

LONDON

COVERING: Ireland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The objectives and plans of action are valid for two years, while the budget presented applies to one year only.

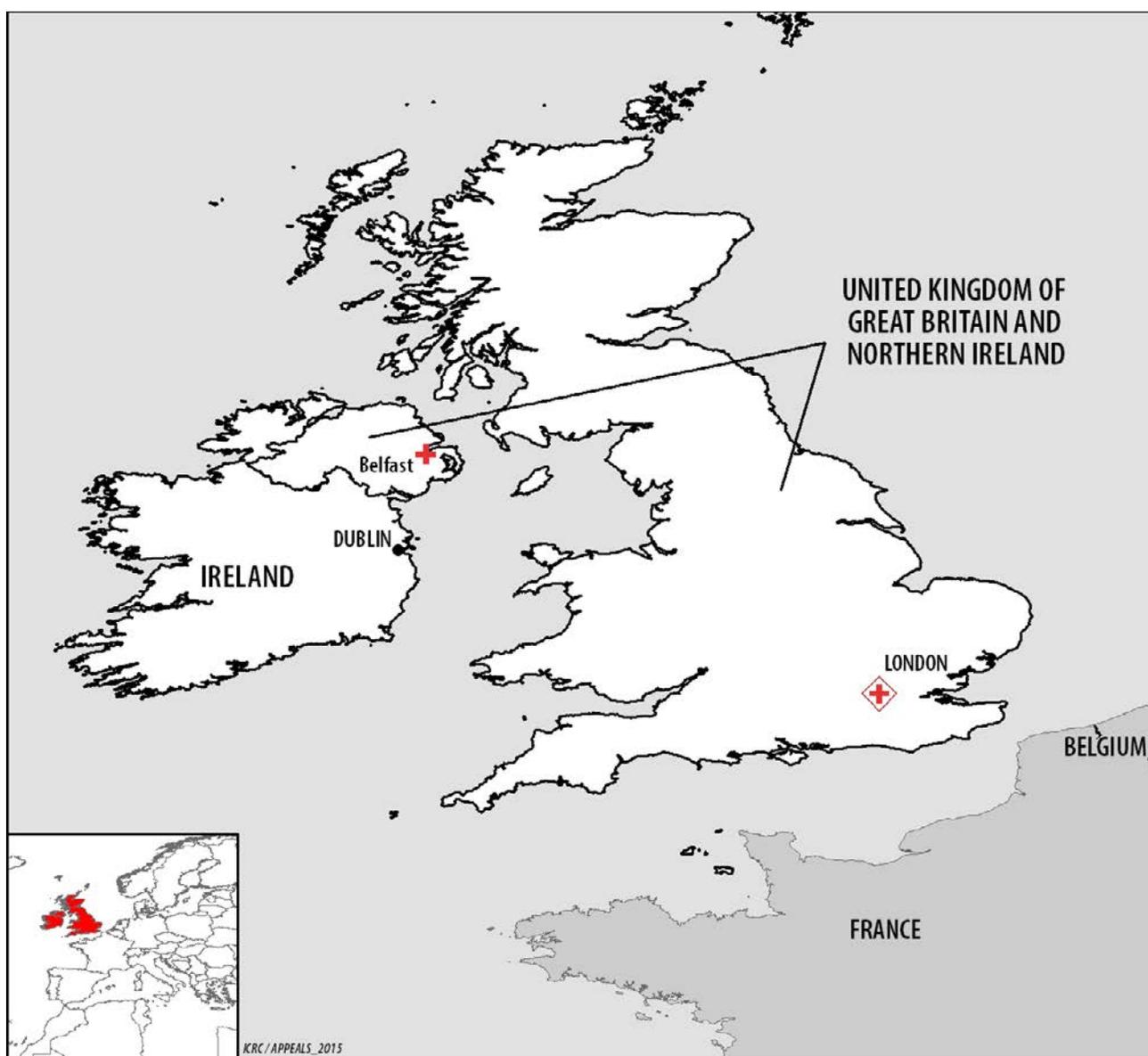
Set up in 2003, the London mission focuses on pursuing humanitarian diplomacy and facilitating ICRC operations in the field. Through contact with the British government, armed forces, members of parliament, think-tanks, the media and international NGOs, it seeks to secure broad support for IHL and ICRC and Movement operations. It has similar contact with the Irish authorities and is developing its cooperation with the armed forces. The mission operates in partnership with the British Red Cross on a range of common areas, while cooperation with the Irish Red Cross is concentrated on IHL and issues related to Movement coordination.

BUDGET IN KCHF

Protection	2,179
Assistance	-
Prevention	1,397
Cooperation with National Societies	375
General	14
Total	3,965
<i>Of which: Overheads</i>	242

PERSONNEL

Mobile staff	3
Resident staff (daily workers not included)	15



 ICRC mission
  ICRC office

MAIN TARGETS FOR 2015–16

- ▶ people detained in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on suspicion of acts of “terrorism” receive ICRC visits aimed at helping ensure that their treatment and conditions comply with international norms
- ▶ in Northern Ireland, people affected by past conflict/the prevailing situation – including detainees, young people, former detainees/combatants and the families of missing persons – receive appropriate support
- ▶ government officials, parliamentarians, armed/police forces and paramilitary groups show support for IHL and humanitarian action in their policies, decisions and operations, with civil society members contributing to this end
- ▶ cooperation with the British Red Cross and the Irish Red Cross Society helps reinforce the Movement’s response to the humanitarian needs of violence/conflict-affected people in the country and overseas

CONTEXT

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (hereafter UK) is a major player in international affairs. It is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and participates in multilateral military operations, mainly through NATO; it also takes the lead in addressing issues such as sexual violence in armed conflict. The withdrawal of UK troops from Afghanistan is on schedule. Ireland also participates in international military operations, primarily through the UN. Both the UK and Ireland contribute significantly to humanitarian operations overseas.

In Northern Ireland, the legacy of past conflict continues to divide communities; violence linked to sectarian tensions still occurs sporadically.

The security-alert level in the UK in relation to potential acts of international “terrorism” is at “severe”, mainly owing to the situations in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

In 2015 and 2016, the ICRC mission in London will spread awareness of and help address humanitarian needs created by armed conflict and other situations of violence worldwide. It will enlist the support of decision-makers and civil society actors for the ICRC’s neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, and continue to develop its position as a key source of reference on IHL and humanitarian issues.

The ICRC will aim to expand the scope of its protection activities in the UK, particularly in terms of helping ensure that the rights of people held under anti-terrorist legislation in the UK or in relation to violence in Northern Ireland are respected and that they benefit from detention conditions that comply with domestic law and internationally recognized standards. The ICRC will visit, according to its standard procedures, people held in connection with past conflict or the prevailing situation in Northern Ireland to monitor their situation first-hand, and communicate its findings and recommendations confidentially to the authorities concerned; it will also keep up its consultations with various stakeholders. The ICRC will follow up the situation of people detained in the UK on suspicion of activities threatening national security and seek to finalize an agreement with the authorities regarding visits to these detainees in accordance with standard ICRC procedures.

To help address humanitarian needs in violence-prone areas of Northern Ireland, the ICRC will continue supporting community-based organizations working to mitigate the effects of sectarian violence – including sexual violence – on affected people, particularly former detainees/combatants, young people and the families of missing persons. Dialogue with the authorities and community leaders will raise awareness of these needs and aim to obtain backing for Movement activities in this regard.

The ICRC will continue to actively engage with government officials, members of parliament and other decision-makers in Ireland and the UK, with a view to promoting the development of informed positions on humanitarian issues of common concern and ensuring that operational, legal and policy decisions reflect humanitarian considerations, respect for IHL and support for the ICRC’s work worldwide. It will do so through briefings, meetings, field visits for the authorities and targeted events. Where appropriate, these activities will be conducted in partnership with the British Red Cross, the Irish Red Cross Society and national IHL committees. The ICRC will pursue discussions with the UK Defence Ministry and other authorities concerned on UK defence/security policies, with a view to contributing to the development of future ones, particularly regarding the protection of civilians and detainees. It will step up cooperation on humanitarian and IHL-related issues with Ireland’s Defence Forces. The ICRC will participate in training sessions for military personnel, including troops preparing for deployment overseas, to familiarize them with IHL and the ICRC’s mandate and activities for people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence.

To secure wider support for its work in the UK and abroad, the ICRC will continue to mobilize members of think-tanks, academia, NGOs, community organizations, diaspora networks, the media and the public to relay humanitarian messages to key policy/decision-makers and increase their support for neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action.

The ICRC will develop its partnerships with the National Societies, cooperating with them in areas of mutual interest, including projects to address the consequences of violence in Northern Ireland and to promote IHL and humanitarian principles. On the basis of a partnership framework agreement, the British Red Cross and the ICRC will further strengthen cooperation in a wide range of fields of expertise, both in the UK and in specific operational contexts abroad.

HUMANITARIAN ISSUES AND ICRC OBJECTIVES

CIVILIANS

In Northern Ireland, former detainees and members of armed groups face difficulties in integrating back into society, such as barriers to employment. Some of them have psychological problems, as reportedly do victims of sexual violence related to past conflict. Cases of sexual violence have also been reported in recent times, allegedly perpetrated by those involved in past conflict/the prevailing situation. Scepticism towards the police and a lack of community-based mediation structures acceptable to paramilitary groups contribute to civilians in certain areas being subjected to paramilitary punishment practices. Incidents of sectarian violence persist, with young people particularly at risk of involvement.

Of the 16 people – officially known as “the disappeared” – who had gone missing before the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, some seven are still unaccounted for; other individuals not on the official list have been reported missing. The Independent Commission for the Location of Victims’ Remains (ICLVR) is in charge of solving these cases and providing answers to victims’ families.

In the Falkland/Malvinas Islands, the remains of 123 Argentinian servicemen killed during the past conflict remain unidentified.

Objective

People in Northern Ireland are adequately protected against violence, including paramilitary punishment practices. They have access to the necessary support services. The families of missing persons receive information on the fate of their relatives.

Plan of action and indicators

Protection

- ▶ to gain better insight into and raise awareness of the humanitarian needs created by the violence in Northern Ireland, maintain dialogue with the relevant authorities, civil society actors, paramilitary groups and other stakeholders at community and regional level; on this basis, identify ways to address these needs, including those linked to sexual violence
- ▶ provide financial, technical and project-management expertise/assistance to up to 15 community-based organizations/projects in Northern Ireland and mobilize other actors to support them, including by producing a yearly report on ICRC assistance, thereby enabling:
 - young people to participate in diversionary programmes that prevent their involvement in violence and reduce tensions in interface areas
 - former detainees/combatants to obtain psychological support and counselling to facilitate their reintegration into society
 - individuals targeted by paramilitary groups to benefit from appropriate mediation structures

Restoring family links

- ▶ to help solve the remaining cases of missing persons officially known as “the disappeared”, coordinate with the ICLVR and other organizations to obtain information and identify areas where the ICRC’s support or expertise

would be of use; when necessary, help families recover the remains of relatives who have been secretly buried

- ▶ continue discussions with the authorities about identifying the remains of Argentinians in the Falkland/Malvinas Islands

PEOPLE DEPRIVED OF THEIR FREEDOM

In the UK, people are arrested, held or deported – under anti-terrorist legislation – on suspicion of activities threatening national security. Their status reportedly gives rise to certain humanitarian issues, such as difficulties in integrating with the wider prison population.

Detainees in Northern Ireland include people held in relation to past conflict or to the prevailing situation. They are housed at the Maghaberry maximum security prison, which has facilities to separately accommodate detainees belonging to different political factions; female detainees are held at the Hydebank Wood prison. Issues of humanitarian concern – regarding detainees’ access to health care, for instance – have been reported at both prisons. The Northern Ireland Prison Service is undergoing reform.

Objective

People held in relation to armed conflict or other situations of violence are afforded treatment and living conditions, including respect for their judicial guarantees, that meet internationally recognized standards.

Plan of action and indicators

Protection

- ▶ to help ensure that the rights of people held on suspicion of “terrorism” in the UK or in connection with past conflict/the prevailing situation in Northern Ireland are respected in accordance with domestic law and that these people benefit from detention conditions that comply with internationally recognized standards:
 - identify and draw attention to the humanitarian concerns of people detained on suspicion of committing/supporting acts of “terrorism” by monitoring their situation through dialogue with the authorities, monitoring bodies and other stakeholders and – pending the conclusion of discussions with the UK authorities – through visits conducted according to standard ICRC procedures
 - conduct visits, in accordance with standard ICRC procedures, to monitor the treatment and living conditions of detainees in the Hydebank Wood and Maghaberry prisons, and confidentially share findings/recommendations with the authorities, including to help clarify the legal framework applicable to the detainees; keep up dialogue with the various parties concerned, such as the families of detainees

ACTORS OF INFLUENCE

The Irish and UK authorities are well-placed to mobilize support for IHL and to highlight humanitarian issues and influence action to address them, both domestically and within international institutions.

The UK’s military engagement abroad remains a focus of interest and scrutiny, as does its investment in intelligence services and new warfare technologies. The government is

reviewing its defence policies, doctrine and training. Ireland contributes troops to peacekeeping missions abroad.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) faces various challenges in maintaining law and order, including the activities of paramilitary groups (see *Civilians*).

London is a major hub for think-tanks, media outlets and NGOs, all of which help shape humanitarian debates and policies. Diaspora communities from countries experiencing armed conflict/other situations of violence can influence decision-makers in their countries of origin through their organizations and their involvement in humanitarian discussions.

Objective

Governments, multilateral regional fora and institutions, the armed forces and the police respect and support IHL and other fundamental rules protecting people in armed conflict and other situations of violence, and reflect this in their decision-making processes. The media and other civil society groups help foster awareness of humanitarian issues and IHL among the public, decision-makers and all those involved in such situations, thus achieving greater respect for human dignity. All actors recognize the ICRC as a key source of reference on IHL and neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, and support the work of the Movement.

Plan of action and indicators

Prevention

With the National Society concerned:

- ▶ to help address the humanitarian needs of people affected by past conflict and the situation in Northern Ireland and of those held under anti-terrorist legislation in the UK (see *Civilians* and *People deprived of their freedom*):
 - strengthen dialogue with the authorities in Belfast, Dublin and London to gain support for the work of the British Red Cross/ICRC in Northern Ireland
 - pursue dialogue with the PSNI and paramilitary groups to raise their awareness of the humanitarian consequences of their practices, particularly regarding law enforcement/punishment, and enhance their understanding of the ICRC's activities
 - intensify contact with the authorities and other pertinent actors to foster understanding of and support for the ICRC's humanitarian activities for people held under anti-terrorist legislation in the UK
- ▶ to encourage the development of informed positions on humanitarian issues of common concern and of operational/legal/policy decisions that reflect humanitarian considerations, respect for IHL and support for the ICRC's mandate and work worldwide:
 - through briefings, high-level meetings and field visits to ICRC operations, keep government officials/parliamentarians updated on the ICRC's activities for people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence
 - with the support of national IHL committees, engage in dialogue with officials/parliamentarians on humanitarian policies and operational/thematic issues of common interest; where pertinent, mobilize them to take action
 - pursue dialogue with the UK authorities, including parliament and the Ministry of Defence, on UK defence policies and related IHL/humanitarian con-

siderations, including those associated with the use/development of new warfare technologies

- interact regularly with the UK armed forces at strategic, operational and policy levels; establish dialogue with the Irish military, particularly on humanitarian responses to weapon contamination and chemical, biological and other emergencies
 - help military personnel, including troops preparing for deployment abroad, enhance their understanding of IHL and ICRC activities by taking part in their training sessions
- ▶ foster wider understanding of/support for humanitarian concerns, the Movement and its neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian approach, and the ICRC as a source of reference on IHL through:
- enhanced communication efforts – including media outreach, targeted events and use of online platforms – to position operational and institutional priorities, such as the Health Care in Danger project, in the public debate and increase awareness of the Movement's work in these areas
 - networking with members of think-tanks, academia and NGOs to share updates/analyses on IHL, humanitarian policies and ICRC operations
 - dialogue with diaspora networks in the UK and community groups in Northern Ireland

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The National Societies and the ICRC cooperate to promote IHL and acceptance for the Movement and to implement humanitarian activities for victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence. The British Red Cross is active internationally; the Irish Red Cross is gearing up to do the same.

Objective

The National Societies and the ICRC work in close partnership in areas of common concern, contributing to strengthening their operations and national and international positioning. The National Societies have solid IHL expertise and partner the ICRC in its dialogue with the authorities on IHL-related matters.

Plan of action and indicators

Cooperation

With the National Societies:

- ▶ hold coordination meetings to facilitate effective humanitarian responses domestically and internationally
- ▶ cooperate on projects addressing the humanitarian needs of violence-affected communities in Northern Ireland and organize joint events on issues of common interest (see *Actors of Influence*)
- ▶ implement the British Red Cross/ICRC partnership framework agreement for 2014–16, which covers technical, thematic and institutional cooperation in the UK and abroad
- ▶ in view of the Irish Red Cross's efforts to work internationally, keep officials/staff informed about ICRC operations worldwide through exchange visits and the secondment of personnel
- ▶ support the British Red Cross/ICRC legal divisions in analysing information on customary IHL and entering it in the online database