

Selected Resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent applicable to IDRL

9th International Conference of the Red Cross, Washington, 1912 Resolution 4

Legal protection of privileges and rights of the Red Cross

States signatory to the Geneva Convention are asked to be good enough to make legal provision for according privileges and rights to Red Cross Societies, such as exemption from taxes and fiscal charges, postal and telegraphic charges, customs duty and others.

10th International Conference of the Red Cross, Geneva, 1921 Resolution 11

Relations between National Societies

1. No Red Cross Society shall set up a Section, Delegation, Committee or Organization or have any activity in a foreign country without the consent of the Central Committee of the National Society of that country and of its own Central Committee, especially as far as the use of the name and emblem of the Red Cross is concerned.

Central Committees are requested to give such approval generously when it is clear that the foreign Section is working exclusively on behalf of its own countrymen. In case of disagreement, the Central Committees may refer the question to the supreme authority of the International Red Cross.

It goes without saying that foreign Sections should, in the same way as the National Red Cross, respect the legislation and administrative measures of the country in which they are working, and operate always in agreement with the National Red Cross.

Where it is desired to set up foreign Sections in countries which have no National Red Cross or Red Crescent prior approval of the International Committee of the Red Cross must be obtained. Such Sections, once constituted, are invited, in the highest interest of the Red Cross, to encourage, by their example and influence, the formation of a National Society at the earliest date.

2. Such undertakings must be exclusively humanitarian, and

3. must be recognized and approved by the foreign Red Cross Society. It is desirable that the sending of a Red Cross mission, or the constitution of a Section on foreign territory, should be notified to the International Committee, with the names of the responsible directors, and that the International Committee should be kept informed of the activities of such missions or Sections.

NB: this resolution of the 10th Conference is to be read with the Resolution VII of the 16th Conference (London, 1938).

16th International Conference of the Red Cross, London, 1938 Resolution 7

Relations between National Societies

The XVIth International Red Cross Conference,

having taken cognizance of the proposal of the Chilean Red Cross and the Chilean Government, supported by eleven other delegations, regarding the relationship of National Societies inter se;

considering the recommendations of the Second Pan-American Red Cross Conference held in Washington in 1926,

that in order to safeguard the rights of each National Society on its own territory, the meaning of Resolution No. XI of the Xth International Red Cross Conference should be clarified as follows,

recommends to National Societies,

a) that no Red Cross Delegation, Section or Committee shall be established in foreign territory without the consent of the Central Committee of the National Society of the country concerned,

b) that this consent should only be asked for in exceptional circumstances, for purposes definitely determined in advance and for a limited period of time.

NB: this resolution of the 10th Conference is to be read with the Resolution 11 of the 10th Conference (Geneva, 1921).

23rd International Conference of the Red Cross, Bucharest, 1977

Resolution 4

The Red Cross and famine

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

considering that malnutrition and famine still prevail in many parts of the world and are a constant threat to human life, health and economic stability,

stressing that its fundamental principle of humanity necessitates Red Cross intervention,

recalling Resolution No. XII/1975 of the XXXIIIrd session of the Board of Governors of the League,

calls upon National Societies in famine-prone regions to include all feasible preventive measures in their current activities and disaster preparedness plans,

requests the Red Cross to collaborate more closely, especially in acute situations, with governments and intergovernmental organizations working in this field, in particular the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Disaster Relief Office,

appeals to governments to intensify their efforts to alleviate suffering in such catastrophes and urges the Red Cross to co-ordinate its activities more closely with those of governments.

23rd International Conference of the Red Cross, Bucharest, 1977

Resolution 5

Issue of visas to delegates appointed in connection with appeals for assistance in time of disaster

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

recalling that the Principles and Rules for Red Cross Disaster Relief, approved by the XXIst International Conference of the Red Cross (Istanbul, 1969), stress the need for rapid action in time of disaster, which necessitates careful and complete pre-disaster planning in National Societies and in the international bodies of the Red Cross,

noting that in Article 13 of the said Principles and Rules, National Societies are in particular responsible for obtaining travel facilities and the quick granting of visas for Red Cross personnel in relief operations,

observing that, in Resolution No XXV, the XXIst International Conference of the Red Cross (Istanbul, 1969) "urges all governments which have not already done so to prepare and to pass the necessary legislation enabling immediate and adequate action to be taken, in conjunction with the Red Cross, along the lines of a preestablished plan based on the disaster relief rules adopted by this Conference",

regretting that experience indicates that the obtaining of visas for disaster and relief delegates and teams remains a time-consuming procedure which often delays their departure,

urges National Societies to make representations to their governments, with a view to achieving an easing of governmental formalities for the entry of official League delegates or official national teams provided by other Societies in response to a League appeal,

recommends any National Society requesting assistance following a disaster to obtain from its government the assurance that the relief personnel sent out at the request of the League, whether official League delegates or teams made available by National Societies, will be given the advantage of simplified entry formalities, such as exemption from visa obligation, issue of visa at points of entry, or any other facility enabling this relief personnel to fulfil its mission without delay, while respecting local legislation; the Society launching the appeal shall inform the League of the measures taken by the government in this respect.

23rd International Conference of the Red Cross, Bucharest, 1977 **Resolution 6**

Measures to expedite international relief

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

considering the important part played by the Red Cross in assistance to the victims of natural disasters and other emergency situations,

reaffirming the solidarity of National Red Cross Societies and their duty to help each other when one of them is struck by an emergency situation exceeding its resources,

recalling that the plight of victims to a large extent depends on the speed with which adequate help arrives,

noting that there are still too many obstacles and difficulties which slow down the movement of international relief supplies and relief personnel to the detriment of those in urgent need of assistance,

noting with satisfaction the joint League of Red Cross Societies-UNDRO study on these obstacles, and the resulting recommendations concerning the measures to be taken to overcome them and to speed up the movement of relief personnel and supplies,

taking into consideration Resolution No 2102 (LXIII) adopted by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations on 3 August 1977 at its 2034th plenary meeting,

supports the League-UNDRO recommendations as set out in the annex,

hopes that the United Nations General Assembly will adopt them,

urges National Societies, governments, inter-governmental bodies and non-governmental organisations concerned with relief operations to implement these recommendations to the fullest possible extent,

requests the League, in liaison with the ICRC, to continue in its endeavours with organizations engaged in disaster relief, and in particular UNDRO, with a view to surmounting the obstacles and difficulties in the way of the despatch of international relief and the movement of relief personnel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Measures to expedite international relief

Recommendation A

It is recommended in accordance with paragraph 8 (b) of General Assembly resolution 2816 (XXVI) that potential recipient Governments, if they have not already done so, designate one single national relief authority to co-ordinate all domestic relief activities: this authority will collaborate with appropriate government departments and with domestic and international relief agencies in defining and quantifying those relief items required from abroad.

Recommendation B

It is recommended that potential recipient Governments waive requirements for consular certificates of origin and invoices, with respect to relief consignments (as distinct from normal commercial imports), on condition that adequate documentation from recognised relief agencies accompany such consignments: Examples of such documentation are provided in the LICROSS Recommended Procedures for Packaging and Labelling or Marking Consignments of Supplies for International Disaster Relief Operations, UNICEF shipping lists, and similar documents from other recognised relief agencies.

Recommendation C:

It is recommended that potential recipient Governments waive requirements for import and/or export licences, possibly through extending the scope of the Annex to the Convention of the Customs Co-operation Council (Provision 3 to 28) to apply to relief shipments destined for any kind of disaster.

Recommendation D:

It is recommended that potential recipient Governments waive - to the extent compatible with minimum standards of hygiene and animal protection - normal requirements regarding fumigation certificates and restrictions on food imports where these would impede the admission of relief essential for the protection of disaster victims.

Recommendation E :

It is recommended that all Governments waive requirements for transit, entry and exit visas for relief personnel acting in their official capacity as representatives of internationally-recognised relief agencies. In this connexion attention is drawn to resolution No. 13 adopted by the Board of Governors of the League of Red Cross Societies at their 33rd Session, and Governments are urged to approve its adoption at the forthcoming 23rd International Conference of the Red Cross as well as to generalise its provisions so as to apply them to all relief personnel representing internationally-recognised relief agencies.

Recommendation F :

It is recommended that all donors restrict their relief contributions to those high-priority relief needs identified by appropriate relief authorities and agencies with a view to more efficient utilisation of resources and more rapid fulfilment of essential relief needs.

Recommendation G :

It is recommended that all Governments, inter-governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations concerned with relief operations undertake programmes to educate donors on the importance of avoiding contributions of non-essential items for relief purposes.

Recommendation H:

It is recommended that all donors ensure that prompt notification is given to consignees of impending relief shipments; that they review procedures for consigning relief shipments; that they include detailed manifests with each consignment; and that they seek to secure prompt acknowledgement of arrival of the consignee. In this con

nexion, donors are encouraged to refer to the Recommended Procedures for Packaging and Labelling or Marking Consignments of Supplies for International Disaster Relief Operations, prepared by the League of Red Cross Societies.

Recommendation I :

It is recommended that Governments of transit and recipient countries ensure that their customs authorities receive standing instructions to expedite processing of relief shipments in their custody. In this connexion. Governments are urged to consider acceding to Annex F.5 concerning Urgent Consignments adopted in Brussels in 1976 as an annex to the International Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures adopted by the Customs Co-operation Council at Kyoto (1973).

Recommendation J : It is recommended that all Governments authorise their national airlines - whether members of IATA or not - to accord free transportation or, if this is not possible, transportation at minimal rates to relief consignments and relief personnel wherever reasonably possible. Potential recipient Governments in particular should instruct their national airlines to accord such treatment to incoming relief personnel and relief shipments, even to the extent of deferring transport of regular passenger and commercial cargo.

Recommendation K :

It is recommended that all Governments relax limitations imposed on carriers not possessing traffic rights where this action would facilitate the travel of relief personnel or the transport of relief supplies and equipment.

Recommendation L :

It is recommended that all Governments explore the possibility of according overflight permission and landing rights for aircraft transporting international relief at the outset of disaster emergency operations. It would be desirable for such authorisations to be valid for the duration of the emergency relief phase, thereby obviating the need for subsequent time consuming ad hoc overflight and landing requests.

Recommendation M :

It is recommended that potential recipient Governments take advance measures to authorise recognised relief agency personnel to have access to all available telex, cable, wire, telephone and radio facilities, as disaster relief circumstances require, for their internal and external communications.

23rd International Conference of the Red Cross, Bucharest, 1977
Resolution 9

Red Cross emergency radiocommunications

The XXIIIrd International Conference of the Red Cross,

taking note with satisfaction of the considerable developments in the Red Cross emergency radio-communications network, stressing that in emergency situations the Red Cross must have at its command direct, independent and speedy communications for its action for the victims, thanks the national and international administrations which have granted the Red Cross many facilities in this field, requests the World Administrative Radiocommunications Conference, to be held at Geneva in 1979, to take a constructive approach to all practical measures which might make this emergency network still more effective, in particular by according additional frequencies.

25th International Conference of the Red Cross, Geneva, 1986
Resolution 21

Disaster relief in case of technical and other disasters

The Twenty-fifth International Red Cross Conference,

recognizing that technological developments in many areas constantly progress and that many States carry out nuclear activities,

being aware that in the development and application of existing and new technologies it cannot be totally excluded that at any time technical incidents can turn suddenly into serious accidents and disasters, which directly endanger the health and life of a great number of people,

recognizing that damaging situations of this kind can also occur below the threshold of disaster, which require immediate and preventive action on the part of all agencies called upon to help, knowing that the effects of such serious accidents and disasters can independently of where they occurred in one State-spread to the territory of other States,

being aware that these kinds of accidents and disasters require special and additional measures of prevention, assistance and mutual information and support, which must be planned and carried out both by States and by international organizations,

expressing the wish that to this end international co-operation may be reinforced and intensified,

acknowledging the fact that the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is more especially obliged to provide mutual assistance and support in any kind of disaster,

recognizing the necessity for the Movement to address itself more comprehensively and more intensively than up to now to the issue of possible dangers and consequences of technical and other disasters with a view to more adequate and improved assistance,

noting with gratitude that the members of the International Atomic Energy Agency meeting in Vienna recently adopted a Convention on early notification of nuclear accidents and on mutual assistance,

1. requests governments to intensify future international co-operation for the safe development and application of new technologies and to undertake efforts to conclude further bilateral and multilateral agreements on mutual, timely and comprehensive information as well as on measures for mutual assistance,
2. recommends to governments and international organizations when concluding such agreements and conventions also to take proper account of the capacity of their corresponding National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and of the entire Movement to participate in relief action and to include them in their information system at an early stage,
3. further recommends to governments vigorously to support their National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in their efforts to improve their capacity for assistance in this field,
4. calls upon National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to approach their governments in the manner outlined above and to undertake efforts that promote improvement of their own capacity for assistance,
5. encourages National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to intensify their efforts to arrive at bilateral and multilateral agreements and commitments to mutual assistance in case of major disasters of any kind,
6. recommends that the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Henry Dunant Institute undertake a study concerning the possibilities and necessities of improved assistance from the Movement in case of technical and other disasters and that the results of this study be reported to the next International Conference,
7. calls upon the Movement not to slacken its efforts to support National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in their endeavour to conclude agreements for mutual assistance in case of technical disasters and all other kinds

of disasters in as comprehensive a manner as possible and in the spirit of human solidarity and to carry out a regular exchange of experience.

26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Geneva, 1995
Resolution 4

Principles and action in international humanitarian assistance and protection

The 26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

conscious that the number of people in need of assistance as a result of disasters, and the number of refugees and internally displaced persons in need of assistance and protection, has increased dramatically over the past decade,

conscious of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's (Movement) unique position as a global, neutral and independent provider of assistance and protection to victims of disaster and war victims, benefiting from the complementarity of its components,

desirous to improve the framework in which humanitarian organizations, in particular the components of the Movement, perform their humanitarian activities, and welcoming the standing invitation to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) to participate in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee of the United Nations convened by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, as a means of ensuring operational cooperation by humanitarian organizations in the delivery of humanitarian assistance,

recalling that, according to the Statutes of the Movement, each component of the Movement should respect at all times the Fundamental Principles enshrined in these Statutes (Fundamental Principles), and that States should at all times respect the Movement's adherence to the Fundamental Principles,

recalling that in situations of armed conflict refugees and internally displaced persons together with the remainder of the civilian population are protected by international humanitarian law and that, in addition, refugees are protected by the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and its 1967 Protocol,

reaffirming the principle of non-refoulement,

taking note of Resolution 11 of the Council of Delegates of the Movement held in 1993 in Birmingham concerning the "Principles of Humanitarian Assistance", which inter alia reminded States of:

- the victims right to receive humanitarian assistance,
- the States' duty to assist people who are placed under their authority or their obligation to authorize humanitarian agencies to do so, and
- the right of humanitarian agencies - abiding by the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence - to have access to victims,

recalling Resolution XXI and the accompanying Statement of policy on aid to refugees adopted by the 24th International Conference of the Red Cross, and Resolution XVII on the Movement and refugees adopted by the 25th International Conference of the Red Cross,

recalling Resolution XXI on disaster relief in case of technical and other disasters adopted by the 25th International Conference of the Red Cross,

noting that religious and ethical values can foster respect for human dignity and the principles of international humanitarian law,

A. With regard to internally displaced persons and refugees:

1. calls upon States:

(a) to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law, in particular the general prohibition of forced displacement of civilians, and to respect the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and its 1967 Protocol, in particular the fundamental principle of non-refoulement, as well as other relevant regional instruments,

(b) to accede to, for those States which have not already done so, and to implement fully the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and its 1967 Protocol,

(c) to provide humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons and to assist States having accepted refugees,

(d) to ensure efficient and adequate access to internally displaced persons and refugees for neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian organizations, in particular National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies), the ICRC and the International Federation, as well as other international organizations, in particular the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), according to their respective mandates, so that they may provide protection and humanitarian assistance to these persons,

(e) to ensure a rapid response to appeals by the ICRC, the International Federation, the National Societies and other international organizations for funding of emergency assistance and protection for refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees,

(f) to renew their support, through appropriate funding, for the provision of food aid and other supplies for humanitarian assistance to long-standing but unsolved refugee and displaced persons situations, keeping in mind the needs of the most vulnerable,

(g) to recognize that National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation can play a vital role in providing protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons, refugees and returnees, in accordance with the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law;

2. invites the components of the Movement, in accordance with their respective mandates:

(a) to continue to provide assistance and protection to, and to work with determination on behalf of and together with, internally displaced persons, refugees and returnees,

(b) to devise and apply innovative approaches to humanitarian response, including mechanisms for rapid action, based on effective mobilization and use of resources, which will enable them to provide timely and appropriate assistance for internally displaced persons and refugees, taking due account of the action of other humanitarian organizations,

(c) to promote conflict prevention through the promotion of humanitarian principles and values, as well as the dissemination of international humanitarian law, in particular at the community level,

(d) to stand ready to work in the framework of international relief operations in accordance with the Statutes of the Movement,

(e) to continue and promote operational cooperation with the United Nations, including in particular the UNHCR, in a spirit of complementarity, as well as with other international humanitarian organizations, as appropriate;

3. invites National Societies:

(a) to continue, in accordance with their status as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, to offer their services to their governments, in order to respond to the needs of refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees,

(b) to call upon the resources of the ICRC and the International Federation to make effective use of the Movement's capacity when needs exceed the resources locally available,

(c) to seek efficient cooperation with other organizations, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the United Nations, in particular the UNHCR, recalling the provisions of Resolution XXI of the 24th International Conference concerning International Red Cross aid to refugees, and in particular the provision on agreements between National Societies and the UNHCR;

B. With regard to natural and technological disasters:

1. calls upon States to take note of the guidelines on National Society involvement in technological disasters (Annex I of the background paper)

2. encourages National Societies and the International Federation to intensify their activities in favour of the victims of natural and technological disasters, to develop their expertise in this field and to mobilize financial resources

C. With regard to the Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief:

takes note of the revised Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief (Annex II of the background paper) and calls upon the components of the Movement to implement them

D. With regard to the need to build longer-term developmental perspectives into humanitarian assistance:

1. calls upon States:

(a) to ensure that their international relief funding policies allow for the strengthening of the operational capacities of recipient National Societies,

(b) to explore ways of encouraging a developmental approach to relief through their humanitarian assistance programming, and to take note in this context of Annex III of the background paper,

(c) to promote, in international organizations of which they are members, including in particular the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the implementation of a development approach that takes into account emergency situations and humanitarian needs,

2. calls upon the International Federation and the ICRC to further develop tools and approaches in order to implement a more developmental approach to relief as well as to give due emphasis to the strengthening of Red Cross and Red Crescent structures, as outlined in the guidelines presented in Annex III of the background paper;

E. With regard to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief:

1. takes note of and welcomes the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief (Annex IV of the background paper), and further;

2. invites all States and National Societies to encourage NGOs to both abide by the principles and spirit of the Code and consider registering their support for the Code with the International Federation;

F. With regard to the humanitarian consequences of economic sanctions:

1. encourages States to consider:

(a) when designing, imposing and reviewing economic sanctions, the possible negative impact of such sanctions on the humanitarian situation of the civilian population of a targeted State and also of third States which may be adversely affected by such measures,

(b) assessing the short- and long-term consequences of United Nations-approved economic sanctions on the most vulnerable, and monitoring these consequences where sanctions have been applied,

(c) providing, including when subject to economic sanctions, and to the extent of their available resources, relief for the most vulnerable groups and the victims of humanitarian emergencies in their territories

2. calls upon States to permit relief operations of a strictly humanitarian character for the benefit of the most vulnerable groups within the civilian population, when required by international humanitarian law

3. calls upon the ICRC, the International Federation and National Societies to contribute to the reduction of the undesirable side-effects of sanctions on the humanitarian situation of civilian populations, through assessing the impact thereof and providing relief to the most vulnerable persons, in accordance with their respective mandates;

G. With regard to the need for independence of humanitarian action in times of crisis:

1. takes note of the Movement's commitment to carrying out its humanitarian work in accordance with its Fundamental Principles, recognizing that humanitarian assistance and protection are primarily directed at the effects of humanitarian crises, not the causes;

2. calls upon States:

(a) to recognize the need for the Movement to maintain a clear separation between its humanitarian action, on the one hand, and actions of a political, military or economic nature carried out by governments, intergovernmental bodies and other agencies during humanitarian crises, on the other hand, bearing in mind the need for the Movement to maintain, in its humanitarian work, its independence, impartiality and neutrality,

(b) to redouble their efforts in the resolution and prevention of conflicts, peacekeeping, disaster preparedness and disaster mitigation, to which the humanitarian work of the Movement acts as a necessary complement,

(c) to take note that the security of the operations and personnel of the ICRC, the National Societies and the International Federation is based on their adherence to the Fundamental Principles and that they do not use armed protection unless confronted with exceptional circumstances and not without the approval of the authority in control of the territory concerned,

(d) to fully respect humanitarian operations and the personnel engaged therein, in all circumstances, and to take due precautions to refrain from acts that would endanger such operations and personnel.

Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief

Adopted by the XXIst International Conference of the Red Cross (Istanbul, 1969) - revised by the XXIInd, XXIIIrd, XXIVth, XXVth and XXVIth International Conferences - Tehran (1973), Bucharest (1977), Manila (1981), Geneva (1986) and Geneva (1995).

Prepared by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in consultation with the ICRC

Basic Principles

1. Field of application

1.1 The present Principles and Rules apply to disasters resulting from natural or other calamities.

1.2 Every disaster relief operation carried out in a country where there is war, civil war, or internal disturbances, shall be regulated by the provisions of the Agreement of 1989 between the ICRC and the Federation, or by any subsequent such agreement.

1.3 However, Articles 24 to 29 of the present Principles and Rules shall also apply to situations described under paragraph 1.2.

2. The duty to assist

2.1 The Red Cross and Red Crescent in its endeavour to prevent and alleviate human suffering, considers it a fundamental right of all people to both offer and receive humanitarian assistance. Hence it has a fundamental duty to provide relief to all disaster victims and assistance to those most vulnerable to future disasters.

2.2 We recognize that in helping disaster victims to survive, relief programmes must also look to the future and ensure that people are not left more vulnerable to the future disasters. Wherever possible, relief programmes should attempt to build upon the capacities of those being assisted, involve them in the management and implementation of the programme and act with a sense of accountability towards the beneficiaries.

3. Role of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

3.1 Prevention of disasters, assistance to victims and reconstruction are first and foremost the responsibility of the public authorities. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, (hereinafter referred to as the Federation [1]) will actively offer assistance to disaster victims through the agency of the National Society in a spirit of cooperation with the public authorities. In principle, Red Cross and Red Crescent help is of a complementary and auxiliary nature and is given primarily in the emergency and reconstruction phase. However, if circumstances require and provided the Red Cross and Red Crescent is assured of the necessary resources and means, it may undertake longer-term disaster assistance programmes. Such programmes should be designed to reduce vulnerability to disasters, and prepare for future possible disasters.

4. Coordination

4.1 Considering that assistance to disaster victims requires coordination at both the national and international levels, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, whilst remaining true to its Principles, should, in the implementation of its programme, endeavour to take into account the help given by other national and international organizations.

4.2 Considering the Federation's position as one of the leading disaster response agencies, the National Society should offer its service to their disaster affected government to assist with the coordination of NGO disaster relief. The Federation should support such endeavours.

5. Role of the Federation

5.1 The Federation acts as the information centre for its member Societies regarding situations caused by disaster and coordinates, at the international level, the assistance provided by National Societies and the Federation or channelled through them.

5.2 The Federation should also support National Societies in their contacts with their governments with a view to establishing and developing their position and role in disaster preparedness and response.

6. Preparedness and mutual aid

6.1 It is the duty of National Societies to prepare themselves to give assistance in the event of a disaster.

6.2 In view of the solidarity binding them together they shall help one another when faced with a situation exceeding the resources of any one Society.

6.3 In assisting each other in this way, while respecting the independence of each other and the sovereignty of the stricken country, National Societies contribute to the strengthening of friendship and peace among peoples.

7. Ways and means of assistance

7.1 Red Cross and Red Crescent assistance to victims is given without any distinction as to sex, nationality, race, religion, social condition or political opinion. It is made available solely on the basis of the relative importance and urgency of individual needs.

7.2 Red Cross and Red Crescent relief is administered with economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Its utilization is the subject of reports, including audited accounts of income and expenditure, reflecting a true and fair view of the operation.

Disaster Preparedness

8. National relief plan

8.1 In order to cope with the effects of disaster, each country should have a national plan outlining an effective organization of relief. If such a plan does not exist, the National Society should instigate its establishment.

8.2 The national plan shall assign to all sections of the community - public services, Red Cross and Red Crescent, voluntary agencies, social welfare organizations and qualified persons - precise tasks in the fields of disaster prevention, relief and reconstruction.

8.3 To ensure rapid mobilization as well as complete and effective use of material and personnel resources, the national plan should envisage coordination through the establishment of a centralized managing body. Such a body should be able to provide authoritative information on the effects of a disaster, its evolution and the needs.

9. Preparedness of the National Society

9.1 The extent of the Red Cross and Red Crescent relief programme depends on the magnitude of the disaster, the needs already covered by others and the responsibilities delegated to the National Society by its government or by the national relief plan.

9.2 Each National Society must prepare itself to assume the responsibility devolving on it in the case of disaster. It must establish its own plan of action, adapt its organization accordingly, recruit, instruct and train the necessary personnel and ensure the availability of the reserves in cash and kind which it might need in the emergency phase of a relief operation. Such plans must be regularly reviewed and capacity further developed in the light of experience.

9.3 All National Societies face the possibility of responding to disasters beyond their capacities. National Societies should therefore make preparations for receiving and managing international assistance provided by the Federation.

9.4 National Societies should make every effort to obtain facilities from governmental or private transport services in their countries for the rapid transport, whenever possible free or at reduced rates, of relief supplies, including goods in transit, for disaster victims.

9.5 National Societies should also endeavour to obtain from their governments exemption from all taxes and customs duties, concerning the entry into and transit through the country, of funds and relief supplies intended for the victims of disasters.

9.6 Furthermore, they should seek to obtain travel facilities and the quick granting of visas for Red Cross and Red Crescent personnel taking part in relief operations.

10. Preparedness of the Federation

10.1 The Federation will endeavour to assist National Societies with their organization and preparedness for relief actions. In particular by offering them the services of technically qualified personnel (delegates) and by contributing to the instruction and training of their personnel. It will encourage and facilitate exchanges of information between Societies so that the experience of some will be of benefit to others. It will encourage investment by Federation members in disaster preparedness activities in the most disaster prone countries.

11. Agreements on mutual assistance

11.1 As part of their disaster preparedness strategy, National Societies should endeavour to conclude agreements on future mutual assistance in the event of disaster, with the National Societies of neighbouring countries. The Federation shall be informed.

11.2 For the most disaster prone countries, the Federation shall endeavour to negotiate pre-disaster agreements with the National Society of the disaster prone country aimed at enhancing the disaster preparedness activities of the Operating National Societies and improving the timeliness and effectiveness of Federation response to major disasters. Where appropriate these agreements may be tripartite, involving a Participating National Society.

International Disaster Relief Assistance

12. Initial information

12.1 To enable the Federation to act as the disaster information centre, National Societies shall immediately inform it of any major disaster occurring within their country, including data on the extent of the damage and on the relief measures taken at the national level to assist victims. Even if the National Society does not envisage appealing for external assistance, the Federation may, in the spirit of Federation solidarity, send a representative/s to the disaster-affected area to gather information and assist the National Society in dealing with the international dimensions of the disaster.

13. Use of the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund

13.1 In accordance with its rules, as amended by the 1991 General Assembly, the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund may be used by the Federation to finance emergency pre-disaster activities or initial emergency response to disasters.

14. Request for assistance and appeal

14.1 Any request from a National Society of a stricken country for international assistance shall be addressed to the Federation. Such a request must contain an overview of the situation in the disaster area, the number of persons to be helped and the nature, quantities and priorities of relief supplies needed by the National Society.

14.2 On receipt of such a request, the Federation will, when conditions call for it, launch an Appeal to all National Societies or, depending on the circumstances, to a certain number of them. No Appeal will be launched by the Federation without a request from the National Society of the stricken country or without its agreement.

14.3 The Federation may, however, take the initiative to offer assistance, even though the National Society has not asked for it. The National Society will consider such offers with urgency and goodwill, bearing in mind the needs of the disaster victims and the spirit in which such offers are made.

15. Relations with the international news media

15.1 Since the media can have a major influence on public support for a relief operation and the generation of funds, the National Society of a stricken country should make every effort,

consistent with the efficient conduct of the relief operation and any regulations laid down by the authorities, to facilitate journalists' coverage of an emergency situation.

15.2 When a disaster situation attracts large-scale international media interest, the Federation may assign a delegate, or delegates, to assist the National Society in coping effectively with the requirements of the media and responding to the public information needs of Participating National Societies and the Federation's Secretariat in Geneva.

16. Regular communication of information

16.1 The National Society of the stricken country will keep the Federation informed on the development of the situation, the relief given and the needs still to be met. The Federation will forward this information to National Societies to which the Appeal had been made.

17. Information on assistance

17.1 When, as a result of a Federation Appeal or as a result of mutual agreement or other special circumstances, a National Society gives assistance to the Society of a stricken country it will immediately inform the Federation. Such information will contain the amount of gifts in cash and all available data on gifts in kind, including quantity, value and means of transportation.

18. Implementation of Federation assistance

18.1 When a National Society is in receipt of international assistance, the Federation may assign to that National Society a representative or a team of delegates, whose name or names will be communicated to it as rapidly as possible and whose number will depend on the magnitude of the disaster.

18.2 Where technical assistance personnel are provided, the Head of Delegation will be responsible for the judicious and effective utilization of the team of experts with a view to helping the National Society with such activities as the reception, warehousing and distribution of relief supplies received from abroad, as well as information, communication and all other activities that will contribute to the effectiveness both of the relief operation itself, undertaken by the National Society involved, and of the assistance of sister Societies.

18.3 All staff assigned by the Federation will have the task of assisting the National Society and not of taking over its basic responsibilities.

18.4 The Representative or Head of Delegation shall be given all necessary communication facilities for the swift dispatch to the Federation, of all the information likely to enable it to back up its Appeals to National Societies and inform them as fully as possible on the needs resulting from the disaster and then on the use made of the relief received. He/she should advise the National Society concerned of the measures taken and foreseen, both by the Federation and National Societies, which are giving their support.

19. Execution entrusted to the Federation

19.1 When the administrative organization of the Society in the stricken country does not enable it to meet the situation, the Federation, at the request of that Society and with its cooperation, may assume the local direction and execution of the relief action.

20. Representatives of Participating Societies

20.1 Participating Societies wishing to send representatives to the spot, particularly to collect information material to enhance public support for the relief actions, shall obtain the prior agreement of the central headquarters of the National Society of the stricken country. They should also inform the Federation.

20.2 Any such representatives will be bound by the Rules of Conduct for Federation field personnel and shall report on their actions to the Federation Representative or Head of Delegation.

21. Foreign personnel

21.1 All personnel provided by Participating Societies to assist in the implementation of the operation, will be placed under the direction of the Federation, when the direction and execution of the relief operation have been entrusted to it.

22. Transmission and forwarding of relief

22.1 Assistance donated by a National Society to a stricken country shall always be sent through Red Cross and Red Crescent channels, either direct to the National Society or through the intermediary of the Federation. Funds sent to the Federation will be specifically earmarked for the disaster for which they are contributed and will either be sent to the National Society of the stricken country or, with its concurrence, be utilized by the Federation according to the needs of the relief operation.

22.2 National Societies and the Federation may agree to transmit relief from non-Red Cross sources to a stricken country. In such cases, the relief will be utilized by the National Society or, with its concurrence, by the Federation in conformity with the present Principles and Rules.

23. Soliciting of contributions abroad

23.1 Unless there is a previous agreement, the National Society of a stricken country will not try to obtain, either directly or indirectly, funds or any other form of assistance in the country of another Society and will not permit its name to be used for this purpose.

Accounting and Auditing for Joint or Separate Federation and/or ICRC Operations

24. Principle of accountability

National Societies receiving gifts from sister Societies, the Federation, the ICRC or any other source in the context of a joint or separate Federation and/or ICRC operation or programme must conform to the following rules as regards accounting and auditing:

24.1 Gifts in cash

24.1.1 Bank accounts

The Operating Society shall open in its own name a special bank account whose sole purpose shall be to receive all the funds and cover all the expenditure of the operation / programme. It shall not be used for any other transactions. There shall be one bank account per operation / programme. If for unforeseen reasons, it is not possible to open a separate bank account, a separate cash ledger should be maintained per operation / programme.

24.1.2 Financial reporting

The Operating Society shall render a periodic account of the funds held by it for the operation / programme showing: opening balance brought forward from the previous period; income from all sources during the current period; actual disbursements during the period and the closing balance for the period. The periodicity of these reports shall be established in the agreement, but under no circumstances should be less than quarterly. Additional information required for the following period comprises: anticipated income, an estimate of expenditure and cash requirements. The Federation and/or the ICRC would in that way be prepared to give consideration to making an appropriate supplementary advance in cash.

24.1.2.1 The actual disbursements charged to the operation / programme shall be shown in a detailed statement which, together with copies of vouchers for all amounts debited and recapitulatory bank statements, shall be submitted promptly to the Federation and/or the ICRC local Delegation, no later than the end of the following month. In the event of such reports not being submitted, the local Delegation should take appropriate steps to assist the Operating Society in producing the necessary report. In exceptional circumstances, where monthly reports are not forthcoming, the Federation and /or the ICRC may decide on the suspension of the financial assistance.

24.1.2.2 In recognizing the importance of financial reporting, the Federation and /or the ICRC shall undertake to provide or make available technical assistance to the Operating Society in order to ensure the timely production of accurate and complete financial reports . Such reports should be regarded both as a management tool for the Operating Society, and as a reporting service to the Federation.

24.1.3 Auditing

Auditing is a normal, integral step in any professionally managed operation. In the interest of sound financial administration, the National Society's accounts related to the operation / programme shall be audited at least yearly by auditors designated by the Federation and/or the ICRC. The cost of the audit will be met from the funds available for the operation / programme. This audit shall result in the Auditor's Report and a Management Letter. The said results shall be communicated to the National Society and, if necessary, corrective actions to be taken shall be indicated. In the exceptional event when no corrective action have taken place, the Federation and/or the ICRC may consider suspension of financial assistance.

24.2 Gifts in kind

Where gifts in kind are made, records of the stocks showing the origin and use of such contributions shall be submitted monthly and upon completion of the operation / programme.

25. Exceptional Rules of Procedures

25.1 The Federation and /or the ICRC may, in certain exceptional circumstances, not be fully satisfied with the way in which resources for Federation and/or the ICRC operations and programmes are managed and accounted for by either Participating or Operating Societies.

25.2 In such circumstances, the Federation and/or the ICRC is authorized to entrust a qualified Federation and/or the ICRC representative to look into the matter.

25.3 The National Society in question be it operating or participating, shall ensure that the Federation and /or the ICRC representative, has access to such records of the Society as the Federation and /or the ICRC representative considers necessary for the purpose of their task.

26. Use made of gifts

26.1 A National Society which benefits from the assistance of sister Societies will give the Federation's and/or ICRC's Representative or Head of Delegation the opportunity to see, on the spot, the use made of the gifts received.

27. Unsolicited relief supplies

27.1 If a National Society wishes to send relief supplies which are not mentioned in the Appeal launched by the Federation and/or ICRC, it shall first obtain the agreement of the National Society of the stricken country or of the Federation and/or ICRC. When there has been no Appeal but a National Society nevertheless wishes to send relief supplies to the Society of a stricken country, the previous agreement of that Society is also required and the Federation and/or ICRC shall be informed.

27.2 In the absence of such an agreement, the receiving National Society is free to use unsolicited relief supplies at its own discretion, without being bound by the provision of Article 29.3.

28. Donating supplies while receiving assistance

28.1 A National Society in receipt of international assistance for its own country shall not contribute assistance of a similar nature to a sister Society without the prior authorization of the Federation and/or ICRC.

29. Use of gifts

29.1 Gifts sent to a National Society may be used only for the purpose designated and will serve in the first place to give direct assistance to the victims.

29.2 An Operating Society may in no event use cash gifts to cover administrative expenses included in its ordinary budget, nor may it transfer cash gifts donated to it to another organization or group for use by that organization or group.

29.3 If in the course of a relief operation it becomes necessary to sell or exchange a part of the goods received, the donors will be consulted through the Federation and/or ICRC. The funds or goods thus obtained may only be used for the relief action.

30. Relief balances

30.1 Goods or funds remaining on hand after the termination of a relief action may be; used for subsequent rehabilitation activities, used for Society disaster preparedness activities, transferred to other priority programmes, or returned to the Participating Society. All such use of funds or goods should take place under an agreement between the National Society of the stricken country and the Federation after consultation by the Federation with the Participating Societies concerned.

Final Provisions

31 Obligations

31.1 A National Society which accepts spontaneous or special assistance is bound to conform to the obligations laid down in the present "Principles and Rules" even though it has not requested assistance within the terms of Article 12.1.

Note

1. In the Federation, the organization of disaster relief actions belongs to the attributions of the Secretary General, assisted by the Secretariat.

The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief

Annex VI to the resolutions of the 26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Geneva, 1995

Prepared jointly by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the ICRC [1]

Purpose

This Code of Conduct seeks to guard our standards of behaviour. It is not about operational details, such as how one should calculate food rations or set up a refugee camp. Rather, it seeks to maintain the high standards of independence, effectiveness and impact to which disaster response NGOs and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement aspires. It is a voluntary code, enforced by the will of organization accepting it to maintain the standards laid down in the Code.

In the event of armed conflict, the present Code of Conduct will be interpreted and applied in conformity with international humanitarian law.

The Code of Conduct is presented first. Attached to it are three annexes, describing the working environment that we would like to see created by Host Governments, Donor Governments and Intergovernmental Organizations in order to facilitate the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Definitions

NGOs: NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) refers here to organizations, both national and international, which are constituted separate from the government of the country in which they are founded.

NGHAs: For the purposes of this text, the term Non Governmental Humanitarian Agencies (NGHAs) has been coined to encompass the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement - The International Committee of the Red Cross, The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and its member National Societies - and the NGOs as defined above. This code refers specifically to those NGHAs who are involved in disaster response.

IGOs: IGOs (Inter-Governmental Organizations) refers to organizations constituted by two or more governments. It thus includes all United Nations Agencies and regional organizations.

Disasters: A disaster is a calamitous event resulting in loss of life, great human suffering and distress, and large scale material damage.

The Code of Conduct

Principles of Conduct for The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes

1. The Humanitarian imperative comes first

The right to receive humanitarian assistance, and to offer it, is a fundamental humanitarian principle which should be enjoyed by all citizens of all countries. As members of the international community, we recognize our obligation to provide humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed. Hence the need for unimpeded access to affected populations, is of fundamental importance in exercising that responsibility. The prime motivation of our response to disaster is to alleviate human suffering amongst those least able to withstand the stress caused by disaster. When we give humanitarian aid it is not a partisan or political act and should not be viewed as such.

2. Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone

Wherever possible, we will base the provision of relief aid upon a thorough assessment of the needs of the disaster victims and the local capacities already in place to meet those needs. Within the entirety of our programmes, we will reflect considerations of proportionality. Human suffering must be alleviated whenever it is found; life is as precious in one part of a country as another. Thus, our provision of aid will reflect the degree of suffering it seeks to alleviate. In implementing this approach, we recognize the crucial role played by women in disaster-prone communities and will ensure that this role is supported, not diminished, by our aid programmes. The implementation of such a universal, impartial and independent policy, can only be effective if we and our partners have access to the necessary resources to provide for such equitable relief, and have equal access to all disaster victims.

3. Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint

Humanitarian aid will be given according to the need of individuals, families and communities. Notwithstanding the right of NGHAs to espouse particular political or religious opinions, we affirm that assistance will not be dependent on the adherence of the recipients to those opinions. We will not tie the promise, delivery or distribution of assistance to the embracing or acceptance of a particular political or religious creed.

4. We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy

NGHAs are agencies which act independently from governments. We therefore formulate our own policies and implementation strategies and do not seek to implement the policy of any government, except in so far as it coincides with our own independent policy. We will never knowingly - or through negligence - allow ourselves, or our employees, to be used to gather information of a political, military or economically sensitive nature for governments or other bodies that may serve purposes other than those which are strictly humanitarian, nor will we act as instruments of foreign policy of donor governments. We will use the assistance we receive to respond to needs and this assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses, nor by the political interest of any particular donor. We value and promote the voluntary giving of labour and finances by concerned individuals to support our work and recognize the independence of action promoted by such voluntary motivation. In order to protect our independence we will seek to avoid dependence upon a single funding source.

5. We shall respect culture and custom

We will endeavour to respect the culture, structures and customs of the communities and countries we are working in.

6. We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities

All people and communities - even in disaster - possess capacities as well as vulnerabilities. Where possible, we will strengthen these capacities by employing local staff, purchasing local materials and trading with local companies. Where possible, we will work through local NGHAs as partners in planning and implementation, and co-operate with local government structures where appropriate. We will place a high priority on the proper co-ordination of our emergency responses. This is best done within the countries concerned by those most directly involved in the relief operations, and should include representatives of the relevant UN bodies.

7. Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid

Disaster response assistance should never be imposed upon the beneficiaries. Effective relief and lasting rehabilitation can best be achieved where the intended beneficiaries are involved in the design, management and implementation of the assistance programme. We will strive to achieve full community participation in our relief and rehabilitation programmes.

8. Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs

All relief actions affect the prospects for long term development, either in a positive or a negative fashion. Recognizing this, we will strive to implement relief programmes which actively reduce the beneficiaries' vulnerability to future disasters and help create sustainable lifestyles. We will pay particular attention to environmental concerns in the design and management of relief programmes. We will also endeavour to minimize the negative impact of humanitarian assistance, seeking to avoid long-term beneficiary dependence upon external aid.

9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources

We often act as an institutional link in the partnership between those who wish to assist and those who need assistance during disasters. We therefore hold ourselves accountable to both constituencies. All our dealings with donors and beneficiaries shall reflect an attitude of openness and transparency. We recognize the need to report on our activities, both from a financial perspective and the perspective of effectiveness. We recognize the obligation to ensure appropriate monitoring of aid distributions and to carry out regular assessments of the impact of disaster assistance. We will also seek to report, in an open fashion, upon the impact of our work, and the factors limiting or enhancing that impact. Our programmes will be based upon high standards of professionalism and expertise in order to minimize the wasting of valuable resources.

10. In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognize disaster victims as dignified humans, not hopeless objects

Respect for the disaster victim as an equal partner in action should never be lost. In our public information we shall portray an objective image of the disaster situation where the capacities and aspirations of disaster victims are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities and fears. While we will cooperate with the media in order to enhance public response, we will not allow external or internal demands for publicity to take precedence over the

principle of maximizing overall relief assistance. We will avoid competing with other disaster response agencies for media coverage in situations where such coverage may be to the detriment of the service provided to the beneficiaries or to the security of our staff or the beneficiaries.

The Working Environment

Having agreed unilaterally to strive to abide by the Code laid out above, we present below some indicative guidelines which describe the working environment we would like to see created by donor governments, host governments and the inter-governmental organisations - principally the agencies of the United Nations - in order to facilitate the effective participation of NGHAs in disaster response.

These guidelines are presented for guidance. They are not legally binding, nor do we expect governments and IGOs to indicate their acceptance of the guidelines through the signature of any document, although this may be a goal to work to in the future. They are presented in a spirit of openness and cooperation so that our partners will become aware of the ideal relationship we would seek with them.

Annex I : Recommendations to the governments of disaster affected countries

1. Governments should recognize and respect the independent, humanitarian and impartial actions of NGHAs

NGHAs are independent, bodies. This independence and impartiality should be respected by host governments.

2. Host governments should facilitate rapid access to disaster victims for NGHAs

If NGHAs are to act in full compliance with their humanitarian principles, they should be granted rapid and impartial access to disaster victims, for the purpose of delivering humanitarian assistance. It is the duty of the host government, as part of the exercising of sovereign responsibility, not to block such assistance, and to accept the impartial and apolitical action of NGHAs. Host governments should facilitate the rapid entry of relief staff, particularly by waiving requirements for transit, entry and exit visas, or arranging that these are rapidly granted. Governments should grant over-flight permission and landing rights for aircraft transporting international relief supplies and personnel, for the duration of the emergency relief phase.

3. Governments should facilitate the timely flow of relief goods and information during disasters

Relief supplies and equipment are brought into a country solely for the purpose of alleviating human suffering, not for commercial benefit or gain. Such supplies should normally be allowed free and unrestricted passage and should not be subject to requirements for consular certificates of origin or invoices, import and/or export licences or other restrictions, or to importation taxation, landing fees or port charges.

The temporary importation of necessary relief equipment, including vehicles, light aircraft and telecommunications equipment, should be facilitated by the receiving host government through the temporary waving of licence or registration restrictions. Equally, governments should not restrict the re-exportation of relief equipment at the end of a relief operation.

To facilitate disaster communications, host governments are encouraged to designate certain radio frequencies, which relief organizations may use in-country and for international communications for the purpose of disaster communications, and to make such frequencies known to the disaster response community prior to the disaster. They should authorize relief personnel to utilize all means of communication required for their relief operations.

4. Governments should seek to provide a co-ordinated disaster information and planning service

The overall planning and coordination of relief efforts is ultimately the responsibility of the host government. Planning and coordination can be greatly enhanced if NGHAs are provided with information on relief needs and government systems for planning and implementing relief efforts as well as information on potential security risks they may encounter. Governments are urged to provide such information to NGHAs.

To facilitate effective coordination and the efficient utilization of relief efforts, host governments are urged to designate, prior to disaster, a single point-of-contact for incoming NGHAs to liaise with the national authorities.

5. Disaster relief in the event of armed conflict

In the event of armed conflict, relief actions are governed by the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law.

Annex II : Recommendations to donor governments

1. Donor governments should recognize and respect the independent, humanitarian and impartial actions of NGHAs

NGHAs are independent bodies whose independence and impartiality should be respected by donor governments. Donor governments should not use NGHAs to further any political or ideological aim.

2. Donor governments should provide funding with a guarantee of operational independence

NGHAs accept funding and material assistance from donor governments in the same spirit as they render it to disaster victims; one of humanity and independence of action. The implementation of relief actions is ultimately the responsibility of the NGHAs and will be carried out according to the policies of that NGHAs.

3. Donor governments should use their good offices to assist NGHAs in obtaining access to disaster victims

Donor governments should recognize the importance of accepting a level of responsibility for the security and freedom of access of NGHAs staff to disaster sites. They should be prepared to exercise diplomacy with host governments on such issues if necessary.

Annex III : Recommendations to intergovernmental organisations

1. IGOs should recognize NGHAs, local and foreign, as valuable partners

NGHAs are willing to work with UN and other intergovernmental agencies to effect better disaster response. They do so in a spirit of partnership which respects the integrity and independence of all partners. Intergovernmental agencies must respect the independence and impartiality of the NGHAs. NGHAs should be consulted by UN agencies in the preparation of relief plans.

2. IGOs should assist host governments in providing an overall coordinating framework for international and local disaster relief

NGHAs do not usually have the mandate to provide the overall coordinating framework for disasters which require an international response. This responsibility falls to the host government and the relevant United Nations authorities. They are urged to provide this service in a timely and effective manner to serve the affected state and the national and international disaster response community. In any case, NGHAs should make all efforts to ensure the effective co-ordination of their own services.

In the event of armed conflict, relief actions are governed by the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law.

3. IGOs should extend security protection provided for UN organizations, to NGHAs

Where security services are provided for intergovernmental organisations, this service should be extended to their operational NGHAs partners where it is so requested.

4. IGOs should provide NGHAs with the same access to relevant information as is granted to UN organisations

IGOs are urged to share all information, pertinent to the implementation of effective disaster response, with their operational NGHAs partners.

Registration form

Non-governmental Organisations who would like to register their support for this Code and their willingness to incorporate its principles into their work should fill in the form below and return it to

Note

1. Sponsored by: Caritas Internationalis*, Catholic Relief Services*, The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*, International Save the Children Alliance*, Lutheran World Federation*, Oxfam*, The World Council of Churches*, The International Committee of the Red Cross. (* members of the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response)

