

Identifier	Created	Classification	Origin
08KYIV1553	2008-08-12 07:33:00	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Kyiv

Cable title: **UKRAINE: ICRC TO CLOSE ITS DELEGATION IN KYIV**

Tags: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [UP](#)

 [how-to read a cable](#)

[Show metadata](#)

C O N F I D E N T I A L KYIV 001553

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL. 03/24/2016

TAGS: PHUM PGOV UP

SUBJECT: UKRAINE: ICRC TO CLOSE ITS DELEGATION IN KYIV

Classified By: Acting POL Counselor for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Summary: The Head of the Kyiv Regional Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent (ICRC) informed Post on August 7 that it will close its Kyiv delegation later this year. The reasons given were its strategy to consolidate regional operations, position itself closer to conflict areas, and to cut operational costs. Delegation Head Jean-Jacques Bovay explained that its regional activities were either completed, will be handed over to the host government (in the case of Ukraine), or will be managed by its Moscow delegation. Bovay said that the GoU seemed unconcerned by the closure and that he will make the news public in late September.

2. (C) We were surprised by Bovay's account of the GoU's indifference towards the ICRC's closure in Kyiv. Bovay acknowledged that the GoU's preoccupation with political infighting and the summer holidays likely had something to do with its muted response. Although Post has not worked closely with the ICRC Delegation in Kyiv, we believe that its presence was useful in promoting a focus on international humanitarian law issues within Ukraine and hope that it will continue to provide a presence in Kyiv from its delegation in Moscow. With recent developments in Georgia, Post will stay in contact with ICRC Kyiv to see if it may change its closure plans in order to deal with any inflows of migrants fleeing the conflict areas. End Summary and Comment.

Kyiv ICRC Delegation to Close In November 2008

3. (C) The Head of the Kyiv Regional Delegation of the ICRC, Jean-Jacques Bovay, told PolOff on August 7 that his organization will close its office in Kyiv later this year. Bovay explained that the ICRC, which has been in operation in Kyiv since 1995 covering Ukraine, Belarus, and Moldova, had concluded some of its activities, will hand over some its programs to the host government (in the case of Ukraine), or will continue to run them from its Moscow delegation. He explained that the decision to close the delegation in Kyiv was made because of the need to consolidate its operations in the region, hand over ownership of some of its programs to the host government where appropriate, position itself closer



to conflict areas, and to cut the rising cost of maintaining its office in Kyiv.

4. (C) Bovay explained that ICRC's mandate to provide protections to detainees in Moldova was no longer necessary with the recent release of all detainees of concern. In the case of Belarus, he said its Moscow delegation would take over discussions with the Government of Belarus regarding two persons of concern still in detention. He said that activities with Ukraine's armed services to promote international humanitarian law (IHL) would be taken over by the GoU, while activities to advise Ukrainian authorities on IHL treaty implementation, IHL training for security services, and training on the law of armed conflict will be managed by its delegation in Moscow. He said that activities to promote IHL at Ukrainian schools and universities will be assumed by Ukraine's Ministry of Education and Science. He added that ICRC financial support for the Ukrainian Red Cross will continue at slightly higher levels than in previous years.

5. (C) Bovay explained that he was in the process informing Embassies of major ICRC donor countries as well as NGOs and international organizations involved with refugees, including the UNHCR. He mentioned that he had already informed the GoU and seemed dismayed at its apparent indifference to the news. He expressed concern that the GoU did not fully appreciate ICRC's contributions and mentioned that the MFA was only concerned about maintaining the status of its agreement with the ICRC, which Bovay confirmed would remain in force. He intends to travel to Minsk later this month to inform the Government of Belarus and will release the information to the public at the end of September. He projected the closure date will be in mid-November of this year.

6. (U) Visit Embassy Kyiv's classified website:
www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kyiv.
PETTIT

Website pages 