

Deutsches Rotes Kreuz - Carstennstr. 58 - 12205 Berlin

To
the interested public

Berlin, 29 May 2020

Information

Negotiations on the extension of the task “Clarification of fate - Second World War”

You may have learned from the public relations work of the GRC that, in accordance with a corresponding provision in the Tracing Service Agreement between the GRC and the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (BMI), it has been decided to end the federally financed task of clarifying the fate of missing persons of the Second World War in December 2023 as previously agreed.

On the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the GRC Headquarters had therefore issued a press release (*Annex 1*) calling on the population to submit inquiries to the GRC Tracing Service regarding relatives missing during the war in the near future and no later than December 31, 2021. This information is also relevant for many other National Red Cross Societies, for which the tracing/clarification of fate of Second World War missing persons remains an ongoing task.

The BMI has been telling the GRC for many years that the funding associated with the tasks of the GRC Tracing Service relating specifically to the Second World War and its aftermath are unfortunately finite. After having secured funding until the end of 2023, the above-mentioned Tracing Service Agreement was accordingly amended.

Due to the great media echo following the GRC press release and supporting voices from the German Bundestag, a potential willingness to continue the

Headquarters

Carstennstraße 58
12205 Berlin
Phone +49 30 85404 -0
www.DRK.de
drk@DRK.de

President
Gerda Hasselfeldt

**Chairman of the
Management Board**
Christian Reuter

Division/Team
2/22-Tracing Service Head
Office
Contact persons
Frauke Weber and
Dorota Dziwoki

Extension
-195
Fax
-495
E-mail
frauke.weber@drk.de

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task of “Clarification of fate - Second World War” beyond 2023 until 2025 became apparent.

The President of the GRC, Gerda Hasselfeldt, has therefore stated in a further press release (*Annex 2*) that the GRC is willingly available for renewed considerations and corresponding talks with the BMI in order to maintain this offer of the GRC Tracing Service beyond 2023. At the same time, she wrote a personal letter to the Federal Minister of the Interior asking him for his support in the corresponding budget discussions in the Bundestag and the Federal Government. Further efforts are being made to ensure long-term access to the files and documents of the Tracing Service in order to provide certainty for relatives.

The Tracing Service Head Office welcomes these current developments, even though it is unfortunately not yet clear at the present time whether future negotiations with the BMI will lead to the desired result. Regardless of this, the long-term funding and continuation of all other tracing service tasks remains ensured, for which the GRC Tracing Service is very grateful to the Federal Government.

As soon as the developments currently underway and the detailed coordination with the Federal Government, which is still necessary, are completed, the Tracing Service Head Office in the GRC Headquarters will provide further information for the public. This information may concern new deadlines and future changes in the responsibilities for inquiries regarding the Second World War.

Kind regards

On behalf of

sgd. Dorota Dziwoki
Head of the Tracing Service Head Office

Annexes: 2