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PRESS RELEASE

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THIRD ICRC MISSION TO TAJIKISTAN

Geneva (ICRC) - A team of delegates from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) arrived in Tajikistan on 1 November. The team, the third to visit the Republic, has visited Dushanbe, the capital, and Kulyeb.

The delegates have made numerous contacts, including Tajik civilian and military authorities, to find out about the general situation, to enquire about prisoners, and to assess possibilities for providing humanitarian aid. They have been informed that as many as 150,000 people have been displaced by the fighting and that food and medical supplies are needed in the south-east.

The team's findings will determine the ICRC's plan of action for Tajikistan in the coming months. In the immediate future, 10,000 displaced people in urgent need of assistance will receive 20 tonnes of clothing. 10,000 blankets, 290 rolls of plastic sheeting and 6,000 family parcels, worth a total of 400,000 Swiss francs. One family parcel contains enough basic foodstuffs to last a family of 4 or 5 people for one month.

ICRC teams previously visited Tajikistan in May and September to discuss the country's accession to the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols with the government and to assess the capacity of Tajikistan's medical and sanitary facilities.

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The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), together with the League of the Red Cross Societies and the recognized National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, is one of the three components of the International Red Cross.

An independent humanitarian institution, the ICRC is the founding body of the Red Cross. As a neutral intermediary in case of armed conflicts or disturbances, it endeavours on its own initiative or on the basis of the Geneva Conventions to protect and assist the victims of international and civil wars and of internal troubles and tensions, thereby contributing to peace in the world.