delegations: The International Federation's numbers in terms of delegate staff increased with the arrivals of a new water sanitation delegate and the return of the logistics reporting delegate.

Kukes Report

Despite the deteriorating security situation over the weekend at the Morini Border and in Krume District, the Red Cross Red Crescent operations were carried out as planned. Indeed, in Krume town, the Red Cross Red Crescent helicopter was able to land in Krume town in the late afternoon on 6 June and evacuate six patients to Tirana.

Given the recent peace initiative, it was anticipated that the number of refugees moving south would diminish drastically, however, this situation did not occur over the weekend whilst the peace discussions were taking place. The official figures concerning the movement of refugees over the week-end were as follows: 296 into Kukes and 3,267 leaving Kukes. The vast majority of new arrivals were male, and of the 1,128 departing in the government transport to the south on 6 June, 476 were refugees fleeing from the insecurities in Krume. It is estimated that 850 refugees in total left Krume on 6 June.

Relief distribution: The third round of distributions are now occurring in Kukes Town. Over the week-end 31,796 refugees in host families and 2,324 host families have received 20,667

Swedish Red Cross food parcels, weighing 186 MT and 136.5 MT of wheat flour. In addition, 111 refugees in host families and 13 host families in Ujmisht Commune, Kukes received 124 Swedish Red Cross food parcels, 496 kg of wheat flour and 26 hygiene parcels.

In the forthcoming week, the Red Cross RedCrescent will meet with the Local Authorities, the UNHCR and Concern in order to discuss the creation of a direct distribution system of food assistance for displaced persons. The Red Cross Red Crescent will begin assisting 6,000 additional refugees in host families in Kukes (Shtiquen Commune) and 2,500 refugees in host families in Has District (Gjinaj and Fajza Communes).

Over the week-end, the Kukes Sub-delegation received 3,395 French Red Cross food parcels, weighing 23.7 MT. Secondary deliveries were made to distribution points in Kukes Town, Ujmisht Commune (Kukes District) and the Krume warehouse as follows: 43 MT of wheat flour, 428 Swedish Red Cross food parcels and 26 hygiene parcels.

Tracing: The Protection team, between 4 to 6 June, facilitated 1,604 satellite telephone calls and 274 radio messages from the Kukes Office, Kukes Main Square, the Italian Red Cross Camp, Kukes II and Cap Anamor Camp.

Health: The general health situation for refugees in camps and host families is good, with no reports of any major problems. The Italian Red Cross field hospital, from 3 to 5 June, treated a total of 477 patients, of which 160 were under 10 years old. During the same period they had a total of 28 in patients. On 4,5 and 6 June, the Finnish Red Cross basic health clinic treated a total of 1,294 patients, many of which were treated during the night.

Albanian Red Cross Society: In Kukes district, and especially in Kukes Town, the Albanian Red Cross (ARCS) is very active in all distribution preparation and activities.

External relations, information and publicity: Interviews and coverage were gained from the following: TFI television, featured developments in the peace process, in which the ICRC Team Leader was interviewed; Associated Press, featured a baby born in the Finnish Red Cross Basic Health Clinic; the *Irish Times*, featured tracing, refugees' return to Kosovo and food distributions in Kukes Town. CNN and Agence France Press also featured food distributions in Kukes Town. Contacts were made with the following: Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (in liaison with Tirana), concerning the filming of the Red Cross Red Crescent convoy travelling from Tirana to Kukes.

Summary: Over the weekend discussions were held regarding the impact on refugee movements north if the peace initiative reached a successful conclusion. An Interagency meeting was held in Kukes Town regarding contingency plans in preparation for a large influx of refugees from the south, and the different arrangements which could be put into practise by the Albanian authorities and humanitarian agencies. It was suggested that, if the talks were successful, the border would be closed until the authorities felt confident that the whole of Kosovo was "secured". The Sub-delegation felt that it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to control the movement into Kosovo of what potentially could be large numbers of refugees. Regardless of the outcome of the peace talks, this was an interesting debate, and gave the Sub-delegation a taste of the future and of the need to readjust Red Cross Red Crescent operational priorities.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Over the weekend the total number of refugees from Federal Republic of Yugoslavia remained unchanged. According to the UNHCR, the total number of refugees that fled to Bosnia and

Herzegovina (BiH) since the beginning of the crisis in Kosovo is 104,600 people. Some 44,500 refugees have fled to the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and 60,100 to Republika Srpska (RS). About 21,700 ethnic Albanians have fled to FBiH as well as 22,000 Moslems from Sandzak and 800 Serbs from FRY. More than 30,100 Serbs have fled to Republika Srpska. An additional 30,000 Croatian Serb refugee from FRY have also fled to RS.

Shelter: Almost 8,000 refugees are accommodated in refugee camps, which makes less than 10% of the total number of FRY refugees. There are 29 refugee camps in BiH, 17 in FBiH and 12 in RS, including 14 collective centres, 11 transit centres and four tented sites. Bosnian authorities and UNHCR are relocating some groups of refugees from one refugee camp to another, depending on the type of the camp. For instance, refugees who are waiting for visas for third countries are usually accommodated in transit centres.

External relations, information and publicity: The Federation has agreed with the News Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina - BiH Press to publish summaries of Red Cross Red Crescent activities, reports and a link to the Federation's web site published on the BiH Press web site on a regular basis, in both Bosnian and English languages. **Logistics cell contact names/numbers: Charles Bernimolin, Federation, and John Wert, ICRC, at:**

Phone: +41 22 730 2143 or +41 22 730 2204;
Fax: +41 22 730 2876; **email:** fedicrcbalkanlog.gva@icrc.org

For further information from the International Federation, please contact Mark Wilson for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Bosnia & Herzegovina; tel: +41 22 730 4439; email: wilson@ifrc.org and Penny Elghady for Albania and Macedonia; tel: +41 22 730 4319; email: elghady@ifrc.org

For further information from the ICRC, contact External Resources Department; tel: +41 22 734 6001 or Pierre Kraehenbuehl tel : 41 22 730 2256, email : pkraehenbuehl.gva@icrc.org.

Renny Nancholas
Director
Europe Department
International Federation of Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies

Angelo Gnaedinger
Delegate General for Europe,
Middle East, and North America
ICRC

