

**Resolution No 21/2018
of the Polish Red Cross National Congress of 30 June 2018**

**on the descriptive program-based report
on the National Society's activities in 2017**

By virtue of & 27 section 3 subsection a) of the Polish Red Cross Statutes,

the Polish Red Cross National Congress

formally approves the descriptive program-based report on the National Society's activities in 2017, herewith attached.

The present resolution shall enter into force as from the date of its adoption.

Secretary of the Meeting

(-)

Anna Zacharek

Chairman of the Meeting

(-)

Stanisław Kracik

POLISH RED CROSS EXECUTIVE BOARD

**REPORT ON ACTIVITIES
OF THE POLISH RED CROSS IN THE YEAR 2017**

Warsaw, June 2018

I FOREWORD

This report on the Polish Red Cross activities in the year 2017 is based on reports of district branch boards and of the Head Office departments. In keeping with § 33, section 2, subsection 9 of the Statutes, within the competence of Director General lies submitting reports for approval to the National Society's supreme statutory body, i.e. the PRC National Congress, solely responsible, in accordance with § 33, subsection 3, items a) and b) of the Statutes, for examining programmatic and financial yearly reports on the NS activities.

The above mentioned reports once evaluated by the Main Audit Committee give ground for granting a vote of acceptance by the National Congress to the PRC Executive Board, as well as to each of its members for their activities in the precedent year, in keeping with the Statute's § 34, section 2, subsection 2 and § 27, subsection 3.

As a public benefit organization, PRC is bound to submit yearly reports, once endorsed by the PRC National Congress, to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and to make them public on the website www.pck.pl.

It should be mentioned that reports on activities constitute the basic source of information about the achievements of PRC and of its members, as well as about the implementation of the programmatic strategy, voted by the PRC National Congress for the current term of office; thus, they become historical documents that together form a chronicle of the Society's almost 100 year tradition based on shared universal values.

II. Characteristics of a public benefit organization

1. Polish Red Cross

14, Mokotowska Street, 00-561 Warsaw

National Court Register number 0000225587, as from 24.01.2005, Company Registration Number 007023731.

The Organization, founded on 18 January 1919 as the Polish Red Cross Association, in 1927 became known as Polski Czerwony Krzyż (Polish Red Cross), using the acronym "PCK" (PRC); it was recognized by the International Committee of the Red Cross on 14 July 1919 and admitted to the League of Red Cross Societies, presently the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, on 16 September 1919. Polish Red Cross is a National Society, as stipulated in the Geneva Conventions for the protection of war victims, of 12 August 1949 (Off. J., 1956, No. 38, doc. 171) as well as in Additional Protocols to the aforementioned Conventions, of 8 June 1977 (Off. J., 1992, No. 41, doc. 175) and of 9 December 2005 (Off. J., 2009, No. 127, doc. 1049), Poland is party of.

Legal basis for PRC activities

- Law of 16 November 1964 on the Polish Red Cross (Off. J. No 41, item 276),
- its own Statutes, approved by Cabinet decree of 20 September 2011 (Off. J. of 12 October 2011, No 217, doc. 1284),
- resolutions of International Conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

2. Polish Red Cross is endowed with legal personality, embodied by the Executive Board.
3. The emblem of the National Society is a regular red cross on a white ground, displayed separately or together with the designation „Polski Czerwony Krzyż” or „PCK”. The rules and ways of usage and protection of the red cross emblem are specified by the Law on the Polish Red Cross, by the set of regulations of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as well as by legal provisions in force in Poland.
4. Polish Red Cross operates on a voluntary basis, being auxiliary to public authorities in the field of humanitarian work, in compliance with the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, as the sole national society empowered to carry out its activities in Poland. In relation to the public authorities, the National Society maintains autonomy, which allows it to act in all time in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

5. The goal of Polish Red Cross (as stipulated in § 8 of the Statutes) is to “prevent and alleviate human suffering in all times and in all circumstances, while preserving impartiality and making no discrimination, in particular as to nationality, ethnic identity, social origin, race, sex, religion or political opinions”.
6. The National Society’s core programmatic document is “Polish Red Cross strategy for the term of office 2016-2020”, adopted by vote No 7/2016 of the PRC National Congress of 19 June 2016.
7. The Polish Red Cross basic organizational units are circles, clubs and any groups consisting of members. Primary units can be set up in any environment (place of residence, of work, of studies, or affiliated to PRC boards at all levels). Besides, throughout the country operate PRC provincial and district branches. All the entities make up a countrywide framework of the National Society. The latter’s supreme body, the National Congress, is held every four years, if reporting and electoral; once a year, if ordinary; or according to needs, if extra-ordinary. The governance is exerted by the Executive Board and a Praesidium appointed from among its members.
8. Throughout the year 2017, the PRC Executive Board members, elected by the PRC National Congress on 19 June 2016, were the following:
 - Stanisław Kracik – President,
 - Jarosław Cieszkiewicz – Vice-President (Greater Poland province),
 - Jerzy Kornaus – Vice-President (Lesser Poland province),
 - Jerzy Bisek – member (Lubelskie province),
 - Marek Brodzki – member (Lower Silesia province),
 - Jolanta Chełmińska – member (Łódzkie province),
 - Jerzy Kotowicz – member (Mazovia province),
 - Zbigniew Misiejuk – member (Podlaskie province),
 - Antoni Olak – member (Subcarpathia province),
 - Paulina Szymańska – member (Pomerania province),
 - Anna Zacharek – member (Kuyavia-Pomerania province).
9. The Executive Board’s Praesidium, since 19 June 2016, consists of:

- Stanisław Kracik – President,
- Jarosław Cieszkiewicz – Vice-President,
- Jerzy Kornaus – Vice-President,
- Joanna Chełmińska – member,
- Jerzy Kotowicz – member.

III. Statutory activities

III. 1. Putting into effect the Polish Red Cross strategy

The “*PRC Strategy for the years 2016-2020*”, adopted by the NS National Congress in June 2016, defined the following priority areas of activity:

1. preparing for emergencies and assisting victims of disasters, catastrophes and accidents,
2. developing welfare programs for the sake of the most vulnerable,
3. promoting a healthy lifestyle and developing PRC honorary (i.e. voluntary) blood donorship,
4. disseminating the Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the provisions of international humanitarian law applicable to armed conflicts, moulding attitudes of tolerance and respect for human dignity,
5. strengthening the National Society’s core organizational and financial capabilities, in order to make it perform its statutory tasks more efficiently.

The key spheres of public benefit activity, conducted by PRC in 2017 were:

- community welfare support to vulnerable individuals and families and to the elderly; equalling their opportunities; home care services,
- protection and promotion of health, blood donorship advocacy.
- rescuing and protecting the population in case of disasters, natural and man-made.

III. 1.1. In the field of disaster preparedness and assistance to victims,

in 2017 the PRC Rescue System consisted of **19 emergency rescue teams** (i.e. one medical rescue team, one dedicated to special rescuing and 17 standard teams), totalling **386 members**, as well as of **four humanitarian relief groups**, comprising **87 members**. Altogether, the PRC rescue teams provided security to **1,215 assemblies and events**, organized **221 exercise performances**, presented **628 rescue skill shows** and **assisted 4,199 persons**. At the end of 2017 all PRC rescue teams were recognized as units cooperating with the State Medical Rescue System.

On 29 December 2017 teams operating under the authority of PRC district branch in Bielsko-Biała carried out common field exercises covering research of missing persons. Rescuers and candidates from Bielsko-Biała and Czechowice-Dziedzice were upgrading their skills in operating GPS and in scanning the sectors singled out by means of the three-rescuer “quick approach”. Common exercises contribute to an integration of the community rescuers and to an exchange of experiences; therefore more events of the kind are planned for the current year.

In 2017 Bielsko-Biała district branch rescuers, medical and first aid providers, by assuring transport services and ensuring protection at events, generated an income of **PLN 354,307.01**.

PRC Kielce branch rescue team took part in a gathering in Presidential Palace gardens under the motto “**Safe Holidays with the Presidential Couple**”. This yearly event addressing children, is aimed at making them participate in workshops and assist at displays of life-saving operations prepared by the responsible services; different rescuing techniques observed should enable them to take appropriate steps during holidays, in case of emergency.

The rescuers from Kielce together with their counterparts from PRC Warsaw and Wrocław teams and with the PRC Łódź set up a standpoint equipped with materials of the NS Rescue System, and organized a play and fun area dedicated to safety.

The Kielce **PRC rescue team**, on commission of the City Board, under the title “**Spreading knowledge about principles of first aid**”, conducted first aid demonstrations for three secondary schools, as many elderly’s social clubs and four kindergartens. Among the topics on the agenda were: securing the scene of an accident, calling for help, administering basic first aid before the arrival of emergency medical services, as well as dealing with fractures and bleeding. At the end of the day, the 1,300 participants received various gadgets purchased thanks to a municipal subsidy.

From 6 to 8 October 2017 took place in Rostock Mecklemburg-Western Pomerania **Main Water Transport Manoeuvres**, with the participation of **PRC rescue team from Koszalin** and of first aid instructors from PRC Szczecin branch; some youth volunteers were also attending. The exercise’s aim was to get prepared for threats to people in case of water disasters, e.g. to reinforce dams, to rescue injured shipwrecked or other occasional victims and to train the crews. A real challenge to cooperation of those involved was a helicopter operation, rescuing several persons at risk of drowning. The show proves spectacular, since the approach distance of the rotocraft is of only 30 metres: therefore the coordination procedure, including the timing, must be strictly followed. Land-operating rescuers faced another task: to save people from drowning by means of special equipment. Training courses for car drivers were also organized: apart from theory and practical skills, focus was placed on preventing road accidents. Participants could also assess the impact of narcotics and alcohol on the drivers’ behaviour.

The humanitarian relief groups took part in 58 events, using their skills and equipment, staged 56 first aid shows and carried out 254 “other activities”. They brought relief to 438 persons.

Within the disaster preparedness program, the NS was managing **13 provincial and 14 district emergency warehouses**, ready to assist **at once 8,288 persons**. Relief in kind was provided to 1,440 persons.

The Strategy set, and the Executive Board indicated as a priority objective to enhance the public’s knowledge about first aid practices. In 2017, PRC was promoting this knowledge in different areas, both by training staff members of companies and institutions or other persons, but also by creating and developing awareness campaigns in the media, including the Internet.

Training courses were conducted, as usual, according to the guidelines of the European Resuscitation Council and of the European Reference Centre for First Aid Education. The materials, apart from those for internal distribution, were put and currently updated on the PRC first aid website, under dedicated bookmarks. The continued project of a separate webpage increased visibility of the information offered and facilitated contacts with candidates for training courses.

An important part of the promotion program and campaign was the PRC First Aid Championship, held according to the regulations approved by the PRC Executive Board in the 203/2008 resolution of 11 March 2008.

Consequently, the Championship was carried out on three levels:

- district (branches at that level), organized by respective branch boards
- provincial (branches at that level), organized by respective branch boards,
- national, organized by the PRC Executive Board, in cooperation with the PRC Subcarpathia Province Branch Board in Rzeszów.

At the district level 789 5-person teams from secondary schools entered the competition, out of which 156 remained qualified for the provincial level.

For the finals, held in Rzeszów from 8 to 10 June 2017, 16 teams were qualified, representing all the PRC branches.

The final competition of the 25th PRC National First Aid Championship was held under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Poland, Mr Andrzej Duda, who had funded the winners' cup.

The Jury consisting of the following PCK first aid instructors, in charge of the performance of tasks by the competing teams, was presided by the main referee:

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. Main Referee | Dawid Drożdż |
| It consisted also of the following members: | |
| 2. PRC Executive Board Delegate | Marek Brodzki, MD |
| 3. Technical Referee | Przemysław Chmaj |
| 4. PRC First Aid National Coordinator | Piotr Skura |

During the national-level contest of the 25th PRC National First Aid Competition were set up

- 10 stations, where the teams were requested to demonstrate their skills and
- 6 “relax” stations.
- A test was carried out, to assess the competitors' knowledge about first aid, the international humanitarian law and the International Movement.

Simulated victims and go-between for technical issues were youth from PRC school circles, support was also provided by PRC Przemyśl Rescue Team, Nowa Sarzyna Humanitarian Relief Group and medical rescuers from the Rzeszów Provincial Emergency Services.

Competitors, referees and invited persons were accommodated in three recreation centres: of teachers and local administrative staff in Czudec, in a woodland inn in Rudna Mała and in “Nowy Dwór” hotel in Świlcza.

First place overall in the 25th PRC FA contest was won by Suchowola Integrated School, representing the PRC Podlaskie province branch; the second, to Maj. H. Suchodolski Memorial Senior Secondary School No 1 in Kępno, representing the PRC Greater Poland province branch and the third, to Maria Curie-Skłodowska Integrated Vocational School in Płock, under the label of the Mazovia province branch.

According to the training scheme adopted, in all PRC provincial branches have been appointed first aid coordinators, whose task consists in conducting, together with PRC first aid instructors, a series of training courses for companies and institutions; in some parts of the country, such courses, on a regular basis, are organized for all individuals approaching the NS and wishing to learn first aid skills.

Another responsibility of provincial coordinators was to organize instructors' meetings and dedicated workshops; cyclic events of the kind enable instructors to enhance their knowledge of new developments in this field.

In 2017 in Poland 369 first aid instructors were operating; among them, 237 offering training opportunities.

The process of reaffirming the competences of PRC FA instructors was continued at the request of provincial branch boards; 60 persons managed to get through.

The need to train new PRC FA instructors was met by a course carried out for the first time, in Białystok, by the PRC Executive Board. The reference documents were groundwork for a Programme based on education materials for PRC FA Instructors Course and aimed at training FA rescuers.

Throughout the year the PRC FA instructors database was being updated; all the files were also being reviewed and modified, if appropriate.

New cards for instructors were constantly issued. A credit-card format document contains the bearer's photograph, his/her full name, the license number, as well as the date of the recognition and the expiry date. The cards are delivered to all newly trained instructors, to those whose competences have been renewed and to those, whose cards have been lost or destroyed. The PRC provincial branch offices are responsible for distributing them.

In 2017, throughout the year, a FA Programme Council was active, consisting of:

1. Danuta Lewandowska
2. Dawid Drożdż
3. Magdalena Michułka-Kuraś
4. Magdalena Stefańska
5. Marek Brodzki
6. Michał Siemieński
7. Piotr Skura
8. Tomasz Klimczyk.

In 2017 a meeting of provincial coordinators took place in Rzeszów, when guidelines for the years 2017/2018 were agreed upon and drafting began of a FA handbook.

Certificates were issued all the year round, requested by the PRC provincial branch boards; eventually, the number of those certificates for course completion attained 13,245.

According to the reports sent in, in 2017 were carried out 304 FA courses for school-attending youth, resulting in the issuance of schoolmate certificates to 6,217 persons; as well as 559 5-hour basic courses for 8,193 persons; 350 16-hour elementary courses for 4,502 participants; 223 other certified courses involving 69,108 trainees; as for 1,642 informal training activities, 69,108 persons had the opportunity there to learn FA (no certificate issued).

During the year clients were being sought, i.e. companies wishing to have their staff trained in first aid.

In 2017 workshops for FA instructors were organized in Podlaskie, Lesser Poland and Mazovia provincial branches

District and provincial branches carried out a number of awareness-raising campaigns, focused on life-saving and protection of health.

Among the greatest health promotion campaigns developed on the territory of the **Greater Poland province branch in Poznań**, one should mention the educational program **“I know how to save a life”**, targeting primary school-attending children from the city of Poznań and its district. A 1.5 hour course was performed on pre-medical first aid for **2,789 persons** in scholastic establishments. To conclude it, a contest was organized, involving pupils of primary school, 5th grade. The action’s aim was to help the children acquire the habits of rendering assistance to people in need, and of giving basic first aid in emergency. The requirements were adapted to the age and profiles of the young participants. The competition proved very popular, since primary school-based 21 teams took part therein from the city and district of Poznań.

An attractive way of FA education and promotion was a flash mob: in five squares in the centre of Szczecin, such an operation was performed on **4 December 2017, under the motto “What do you know about first aid?”**, involving on a voluntary basis, schoolmates from the city. The project’s aim was to impart knowledge and to provide people with skills; also to make them acquire an emotional approach and awareness of their efficiency. The purpose was to check, if Szczecin city dwellers aged 30 years and younger would behave properly in case of an emergency, by calling for help, instead of falling into a state of panic. The programme’s addressees were expected to learn appropriate psycho-social competencies and thus be able not only to share their knowledge about FA among people within their age group, but also to address the rest of the local population. During the campaign in downtown Szczecin, a public survey was conducted among people under the age of 30, aimed at assessing their ability to administer FA; PRC leaflets and gadgets were given out. 100 persons were reached by the programme.

III 1. 2. Development of program activities aimed at assisting the most vulnerable groups

In this priority area, two strategic goals had been singled out: to improve the situation of people in need and to counter social exclusion of individuals and groups. **In 2017 PRC**

provided welfare relief, consisting of food parcels, clothes, cash allotments etc. to 167,642 individuals, classified as follows

- 91,271 women,
- 15,150 handicapped persons
- 16,789 retired-aged persons,
- 3,698 dependants and/or with protracted/uncurable diseases
- 3,786 homeless,
- 871 victims of violence,
- 22,696 unemployed,
- 77,185 poverty-stricken persons,
- 1,925 persons overcoming addictions and members of their families
- 7,410 single parents and their children,
- 20,975 children and youth, including 9,106 from communities under threat.

Among those, numbering 98,708, who received an emergency support no less than twice in 2017, 52,335 were women; the total worth of assistance provided by provincial and district branches reached PLN 13,192,576.90.

94 emergency warehouses were managed by the NS throughout the year.

During the whole year **91 care facilities** were runned, **151 home healthcare agreements** signed with local administrative units. The **number of non-autonomous beneficiaries attained 14,228**, out of which in 952 cases, service was financed from the NS budget. 36 persons, including 25 women, were receiving neighbourly assistance, while the number of PRC beneficiaries able to walk reached 14,228, including 10,031 women. **Care services were provided by 5,416 PRC “sisters” (personal care assistants)**. One should bear in mind that the extent to which care services are being rendered depends on whether a PRC unit wins or loses the bid, on grant funding available and on respective agreements signed.

During the whole year, 68 relief centers of different kinds were run, offering 1,996 places. Altogether 5,272 persons availed themselves thereof: 3,966 on a free-of-charge basis, 1,196 in a businesslike way and 110 within a payment schedule.

In the reporting year supplementary feeding was provided by the PRC to members of families undergoing hardships. 211 establishments (soup kitchens, school canteens, assistance centres) were involved in this programme, serving 463,230 meals to 10,331 persons. Earmarked PRC expenses totalled, in 2017, PLN 1,589,442.93, including the amount of PLN 210,036 from NS own resources.

In 2016 and 2017 PRC continued putting into effect the Operational Food Program for the years 2014-2020, within the framework of the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD); in Poland this program is implemented by the Agricultural Market Agency in cooperation with partner organizations, i.e. NGOs, operating nationally or intra-regionally, i.e. Polish Red Cross, the Federation of Polish Food Banks and the Polish Committee of Social Welfare. The Program’s managing partner is the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy. The FEAD’s task consists not only in meeting basic needs, but also in taking social inclusion measures, such as guidance and support in helping people get out of poverty. The Operational Food Program supports persons and families undergoing sustained deprivation, and therefore unable to meet their basic food needs.

The aim set for the 2016 sub-program's implementation, continued in 2017, was to provide assistance to those in greatest need, by distributing among them parcels containing 16 different commodity groups belonging to 6 categories, e.g. : pasta, white rice, or pork ham. The final recipients in the 2016 sub-program were persons and families suffering from material deprivation and receiving support from Social Welfare Centers. Respective county or town Centers had been made responsible for the final selection, while the NGOs participating were requested to determine the eligibility of the homeless only.

Within the 2016 sub-program (implemented from August 2016 to June 2017) the commodities were forwarded to 16 PRC warehouses in the provinces of Lower Silesia, Mazovia, Sub-Carpathia, Pomerania, Silesia, West Pomerania, Świętokrzyskie, Lubelskie and Lubuskie. Eventually, food was distributed by:

- PRC Lower Silesia Province Branch,
- PRC Lubelskie Province Branch,
- PRC Lubuskie Province Branch.
- PRC Mazovia Province Branch,
- PRC Silesia Province Branch,
- PRC Świętokrzyskie Province Branch,
- PRC Sub-Carpathia Province Branch,
- PRC Pomerania Province Branch,
- PRC West Pomerania Province Branch.

Altogether the NS distributed 4,711.1 MT of food worth PLN 21,466,436.97. 588,982 food parcels were handed over to 95,432 persons, appropriately selected, including more than 27,800 children under 15 years of age.

Within the Subprogram 2016 activities were carried out, financed from supplementary funds, aimed at strengthening autonomy and competencies in household management; for example:

- cooking workshops for different age groups, animated by nutrition experts, chefs and dietitians, presenting meal preparation ideas and explaining health benefits of food;
- dietary workshops promoting wholesome food,
- education programs, aimed at making participants acquainted with the principles of healthy feeding and of countering food waste.
- economic education workshops (learning how to draft and implement a household budget, as well as to supervise its execution, taking into account the cash and in-kind income of families, including the food donations received),

The number of participants in programmed workshops, carried out by PRC, totalled 11,532.

The “Yellow Plate” program is part and parcel of the PRC relief activities. Its first stage started in October 2016 and ended in August 2017, in the framework of a joint campaign of five major charities: Polish Red Cross, Polish Food Banks, SOS Children's Villages, Children's Friends' Association and Caritas, using a PLN 1,000,000 subsidy provided by the co-operating Kulczyk Foundation.

The program was implemented in 31 schools from October 2016 to August 2017 for 1,237 schoolmates from six provinces (Łódzkie, Lesser Poland, Mazovia, Opolskie, Sub-Carpathia and Pomerania). Throughout the reporting year food for 1,310 schoolmates was financed from PRC budget. Altogether 264,906 meals were served, as well as 26,030 more, funded by the NS. Besides, 86 lectures and workshops were carried out, delivered

by PRC volunteers and focused on principles of healthy eating, concerning e.g. the food pyramid. Thanks to the co-financed scheme, the participating establishments paid more attention to the educative value of wholesome nutrition for their pupils. The parents gladly joined the health promotion campaign, by organizing festivities and transgenerational meetings, in order to share their culinary experiences.

The program enabled the partner schools to improve the nutritional quality of the meals they serve, modifying the lunch menu by introducing more wholesome food e.g. a choice of vegetable salads proposed for lunch, and in this way, striving to meet the childrens' various tastes. Jointly with school canteen staff and catering services, different well-balanced menus were prepared, aimed at responding to young people's energy requirements. Consequently the habit of "gnawing on" unhealthy snacks after lunch was reduced. The dishes proposed contained veal, turkey, duck, fish, fruit and vegetables, as well as creamy soups. Yogurts, often served at the end of the meal also contributed to a food quality improvement. In one school, in October a "Baked Potato Feast" was organized, involving local people, who donated fruit and vegetables, for the purpose of making, together with their children, healthy salads. Contests were carried out, concerning wholesome nutrition. Smartly composed recipes and meals made of quality products attracted to school canteens more pupils, now persuaded into eating more fruit and vegetables. Contests were carried out, focused on proper nourishment. Many schoolmates became habitual consumers of canteen food, as soon as the latter's quality improved thanks to appropriate commodities used and to a skilful preparation. Having attended healthy eating workshops, they are more willing to eat fruit and vegetables.

From observations and reports of the teachers one may conclude that the betterment of food quality resulted in a diminished susceptibility to infections. In one school was launched the EU School Fruit Scheme, aimed at countering children's unhealthy eating habits.

Thanks to the program, the participating establishments started paying attention to health-oriented education. Lessons and lectures devoted to this subject were conducted. The schoolmates learned to appreciate nutritional value of different products and to keep up a wholesome diet. In the Subcarpathia Province the organizers managed to get involved in the program student volunteers from the group "Projector".

The program is to be continued: its second edition, began in October 2017 should end in August 2018.

The Council of Ladies, supporting the activities of PRC, focused on assisting the most deprived children, mostly in rural areas and on providing emergency relief to individuals. The significant moves they made during the year were the following:

- closing up the campaign "Let's give holidays to children badly-off", begun in 2016 (i.e. drafting reports for the partners and winding up the charity auction budget);
- discussing with PRC provincial branches about summer holidays to be organized in 2017;

- choosing the branches organizing summer holiday camps and selecting the children for participation, according to lists prepared by the branches on the basis of criteria set by the social security services of municipal and communal levels;
- partial financing of the 2017 summer holiday camps of the most deprived children, from rural areas in the provinces: Łódzkie, Lesser Poland, Mazovia (semi-camps), Subcarpathia and Silesia – altogether more than 400 children; apart from active recreation (including excursioning), the program had an educational character, since the young participants learned road safety and traffic rules, as well as basic first aid skills;
- reporting to the 2017 summer holiday campaign's partners, with a support of the Head Office Accountancy and Legal departments;
- honorary patronage of the Council of Ladies over first aid workshops for handicapped persons and cofinancing this event, organized in Szczyrk, on 16 and 17 November 2017 by the PRC Silesia province branch;
- donating funds for the purchase of parcels for children from flood-affected areas in the Kuyavia-Pomerania province;
- acquiring the honorary patronage of the wife of the President of the Republic, Ms Agata Kornhauser Duda over the campaign "Let's give holidays to children badly-off", in 2017;
- complicated arrangements of a charity concert in the park of Łazienki in Warsaw: talks with the partners, proposals submitted to foundations and associated big companies, by means of application generators, meetings with would-be donors, participation in radio and TV broadcasts, endeavours to get press patronages, media appearances, work on the event's program, including the entertainment's scenario; exchange of views on technical issues concerning the concert's organization; display of the donors' logos; producing billboards featuring the donors and the media; coordination of after-concert refreshments; transport of different stage props before and after the event, preparatory meetings and rehearsals; collecting, during several months, of auction items, describing and registering them, cooperating with a graphic artist and a photographer in creating a presentation of the occurrence of bidding; managing the logistics process; monitoring transfers of auction proceeds, designing a template, printing and sending out invitations to the concert, in particular to high ranking representatives of the State and local administration; coordination of travels of children's delegations; offering them meals and gift parcels, finding accommodation for them, employing an announcer and appointing one member of the Council to preside over the charity auction;
- a report on the concert was drawn up and sent to medial patrons, as well as posted on the website of PRC and on the FB page of the Council of Ladies;

- administering the Council's of Ladies FB page, for the purpose of informing the public about their activities and of meeting the requirements of the sponsors and the media.

It should be mentioned that the campaign "Let's give holidays to children badly-off" was patronized, on an honorary basis, for the third time, by the Wife of the President of the Republic. We are glad that the number of donors has been increasing and therefore every year more children can be sent on holidays they were yearning for.

PRC provincial and district branches conducted numerous activities for the sake of the vulnerable (apart from the traditional campaigns, e.g. "Easter with PRC", "Gold Rush", "Outfit for a Schoolmate" or "Red Cross Christmas Eve").

Besides, the NS received **four humanitarian consignments from abroad (weight 832 kg, worth PLN 7,056), as well as PLN 4,231,324 kg of goods from national donors, worth PLN 4,181,313.26).**

III 1.3. Promoting healthy lifestyle and developing voluntary blood donorship

Promoting health and a wholesome lifestyle, thus enhancing health-oriented attitudes of the population, one of the NS key statutory activities, address mainly children and youth. In this area, for those age groups, in 2017, were organized 10,315 contests, training courses, lectures, chats and related events, with the number of participants rising to 304,107. Targeting adults, 641 health promotion actions involved 46,224 persons.

„PRC Olympic Nationwide Healthy Lifestyle Contest”, the 25th edition of which was carried out in 2017, has been gaining popularity. According to the regulations in force, the competitors were divided into two age groups. i.e. secondary and upper secondary school levels. Altogether, 40,616 schoolmates from 3,276 establishments took part in the contest. Most of the district and all the provincial branches having participated in the preparations, all the stages were conducted smoothly.

During the first stage of the 25th edition of the PRC Olympic Nationwide Healthy Lifestyle Contest the competitors were allowed to complete online tests, like in previous years. Thanks to a partnership with Coca Cola HBC Poland, new technologies were made available; therefore the contest's conduct was facilitated. During the district stage the contestants persuaded many colleagues into the open air activities they were conducting.

Honorary patronage over this major event was extended by the Minister of National Education, the Chief Sanitary Inspector, the Rector of Łódź Medical University, Directors of the National AIDS Center and of the National Food and Nutrition Institute.

The finals of the yearly contest, at the national level, took place at "Trylogia" Hotel in Zielonka, near Warsaw, from 25 to 27 May 2017. All those involved, including the tutors, were accommodated in double or triple rooms with plumbing facilities and had full catering provided; respective costs were covered by the organizer, i.e. PRC Head Office, from the funds donated by Coca Cola HBC Poland, partner in the event.

The agenda of the finals consisted of a 100-question test about threats to human health, appropriate nutrition, environmental conservation and principles of healthy lifestyle. The contestants were also expected to present before the jury an action conceived and performed by themselves, aimed at promoting healthy lifestyle within their local

community, as well as to prove their life saving skills by practicing a CPR on a resuscitation manikin and to administer first aid to a simulated accident “victim”.

As a variety entertainment, a laughter yoga workshop was organized and directed by the first coach of this practice in Poland, Piotr Bielski. The meeting made participants aware of the opportunities opened up by this exercise, called pranayama, which incorporates yoga breathing and stretching techniques along with laughter and relaxation. In a safety zone during the session all the finalists were able to laugh loud, from the bottom of their hearts, thus activating their diaphragms. As an effect of the practice, tensions were diffused and the group was integrated.

32 contestants from the 16 provinces were involved in the Olympic finals, in two categories (secondary and upper secondary age groups).

Having examined the achievements of the participants and summed up all the parts of the contest, i.e.

- test aimed at assessing the knowledge of healthy lifestyle principles, first aid, promotion of health, prevention, conservation and activities of the RC and PRC in particular;
- practical FA examination;
- presentation of a pro-health action,

the jury, announcing their verdict, singled out the best contestants: at the secondary school level, representatives of provincial branches of Pomerania (1st), Podlaskie (2nd) and Mazovia (3rd Place), while in the upper secondary category, from the provinces of Warmia and Masurya (1st), Lubuskie (2nd) and Lesser Poland (3rd).

The supreme prize was awarded to the winner, Sabina Downar, female secondary school pupil representing the PRC Warmia and Masurya Province Board, by Prof. Małgorzata Wągrowaska-Danilewicz, MD, PhD, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the Medical University of Łódź, Krzysztof Baczyński, Regulatory Manager of Coca-Cola HBC Poland and Assoc. Prof. Antoni Olak PhD, DSc, member of the PRC Executive Board.

In promoting health, one of our core activities is the prevention of infectious diseases, with a particular focus on HIV/AIDS, while taking into account dangers resulting from a poor awareness of this threat amongst average Poles, and on the other hand, preoccupying statistics. Since the beginning of research in this domain in 1985 until the end of 2017 (making necessary corrections and updates, e.g. avoiding double registration of cases), HIV status was ascertained in 22,657 Polish nationals and aliens remaining in Poland. Among the infected persons registered, at least 6,347 got HIV through injection drug use, 1,758, through heterosexual intercourse and 3,451 through male-to-male sexual contact. Altogether, 3,558 AIDS cases were diagnosed, whereas 1,382 persons affected passed away (figures provided by the National Institute of Public Health – National Institute of Hygiene). PRC, likewise sister National Societies, conducts activities in this field, including training courses. **In 2017, throughout the country, their number reached 1,633, and the number of trainees, 38,379. In primary, secondary and upper secondary schools 34,407 pupils participated in 1,404 courses.**

Activities concerning the promotion of health and of wholesome lifestyle were also performed within summer holiday camps, organized by PRC provincial and district branches. **In 2017 in 29 community-based sojourns, training and recreational camps,**

the number of benefiting children and youth was 1,365, whereas 276 more took part in 9 holiday sojourns organized on part-time basis.

773 persons took part in recreation camps on non-remunerated basis, while 562 against payment and 30 on a businesslike principle. For part-time recreation beneficiaries, the figures are 208 in the non-remunerated and 68 in the remunerated categories.

In 2017, the PRC Head Office coordinated the following education programs targeting children and youth:

- **“I Care for my Health”** – concerning principles of wholesome foodstuff in kindergartens and lower primary school forms. The program’s aim is to strengthen the educational process through an information campaign and to promote appropriate nourishment. **During the year 2017, 147 establishments and 4,760 children were involved therein.**
- **“The Little Rescuer Helps you Help”** – about the first aid education in primary school forms 1 to 4. The **number** of trainees among children reached 14,252 in **290 schools.**
- **“Super-Squirrel, Friend of Jack and Jill”**: implemented in **405 establishments, the program reached 14,964 children.**
- **“I and my Teeth”**, for children aged 6 to 9. 702 schools joined in and the number of participants reached 41,219.
- **“I and my Smile”**, for children aged 10 to 12; involving 35,715 pupils from 588 establishments.

Moreover, was implemented

“Share out your Smile”. Since 2013 Polish Red Cross has been organizing, jointly with Wrigley Poland Inc., an education program (initially called **“Protect Kids’ Smiles”**); in the school year 2017/2018 the 5th edition is under way, conducted in partnership with the Polish Dental Association, Polish Society of Paediatric Dentistry, and Lux Med Group, with a support of **“Biedronka”** [Ladybird], discount supermarket chain.

The program’s purpose is to teach children aged 5 to 13 to prevent caries by caring for their oral cavity hygiene.

By carrying out this program, we intend to diminish the number of affected children in Poland, where the incidence of dental decay remains one of the highest in Europe.

A survey-based report of IPSOS, made in several provinces at the request of Wrigley Inc. after the program’s first edition, reveals that as many as 80% children are affected.

The program’s 5th edition initiated a series of activities throughout the country, where from September to November 2017 were performed 11,595 check-ups. At every instance, the dentist filled in a questionnaire to assess the patients’ oral hygiene practices and dental status.

Like in previous years, the program’s addressees were children aged 5 to 13 from selected primary and secondary schools in the provinces of Kuyavia-Pomerania, Lubelskie, Świętokrzyskie, and Greater Poland. The teeth of school-attending children have been examined not only in provincial capitals like Bydgoszcz, Poznań, Lublin and Łódź, but also in smaller towns (like Grudziądz, Włocławek, Piła, Puszczykowo, Wiry, Włodawa,

Siedliszcze, Pabianice, Końskie, Skarżysko-Kamienna, Starachowice, Staszów, Bodzechów, Lubartów, Kalisz and Ostrów Wielkopolski).

Thanks to mobile cabinets the prevention campaign was extended to many schools and engaged PRC staff members and volunteers, from Squirrel Clubs School PRC circles and “SIM” groups.

Besides, from September 2017 to June 2018, classes are being conducted on dental cavity hygiene, attended by more than 100,000 pupils in various primary schools all over the country. They use materials prepared for the “Protect Kids’ Smiles” program, targeting children aged 5 to 9.

The IPSOS report, worked out at the end of the 5th edition, shows that in the five provinces taken into account, caries remains a problem among school-attending children: 72% (almost three quarters) are affected. Enquiries prove that the prevalence is higher in residents of rural areas and villages than in town and city dwellers. Boys in general and children in the 5 to 9 age group are also at greater risk.

In all the provinces surveyed, some 2/3 of the children go to the dentists once or twice a year, but according to experts, the frequency of dental visits has hardly any impact on the incidence of caries in the kids examined. However, what contributes to a diminishing of the number of cases is brushing one’s teeth more often, but also using other necessary hygiene means.

The IPSOS report gives ground for a comprehensive long-term strategy, in particular in the field of education, aimed at improving the adolescents’ state of dentition. Dental care habits must be inculcated into the youngest children. A campaign should be envisaged, addressing the population, to point out harmful consequences of neglecting oral hygiene.

The 5th edition of “Share out your Smile” program was held under the honorary patronage of:

- Ministry of National Education,
- The Children's Ombudsman,
- Governor of Łódzkie Province,
- Governor of Świętokrzyskie Province
- Governor of Kuyavia-Pomerania Province,
- Marshal of Łódzkie Province,
- Marshal of Świętokrzyskie Province,
- Marshal of Lubelskie Province,
- Paediatric Dentistry National Consultant,
- Conservative Dentistry and Endodontics National Consultant,
- Paediatric Dentistry Łódzkie Province Consultant,
- Paediatric Dentistry Świętokrzyskie Province Consultant,
- Paediatric Dentistry Lubelskie Province Consultant,
- State Łódzkie Province Sanitary Inspection,
- State Bydgoszcz Provincial Sanitary Inspection,
- State Lubelskie Province Sanitary Inspection,
- Greater Poland Province Sanitary Inspector.

- Presidents of cities of Bydgoszcz, Toruń, Łódź, Poznań, Lublin, Grudziądz, Włocławek, Pabianice, Ostrów Wielkopolski, Kalisz, Piła, Chełm, Skarżysko-Kamienna, Starachowice and Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski,
- Mayors of towns of Włodawa, Lubartów, town and commune of Końskie and of Staszów,
- Forepersons of Końskie, Starachowice, Staszów, Ostrowiec

Media patronage was provided by

- Gazeta Wyborcza (its release on health),
- Poradnik Zdrowie,
- Magazyn Stomatologiczny,
- Nowa Stomatologia,
- Nowy Tydzień (for Lublin and Chełm),
- Wrota Świętokrzyskie,
- Telewizja dla Zdrowia,
- Radio Kielce,
- Radio Lublin,
- Radio Gra Toruń,
- mjakmama.pl,
- MiastoDzieci.pl,
- Czas.Dzieci.pl,
- wlkp24.info,
- PortalZdrowiaDziecka.pl,
- PromocjeWloclawskie.pl,
- StomatologiaNews.pl.

During the program's 5th edition the amount of PLN 795,736 was collected.

In 2017 in the NS were operating 1,079 Voluntary Blood Donors' Clubs, totalling 27,035 PRC members and 52,799 volunteers, who donated altogether 114,505.380 litres of blood, which stands for 27.04% of total blood volume received from honorary donors. Apart from club members, in other units of the NS, there were 1,621 PRC members and 4,290 volunteers.

Throughout the country several initiatives were launched, including 3,403 activities pertaining to blood collection. Among them should be mentioned:

The 14th edition of the Nationwide School and University Tournament, "Young blood saves life", for the school and university year 2016/2017. 11,987.33 litres were collected from 11,425 schoolmates and 4,029 students. In 13 provinces, among participating establishments were 257 upper secondary schools and 15 universities.

- The 12th edition of the operation **"Firemen in Honorary Blood Donorship – Ardent Rescuer – Hot Blood"** was organized in collaboration with the National Headquarters of the State Fire Service and with the Executive Board of the Association of Voluntary Fire Brigades in the Republic of Poland. 54 detachments of the State Fire Service, 198 units of voluntary brigades took part in the project. Altogether, in 2017, 2,912 firepersons donated blood and promoted the idea of this non-remunerated gesture. As a result of the program's implementation, from 1 January to 10 December 2017 in the 12

provincial districts having sent reports on the campaign, were collected from firepersons and persons encouraged by them, 7.219 litres of blood.

- **The 10th edition of “We collect blood for Poland”** campaign – together with a group of independent businesspersons, under the label “Musketeers Group” (Intermarché and Bricomarché supermarket chains) – deployed in 15 provinces, covering 108 localities. Apart from blood collections, numerous promotion actions were conducted: first aid shows, displays of rescue techniques, arts competitions and stage performances. During the programmed events more than 3,000 persons donated 1,300 litres of blood. The campaign has yielded, since its beginning 10 years ago, almost 15,000 litres.

In compliance with provisions of the Act on the Public Blood Service concerning the procedure for medal awarding, with financial support from the Ministry of Health, the “Honorary Blood Donor Medal” and the respective title were conferred on 27,603 persons.

Every year, in November, the Voluntary Blood Donorship Days are celebrated, when the most deserving donors obtain State decorations – “Honorary Blood Donor Decoration: Meritorious to National Health” – but also PRC Honorary Blood Donor Medals, the “Crystal Heart”, and other decorations awarded by the NS. In 2017 the President of the Republic bestowed State medals upon individuals for their achievements in blood donorship and in disseminating the Red Cross values within the civil society:

- Cavalier’s Cross of *Polonia Restituta* Order – 9 persons,
- Gold Cross of Merit – 45 persons,
- Silver Cross of Merit – 75 persons,
- Bronze Cross of Merit – 139 persons.

The Presidium of the National Voluntary Blood Donorship Council, having examined 2,463 applications for the “Honorary Blood Donor Decoration: Meritorious to National Health”, submitted by the PRC provincial branch boards, rejected 345 on formal grounds. Actually, upon proposal of the NS, the Ministry of Health gave this medal to 2,098 non-remunerated blood donors.

The Chapter of “Crystal Heart”, after due consideration of the 95 applications sent in, bestowed this decoration upon 73 deserving voluntary blood donors for their involvement in the development of donorship within the SN.

Cooperation, lasting for several years now between the Presidium of the NVBDC and the Committee for Promotion of Blood Donorship within the Border Guard, resulted in setting up a section representing donors from the aforementioned State agency within the PRC National VBD Council.

Apart from the reported activities of the NS at the country level, provincial and district branches conducted several promotion campaigns, aimed at integrating the donor community, i.a.:

The PRC Lower Silesia Province Branch organized, in 2017, the 41st edition of the Voluntary Blood Donor Rally, “The Red Rose”, from 6 to 10 June, in Nowa Ruda. 280 persons (adults and children) representing 22 VBD clubs from most of the provincial branches participated in this integrative event, the oldest of this kind in the NS.

The PRC Lubuskie Province Branch together with the provincial PRC VBD Council, staged the 31st VBD National Motor-car Rally. The contestants were accommodated from 24 to 27 August 2017 in the PRC Recreation and Training Centre in Sława. The competition, held on the itinerary Sława-Sulechów-Sława, but also on the premises of the establishment, consisted in a number of dexterity exercises. Traditionally, on the agenda were knowledge tests about Red Cross and voluntary blood donorship, traffic regulations and the region concerned, as well as a first aid practice test. The event was patronized by the Lubuskie province governor Władysław Dajczak, the mayors of Sława Cezary Sadrakuła and of Sulechów, Ignacy Odważny, as well as Senator Waldemar Sługocki. 43 teams from 14 provinces, totalling more than 250 persons, were participating.

Every year in many regions of Poland several recreational and integrative events are performed, i.e. athletic meetings, shooting and angling tournaments, chess championships or family picnics. Here are some examples of such events in the reporting year:

In 2017, twice, line-fishing competitions of PRC VBD Clubs were organized in Bielsko-Biała district: one in May in the pond “The Crucian”, owned by the Polish Angling Association (PAA) in the above mentioned town, Grenady street, carried out by the VBD Club associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary Visitation parish in Bielsko-Biała-Halców, and in October, in the pond of Kobiernice, owned by the PAA. This contest was organized by the aforesaid Roman Catholic Church-related club, together with their donor counterparts at the “Nemark-Poland” plant in Bielsko-Biała and “The Flame”, another club within the Voluntary Fire Brigade in Kobiernice. Team and individual competitions were held for 81 participants representing VBD clubs from the PRC Bielsko-Biała district branch. During the tournament fish were hooked, weighing altogether 16,760 kg, and quickly returned to the pond.

On Saturday 10 June 2017 took place in the PRC West Pomerania Province a VBD Club Float Fishing Challenge, staged for the 19th time. The Mayor of Węgorzyn, Monika Kuźminska, extended her patronage over the competition, prepared by the Łobez county PRC VBD Club, jointly with the Polish Angling Association’s circle, “The Eel” in Węgorzyn. 12 teams competed: Łobez, Szczecin, (2 teams each), Banie, Goleniów, Stargard Rolling Stock Repair Workshops, Gryfice, Nowogard, Dobra, Gryfino and Płoty. The event was financed from the Łobez local community budget, within the public task “Promoting healthy lifestyle by developing non-remunerated blood donorship”. In the team competition the winner was the PRC VBD Club from the PRC Szczecin (West Pomerania) provincial branch, the top contestant was Piotr Działkowski, from the VBD Club “The Gift of Life” associated with the Goleniów Cultural Center. The largest fish was caught by Wojciech Gała from the VBD Club in Banie.

On 24 June 2017 for the fifth time was carried out, **in Kędzierzyn-Koźle, Michał Kubal Memorial Provincial Angling Competition for Voluntary Blood Donors** from Opolskie Province, co-organized by PRC VBD club associated with the Holy Spirit and Blessed Mary Mother of the Church parish and the Kędzierzyn-Koźle circle No. 1 of the Polish Angling Association (PAA). 9 teams represented PRC VBD clubs from the Opolskie province. The event was expected to raise the level of donors’ integration and to promote a wholesome way of life, based on sport and recreation, including amateurish line-fishing. The referee was Mr. Mieczysław Ferdzyn from the PAA. Once the fish weighed, results were announced and prizes awarded. The best competitor turned out team

No. 1 from the PRC VBD Club in Krapkowice, followed by PRC VBD Club in Głubczyce and PRC VBD Club “Downtown” at the District Branch in Kędzierzyn-Koźle. As individuals, anglers from Krapkowice and Głubczyce were recognized as the best.

On 19 August 2017 on Otmuchowskie lake took place **Provincial Angling Championship of PRC Voluntary Blood Donors**, organized by PRC Otmuchów District Branch in cooperation with the District Foreman’s Office in Nysa and the PRC Opolskie Province Branch. Eight teams from VBD Clubs of the above named province entered into rivalry with each other. The biggest catch was made by the PRC VBD Club at the Preventive Autonomous Subdivision of the State Police in Opole, whereas the second place winner was PRC VBD in Głubczyce. Mr Jarosław Jaros turned out to be the best angler. Cups and diplomas were handed out by Andrzej Szuba, member of the PRC Opole Branch Board, Robert Burzyński, vice-president of the provincial PRC Voluntary Blood Donorship Council and Teresa Stopyra, president of the PRC Otmuchów District Board.

On 2 September in Babi Loch fishery was staged the **3rd Angling Championship** of members and followers of the Association for Development of Brzeska Territory, as well as of voluntary blood donors from Brzeg PRC VBD clubs in this town. Integration of the communities and promotion of voluntary blood donorship were the objectives of this event. The best anglers received cups, diplomas and prizes.

On 7 October 2017 the **PRC Lesser Poland province branch organized, in Czerwieński Boulevard in Cracow, the 4th Race for Blood**. This charity sporting event is meant to promote the voluntary blood donorship, to raise funds for its development and to popularize a healthy lifestyle by open-air running. The Race for Blood appeals not only to those who run as professionals or amateurs, or even who try to catch a morning tram, but also to those who, needing to help people are persuaded that good will can do miracles and save someone’s life. Altogether 800 runners participated and 11.7 litres of blood were collected from 26 persons.

III 1. 4. Disseminating the Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values of the international humanitarian law applicable to armed conflicts and of knowledge about the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement remains one of the core statutory task of Polish Red Cross. Within activities pursuing this aim should be mentioned:

- **21st Polish School of International Humanitarian Law**, held from 20 to 24 November 2017 in a cultural workers residence of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, **in Radziejowice**. The group of 29 trainees consisted of university students, representatives of the Headquarters of the Polish Fire Service, members of the armed forces, of units subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior, as well as of employees of PRC branches and Head Office, but also of NGO activists. The lecturers were members of the PRC Committee for Disseminating IHL, officials from the Ministry of National Defence and of the Polish Refugee Council. The workshops, like in precedent years, were focused on case studies related with the contents of lectures. The course’s coorganizers were the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Culture and National Heritage, as well as the National Headquarters of the State Fire Service.
- **Professor Remigiusz Bierzanek Memorial Contest** – The closing ceremony of the 21st edition of the Polish School of International Humanitarian Law was marked by

the handover of awards to the winners of Professor Remigiusz Bierzanek Memorial Contest of LL.B. and LL.M. dissertations and LL.D. theses treating of IHL, organized for the 20th time. The prizes had been funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Legal and Treaty Department). Again, like in the precedent year, graduation works were acknowledged in this category. A call for candidates was launched, in view of the contest's following edition, and posters announcing it were sent out to PRC branches.

- **The Committee for Dissemination of the International Humanitarian Law, attached to PRC Executive Board** held one session in 2017. On the agenda were the Polish School on IHL in Radziejowice, and Professor Remigiusz Bierzanek Memorial Contest. Other topics were: the conference in Cracow on the protection of cultural heritage in armed conflicts, an envisaged training for journalists and courses organized by the Headquarters of the State Fire Service for civil service employees.
- **The PRC Committee of Red Cross Emblem Protection** took up 32 cases at the central level, and performed at least a dozen internal consultations. The Committee's chairperson delivered a number of lectures on the protection of emblem for PRC staff members and uniformed services, as well as for students of the War Studies University and Warsaw University. The Committee also assisted the Promotion Department in working out a logo meant to celebrate the NS centenary.
- **The Inter-ministerial Committee for International Humanitarian Law:** PRC representatives participated in this body's regular meetings, in order to report on the fulfillment of humanitarian pledges.
- **Lectures/training courses/publications** – the Department's staff members took part in a number of sessions devoted to IHL at the Law Department of Warsaw University and delivered lectures to soldiers and NCOs during a seminar in IHL at the Faculty of Law at Warsaw University; they also conducted a series of lectures and workshops for soldiers and NCOs, organized by the Military Centre for Civic Education and the War Studies University. Magdalena Stefańska, LL.D., published two scientific papers on international humanitarian policy with regard to action strategy in Australia and Oceania and within the context of the crime of genocide (the two texts are available in the IHL Library).
- **IHL Library** – in 2017 the IHL Dissemination Centre was opening access to its resources for teachers, students and pupils not only from Warsaw, but from the whole country, who could either read books on the spot, or borrow them. The premises were updated, whereas new publications received from IFRC, the ICRC and several friendly publishing companies, were donated to the winners of Prof. R. Bierzanek Memorial Contest.
- **“Exploring Humanitarian Law”:** talks were being held with the Ministry of Education and the Center for Education Development about this program's implementation, in particular through the repeated launch of the on-line course for teachers and the production of a board game, “Limito – even wars have limits”. Thanks to its licence, obtained from the French Red Cross, the publication's translation and cost estimate could be made. A set of activities was agreed upon with the CED, depending on a subsidy for 2018 from the Ministry concerned.

- A one-day **workshop for journalists**, i.e. reporters covering the activities of peacekeeping missions or authors of papers on armed conflicts. The training course, financed by the IFRC, was conducted by Marcin Marcinko, LL.D., chairperson of the Committee for Dissemination of IHL, and attended by 16 persons. The topics discussed were i.a.: the journalists' legal status, from the IHL point of view, their rights and obligations while reporting on armed conflicts, including situations of arrest and detention, but also basic definitions contained in the provisions of IHL.

PRC provincial and district branches carried out a number of dissemination activities concerning IHL, among others:

The 21st “Spreading Knowledge about IHL” contest, staged within the World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day and the PRC Week, on 6 May 2017, by the PRC West Pomerania Branch in Szczecin. The honorary patronage over the event had been assumed by the marshal of province, Mr Olgierd Geblewicz and by Ms. Magdalena Zarębska-Kulesza, provincial school inspector; the competition addressed youth of upper secondary level. The competition was renewed and limited to one level (provincial) The writing test, for the six participants, contained 30 questions. The opening address was made by Paweł Krzysiek, Communications Manager at the ICRC Delegation in Syria, who, in a short film registered in Damascus, talked about the Organization's role in war-torn territories and encouraged the contestants to expand their knowledge of IHL, wishing them success. His speech made them aware of the need to apply in practice the IHL provisions they were expected to deal with during the competition.

They all deserve praise for their thorough knowledge of IHL, likewise their tutors who had prepared them for the contest. The winners of the first three places were awarded diplomas and prizes funded by the Office of the Marshal of West Pomerania Province, i.e. IT devices (e-book reader, wireless loudspeaker, and power bank), as well as books offered by the PRC provincial branch in Szczecin.

Activities of the Group for Disseminating IHL in the Lesser Poland Province Branch, presided by Assoc. Prof. Zbigniew Kwasowski, from the “Commission of National Education” Pedagogical University of Cracow. This body consists of representatives of the above mentioned school's Security Education and Civic Education, of Jagiellonian University in Cracow: Faculty of Law and Administration (Department of Public International Law), likewise of its Center of IHL and Human Rights, of Andrzej Frycz-Modrzewski Cracow University (Faculty of Security Sciences) and of Academy of Business in Dąbrowa Górnicza. The group, made up of 18 members, all of whom perform core dissemination activities, had five sessions in 2017; among their common achievements is the organization of the 13th edition of Prof. Andrzej Pankowicz Memorial Competition on Disseminating IHL, for schoolmates from military establishments of secondary and upper secondary levels, from Lesser Poland province; on the other hand they were involved in preparing for the celebration of the PRC centenary.

Under commitment of the State, Polish Red Cross runs a national tracing service, as provided for by the Geneva Conventions. Among the main responsibilities of this unit are activities for the sake of victims of the Second World War, of other armed conflicts and of natural disasters. It also conducts researches for humanitarian reasons.

During the year 2017 the Service received **9,926** letters, domestic and international, concerning **9,537** persons. Questions about the latter concerned

- tracing family members – **613**,
- issuing certificates of war vicissitudes – **1,832**
- searching for war graves – **3,938**;
- various matters – **3,181**.

The number of cases opened reached **3,700**, while **3,578** cases were closed, in 2017.

- inquiries launched; outcome expected: **2,781**;
- applications for issuance of documents; **112**.
- correspondence about search for war graves and exhumations carried on – **807**,
- positive outcomes of inquiry – **257**,
- negative outcomes of inquiry – **540**,
- satisfactory certificates – **959**,
- dissatisfactory certificates – **1,069**,
- grave locations ascertained (military and civilian war victims) – **673**,
- negative results of grave search notified – **73**;
- messages – **7**,
- various correspondence, domestic and international – **1,740**.

Altogether, in 2017,

- **447** new individual documents, obtained from Polish and foreign archives, were filed,
- **40,144** original nominative documents concerning war victims were entered into the database,
- **4,328** documents were scanned,
- **1,345** applicants were received personally.

The following core activities of the PRC National Tracing Service, carried out in 2017, should be mentioned:

- looking for persons unaccounted for during wars and other armed conflicts or man-made and natural disasters,
- issuing wartime certificates based upon NS own archives or upon documents received as a result of our solicitations;
- search for war graves in Poland and abroad;
- participation in exhumations of war victims;
- participation in inquiries launched for humanitarian reasons, upon request of immediate family members;
- transmitting RC messages (between relatives) to and from persons remaining in conflict zones;
- receiving people concerned; giving them as much information as possible about the results of inquiries and the certification procedure.

The volume of mail dealt with has been slightly changing. There has been a considerable increase in requests for information about war graves. Because of the complexity of many cases concerning people separated from each other during the Second World War, numerous contacts are needed with national and foreign institutions;

therefore inquiries prove time-consuming. Due to the Service's diligence, sometimes the outcome turn up positive.

As a consequence of the nation-wide registration of war graves and remembrance sites, we continue our inquiries and produce certified copies of documents for the institutions responsible. Our tracing endeavours are also made on behalf of the Institute of National Remembrance and its territorial departments investigating into war crimes, and at the request of courts or provincial State administration entities.

Gradual digitalization of the Service's archives is under way. Documents are scanned while being entered into the Q-BINF database. In case of need, papers undergo conservation work.

Amidst daily routine occupations in 2017 the Service was facing money transfer delays after the contract's signature; eventually the first installment of the subsidy was received in mid-March only.

During almost three months, when funds were not released for the performance of the public task, current expenses of the PRC National Tracing Service were covered by the PRC Executive Board; therefore NS own projects and statutory tasks were executed only to a limited extent.

In the 2nd quarter of the year, the Service encountered problems in finding appropriate company for repair and maintenance works planned in the 2017 budget. The grant amount proved insufficient, due to the growing number of man-hours needed and to rising costs of building materials. Consequently, basic repairs, planned for summer, were done in September; therefore, some of the Service's activities were slowed down.

As far as the envisaged updating of the security control system is concerned, again, once the bids examined and the cost estimates compared, a decision was made to put off the plan indefinitely.

From April to June 2017 recruiting staff members became urgent twice. In spite of a wage increase in the course of the year, the Service still cannot meet the expectations of applicants having appropriate knowledge (in particular of foreign languages and history). In 2017 four persons were employed. Making a new staff member catch up to the specific requirements of the job takes more than a year, when his/her work is thoroughly analyzed; therefore the recruitment process lengthens. Notwithstanding the pay rises above mentioned, the Service continues to tackle staff shortages, unable to offer attractive salaries to those who could envisage long-term career development within the PRC. Usually, employees quit their job, for financial reasons, within a few years after recruitment.

When, at the end of October 2017, part of the 2nd floor of the PRC building was flooded, the archive rooms affected had to be dried. The documents stored were relatively untouched; therefore, protective measures were taken, following the advice of the cooperating conservator and of Conservation Laboratory of the National Library. As a consequence, the need to deactivate the archives for more than three weeks disorganized the Service's work.

Throughout the year 2017, the management and staff of the National Tracing Service attended, but also organized on its premises many initiatives and events within their field of activity:

- On 7 March a PRC representative took part in the reburial ceremony of Soviet Army soldiers in Gryfino.
- On 17 March a PRC NTS delegation participated in the commemoration of the 72nd anniversary of Stalag's 344 liberation in Lamsdorf, Łambinowice.
- From 4 to 8 April the Head of Service attended the annual conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent NS representatives, from Europe, United States, Canada and Australia, convened by the ICRC in Oslo. Under debate were problems faced by NSs in their everyday work. Focus was made on cooperation of European TSs with their counterparts in countries affected by armed conflicts, e.g. Syria, Iraq or Somalia. Since the conference in 2017 was expected to deal also with emergencies, the ICRC invited staff members from European NSs, responsible for disaster coordination: from PRC came the Head of Program Department.
- From 2 to 6 May the Head of Service took part in a meeting of PERCO (Platform for European Red Cross Cooperation on Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants) in Stockholm.
- On 18 May staff members of the Service had a meeting with Prof. Krzysztof Szwagrzyk, Deputy President of the Institute of National Remembrance, held during exhumation works conducted on "Łączka" [Small Meadow] at the Powązkowski Cemetery in Warsaw. The Service has been cooperating with the INR, following the discovery of mortal remains of World War 2 victims, buried in the above-mentioned cemetery and exhumated for sanitary reasons in the post-war period.
- Like in previous years, the Service, within the "Museum at Night" campaign, on 20 May, made available to the public its nonpareil archives, including genuine files containing data of concentration camp and other nazi jail inmates, registers of hospitals for wounded insurgents and other evidence items related to the Warsaw uprising, but also death certificates of Polish nationals who passed away in camps and prisons on the territories of Germany and Poland. The visitors had an opportunity to check, if the name of a relative had been registered, or to submit a request for tracing. The 2017 edition of "Museum at Night" attracted the largest number of visitors so far.
- On 19 June representatives of the PRC NTS met the management of the INR Office of Search and Identification to discuss cooperation concerning victims of totalitarian regimes.
- On 21 June the Deputy Head of Service attended a ceremony organized by the Pawiak Prison Museum to mark the National Day of Remembrance for the Victims of Nazi German Concentration and Death Camps.

- On 22 June PRC NTS employees participated, in Warsaw, in a meeting convened by the INR Office for Commemorating the Struggle and Martyrdom; focus was put on former torture chambers in the city. A lecture delivered by the head of INR District Historical Research Office was followed by several visits: to the quarter of Praga, to the Bródno cemetery and to the Mokotów Custody Suite, Rakowiecka street. The latter, because of its tragic history, will be transformed into a Museum of Doomed Soldiers and of political prisoners of Polish People's Republic.
- On 23 June the Head of Service joined the team of INR Office for Commemorating the Struggle and Martyrdom for an on-site verification of "Stronghold 3" in Pomiechówek, near Warsaw, where a German penal and investigative jail was located.
- On 15 July employees of the PRC NTS, in Ełk cemetery, commemorated, together with representatives of other institutions, victims buried in the Polish Military Cantonment, by putting garlands on their graves; they also attended, at the war cemetery in Bartosze (Ełk county), the reburial of 2,974 German war victims, exhumated in Toruń-Glinki.
- On 11 August the Head of Service took part in a ceremony organized by the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression to pay homage to Polish nationals persecuted and murdered on the territory of the Soviet Union, in the framework of the "Polish Operation" in 1937 and 1938.
- On 9 September staff members of the PRC NTS were present at the Picnic of Non-Governmental Initiatives.
- From 13 to 15 September the Head of Service and her Deputy attended the annual meeting of archivists and database operators working on World War II-related documents.
- On 27 September the Deputy Head of Service participated in the opening of an exhibition "Museum in a Site of Remembrance" organized in the main building of the Sejm (Parliament's lower chamber) by the Central Museum of Prisoners-of-War in Łambinowice-Opole.
- From 25 to 28 September employees of the PRC NTS took part in the first training conference of the INR Office for Commemorating the Struggle and Martyrdom, focused on "Places of national remembrance on the territory of Poland".
- On 12 October in Warsaw was held a meeting of the Council of foundation "Memory"; the question for debate was about exhumating Wehrmacht soldiers, fallen in Poland during WW2. The Head of Service had been invited as member of the foundation's Council.
- From 25 to 27 October the Head of Service attended a meeting of PERCO in Sofia.

- On 26 October the PRC NTS received a visit of a delegation of the Central Museum of Prisoners-of-War in Łambinowice-Opole with the purpose to improve mutual cooperation focused on tracing of WW2 victims.

Activities aimed at shaping humanitarian attitudes, susceptibility to human suffering and respect for human dignity address mainly children and youth. Projects in those age groups are implemented in school and university circles, as well as within Voluntary Youth Instructors Groups (SIM), who convey them to local communities. **In 2017** were active:

- **2,429 school and university circles, and 23 SIM groups, totalling 46,185 members and 28,677 volunteers,**
- **846 “Squirrel” clubs, in kindergartens and lower primary classes; their membership amounted to 25,584.**

The SIM groups, a breeding ground for PRC human resources, were operating in 11 provincial branches.

The programs implemented within youngest group of NS members and volunteers focused on welfare assistance, on countering social dysfunctions, on security in a broad sense, on their ability to function within their community, on children and youth development, and last but not least, on health and wholesome lifestyle. Being involved in campaigns like “Gold rush” “Outfit for a schoolmate”, “Easter with PRC” or “Red Cross Christmas Eve”, made them more aware of other people's needs, able to render assistance and respectful towards the principles of community life. Thanks to activities of that kind they improve their self-evaluation and enhance their awareness of existing needs, thus overcoming idleness and boredom. Provincial and district branches were managing day rooms and carrying out local programs targeting different age groups. Local community leaders play an important role in all the activities addressing youth and children.

III 1. 5. Strengthening the National Society’s core, organizational and financial capacities, in order to make it execute statutory tasks more efficiently is the fifth priority area determined by the National Congress. In that field, four strategic goals were singled out:

- to modify the NS structure and organizational scheme, as well as the functioning of statutory bodies, in order to more effectively support the activities of members and volunteers,
- to ensure adequate funding for the functioning and activities of PRC, including the implementation of the programs adopted,
- to efficiently manage and develop human resources,
- to professionalize promotion activities conducted by PRC.

The most serious problem is to raise enough money for financing the current functioning, including statutory membership contributions to international entities (IFRC, RC EU Office). The parliamentary Association for Supporting PRC took a tentative pledge to help sort out these difficulties.

Activities were continued aimed at amending the PRC Act.

In 2017 were functioning 16 provincial branches, 201 district branches and 22 PRC delegations. Besides, apart from school and university circles, “SIM” groups, “Squirrel” clubs and Voluntary Blood Donors Clubs, referred to in other parts of this report, there

were 251 circles (professional or in communities), totalling 5,116 adult members, including 2,777 women and 3,751 volunteers, including 2,363 women.

Altogether in 2017, in all basic units (circles, clubs, adult and youth groups) were enlisted as **members 78,722 persons**. During the year the number of **new adherents attained 7,696**, whereas the number of those who **resigned, 7,664**. Moreover, **85,227 volunteers** cooperated with the NS, including 28,667 youth and children, 52,799 within the voluntary blood donor movement and 3,751 in other adult milieus. 10,773 volunteers rendered services to the NS during less than 30 days during the year, whereas 2,575 exceeded this time limit.

From among the 201 district branches mentioned in the reports of their respective provincial counterparts, **as many as 22 fail to meet** the requirement of **§ 22, subsection 1 of the PRC Statutes** (i.e. to have at least 3 basic units comprising adult NS members); from among those district branches, 6 declare neither circles, nor clubs.

In 2017 were employed by the NS:

- 739 persons on a permanent basis (including 657 women): 187 in provincial branch offices and 173 in district branch offices and delegations, 68 at the Head Office, 3 in PRC training centers, 56 in care centers (as heads of posts/commissioned nurses), 163 persons were employed as healthcare providers (PRC “sisters”), 79 in PRC care centers, and 10 persons were running business activities on behalf of the NS;
- 4,248 persons working under temporary contracts, including 3,332 PRC “sisters”, 97 in PRC care centers, 47 in provincial branch offices, 776 in district branch offices, 6 at the Head Office, 4 in training centers, 141 running business activities and 17 persons as heads of posts/ commissioned nurses.

In 2017 we continued the NS promotion campaign addressing all the personal income tax-payers, under the slogan:

4 bread rolls, 2 little swans, write down two “fives”, draw a snowman, add “seven”:

0000 22 55 8 7

this way you will fill many stomachs.

Further one reads: “Helping is as easy as pie! Remember this National Court Register number and transfer 1% of your income to make the poorest children benefit from warm meals, holiday camps and education kits. Support the Polish Red Cross!!!”.

In 2017 the funds yielded by the “1% PIT program” were spent on financing, within the “Decent Childhood” campaign, meals in school canteens and day centers, summer holiday camps, school equipment, Christmas or Easter food parcels and after-hour education activities.

The Promotion Department of Head Office distributed the materials among provincial branches and produced a fan page for a campaign on Facebook. Provincial branches received also graphic designs ready to be printed and used in local broadcast messages.

The Promotional campaign “Decent Childhood” was carried on in 2017 in different ways and in partnership with several external entities; some of them have already proved their competence in common activities, others joined the campaign in the reporting year.

➤ **Collections in TESCO**

Since 2012 Polish Red Cross has been cooperating with TESCO Poland. Proceeds from collections carried out in its stores are used for the sake of beneficiaries of the “Decent Childhood” program, i.e. to finance Christmas parcels, school lunches and summer holidays for the deprived children. Every year three collections are carried out: at Christmas, at Easter and in September (for purchase of school supply kits).

In 2017, the funds raised amounted altogether to PLN 288,889.18, whereas since the cooperation’s beginning, they reached PLN 1,770,666.50. They enable us to finance support to children from poverty-stricken families. Last but not least, money must be spent on relief items on the territory of the respective provincial and district branches.

➤ **Collections in “Stokrotka”**

In 2017 we were continuing our campaign of raising funds and collecting goods in the retail network “Stokrotka” [Daisy]. The PRC provincial and district branches managed to gather in three operations PLN 50,547.25. The outcome since the campaign’s start is PLN 120,514.07.

➤ **Cooperation with Kingfisher/Castorama**

Throughout the year, the PRC Communication and Fundraising Division was cooperating with Kingfisher, owner of “Castorama” retail network. The grant we had received for this purpose amounted to PLN 138,450. Additionally the Company transferred PLN 50,000 to people affected by thunderstorms in Pomerania.

This cooperation relies on an international partnership of Kingfisher with the Red Cross, coordinated by the British National Society. The scope encompasses disaster preparedness and relief efforts after emergencies. Thanks to the funds received, in 2017 PRC purchased equipment for its Rescue Groups and published a leaflet for people living in places threatened by natural disasters. Within the program, in 2018, workshops are conducted for inhabitants of areas that are prone to flooding.

Polish Red Cross committed itself to

- organize, for those who live in flood-threatened zones, workshops, where PRC rescuers could explain how to care for oneself and one’s property, or to administer first aid to the victims;
 - buy for its teams complementary rescue equipment (including protective clothing);
 - buy rescue kits for inhabitants of the regions threatened by flooding, large-scale or local.
- **Continued campaign “A little help, a big joy”**

In 2017 the PRC Communication and Fundraising Division carried on cooperation with Procter & Gamble Co. Carrefour joined the initiative. Throughout the country we performed a common action “A Little Help, a Big Joy”, aimed at assisting children living in families worst hit by poverty. Consumers, when buying in Carrefour stores P&G products like Pampers, Lenor, Ariel or Gillette, could support Polish Red Cross beneficiaries wherever in the country. Actually 1% of the sales of P&G products in Carrefour stores were transferred to PRC to finance activities for the sake of its poorest beneficiaries. The campaign’s ambassador was Aneta Zając.

On the whole, P&G made a donation in kind, consisting in means of hygiene worth PLN 75,000 and another one, in cash, of equal value. Moreover, P&G financed the whole campaign (promotion materials and media coverage). The funds received enabled us to provide school supplies to deprived families. Besides, the Communication and Fundraising Division was endeavoring to set up a sustainable partnership with the above mentioned company. Cooperation continued in 2018, when we received, so far, PLN 332,636. Since the joint action began, in 2015, the amount of support provided reached PLN 639,636.

➤ **“SeniorON” program**

In 2017 the PRC Communication and Fundraising Division attracted a new corporate partner: the PZU [Polish Insurance Company] Foundation; for the implementation of the new program they donated PLN 73,000. Conceived and put into effect by the PRC C&FD, the project aims at increasing older people’s quality of life and at preparing them for ageing with dignity through an involvement in community activities. Our objective is also to strengthen intergenerational relationship by creating a space for mutual learning. The young and the elderly alike gain new skills. In the first edition took part more than 2,600 persons, including 1,600 seniors. The program will be carried on in 2018 with another partner.

➤ **PRC national relief campaigns**

One of the main tasks of the PRC Communication and Fundraising Division is to support provincial and district branches in their promotion activities. Every year the NS organizes such actions as “Easter with PRC”, “Gold Rush”, “Outfit for a Schoolmate” or “Red Cross Christmas Eve”. Apart from regular campaigns, the C&FD backed other initiatives, launched by the Program Department: “Protect Kids’ Smiles”, “First Aid Championship” or “PRC Olympic Nationwide Healthy Lifestyle Contest”. The C&FD prepares, for every campaign, background materials and reports for the media. By the way, we inform the latter about what else is going on in different branches. Descriptions of activities, as well as accompanying photographs are published on the webpage www.plc.pl and put on the NS Facebook profile.

Other activities of the Communication and Fundraising Division:

- Continuous communication in the framework of other departments’ operations; the role of C&FD is to inform the media, to cooperate with them, to produce news releases for the webpage and to stay in touch with journalists.
- Monitoring of local and national media.
- Preparing and producing positive messages for campaigns; manufacturing gadgets and publishing promotional texts.

- Cooperating with companies and looking for partners.
- Google Adwords – updating keywords, under a grant provided by Google Inc., enabling us to promote our webpage by means of this search engine.
- Managing the PRC Facebook profile, that now has more than 15,000 fans.
- Running the PRC booth at the largest picnic of NGOs in 2017 (“OFIP”).
- In 2017 the C&FD joined the Partnership for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), thus paving the way for cooperation with signing companies, would-be partners of PRC.
- Talks, begun in 2017, are underway with Zara Inc. about collecting second-hand clothing (proceeds from which would go to the PRC).
- We signed a contract with Aviva Inc.; under its terms GBP 44,500 were donated for a program to be implemented in 2018;
- Another activity aimed at making PRC fundraising program more sustainable on different levels of the NS framework, is the “Textiles” project, performed by most provincial branches. In 2017 on the territories of those involved in the project were placed 25,501 collection bins marked with the PRC logo. They all belong to the NS and have been bought for a ridiculous price (PLN 1) for the time of implementation. Donations stockpiled there consist of clothes, bed linen, toys, shoes etc. Proceeds from the sales thereof are spent on financing relief and education programs and on supporting other statutory activities. Collecting textiles within this program turns out to be a relief also for those who try to find out where to recycle useless clothing, shoes etc. In 2017 “Textiles” **netted PLN 2,913,999**. 15 NS branches participated, except the Greater Poland province. In the years 2014 – 2017 the program’s preparation and implementation brought to the PRC the total net amount of **PLN 9,511,754** (i.e. in 2014 – PLN 2,444,258; in 2015 – PLN 1,561,544; in 2016 – PLN 2,591,953; in 2017 – PLN 2,913,999). The PRC project “Textiles” supports natural conservation in the country, helping to maintain tidiness in cities, towns and villages. Another advantage resulting from this project is the possibility of buying, for persons under PRC care, special needs tricycles. In 2017 **509** vehicles of the kind, received from Ecotextil Foundations were distributed. Since 2015, when the “Textiles” project was launched, thanks to this cooperation, PRC provided to its beneficiaries more than 2600 tricycles worth PLN 5,200,000.

New webpage www.pck.pl. In 2017 cooperation was continued with Atom Inc., who prepared for us, free of charge, a new web page. It became operational in February 2018. A contract was signed with PayU, enabling our e-shop, since 2017, to accept payments online, whereas since February 2018, donations can be made on our page.

III. 2. International cooperation

Most important organizational issues

- At the request of international institutions 10 or so questionnaires were filled in and sent back, together with sets of information, as a contribution to an exchange of good practices between the International RC Movement’s components.

- The department was providing follow-up information via email and phone about the activities worldwide of the International RC Movement's components, about prospects of embarking on a mission abroad (8 requests monthly on the average); but also about ongoing and planned activities in Ukraine, Syria, as well as about the migration crisis affecting European countries.
- Materials concerning the activities of PRC and of the entire Movement were prepared and published on www.pck.pl webpage and in IFRC newsletters, thus contribution was made to a promotion of the NS at home and worldwide.
- Background information and operation materials were collected and made available to the NS Executive Board and the Management entity, with reference to meetings with partners, lists of matters dealt with in the preceding years, the framework of the International Movement and the extent of competence of its deliberating and decision-making bodies.
- Projects were drafted for the Ministries of Foreign Affairs (IHL Course in Radziejowice, Prof. Bierzanek Memorial Contest) and of National Education ("Exploring Humanitarian Law").
- Problem-focused and financial assessments of the Department's activities were also made.
- Information and promotion materials were prepared for the new PRC webpage; layout updates were made as well.
- Eight travels abroad of delegations were coordinated; this consisted in booking and ticket arrangements and in applications for a refund, at least partial. Attention should be drawn on the participation of the NS President in the Movement's statutory sessions in Turkey (November 2017); a report therefrom was submitted to the Executive Board at its December meeting.

In 2017, international cooperation encompassed the following activities, apart from those mentioned above:

- Contacts were maintained with the European Legal Supporters Group; participation in its works was being assured.
- Partnership with National Societies was maintained within the "Anti-Trafficking Network", focused on this kind of deprivation of liberty.
- The cooperation agreement was renewed with the Ukraine Red Cross; stress was put on an exchange of knowledge, experiences and good practices against the backdrop of crises, on youth activities and volunteering, as well as on internal communication. The agreement entered into force in March 2018.
- A meeting was coordinated of staff members and Executive Board's representatives with a delegation of the IFRC; on the agenda were the PRC financial situation and operational capacities. Ground was laid down for a "roadmap" and the NS is expected to follow its recommendations in the years to come. Four task groups were set up, consisting of Executive Board members, in order to address different issues: 1) who are we and where are we going? 2) how to improve the financial position? 3) how to upgrade communication? 4) how to strengthen the auxiliary role to public administration authorities?
- A meeting was arranged with representatives of the ICRC paying a visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw. The exchange of views concerned current relief operation in Syria and the extent of PRC cooperation with the Geneva-based Committee. Another outcome of this meeting is an invitation to a project, to be executed in 2018, with the online platform www.booking.com.

- Entrance was made into the work of the Parliamentary Polish Red Cross Group; at its december session were presented the NS achievements and ongoing challenges.
- **First Aid for Migrants** – together with the Foundation for Somalia a six month project was implemented, targeting migrants and refugees present in Poland. Six 8-hour first aid courses, conducted by PRC instrutors, and six three-month courses of the Polish language were organized. As many cultural integration events were staged. A lawyer is regularly on duty and a children’s corner was made available. Cultural assistants have been employed in order to support the beneficiaries. The events are publicized on PRC and on the Foundation’s webpages, as well as on the respective Facebook profiles. Earmarked funds, allotted by the IFRC, were used for this purpose.

One of the issues dealt with, while cooperation was continuing with different components of the International RC Movement, were joint actions to be taken in case of a disaster:

- Information was being shared about the international relief operation resulting from an appeal in favour of victims of conflicts, mainly in Ukraine and Syria.
- Preparation started, together with the Finnish Red Cross, of a relief project; unfortunately the grant application to the UE proved unsuccessful; we intend to resubmit it in 2018.
- Participation was effective in the Staff Management Course, organized by the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.
- Negotiations began with IFRC Europe Zone Office in Budapest concerning financial support to PRC Lubelskie Province Branch for its emergency warehouse; it was meant to be used in case of trans-border occurrences.

Among activities performed by the PRC International Department should be also mentioned cooperation with provincial branch boards:

- The IHL Centre makes provincial branches participate in preparations of Prof. Remigiusz Bierzanek Memorial Contest, thus contributing to the promotion of the whole NS; several students maintain contacts with the Centre, while consulting groundwork documents for their LL.B. dissertations.
- Employees and volunteers of provincial and district branches are invited to attend the Polish School of International Humanitarian Law in Radziejowice, where 10 places are dedicated to them every year.
- PRC provincial branches were involved in the implementation of “Exploring Humanitarian Law” program in secondary and upper secondary schools.
- PRC Committee of Red Cross Emblem Protection supported provincial branches, when their intervention was required in case of misuse of the emblem; the Committee also evaluated the logo projects submitted.
- Participation in a meeting with a delegation of the Ukraine Red Cross; a lecture about the IRC Movement, delivered at the 4th PRC Provincial Rally in Janów Lubelski.

International cooperation was conducted also by PRC branches, to the extent of respective needs and possibilities.

III. 3. Polish Red Cross highest decision-making bodies:

- The PRC National Congress was held twice in 2017:
 - Extraordinary in January for approval votes of the NS financial system and of the amount of deduction for the Solidarity Fund;
 - Regular, on 24 June, to accept descriptive and financial reports on the NS activities, to vote the acceptance of accounts of the Executive Board, to confer the dignity of PRC honorary member and to select an entity to perform an audit of PRC financial statement for 2017.
- In 2017 the PRC Executive Board had 11 sessions and pronounced 144 resolutions, regularly and by circulation.
- The EB Praesidium held its meetings according to needs, mainly before the Board's sessions, in order to examine draft documents to be presented during the debate. One resolution was voted by this body.
- The PRC Honorary Medal Jury met twice, examined 865 nominations and awarded 856 decorations, as a tribute to deserving persons and institutions:
 - to 60, of first degree,
 - to 100, of second degree,
 - to 192, of third degree,
 - to 542, of fourth degree.

The PRC Main Audit Committee had four sessions and one meeting with representatives of provincial audit committees.

IV. Supervision

In 2017 in PRC, 172 external inspections were carried out (by communal and municipal councils, Agricultural Market Agency, School Superintendent's Offices, State Sanitary Inspectorate, Polish Social Insurance Institution, Community Welfare Services, National Health Fund, National Labour Inspectorate). In 34 cases, audit recommendations were given; they were actually followed. In one instance, a supervision resulted in a fine imposed. In 136 cases the outcome was positive (no recommendation issued). Two provincial branch boards advised us of the lack of supervisory memorandum: Kuyavian and Pomeranian and also Mazovian.

V. Follow up to the recommendations of the Main Audit Committee – the latter did not issue any recommendation in 2017

VI. Recapitulation

In 2017 the NS was implementing the tasks set in the "PRC Strategy for the years 2016-2020", endorsed by the respective resolution of the National Congress in 2016. Focus was put on statutory activities, i.e. community welfare relief and home-based care for the bed-ridden, promotion of health and of a wholesome lifestyle, including voluntary blood donorship, rescuing and first aid. Much stress was laid on other statutory activities, i.e. promotion of Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values, dissemination of international humanitarian

law applicable to armed conflicts, as well as fostering tolerance and respect for human dignity.

The greatest number of programs and actions performed by the NS in 2017 concerned health and promotion of healthy, addressing, in particular, children and youth. “PRC Olympic Nationwide Healthy Lifestyle Contest”, as well as First Aid Championship turned out quite popular indeed.

Although care provision has been singled out as one of priority activities, and in spite of efforts made by provincial and district branches to obtain commissioned assignments, the number of care units and of contracts signed with local authorities, diminished; nevertheless, the number of PRC beneficiaries receiving neighbourly care increased.

Voluntary blood donors, active within PRC VBD clubs, make up a large group of PRC adult members and volunteers. Provincial and district branches participate in nation-wide blood donorship promotion campaigns, but also carry out their own projects in this field.

Notwithstanding a shrinking number of basic units and of members, the SN still can rely on a large group of activists, particularly among children and youth, as well as within the voluntary blood donor movement.

Like in previous years, putting into order the PRC framework turned out to be a failure. Still are recognized some district branches that do not meet statutory requirements.

More and more provincial and district branches are looking for external funding sources, e.g. apply for EU grants, either by presenting their own valuable projects, or by entering into different partnerships.

In 2017 very interesting social marketing projects came up. Executed in partnership with the PRC by global PR agencies and highly appreciated by professionals, they gain prizes and not only help our NS raise funds for its humanitarian activities, but also upgrade its image, thanks to their novelty.

This paper describes a number of Polish Red Cross activities performed in 2017 however, presenting each and every one proved impossible, for reasons of conciseness. Details about everyday work of the branches can be found in their respective reports, which served as groundwork for this document.

Report endorsed by the Polish Red Cross Executive Board on 18 June 2018.

*Prepared by the PRC
Head Office
Organizational Department*