

# KUALA LUMPUR (REGIONAL)

**COVERING: Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore**

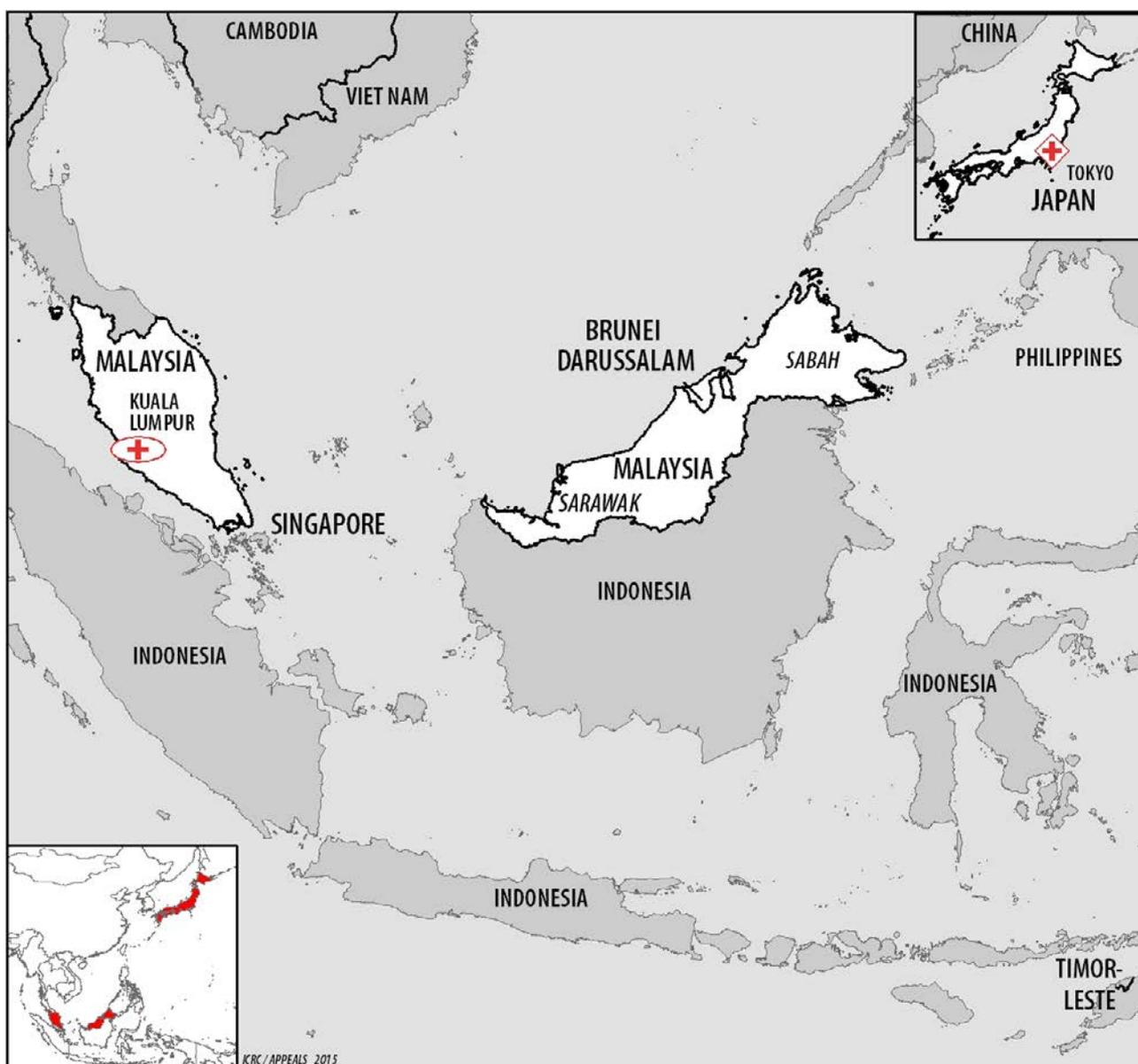
Having worked in Malaysia since 1972, the ICRC established a regional delegation in Kuala Lumpur in 2001 and an independent mission in Japan in 2012. It works with governments and National Societies to promote IHL and humanitarian principles and to gain support for its activities. In Malaysia, the ICRC visits detainees, including detained migrants, and works with authorities to address issues identified during those visits. It enables detained migrants to contact their families. The regional resource centre supports delegations in East and South-East Asia and the Pacific in promoting IHL and strengthening support for the ICRC and for Movement cooperation.

## BUDGET IN KCHF

Protection	1,539
Assistance	860
Prevention	2,788
Cooperation with National Societies	622
General	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,885</b>
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	359

## PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	15
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	39



 ICRC regional delegation

 ICRC mission

## MAIN TARGETS FOR 2015

- ▶ in Malaysia, all categories of persons deprived of their freedom, including migrants, benefit from regular ICRC visits, undertaken according to the organization's standard procedures, to monitor their treatment and living conditions
- ▶ detained migrants in Malaysia receive suitable care, while the authorities and health staff develop best practices in health care in detention, through the establishment of a health clinic in an immigration detention centre
- ▶ people with limited access to health services in Sabah, Malaysia, receive care through trained first-aiders and at a mobile clinic run jointly by the Health Ministry, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, other partners and the ICRC
- ▶ armed/security forces and police in the region incorporate IHL and other international norms in their training, taking into account information on IHL provided by the ICRC during briefings, courses/seminars and other events
- ▶ aided by the Japanese Red Cross Society, the Japanese authorities take steps to advance the humanitarian agenda/IHL, such as forming a group of parliamentarians to support this and reviving its national IHL committee
- ▶ the Singapore Red Cross Society/ICRC develop joint activities, including private sector fundraising initiatives and an international conference on health needs in emergencies

ASSISTANCE		Targets (up to)
<b>CIVILIANS (RESIDENTS, IDPs, RETURNEES, ETC.)</b>		
<b>Health</b>		
Health centres supported	Structures	1

## CONTEXT

Irregular migration and human trafficking remain pressing concerns for the region's authorities and the public.

In Malaysia, where religious/ethnic issues are subjects of socio-political debate, crime-prevention measures and the expiration of an amnesty programme for irregular migrant workers have reportedly resulted in hundreds of arrests and over 19,000 deportations. The government has stepped up security operations in Sabah following the 2013 Lahad Datu clashes, to quell criminal activities.

In Japan, the cabinet approved reinterpretation of the country's self-defence policy as stated in the constitution. Japan remains influential in humanitarian affairs, making representations in international fora on such issues as sexual violence during armed conflict, and launching initiatives tackling such. Recent changes in the Japanese government's aid programme emphasize bilateral cooperation, leading to reductions in contributions to multilateral mechanisms.

The Singaporean government has enacted tighter immigration policies. The country continues to promote itself as a major hub for multinational corporations/businesses and humanitarian/international organizations.

Malaysia will take over the chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2015.

## HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

In 2015, the ICRC regional delegation in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and the autonomous mission in Tokyo, Japan, will continue to work with national authorities, armed/security/police forces, international organizations, key civil society actors and National Societies in the region to highlight and help address humanitarian concerns.

In Malaysia, the ICRC will continue to develop its relations with the authorities, with a particular view to supporting them in addressing the needs of people deprived of their freedom, migrants and other vulnerable people. It will visit people held at immigration detention centres and prisons, paying special attention to those with specific vulnerabilities. It will share its findings confidentially with the detaining authorities and support them in effecting improvements. In addition to offering technical/material assistance

to address the specific needs of particularly vulnerable inmates, it will also organize workshops to help prison/immigration/health staff learn more about internationally recognized standards governing detainees' treatment and living conditions. The ICRC will assist the authorities to meet the health-care needs of detained migrants by establishing a clinic at one immigration detention centre, which will also familiarize health staff with best practices in health care in detention. The ICRC will make its expertise available to detaining authorities throughout the region, including through a regional workshop on prison management.

Solutions to the difficulties faced by vulnerable people, such as irregular migrants, will be discussed with the Malaysian authorities. The ICRC will assess, with the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, protection and other needs of vulnerable communities in peninsular Malaysia, with a view to developing an appropriate response. It will also seek to visit victims of human trafficking housed in government-run shelters. In Sabah, it will cooperate with the authorities, the Malaysian Red Crescent and other partners to understand and address the health needs of vulnerable communities, including those arising from inadequate water/sanitation systems. It will contribute to improving the well-being of people with limited access to health care by training community members in first aid and facilitating the visits/operations of a mobile health clinic.

The National Societies/ICRC will enable detainees, migrants, refugees and other people across the region to restore/maintain contact through the Movement's family-links network. The ICRC will keep itself abreast of humanitarian needs arising from current trends in migration and, with the National Society concerned, encourage governments and others concerned to develop a coordinated response benefiting vulnerable migrants.

Technical support will be provided for armed/security/police forces, through briefings/courses/seminars, such as an annual seminar with the National Institute for Defense Studies in Japan, to help them further their understanding of IHL/other international norms and build training capacities. Similar support, provided with the National Society concerned, will be given to national authorities to encourage them to ratify/implement key IHL treaties. The Japanese Red Cross Society and the ICRC will invite parliamentarians to support the humanitarian agenda.

With a view to gaining support for neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, the ICRC, with the National Societies, will keep key civil society actors – including members of the media, academic circles and, in Singapore specifically, private sector entities – informed of the ICRC’s humanitarian activities and working procedures. Seminars/workshops on regional issues will be organized with think-tanks and other institutions, and dissemination activities for the general public carried out.

ICRC support for the region’s National Societies will help them develop their capacities to address the humanitarian needs of vulnerable populations, respond to disasters/emergencies, restore family links and promote IHL and their own roles. The ICRC will promote close coordination among other Movement and external partners in areas of common interest.

The regional resource centre at the Kuala Lumpur delegation will continue to provide expertise for ICRC delegations in East and South-East Asia and the Pacific, to enhance co-operation-related/preventive activities.

## HUMANITARIAN ISSUES AND ICRC OBJECTIVES

### CIVILIANS

Regular and irregular migrants – among them, victims of human trafficking – have limited access to basic services and must cope with legal issues related to their status.

Malaysia reportedly hosts some 2.2 million documented migrant workers and roughly the same number of irregular migrants. Some sources believe that in Sabah, up to half the population belongs to migrant communities of varying legal status. Malaysia also hosts some 100,000 UNHCR-registered asylum seekers and refugees, mainly from Myanmar.

People in such situations are particularly vulnerable to arrest and deportation, and often lack the means to restore/maintain contact with their families. Malaysian citizens living in conflict-affected countries or detained/interned abroad sometimes require help to contact relatives in Malaysia.

Resident and migrant communities in Sabah find it difficult to obtain health services, as these, along with transport infrastructure in that vast province, are reportedly underdeveloped.

#### Objective

People in the region, including migrants, refugees and those with family members in conflict-affected countries or detained/interned abroad, can exchange news with relatives. Particularly vulnerable migrants and communities are able to obtain basic services and have their specific needs addressed.

#### Plan of action and indicators

##### Protection

With the National Society concerned:

- ▶ based on regular monitoring and analysis of the effects of current regional trends in migration, develop activities to protect/assist particularly vulnerable migrants; with the International Federation, promote/implement a coherent regional approach to the issue, including by coordinating and sharing information with governments and other parties concerned

- ▶ through training/technical support, help National Societies build and, where possible, expand their family-links services; facilitate coordination among them, including through a regional meeting aimed, *inter alia*, at reviewing service delivery during recent disasters and discussing capacity-building initiatives

#### Malaysia

- ▶ enable separated family members, including relatives of people detained/interned abroad, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, to restore/maintain contact through National Society/ICRC family-links services
- ▶ conduct an assessment of family-links and other protection needs of particularly vulnerable migrant communities in peninsular Malaysia, to design a suitable humanitarian response
- ▶ pursue dialogue with the authorities on the situation of victims of human trafficking housed in government-run shelters, with a view to carrying out further visits to assess their needs and recommending/supporting improvements, if necessary

#### Assistance

##### Health

With the National Society:

- ▶ help improve the health and well-being of vulnerable communities in Sabah, Malaysia; in particular:
  - equip community members to deal with injuries, through 4 first-aid training sessions facilitated by National Society staff/volunteers
  - enable people with limited access to health care to avail themselves of curative and preventive care provided by a mobile health clinic run jointly by the Health Ministry the National Society and other partners, and funded by the ICRC
  - develop – through field visits and consultations with the Sabah State Health Department and others concerned – an understanding of the health needs, including those arising from inadequate water supply and sanitation, of vulnerable communities, and encourage cooperation in addressing them; through training/technical support, help the National Society to enhance its capacity to assess/address these needs

### PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

In Malaysia, irregular migrants are detained under two principal authorities: the Department of Depot Management, which manages facilities in peninsular Malaysia and Sarawak; and the Federal Special Task Force, in charge of facilities in Sabah. The Prison Department oversees adult facilities for security, administrative and ordinary detainees and rehabilitation facilities, called Henry Gurney schools, for juvenile detainees.

These facilities have to deal with a particular set of challenges, arising from the large number of irregular migrants, the continuous influx of asylum seekers from Myanmar and elsewhere, and ongoing security operations.

#### Objective

Detainees are afforded treatment and living conditions that meet internationally recognized standards, and are able to keep in touch with their families. The specific needs of vulnerable detainees, including foreigners and minors, are met.

**Plan of action and indicators****Protection**

- ▶ through dialogue, and by supporting their participation in a regional workshop on prison management, provide technical expertise for the region's detaining authorities to help them ensure that detainees' treatment and living conditions meet internationally recognized standards

*Malaysia*

- ▶ in accordance with standard ICRC procedures, visit people held in prisons, detention centres for migrants (including in Sabah) and juvenile centres to assess their treatment and living conditions, including, where applicable, their treatment during arrest and interrogation, and their access to health care; share the findings confidentially with the authorities and, where necessary, make recommendations to effect improvements
- ▶ seek to enhance, through dialogue, detaining/immigration authorities' understanding of the ICRC's role and working methods and of the importance of regular/follow-up visits; offer technical advice and other support – for revising/implementing standard procedures covering treatment of all categories of detainee, for instance; organize workshops/training sessions with staff and heads of facilities, including those under police authority
- ▶ work with the authorities to identify and respond to the needs of detainees with specific vulnerabilities, including women, minors, foreigners, the elderly, the sick, the mentally ill, and victims of human trafficking; for example, discuss alternatives to detention for some of them, and encourage separate housing for unaccompanied minors; in addition, provide detainees with some material assistance (see below)
- ▶ while encouraging the authorities to facilitate contact between detainees and their families, offer detainees, particularly migrants, the opportunity and the means to restore/maintain contact with relatives through National Society/ICRC family-links services; reunite unaccompanied minors with their families, where appropriate, and/or help them find other viable solutions in keeping with their best interests

**Assistance***Malaysia*

- ▶ with the agreement of the Health and Home Affairs Ministries, establish, staff and equip a health clinic at 1 immigration detention centre, thereby enabling detainees to receive diagnoses and medical treatment, including for mental illnesses, and detaining authorities/health staff to familiarize themselves with best practices in health care in detention; offer technical advice and support for detaining/immigration authorities to establish on-site health facilities and a referral system for inmates needing higher-level/specialist care, including physically disabled people and victims of sexual abuse
- ▶ help detention and health authorities develop their capacities to address health-related issues in detention, through technical support provided during regular meetings and a seminar; encourage cooperation among all parties concerned
- ▶ provide vulnerable people, particularly women and minors, at 6 regularly visited immigration detention facilities and prisons with hygiene kits and recreational items to ease their living conditions

**ACTORS OF INFLUENCE**

The region's armed/security/police forces are at different stages of incorporating IHL and other relevant norms in their doctrine and training. They take part regularly in the response to natural disasters, contribute to UN peacekeeping missions and participate in multilateral exercises.

The degree of government interest in promoting IHL and adhering to related treaties varies throughout the region.

The media, NGOs and think-tanks play key roles in forging public opinion in the region. Prominent think-tanks in Japan and Singapore provide policy studies and recommendations as well as opportunities for interaction with the government and military. Malaysian Islamic organizations contribute to humanitarian action abroad.

Some law faculties in the region have incorporated IHL in their curricula; educational authorities, notably in Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia, have taken steps to include IHL in their secondary-school syllabi.

**Objective**

The region's authorities and armed/police forces understand and respect IHL and other internationally recognized standards and incorporate these in their decision-making processes. Opinion-makers, religious leaders, NGOs, academics/scholars and the media help foster public awareness of humanitarian issues and IHL, thus securing greater respect for human dignity. All actors understand the ICRC's mandate and support its work.

**Plan of action and indicators****Prevention**

- ▶ enhance understanding of IHL and other international norms, and help develop related training capacities, among the region's armed/security/police forces; in particular:
  - maintain dialogue and working relationships – with Japan's Self-Defense Forces and Malaysian units involved in security operations in Sabah, among others – by, for example, conducting lectures/briefings and co-organizing training sessions for military/police officers and troops, including peacekeepers, at their training establishments and during multinational/national exercises and other events, such as an annual seminar with the National Institute for Defense Studies in Japan
  - help instructors/officers-in-charge train/instruct their personnel more effectively by facilitating their participation in local/international workshops/courses/seminars covering topics such as humanitarian considerations in military planning/operations, IHL norms in armed conflicts at sea and internationally recognized policing standards
  - provide technical support for the Malaysian armed forces to review/improve their IHL training curriculum

With the National Society concerned:

- ▶ promote awareness of IHL and humanitarian principles, and raise support for National Society/ICRC activities; to this end:
  - interact regularly and co-organize/participate in training/seminars and other events with government and military officials, and representatives of ASEAN bodies (see *Jakarta*), think-tanks and humanitarian

organizations; at these meetings, bring them up to date on ICRC operations in the region and beyond, and share views on such subjects as the Health Care in Danger project, the links between IHL and Islamic law, migration, peacekeeping, disaster/emergency response, sexual violence in armed conflict and cyber warfare

- through dialogue, explain the ICRC's working procedures to government authorities in the region and encourage them to support neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, particularly in relation to needs arising from regional trends in migration, and to legal frameworks for the National Society/ICRC to fulfil their roles; in Japan, invite parliamentarians to form a group to advance the humanitarian/ICRC agenda
- sponsor officials/key stakeholders' participation in IHL-related seminars in the region and beyond
- encourage greater and more accurate media coverage of ICRC activities through regular contact with journalists and by sponsoring their participation in conferences and visits to ICRC field operations
- help universities enhance IHL instruction by providing training and reference materials for lecturers; co-organize internships, courses and competitions to stimulate other institutions' and students' interest in IHL and humanitarian issues; give educational authorities/National Societies technical support for incorporating IHL in the secondary-school curriculum and in youth programmes
- disseminate IHL-related information to various audiences, including the general public, through exhibitions and local-language traditional/web-based publications and audiovisual products, including Japanese comics
- in partnership with the Singapore Red Cross Society, develop a plan of action for expanding contacts among private-sector entities in Singapore and gathering support, including funding
- ▶ to encourage countries to ratify/implement IHL instruments, particularly the 1977 Additional Protocols, the Rome Statute and weapon-related treaties:
  - provide national authorities with technical advice and reference materials; co-organize or sponsor their

participation in national/international events, such as a regional conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, experts' meetings linked to the "Strengthening IHL" process and a regional IHL teaching course

- support the efforts of the Japanese Red Cross to revive Japan's national IHL committee; help Malaysia's national IHL committee and National Society prepare for the 32nd International Conference; and offer advice to the authorities and National Societies in Brunei Darussalam and Singapore on establishing IHL committees

## RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The region's National Societies work in partnership with the ICRC (see above), particularly to restore family links, respond to the needs of vulnerable people, and promote awareness of and support for IHL and humanitarian principles.

Kuala Lumpur hosts the International Federation's Asia-Pacific zone office.

### Objective

The National Societies are effective in responding to the needs of vulnerable populations and in promoting IHL and the Movement's Fundamental Principles. The activities of all components of the Movement are coordinated.

### Plan of action and indicators

#### Cooperation

- ▶ provide expertise/training for the region's National Societies to help them strengthen their capacities in: emergency response, by developing contingency plans incorporating the Safer Access Framework, for instance; family-links services; organizational development; and promoting awareness of and support for IHL and their own roles/activities
- ▶ work with the Singapore Red Cross to develop fundraising initiatives (see *Actors of influence*) and other joint activities: a conference on health-care provision during emergencies, for example
- ▶ help the Malaysian Red Crescent, particularly its Sabah branch, build its capacity to develop/implement projects to address specific humanitarian needs (see *Civilians*)
- ▶ contribute to strengthening regional cooperation/coordination among Movement partners