



**Last farewell.** Yet another family is rent apart by the fighting that has devastated Bosnia-Herzegovina. Until recently the Croat, Muslim and Serb communities lived side by side in harmony. Now, with the fragmentation of what was once Yugoslavia, neighbours, friends and even relatives have become mortal enemies.

## TORN IN THREE





Laurent Rebours/AP/KEYSTONE

Uncertainty and fear govern the movements of innocent civilians, victims of the stratagem called "ethnic cleansing". Hundreds of thousands of people have been hounded from their homes and have sought refuge in other areas of Bosnia-Herzegovina or abroad. Large numbers have been detained in camps in appalling conditions.

Various governments, the United Nations and humanitarian and private organizations are trying to help, some through negotiation, some with food, medical and material assistance. None of the efforts of the international community seem to have had much impact so far on the Bosnians' predicament. It has proved nearly impossible even to persuade the parties to maintain a ceasefire. Assistance, while welcomed by most, is also seen as an indication that the suffering will be prolonged.

The ICRC has been thwarted in its efforts to visit all detainees, get the parties to uphold agreements made and ensure respect for the civilian population by combatants. Even aid workers' safety is threatened daily. Too often the red cross, designed to be a protective emblem, becomes an easily discernible target for sharpshooters. Despite these difficulties the ICRC will not give up. There is much to be done. Continuing vital activities such as reuniting families like the one pictured here and working for the release of all detainees are in fact the institution's *raison d'être*.