



MEDIA RELATIONS UNIT  
International Committee of the Red Cross  
19, avenue de la Paix  
1202 Geneva  
Switzerland  
Phone: +41 22 730 3443  
Fax: +41 22 734 8280  
press.gva@icrc.org  
<http://www.icrc.org>

## ***ICRC News Release No. 09/18***

9 July 2009

### **Sri Lanka: ICRC to scale down operations**

Colombo/Geneva (ICRC) – Following the cessation of active hostilities between the Sri Lankan State and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the government of Sri Lanka has asked the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to scale down its operations in the country.

The ICRC has had a permanent presence in Sri Lanka since 1989. Its role in the country has evolved over the years, always in response to changing needs. The ICRC first responded to the needs resulting from an uprising in the southern part of the country in the late 1980s. Later, in connection with the conflict between government forces and the LTTE, it carried out humanitarian activities which continued until earlier this year.

"The ICRC is in the process of reviewing its setup and operational priorities in Sri Lanka," said Jacques de Maio, the organization's head of operations for South Asia. "As a first step, it will close its offices and withdraw its expatriate staff from the Eastern Province while winding down its operations in the area. However, the ICRC will continue its dialogue with the Sri Lankan government on issues of humanitarian concern."

In accordance with its mandate, the ICRC reaffirms its commitment to address the humanitarian needs of those directly or indirectly affected by the recent conflict, including displaced people and returnees.

**For more information, please contact:**  
**Sarasi Wijeratne, ICRC Colombo, tel: +94 11 250 33 46 or +94 77 315 88 44**  
**Simon Schorno, ICRC Geneva, tel: +41 79 251 9302**  
**or visit our website: [www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org)**