

Pledges: 32. ICRC conference: Czech Republic report

Submitted by the MFA, International Law Department, June 2019

CZ Pledge: Auxiliary role of the Czech Red Cross

(The Czech Republic will support the development of the role of the Czech Red Cross as an auxiliary to the public authorities and will work to improve the conditions for the fulfillment of its tasks, including the strengthening of its role as an auxiliary medical service for the armed forces).

On the basis of the agreement between Czech Red Cross and Directorate General of Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic, CRC is a component of the Integrated Rescue System of the Czech Republic.

The mutual contacts between Czech Red Cross and Medical Service of the Czech Army were further developed. Czech Red Cross has regularly participated of the Conference of Medical service of the Czech Army.

CZ Pledge: Promotion and dissemination of international humanitarian law

(The Czech Republic, in cooperation with the Czech Red Cross, will further work to disseminate international humanitarian law in the public administration, armed forces and security structures of the Czech, in entities forming part of the Integrated Rescue System, and, also, at schools and universities).

The Czech Republic together with the National Red Cross Society (The Czech Red Cross) works on promotion of the IHL and dissemination of knowledge of IHL in the State administration, in the armed forces, police and in the integrated rescue system, mainly through the National Committee on IHL which is presided by the MFA. The National Committee on IHL meets regularly, at least three times a year, to discuss the implementation of IHL obligations of the Czech Republic and to raise awareness of IHL principles, inter alia by organizing annual events on relevant topics with various speakers from international courts and tribunals and other institutions. The National Committee organized a seminar on the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict on June 19, 2018, panel discussion on the safety of the humanitarian personnel and protection of humanitarian aid on June 17, 2019 and published and disseminated manual on the use of the emblem of the Red Cross in the Czech Republic.

In 2017, the Czech Republic submitted a nomination of Villa Tugendhat for granting enhanced protection under the Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. At its 13th session on 7 December 2018 in Paris, the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, UNESCO, decided to include Villa Tugendhat on the List of Cultural Property under the Enhanced Protection.

Since January 2019, the Czech Republic (on the request of MFA) has been providing 18 months grant (cca 70 175,- EUR) on the IHL issues to the Institute of International Relations Prague (independent public research institution).

The Ministry of Defence is responsible for education and training of armed forces of the Czech Republic. In line with the Geneva Conventions and Hague Conventions requirements to disseminate IHL and in cooperation with the Czech Red Cross, the Ministry of Defence organizes twice per year a specialized IHL training for members of the armed forces and civilian personnel, called “Basic Course on Law of Armed Conflict”. Furthermore, the Ministry of Defence organizes specialized IHL seminars based on current needs. In addition, in October 2018, the Ministry of Defence held a military exercise “Jus in Bello 2018” focusing specifically on the practical application of IHL in the field. To support training on the rules protecting the provision of health care and on the rights and responsibilities of health care personnel, the exercise involved also military medical personnel and several students of medical schools.

The Palacky University in Olomouc and the Czech Red Cross in cooperation with ICRC organized an expert meeting on “Health Care in Danger – a Central and Eastern European perspective”. It was a part of the annual conference “Olomouc Days of Emergency Medicine” in 2017. The meeting was attended by a variety of experts from several countries, representatives of civilian and military national authorities, academics, health professionals, and National Red Cross Societies.

Czech Red Cross in cooperation with Association of Medical Rescue Services and Ministry of Health organized a special course for crisis managers of the Regional Medical Emergency Services Directorate.

Czech Red Cross organized regularly courses for his disseminators of IHL. Trough “net of disseminators”, Czech Red Cross organized events focused to dissemination of IHL. IHL is a part of curriculum of first aid courses for public. IHL is also a part of internal education system for staff and members of the Czech Red Cross.

Czech Red Cross has presented IHL on his website www.cervenyriz.eu and on special new website for youth www.mladyzdravotnik.cz .

Czech Red Cross has also regularly published “Magazín mladého zdravotníka” which is focused to youth interested in the topic of first aid. In this publication the topic of IHL has been also contained.

Czech Red Cross also cooperates with Charles University (Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Law), Palacký University (Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Health Science), West Bohemian University (Faculty of law), University of Ostrava (Faculty of medicine), Tomas Bata University in Zlin (Faculty of Logistics and Crisis Management), University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice (Faculty of Health and Social Sciences), and Faculty of Safety Engineering of Technical University in Ostrava to assist to include IHL into study on this ones.

Publication

- Basic Sources of IHL, Ministry of Defence, 2017

· Handbook on the law of war for armed forces / Frederic De Mulinen, ICRC publication translated to the Czech language, Czech Red Cross and Ministry of Defence, 2017

CZ Pledge: Resilience and preparedness for emergencies

(The Czech Republic, in cooperation with the Czech Red Cross, will educate the population with the aim of increasing its resilience and preparedness for emergencies).

Czech Red Cross (with financial support of the Ministry of Health) launched a new interactive website www.mladyzdravotnik.cz which is also focused for education of (young) population for crisis preparedness. The mobile application „First Aid in Mobile Phone“, which was issued by Czech Red Cross also contains a part focused to self-protection in the case of crisis situation

CZ Pledge: Code of conduct for private military and security companies in third countries

(Following the adoption of domestic legislation, the Czech Republic will undertake all efforts to adopt a Code of conduct for private military and security companies in third countries.)

The working group for the Code of conduct for private military and security companies in third countries was established by the relevant ministries in 2018. This topic is also part of the state grant on the IHL issues to the Institute of International Relations Prague. Concrete proposals of the Code are in progress.

EU Pledge: Health Care in Danger: Respecting and Protecting Health Care

In its humanitarian assistance, the Czech Republic has provided mobile health care assistance to conflict affected populations as well as in-kind and expert assistance to local health care facilities in particular in Syria, Iraq and South Sudan.

The Czech MEDEVAC program has provided health and medical services, training for local medical staff as well as in-kind donations of instruments in Iraq, Jordan and Ukraine, among other countries.

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In 2018 the Czech National Committee for implementation of IHL (inter- ministerial body) published and disseminated to relevant actors manual on the use of the emblems of the red cross. The Czech National Committee for implementation of IHL organized a panel discussion on the topic safety of humanitarian personnel and providing a humanitarian aid on June 16, 2019.

EU Pledge: Promotion and dissemination of international humanitarian law

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The Czech Republic is a State party to the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention, the Cluster Munitions Convention and the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and its five protocols.

The Czech Republic has been supporting mine action, mine victim assistance and related activities by means of its engagement within the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention, the Ljubljana based International Trust Fund, UNMAS and NATO, as well as in the framework of its bilateral cooperation. The Czech Republic has been providing voluntary contribution for the implementation and universalisation of the activities of the Ottawa Convention as well as for the humanitarian demining programmes of UNMAS.

The Czech Republic has adopted the Action Plan of the Czech Republic for the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000,) on women peace and security and related resolutions for 2017 – 2020 and prepares regular yearly implementation reports.

The Czech Republic also contributes to EU's Spotlight Initiative (aiming to eliminate violence on women and girls), UN WOMEN and to NATO's Jordan II Trust fund (to build capacities and improve infrastructure at the Women's Training Centre of Excellence in Jordan). The Interior Ministry's MEDEVAC program of medical evacuations includes provisions for the vulnerable groups, including women and girls.

The Czech armed forces are required to complete gender training, which includes segment on sexual and gender based violence. The civilian staff to be deployed abroad is also trained in gender.

The Czech Republic has focused on protection as well as physical and psychosocial rehabilitation of children affected by armed conflicts in its humanitarian assistance to conflict affected countries such as Iraq, Syria, Yemen, the Ukraine, Afghanistan, South Sudan or Central African Republic, incl. displaced children. The Czech Republic has also supported relevant programs of UNICEF targeted children and youth in conflict and post-conflict situation, not least with use of the Czech membership in the Executive Board of UNICEF (2017 – 2019).

EU Pledge: Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The Fundamental Principles were disseminated in the framework of "Basic Courses on LOAC" mentioned above. In 2018, the Czech Red Cross has produced a new special website focused on youth where the Fundamental Principles are presented (<https://mladyzdravotnik.cz/onas/sedm-principu-cerveneho-krize>).

EU Pledge: Sexual and gender-based violence during times of armed conflict or in the aftermath of disasters and other emergencies

In its humanitarian assistance, the Czech Republic focuses both on protection, prevention and rehabilitation in relation to gender-based violence, according to international principles and goals. Further, joint advocacy activities of the EU related to gender-based violence in conflict and other emergency situations are supported and disseminated by the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic (the Ministry of Justice) has reviewed its national law concerning criminalization of sexual and gender-based violence during times of armed conflict or in the aftermath of disasters and other emergencies. The Czech Republic is a contracting party to many international humanitarian law treaties whose provisions prohibit acts of sexual violence. Obligations emerging from such treaties have been fully implemented into the Czech national law. The Czech Criminal Procedure Code also enables effective investigation and prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence. Act on Victims of Crimes offers protection and necessary assistance (legal, psychological, financial) to the needs of victims.

EU Pledge: International Criminal Court

During the relevant period, the Czech Republic continued supporting the work of the ICC, promoting the universality of the Rome Statute and preserving its integrity. The Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs is a member of the Informal Ministerial Network supporting the ICC. Since 2011, the Czech Republic has provided regular voluntary contributions to the ICC Trust Fund for Victims. Since 2015, the Czech Republic serves as a regional focal point of the Eastern European Group for the issue of non-cooperation. The internal process for approval of amendments to Article 8 (war crimes) of the Rome Statute as adopted by the ASP in New York in 2017 is currently in its final stage.