

33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

Power of humanity

33rd International Conference
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
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GENEVA 2019

33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

**Including the summary report
of the 2019 Council of Delegates**

Prepared by the International Committee of the Red Cross
and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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1 RESULTS OF THE MEETINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

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1.1 AGENDA AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE 2019 COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

Wednesday, 4 December 2019 Joint opening ceremony for the Council of Delegates and the IFRC General Assembly followed by the awards ceremony for the Henry Dunant Medal, the Prize for Peace and Humanity, the Henry Davison Award and the Volunteering and Youth Awards, followed by a cocktail reception.

1.1.1 AGENDA AND PROGRAMME

I. Opening and procedural matters

1. Opening of the Council by the Chair of the Standing Commission
2. Election of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretaries of the Council
3. Adoption of the Agenda of the Council of Delegates

II. Items for discussion and decision

Accountability and integrity

4. International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Statement on Integrity

The Statement will propose a firm expression of the Movement's commitment to integrity. It will address individual and institutional integrity and ethical behaviour, calling for the promotion and strengthening of accountability to people and communities, governments, donors and the components of the Movement. The Statement should then be brought to the attention of the 33rd International Conference to signal the Movement's commitment to this issue and to anchor the Movement's position during the planned discussions on "Trust in Humanitarian Action" at the International Conference.

5. Movement approach to strengthening National Society statutory and constitutional base and complementary frameworks such as the Volunteer Charter

The resolution proposes that the Movement adopt the new Guidance for National Society Statutes, following its adoption by the IFRC Governing Board at its October 2018 session. The tool sets the new standards within the Movement that National Societies should abide by and implement in their own statutory and policy base frameworks and related rules, mechanisms and processes. It also invites

the Joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes to actively use the new Guidance Document in supporting National Societies in strengthening their legal and statutory texts. The background report will include the report of the Joint Statutes Commission on the revision of National Society statutes and legal base.

6. Movement-wide commitments for community engagement and accountability

Through a series of Minimum Commitments and Actions, the proposed resolution aims to adopt a common Movement approach to Community Engagement and Accountability. By *recognizing* the different roles, responsibilities and mandates of each component of the Movement, the Minimum Commitments will ensure more consistent, harmonized and meaningful engagement with vulnerable and crisis-affected people throughout the programme cycle, leading to better quality assistance and more effective results.

7. Movement coordination and cooperation

7.1 Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures

Based on Article 10.6 of the “Agreement on the Organization of the International Activities of the Components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement” (the Seville Agreement) adopted by the Council of Delegates in 1997, the Council of Delegates will be informed of the decision of the Governing Board of the IFRC to review in the coming year the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures “Supplementary Measures to Enhance the Implementation of the Seville Agreement” (Supplementary Measures) adopted in 2005. The ICRC will inform about its collaborative process to review implementation and possible policy issues around the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures. The IFRC and the ICRC may seek the support of the Standing Commission to facilitate the dialogue in preparation of the 2021 Council of Delegates where the findings will be given due consideration and/or decision.

7.2 Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC 2.0)

The proposed resolution provides new transformational impetus, while building on the work and achievements of the SMCC since the commencement of the SMCC process in 2013. The objective of the new resolution is: a) to continue the incremental transformational changes when it comes to coordination and cooperation within the Movement both at leadership and operational level; b) to reflect National Society priorities in the areas of data sharing, complementary capacities, local response and capacity enhancement, c) to give National Societies increased ownership in SMCC processes and workstreams in order to maximize the direct collective operational impact. The resolution reflects the need for increased efficiency and cohesion in the Movement in order to effectively scale up operations. It proposes a number of workstreams to achieve this, underpinned by two cross-cutting themes: responsibilities conferred on Movement components and Movement-wide visibility and resource mobilization.

8. Enhancing transparency, gender balance and rotation in the election and composition of the Standing Commission

Building on the Profile for the candidates for election to the Standing Commission adopted in 1995 by the Council of Delegates, the proposed Guidelines are intended to ensure the improved transparency and quality of nominations. They seek to encourage a better gender balance among candidates and members and to recommend an earlier submission of nominations as well as a limit on terms as a means to promote new candidacies. The Guidelines also aim to reinforce requirements in relation to the personal integrity of candidates and contribute to the Council of Delegates’ commitment in 2017 “to address the question of gender equality and equal opportunities at all levels of [...] leadership” in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Addressing needs and vulnerabilities

9. International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Policy on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs

As requested by the 2017 Council of Delegates, this resolution proposes the adoption of a new Movement policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. The policy aims to build a

more harmonized, integrated and contextually appropriate Movement response to mental health and psychosocial needs whilst being cognizant of the respective capacities and mandates of different Movement components.

10. Restoring Family Links: Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2020–2025

As mandated by the 2017 Council of Delegates, the proposed resolution calls for the adoption of the new Restoring Family Links Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for the period 2020–2025. The new strategy will have a strong focus on preventing family separation and disappearances, increasing accessibility to and availability of RFL services, improving case resolution and ensuring support to families of missing persons and separated families. At the same time, it also purports to ensure the protection of personal data by strengthening cooperation with State authorities in order to allow the components of the Movement to continue to carry out their humanitarian mandate effectively and efficiently.

11. Strengthening implementation of the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement: Ten years on

Building on the momentum created by the 20th Anniversary of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the 10th Anniversary of the Kampala Convention, the proposed resolution identifies three main areas of a renewed commitment to action, namely urban displacement outside of camps, protection from and during displacement, and identification and provision of durable solutions. It will recommend a set of concrete measures to enhance the quality and coherence of the Movement's response in these specific areas in order to further strengthen the implementation of the 2009 Movement Policy on Internal Displacement.

12. Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity

The proposed resolution would adopt a Movement statement on migration. This Statement reaffirms the Movement's commitment to addressing the protection and assistance needs of vulnerable migrants and the significant amount of work undertaken by the components of the Movement in this area. The proposed resolution also focuses on the preservation of humanitarian space in the field of migration and reassert the Movement's role in meeting the needs of migrants.

Other topics for decision

13. Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements, dated 28 November 2005, between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and Magen David Adom in Israel

14. 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

- a. Adoption of the agenda of the 33rd International Conference
- b. Proposal of officers for the 33rd International Conference

III. Follow-up and progress reports

The reports listed below will be submitted as working documents to all members of the Council 45 days prior to the opening of the Council.

Members of the Council wishing to comment on these reports are invited to send written submissions to the Conference organizers. **None of the following reports will be introduced during, or discussed by, the Council unless a request to do so is submitted in advance by a member.**

15. Report on Resolution 12 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Reinforcing Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities in the Leadership and Work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”

16. Report on Resolution 2 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Movement-wide Principles for Resource Mobilization”

17. Report on Resolution 6 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Education: Related Humanitarian Needs”
18. Report on “Strengthening Civil-Military Relations (CMR) in Disaster Management” following up to Resolution 7 of the 2005 Council of Delegates
19. Report on Resolution 4 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Working Towards the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons: 2018–2021 action plan”
20. Report on Resolution 7 of the 2013 Council of Delegates “Weapons and International Humanitarian Law”
21. Report on Resolution 4 of the 2015 Council of Delegates “Strategic Framework on Disability Inclusion by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”
22. Report on the Empress Shôken Fund by the Joint ICRC/IFRC Commission
23. Report on the work of the Standing Commission (including reporting on the Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement)

IV. Closing of the Council

Announcement of the place and date of the 2021 Council of Delegates.

1.1.2 RESOLUTION 1 MOVEMENT-WIDE COMMITMENTS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Council of Delegates,

reasserting that as a global humanitarian network of millions of people, the *raison d’être* of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) is to prevent and alleviate the suffering of people vulnerable to and affected by disasters, conflicts, and health and social problems,

reaffirming the Movement’s accountability to vulnerable and affected people in its efforts to provide support and assistance impartially and without discrimination to address their needs, and to protect and preserve their dignity, including protection from sexual abuse and exploitation,

recognizing that vulnerable and crisis-affected people have existing skills, capacities, community systems and structures, and direct knowledge, understanding and experience of their situations, and have the right to participate and lead in designing, implementing and making decisions about the humanitarian activities that concern them,

recognizing also that Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers at the community level are often affected by and the first responders to situations of crisis and therefore provide a vital entry point to support efforts to improve accountability, effectiveness and localization of humanitarian actions,

emphasizing that community engagement and other forms of inclusive participation contribute to more timely, relevant, appropriate and effective humanitarian programmes; build trust and proximity with the people and communities we aim to serve; reduce risks of sexual abuse and exploitation, corruption and misuse of resources; and positively impact the safety and security of our staff and operations,

reaffirming the importance of systematically collecting and responding to vulnerable and affected people’s views on their needs, priorities, vulnerabilities and capacities, and the responsibility to use this information to guide decision-making and adapt activities in response to the feedback and inputs received,

acknowledging the diversity of individuals who make up any community, its existing and evolving power dynamics and patterns of inclusion or exclusion, and the need to take measures to understand these dynamics

and include all groups equally and equitably in community-engagement processes as well as to adapt activities according to different needs and vulnerabilities,

highlighting that effective community engagement enables different groups of people to share their insights or experiences; to ask questions or clarify expectations; to obtain accurate, relevant and potentially life-saving information; to share feedback on the quality and effectiveness of programmes and operations; and to hold us to account,

commending the existing capacity, experience and efforts of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in adopting and applying community engagement and accountability to people and communities more systematically in their policies and programmes,

acknowledging the Movement's existing commitments to strengthening accountability to and engagement with vulnerable and affected people, such as the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief, the IFRC's 2013 General Assembly decision (GA/13/40) on promoting active engagement and wider participation of the communities in operations and programmes, the IFRC's 2018 Policy on Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and the 2015 International Conference resolution on sexual and gender-based violence (32IC/15/R3), amongst other relevant policy decisions,

acknowledging also the Movement's contribution to initiatives to increase quality, effectiveness and accountability in humanitarian action, such as the Core Humanitarian Standard for quality and accountability and pledges made by the IFRC and the ICRC to support community participation and localization of aid and work in a more coordinated manner to promote community engagement and accountability as part of their Grand Bargain commitments,

recalling that, at the 2017 Council of Delegates, the workshop "From words to action: Community engagement and accountability in practice" concluded with a call for a Movement-wide approach to developing and scaling-up of shared commitments on community engagement and accountability to vulnerable and affected people and communities,

acknowledging efforts since then to develop a set of commitments in consultation with the various components of the Movement (National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC) that build on and complement existing or emerging initiatives intended to strengthen community engagement and accountability,

1. *adopts* the Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability, as annexed to this resolution;
2. *encourages* all Movement components to engage with and be accountable to the people they aim to serve in a manner consistent with these Movement-wide Commitments, and dedicate adequate human, financial and technical resources to do this;
3. *requests* all Movement components to work together to strengthen their individual and collective capacities and progressively integrate these commitments and actions into policy, management and decision-making processes, tools for capacity assessment, organizational development, programme planning, monitoring and evaluation, coordination, and cooperation with a view to reducing duplication in approaches and increasing harmonization;
4. *requests* all Movement components to share and document knowledge gained and lessons learned from their efforts to adopt and apply these commitments with a view to continuously improving the Movement's engagement with and accountability to vulnerable and affected people and thereby improving the outcomes of our humanitarian action and advocacy;
5. *recommends* that National Societies providing support and assistance to other National Societies also integrate the commitments into their international cooperation strategies, including by providing financial and other support to strengthen sustainable community engagement and accountability capacities of host National Societies;
6. *calls upon* all Movement components to continue to develop a harmonized performance-measurement framework to monitor and assess the extent to which the Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability are integrated into their ways of working, and report back to the 2023 Council of Delegates on progress and achievements made.



ANNEX

Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability

Introduction

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), in consultation with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies), have developed the following **commitments and minimum actions** as an annex to the 2019 Council of Delegates resolution “Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability”.

The commitments and minimum actions aim to **harmonize and align existing practices in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement** (Movement) and ensure that there is a consistent approach to how we engage with and are accountable to vulnerable and crisis-affected people and communities, while recognizing and respecting the specific mandates, roles, responsibilities and capacities of National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC.

This annex also includes a **draft performance-measurement framework** setting out proposed outcomes, indicators and benchmarks to orient how to integrate the commitments and minimum actions into policies, programmes and operations.¹ This work will be refined, tested and adapted for use by the IFRC, ICRC and National Societies with a view to developing a harmonized approach to monitoring and reporting back to the Council of Delegates on progress towards implementation of these community-engagement and accountability commitments within the Movement.

SECTION ONE: Scope, definitions and rationale

Scope

The commitments are intended to be relevant and applicable to all Movement components, their staff and volunteers, whether they work on short-term emergency responses or longer-term programmes or provide other services and assistance involving direct engagement with people and communities. The accompanying actions are intended to strengthen and improve accountability at all levels:

- National Society headquarters and branches, and domestic and international programmes and services to assist at-risk, vulnerable and crisis-affected people
- IFRC and ICRC national, regional and global programmes and operations
- other situations where one or more Movement components and/or external partners work together with similar objectives and seek to work with and assist similar people and communities.

Definitions

While many National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC have developed their own policies around community engagement and accountability, **the Movement still lacks a common definition and shared understanding** of these concepts and of how to integrate them into programmes and operations. Uncoordinated and diverse approaches undermine the potential of working together as a Movement to fully and effectively incorporate the needs, concerns, priorities and inputs of people and communities into policies, plans and decision-making processes, whether at the branch or community level, or in large-scale programmes and operations involving several Movement components.

In an effort to address this, the following proposed definitions draw on existing terms used within the Movement, as well as externally used and agreed concepts regarding accountability to affected people. The definitions will help ensure **a more consistent and common understanding** of community engagement and accountability. This is especially important when developing and implementing programmes and operations with people and communities, as well as for Movement cooperation and coordination, advocacy, capacity-building and organizational development processes.

¹ This draft document builds on *A Red Cross Red Crescent Guide to Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA)*, a 2019 Council of Delegates background paper supporting this resolution, and extensive consultations with and input from National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC. They are invited to continue to comment on this draft in order to ensure that the final Council of Delegates resolution reflects the Movement's priorities and ambitions around improving and strengthening community engagement and accountability.

Accountability refers to the mutual responsibility of all components of the Movement to use their power and resources ethically and responsibly to **put the interests of people and communities they aim to serve at the centre of decision-making**, thereby ensuring that humanitarian actions lead to the best possible outcomes and results for them, while protecting and preserving their **rights and dignity** and increasing their **resilience** to face situations of vulnerability and crisis. This includes people's rights to equitable access to assistance in proportion to their needs, priorities and preferences, the right to information, and the right to provide feedback and participate in decisions that affect them.

Accountability also includes the responsibility to ensure Movement staff and volunteers comply with all legal and ethical obligations to protect and safeguard the integrity and dignity of those we seek to serve, prevent sexual exploitation and abuse and corruption and misuse of resources, and to take timely and appropriate corrective action to deal with situations that compromise principled humanitarian action.

Community engagement refers to ways of working collaboratively with people and communities to ensure that Red Cross and Red Crescent actions are effective, inclusive, sustainable and accountable, and that they contribute to supporting and enabling people and communities to lead and shape positive, sustainable changes in their own lives and on their own terms. This includes **processes to systematically listen to, engage and communicate with people and communities** in order to better understand their diverse needs, vulnerabilities and capacities; to gather, respond to and act on feedback and input about their priorities and preferences; and to provide safe and equitable access and opportunities to actively participate in decisions that affect them.

This also includes the responsibility to communicate transparently and in an appropriate, accessible manner about Movement principles and values, the aims and objectives of Movement action and advocacy, what they can expect from us, and how people and communities can participate in and provide their inputs about issues and decisions that affect them.

People and communities are understood to mean any group of vulnerable, at-risk or crisis-affected people that the Movement aims to serve, without discrimination and according to need, in line with our Fundamental Principles. This requires recognizing the diversity of individuals who make up any community, the role that gender, age, disability, diversity and existing and evolving social, economic and power dynamics and patterns of inclusion or exclusion play in increasing the risks, vulnerabilities and marginalization of some groups of people within a community. It also means the responsibility to adapt community-engagement approaches to address different needs, capacities, vulnerabilities and preferences of different groups and take measures to deliver safe, inclusive, equal and equitable access to support and assistance.

While the main focus is improving accountability to the most vulnerable and worst affected people and communities directly reached by programmes and operations, whether facing situations of conflict, disasters or other circumstances placing them at risk or vulnerability, the commitments also imply the need to consider the views and perspectives of other groups of people not directly receiving assistance but who may be indirectly affected by Movement action and advocacy.

These commitments also imply taking measures to be more transparent and accountable within the Movement, from supporting and listening to staff and volunteers working at the branch and community level, to building effective and equitable relationships between components of the Movement, and the shared responsibility and commitment of senior management and leadership at all levels to ensure community engagement and accountability is core to our ways of working with the people and communities we aim to serve.

Rationale

The Fundamental Principles oblige us to work to prevent and alleviate human suffering in situations of crisis, and to provide assistance without discrimination and according to need. This is the foundation of our **individual and collective accountability to the people and communities we seek to assist**.

The [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#), a number of Movement policies, and external commitments such as the [Core Humanitarian Standard for quality and accountability](#), reinforce this duty. They call on the Movement to **put vulnerable people and communities at the centre of humanitarian action and advocacy**. This means working in ways that respect local culture, preferences and diversity and promote people's **right to be informed about, participate in and share their input on** the decisions that affect them. It also means ensuring that programmes and operations generate results and outcomes that are **meaningful for them**.



Community engagement – the way we relate to the people we aim to serve – is critical to meeting our accountability commitments. Regularly engaging with people and communities and incorporating their feedback and input into the assessment, formulation, design, implementation, management and monitoring phases of programmes and operations is key to ensuring that our action is effective and accountable.

Systematically incorporating community engagement and accountability into policies, management and decision-making processes, and integrating this into programmes and operations can help the Movement to:

- listen to, understand and address communities' assistance **needs, priorities and preferences**, and identify issues around power dynamics, age, gender, disability, diversity and inclusion and how these influence vulnerability
- provide more fair and equitable access to **appropriate and relevant assistance** and services
- identify, mitigate and **manage risks**, including communities' **security and protection** concerns, and take measures to ensure staff and volunteers are aware of and comply with their legal and ethical responsibilities, particularly around prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
- **empower people and communities** to actively exercise their rights to engage with and participate in decision-making processes and support them to advocate with relevant authorities and aid providers, including the Movement, to address their needs and priorities
- identify and help mobilize local **communities' capacities, knowledge and resources** to reduce their **vulnerability** and develop and implement strategies to strengthen and increase their **capacity and resilience** to prevent and mitigate future situations of vulnerability or crisis
- improve the **quality, effectiveness and sustainability** of Movement action and advocacy **from the perspectives of people and communities themselves**
- build and reinforce relationships of **trust, transparency and respect** between the Movement and people and communities.

These commitments and minimum actions will help consolidate and replicate good practices, reduce duplication of tools and approaches and ensure continuous learning and improvements in the way the Movement engages with and is accountable to the people and communities we aim to serve.

SECTION TWO: Commitments and minimum actions

This section sets out seven commitments and recommended minimum actions aimed at strengthening and improving community engagement and accountability across the Movement. These commitments provide a framework to ensure community engagement and accountability become a core way of working in the Movement, reflected in our institutional policies and procedures, fully integrated into programmes and operations, and guiding cooperation and collaboration within the Movement and with external actors.

Commitment 1:

All Movement components commit to integrating community engagement and accountability in their strategies, policies and procedures.

By 2023 all Movement components will:

- adopt a specific policy commitment to put people and communities' capacities, needs, priorities and preferences as the basis for Movement action and advocacy
- reference and integrate the Movement-wide Community Engagement and Accountability Commitments in other relevant policies, strategies and procedures, such as on disaster response, health care, gender, protection, communications and staff and volunteer management
- ensure all relevant strategic and operational plans include an explicit explanation of how community-engagement and accountability actions will be integrated, monitored and measured in programmes and operations that involve working with people and communities.

Commitment 2:

All Movement components commit to regularly conducting an analysis of the contexts they work in to better understand and address the diversity of needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of the people and communities they seek to serve and assist.

By 2023 all Movement components will:

- undertake situation and context analysis to identify existing knowledge, skills and capacities and the social, economic, political and/or cultural factors and power dynamics that increase risks and vulnerabilities for different groups of people in the community, using equitable, accessible participatory approaches to engage and involve all groups of people in communities whenever possible
- design programmes and operations based on this analysis, paying special attention to integrating gender, age, disability, protection, inclusion, conflict sensitivity and “do no harm” approaches into needs assessment and planning activities
- regularly monitor and update the situational and context analysis, and collect and analyse data disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other diversity parameters, assess protection risks and use this data to inform decision-making processes, while taking measures to protect and safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of personal data.

Commitment 3:

All Movement components commit to facilitating greater participation of local people and communities, including National Society volunteers, and helping them to apply their knowledge, skills and capacities to find appropriate and effective solutions to their problems.

By 2023 all Movement components will:

- take measures to regularly listen to people and communities and consult with them to identify their priorities and preferences on the design and implementation of programmes and operations that affect them, and how they want to participate in decision-making
- integrate mechanisms to facilitate safe, accessible and equitable engagement with and participation of people and communities in all phases of programmes and operations in line with their preferences, and ensure that their inputs and contributions are systematically integrated and considered in decision-making processes
- prioritize the use of local knowledge, skills, capacities and resources when implementing programmes and operations, including adopting measures to allocate funding and resources and transfer decision-making responsibilities to local communities (including National Society volunteers and branch structures) on decisions that affect them whenever possible and appropriate.

Commitment 4:

All Movement components commit to systematically listening to, responding to and acting on feedback from the people and communities we aim to serve.

By 2023 all Movement components will:

- take measures to regularly listen to and consult people and communities on their trusted and preferred channels and means of providing feedback and complaints about issues that concern them as a regular part of programme and operation activities
- integrate context-appropriate, safe, accessible and equitable measures to regularly collect, document, analyse, respond and act on people and communities’ feedback, including mechanisms to assess how satisfied they are with the timeliness, quality and effectiveness of assistance, their participation and ability to influence decision-making and their interactions with us, and use this information as the basis to adapt and continuously improve the quality, effectiveness and accountability of Movement action and advocacy
- ensure institutional responsibilities and channels are clearly established to address feedback, track any actions taken or not taken as result and close the feedback loop by transparently reporting back to people and communities and validating how their feedback has been considered, with specific procedures in place to deal with issues of sexual exploitation and abuse or other sensitive issues.

Commitment 5:

All Movement components commit to greater transparency in our communications and relationships with people and communities we aim to serve.

By 2023 all Movement components will:

- regularly consult with people and communities on their trusted and preferred information sources and communication channels and identify their priority information needs, paying particular attention to diversity issues, and, based on this, design, test and make sure that information-sharing, behaviour change, advocacy and two-way communication activities are relevant, inclusive, accessible, and language and culturally appropriate
- when planning and implementing programmes or operations, take measures to regularly engage with people and communities to inform them of and seek approval for the aims and objectives; planned activities; budget allocations; selection criteria for receiving assistance; and mechanisms to obtain more information, submit feedback and complaints or participate in programmes and operations
- make consistent efforts to build ongoing relationships of mutual trust and respect with vulnerable people and communities and other stakeholders, transparently sharing information about the Movement's principles and Code of Conduct, values and ways of working, and what they can expect from us in terms of our actions, behaviours and responsibilities, with particular attention paid to reaching out to the most marginalized and disadvantaged groups in communities.

Commitment 6:

All Movement components commit to strengthening knowledge, skills and competencies in community engagement and accountability at all levels, and systematically incorporating this learning into our work.

By 2023 all Movement components will:

- allocate adequate human, financial and technical resources to systematically integrate community engagement and accountability into institutional strategies, policies, programmes and operations
- designate a focal point in their senior governance and management team to monitor and oversee community-engagement and accountability initiatives throughout the organization and in programmes and operations
- ensure that performance appraisals of relevant staff members include assessment criteria for their community-engagement and accountability responsibilities and set out realistic and achievable performance benchmarks and indicators and appropriate support for them to achieve this
- share widely existing community-engagement and accountability guidelines and tools, and prioritize the provision of ongoing technical assistance, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing measures for Movement leadership and governance, management, staff and volunteers, particularly at the branch and community level, as part of overall organizational, human resources and cooperation strategies
- encourage and facilitate knowledge-sharing, peer-to-peer learning and a community of practice within and between National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC, and with external partners, drawing on good practices and learning to build greater awareness and understanding of how community engagement and accountability contributes to better outcomes for vulnerable and affected people and communities.

Commitment 7:

All Movement components commit to coordinating their approaches to community engagement and accountability when working in the same context, including with relevant external partners, in order to increase coherence and consistency, avoid duplication and improve effectiveness and efficiency.

By 2023 all Movement components will:

- continue to consolidate work on the Community Engagement and Accountability toolkit, and apply common approaches to community engagement and accountability in all programmes and operations, in line with affected people and communities' priorities and preferences, and the host National Society's own strategy and vision

- establish and use common platforms and mechanisms for community engagement and accountability, such as joint feedback mechanisms or methods to foster people and communities' engagement with and participation in decision-making processes, and participate in relevant coordination mechanisms and platforms with external actors whenever appropriate and possible
- transparently share relevant information, input, feedback, data and analyses from people and communities with other Movement components and relevant external partners in order to identify and address their issues and concerns, with due regard for confidentiality, security and protection issues.



SECTION THREE: Expected outcomes, monitoring and reporting

Systematically adopting and implementing these commitments and actions will strengthen our individual and collective accountability to the people and communities we aim to serve and assist. The commitments and actions will help to ensure the Movement is able to more consistently deliver better quality, more effective, meaningful results in line with people's and communities' needs, priorities and preferences, while preserving and protecting their rights and dignity.

However, the success of this resolution depends on how well each component of the Movement adopts and applies these commitments within their own institutional policies, procedures, programmes and operations. Accordingly, the resolution proposes a **draft performance-measurement framework** with three proposed outcomes and indicators to help the Movement to benchmark and assess how well community-engagement and accountability commitments and actions have been integrated into our ways of working and how this in turn contributes to improving the quality, effectiveness and accountability of Movement action and advocacy.

The intention is to use this draft framework as the basis for further discussion between the ICRC, IFRC and National Societies following the Council of Delegates, with a view to developing a harmonized approach to assessing, monitoring and reporting progress at the individual and collective level towards making community engagement and accountability core to all we do as a Movement.

Proposed community-engagement and accountability outcomes

Outcome 1

- Movement components systematically apply community-engagement and accountability commitments as the foundation to their ways of working with the people and communities they aim to serve and assist.

Example of an indicator:

- Degree to which the Movement-wide commitments and minimum actions are integrated into National Society, IFRC and ICRC strategies, policies, procedures, programmes and operations.

Outcome 2

- People and communities reached by Movement action and advocacy are satisfied with their opportunities to influence decisions that affect them.

Examples of indicators:

- Degree to which Movement components adopt measures for people and communities to

systematically participate in designing, implementing, managing, monitoring and evaluating activities.

- Degree to which people and communities are satisfied with their ability to influence decision-making in all phases of the programme/operation.

Outcome 3

- People and communities reached by Movement action and advocacy are satisfied with the quality, relevance and effectiveness of our activities.

Examples of indicators:

- Degree to which Movement activities have been designed/changed/adapted, based on feedback and input from people and communities.
- Degree to which people and communities are satisfied that the outcomes of Movement activities address their priority needs and preferences.

Outcome 1 is based on the assumption that adopting and consistently using a community-engagement and accountability focus will contribute to greater proximity, reach, acceptance and impact of Movement action and advocacy. This is consistent with current experiences within the Movement and more broadly in the humanitarian and development sectors. The indicator helps assess whether Movement components have the required institutional commitments, systems and processes in place to systematically integrate community-

engagement and accountability measures into their work, and whether those measures are delivering on people's and communities' expectations and desired outcomes.

Outcomes 2 and 3, along with the indicators, aim to generate data and evidence **from the perspective of affected people themselves** on how Movement actions are meeting their priority needs and whether they feel they have influence over decisions that affect them. This includes indicators on people's and communities' perceptions of and satisfaction with their ability to shape and influence decisions on the design and implementation of programmes/operations and their satisfaction with the quality, effectiveness and outcomes of the assistance provided. This builds on the growing experience in the Movement of tracking and monitoring people's perceptions and satisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of aid efforts as part of the decision-making process.

It is important to note that these proposed outcomes and indicators, along with monitoring and reporting tools, are **still under development** and need to be refined and adapted to Movement components' current planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes. Nevertheless, some harmonization is recommended to collectively track and benchmark how well community engagement and accountability is implemented across the Movement.

The IFRC and ICRC will continue to consult and collaborate with National Societies to refine and improve the proposed outcomes and indicators, and to the extent possible, ensure consistency and alignment with similar international commitments to community engagement and accountability, such as the Core Humanitarian Standard for quality and accountability.

Benchmarking community engagement and accountability in programmes and operations

As part of the ongoing consultation process on the commitments and minimum actions, many Movement components recommended developing benchmarks to help integrate community engagement into the design and implementation of programmes and operations. In part, this recognizes the varying degree of capacity, resources and experiences within the Movement on community-engagement and accountability issues, and the need to set out clearer targets for continuous improvement over time.

The following benchmarks offer examples of how the Movement-wide community-engagement and accountability commitments and actions can be applied throughout the lifecycle of a programme or operation. The benchmarks allow National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC to **progressively adopt and improve integration of community engagement and accountability in their work over time**. These benchmarks should be considered alongside work at the institutional level to fully integrate the commitments and minimum actions into organizational ways of working, and to provide adequate support and resources to teams implementing activities with people and communities.

As with the proposed community-engagement and accountability outcomes and indicators, this is still in the development phase, and more consultation is needed to refine and formalize them.

The proposed benchmarks set out three levels of performance:

- **Level 1:** This level is intended for teams with very limited experience in community engagement. It sets out some of the very basic steps that should be included in the different phases of a programme or operation. This includes meeting basic requirements, such as informing people and communities of key information and decisions about the programme and of the mechanisms and channels for submitting feedback and complaints.
- **Level 2:** This level is intended to help teams with some experience in community engagement and accountability to scale up and improve the degree to which this is integrated into programmes and operations. It expands on and goes beyond the very basic requirements by incorporating additional measures, such as mechanisms to **collect and respond to feedback and complaints**, and to **consult and seek approval** for plans and activities with people and communities.
- **Level 3:** This level helps benchmark what full integration of community engagement and accountability could look like in a programme/operation. It meets the aims of progressively increasing the opportunities

for people and communities to **participate directly** and take the lead in programme/operation decision-making, to ensure that their **views, perspectives and feedback are at the centre** of the design, implementation, monitoring and management processes, and to adapt activities in order to better address their need, priorities and preferences.

The range of levels reflects a recognition that there are many contexts where implementing community-engagement and accountability measures is difficult (for example, because of a lack of access and security or limited capacity and experience in community engagement and accountability). This also acknowledges the constraints and dilemmas facing programme and operation teams. Achieving intermediate or advanced levels may not be possible in some situations, though if the context changes and conditions permit, programmes and operations can and should set more ambitious community-engagement and accountability targets and pursue continuous improvement over time.

The benchmarks can also provide decision-makers with the information needed to support internal **quality assurance processes** focusing on how well community-engagement and accountability measures are integrated into all phases of programmes/operations. This is useful for both internal management decision-making and learning and external reporting to donors and other stakeholders.

Institutional Benchmarks

These benchmarks help set out some of the requirements to ensure community-engagement and accountability measures are systematically and sustainably supported within the organization.

Facilitating integration of community engagement in organizational processes		
Strategies and Polices	Management	Organizational Development
L.1. A specific policy commitment to put people and communities' capacities, needs, priorities and preferences as the basis for Movement action and advocacy is in place	L.1. Information and decision-making channels for community engagement and accountability, including responsibilities for addressing feedback, complaints and protection against sexual abuse and exploitation, are clearly established and communicated to all staff and volunteers and partners	L.1. Adequate human and financial resources are allocated to support integration of community-engagement and accountability measures into all areas of work
L.2. Community engagement and accountability is referenced and integrated in other relevant policies, strategies and procedures, such as on disaster response, health care, gender, protection, communications and staff and volunteer management	L.2. A designated focal point in the senior governance and management team is responsible for monitoring and overseeing community-engagement and accountability initiatives throughout the organization	L.2. Technical assistance, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing measures are in place to increase awareness and understanding of community engagement and accountability amongst leadership and governance, management, staff and volunteers, particularly at the branch and community level
L.3. Community engagement policies and commitments have been developed with the participation and input of governance, management, staff and volunteers, and whenever possible, vulnerable and marginalized people and communities	L.3. Performance appraisals of relevant staff members include assessment criteria for their community-engagement and accountability responsibilities and set out realistic and achievable performance benchmarks and indicators and appropriate support for them to achieve them	L.3. Staff and volunteers are encouraged and supported to participate in and contribute to knowledge-sharing, peer-to-peer learning and a community of practice



Programme and Operations Benchmarks

These benchmarks help set out some of the requirements to ensure community-engagement and accountability measures are systematically integrated into programmes and operations.

Understanding the contexts and communities we aim to serve and assist		
Assess, Formulate and Plan	Implement and Monitor	Evaluate and Learn
<p>L.1.a. Programme/operation teams conduct a situation and context analysis to identify existing knowledge, skills and capacities and the social, economic, political and/or cultural factors and power dynamics that increase risks and vulnerabilities for different groups of people in the community</p> <p>L.1.b. Activities are designed based on this analysis and a needs assessment, with attention to issues of protection, gender, age, disability and inclusion</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult with and seek approval from people and communities regarding the context analysis and needs assessment, and the implications for programmes</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate in the situation and context analysis, using equitable, accessible participatory approaches to engage and involve all groups of people in communities whenever possible, and their own knowledge and lived experiences are reflected in the analysis</p>	<p>L.1.a. Programme/operation teams regularly update the situation and context analysis to identify any significant changes in the context and adapt activities accordingly</p> <p>L.1.b. Programme/operation teams regularly collect and analyse sex, age, disability and other diversity parameters to better understand and adapt activities to the context, with adequate measures to protect and safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of personal data</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult with and seek approval from people and communities on changes in the context and the implications for programmes and operations</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate in updating the situation and context analysis, and are given opportunities to use their own knowledge and lived experiences to propose changes to programmes and operations accordingly</p>	<p>L.1. Programme/operation teams document and disseminate lessons learned and good practices for conducting a comprehensive situation and context analysis to inform programming within the organization</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult on and use the lessons learned and good practices for conducting a comprehensive situation and context analysis to inform programming</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate in efforts to identify and document lessons learned and good practices for conducting a comprehensive situation and context analysis to inform programming</p>



Facilitating participation and use of local knowledge, skills and capacities		
Assess, Formulate and Plan	Implement and Monitor	Evaluate and Learn
<p>L.1. Programme/operation teams include an explanation of how people and communities will be engaged with and participate in decision-making processes in programme proposals and plans</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult with and seek approval from people and communities on their priority needs and preferences for delivery of assistance, including preferences for participation in activities</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate and jointly define objectives and activities and mechanisms for participation in decision-making</p>	<p>L.1. Programme/operation teams establish mechanisms to facilitate safe, accessible and equitable engagement with and participation of people and communities in all phases of programmes and operations in line with their preferences</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult with and seek approval from people and communities on the design, functioning and effectiveness of participation mechanisms and adapt if necessary, to ensure equitable access and inclusive participation of all groups in the community</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate in designing, managing and monitoring activities, including funding allocations and management of financial and other resources when appropriate</p>	<p>L.1. Programme/operation teams document and disseminate lessons learned and good practices around participation, and use of local knowledge and capacities are documented and disseminated within the organization</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult with and seek approval from people and communities on the lessons learned and good practices for effective participatory approaches and the use of local knowledge and capacities</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate in identifying lessons learned and good practices for effective participatory approaches and the use of local knowledge and capacities in programmes and operations</p>

Facilitating listening and responding to feedback		
Assess, Formulate and Plan	Implement and Monitor	Evaluate and Learn
<p>L.1. Programme/operation teams include an explanation of how people and communities will be able to provide feedback and complaints, and how these will be addressed by management in programme proposals and plans</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult with and seek approval from people and communities on their preferences for providing feedback, complaints and inputs around programme activities</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate and jointly define mechanisms for collecting, analysing and using feedback, complaints and other measures to track and monitor their satisfaction with assistance</p>	<p>L.1. Programme/operation teams ensure responsibilities and channels are clearly established and in place to analyse, respond and act on feedback as part of management decision-making processes</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult with and seek approval from people and communities on the analysis of feedback data, take appropriate actions to respond to the feedback, and close the feedback loop to report back on the actions taken or not take as a result of their feedback</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate in the analysis and interpretation of feedback data and identify the most appropriate actions to take as a result, including tracking and monitoring if issues have been successfully addressed</p>	<p>L.1. Programme/operation teams include people and communities' feedback, including their satisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of activities, as a core part of monitoring, reporting and evaluation activities</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult with and seek approval from people and communities on the results of feedback, monitoring and evaluation processes</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate in monitoring and evaluation processes, defining criteria for quality and effectiveness based on their own experiences, with the findings shared and disseminated with them and other relevant local actors, within the organization and externally</p>

Promoting greater transparency and building relationships of mutual trust and respect		
Assess Formulate and Plan	Implement and Monitor	Evaluate and Learn
<p>L.1. Programme/operation teams identify people and communities' trusted and preferred information sources, communications channels and priority information needs</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult with and seek approval from people and communities on the most appropriate means to facilitate accessible, relevant, appropriate, transparent and inclusive communications for them, with particular emphasis on age, gender, disability and diversity issues</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate in defining information-sharing and communications channels and mechanisms</p>	<p>L.1. Programme/operation teams regularly inform people and communities about Movement principles, values, project objectives, plans and activities, how to provide feedback and participate in decision-making processes and other relevant information</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult with and seek approval from people and communities on planned information-sharing, behaviour change, advocacy and two-way communications activities</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate in the design and implementation of information-sharing, behaviour change, advocacy and two-way communications activities</p>	<p>L.1. Programme/operation teams inform people and communities in a timely manner about changes or modifications to plans and activities, including information on project end-dates and transition plans</p> <p>L.2. Programme/operation teams consult with and seek approval from people and communities on monitoring and evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of activities and their communications, engagement and interactions with the Movement</p> <p>L.3. People and communities directly participate in monitoring and evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of the communications, engagement and interactions with the Movement</p>

1.1.3 RESOLUTION 2

STATEMENT ON INTEGRITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

This statement expresses the seriousness with which the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement) takes the issue of integrity.

The integrity and ethical behaviour of each component of the Movement, at an individual level as well as at an institutional level, is of paramount importance to the Movement as a whole.

The commitment of the Movement to our Fundamental Principles, coupled with our comprehensive statutory, regulatory and policy frameworks, is **the foundation of our principled and ethical humanitarian action**. This stance is imperative to conducting our humanitarian work effectively and is core to gaining and maintaining the **acceptance and trust** of the people and communities in need that we strive to serve, including in sensitive and insecure contexts.

The Movement is committed to ensuring that our **workplaces are safe for all** and that the **dignity and integrity of our staff and volunteers is preserved, safeguarded and promoted**. The Movement is committed to ensuring that the prevention of and protection against any form of misconduct is an integral dimension of all our work and that there is no tolerance for any form of discrimination, harassment, abuse or exploitation.

Ensuring **compliance with individual behavioural standards**, including through the adoption and firm and fair application of institutional rules, mechanisms and procedures, is paramount, as is their continuous revision and adaptation to address emerging risks and changing contexts. As components of the Movement, we are firmly committed to preventing and addressing breaches of integrity and unethical behaviour by our leadership, employees and volunteers.

The Movement recognizes that **respect for and inclusion of diversity and gender balance within our workforce** is critical to ensure and support integrity, trust and accountability. Volunteers, staff and the leadership should represent the diversity of our Movement as well as the diversity of the people we are mandated to serve.



The Movement components are committed to working together to ensure strong **accountability to the communities we work with**, by engaging and communicating with people to better understand their diverse needs, vulnerabilities and capacities and by providing them with safe and equitable access and opportunities to actively participate in decisions that affect them, with the goal of ensuring that our collective actions are effective, inclusive and accountable, in line with the Movement-wide commitments for community engagement and accountability.

The Movement is determined to ensure the most appropriate levels of **accountability** to governments, to donors and to partners, in line with our Fundamental Principles. The Movement components aspire to be transparent and open and to allow appropriate access to institutional and financial records, while respecting privacy and ensuring data protection. The Movement recognizes that **transparency**, including as it relates to challenges, is crucial to building trust with diverse stakeholders.

The Movement is committed to ensuring **the protection of whistle-blowers** so that individuals are able to act in the best interests of their organization without fear of repercussions or retaliation. We are also committed to **protecting the confidentiality and due process rights** of persons who are the subject of an allegation or investigation.

The Movement is committed to further building on existing structures and, as appropriate, **pooling resources and experience**, including from partners, to provide **all components** with effective support, training, education and guidance in strengthening integrity and accountability rules, processes and mechanisms. **National Society Development** is an effective approach for strengthening local and national capacities for the early detection and effective management of integrity risks, thus contributing to the relevance, reach and sustainability of services to people in need.

National Societies will be further **supported in strengthening risk management** through the revision of their statutory and legal base and related regulatory and policy frameworks, in line with the newly adopted Movement Guidance for National Society Statutes and the IFRC Integrity Framework. National Society statutes will continue to be reviewed regularly by the Joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes.

Furthermore, Movement components are committed to ensuring that the conditions of their **partnerships**, including within the Movement, reflect a firm commitment to integrity and ethical standards, including through the terms and clauses of partnership agreements and the establishment and implementation of appropriate risk management processes.

Integrity issues within National Societies will be addressed by their leadership or, as required, by the **IFRC Compliance and Mediation Committee**, with sanctions applied through the IFRC Governing Board and General Assembly.

Integrity concerns within the IFRC Secretariat will be investigated by the **Office of Internal Audit and Investigation** with oversight, as necessary, from the Audit and Risk Commission. Any breaches will be sanctioned as per staff rules and regulations, and an **annual report** on the handling of significant concerns will be published.

The ICRC will enhance its capability in **proactively managing strategic, institutional and operational risks** and ensure that allegations of misconduct are investigated and that remedial actions, including sanctions, are implemented. It will further augment systems for the effective monitoring and measuring of compliance performance, while continuing to develop systems and processes in response to increased transparency and reporting requirements and to enhance its capabilities to improve risk identification.

This statement will be followed up with a clear plan to consult on, implement and monitor an enhanced approach to integrity across the Movement. We undertake to report to the next Council of Delegates in 2021 and, through it, to the 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent on progress in fulfilling the commitments made in this Statement.



1.1.4 RESOLUTION 3

MOVEMENT APPROACH TO STRENGTHENING NATIONAL SOCIETY STATUTORY AND CONSTITUTIONAL BASE AND COMPLEMENTARY FRAMEWORKS SUCH AS THE VOLUNTEER CHARTER

The Council of Delegates,

acknowledging the crucial contribution of sound and comprehensive statutory base and complementary legal, regulatory and policy frameworks (hereinafter referred to as “Statutes”) to preserving a National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society’s ability to deliver effective, relevant, sustainable and principled humanitarian services to vulnerable people and communities and to being accountable to its constituency at all times, and *recalling* the importance of National Societies periodically reviewing their Statutes so as to ensure and maintain their relevance in line with changing needs in the community,

recalling past resolutions adopted by the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent requesting National Societies to collaborate with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) as well as with the ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes (Joint Statutes Commission) in the strengthening of their Statutes, beginning with Resolution VI of the [22nd International Conference in 1973](#), and welcoming the continued commitment of National Societies to doing so,

reaffirming commitments undertaken by National Societies under past resolutions adopted by the Council of Delegates to work closely with the ICRC and the IFRC as well as with the Joint Statutes Commission on the revision of their Statutes, including the Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement adopted by the 2001 Council of Delegates and Resolution 4 adopted by the 2011 Council of Delegates, which calls on National Societies to:

- periodically review their Statutes in line with evolving humanitarian needs in domestic contexts and to share their Statutes and any revisions thereto with the Joint Statutes Commission at the drafting stage
- take the latter’s recommendations into account,

recalling that strong and sound legal, statutory and policy base frameworks are key contributors to a National Society’s development and to its ability to act in accordance with the Fundamental Principles at all times,

recalling that it is crucially important for a National Society’s Statutes to define its commitment to a culture of inclusion and diversity, including through the promotion of gender equality and the representation of minorities at all levels,

expressing its appreciation of the work and consultations conducted under the auspices of the Core Group on the revision of the 1999 Guidance for National Societies Statutes, composed of National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC,

welcoming the innovations of the new Guidance for National Society Statutes (Guidance document), including its more flexible approach and its attention to the wide variety of organizational models adopted by National Societies from different legal traditions and operational contexts, *welcoming* the Guidance document’s new or strengthened standards on *Members*, on *Volunteers*, on *Leadership* and on *Compliance, Integrity and Dispute Resolution*, including its standards on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse, and *encouraging* National Societies to pay special attention to these innovations in the revision of their Statutes,

welcoming the adoption of the new Guidance document by the Governing Board of the IFRC at its 38th session held in October 2018, *recalling* the 2017 IFRC General Assembly decision relating to the Guidance document, recommending that the Joint Statutes Commission submit the new Guidance document to the 2019 Council of Delegates for adoption, and *expressing* its appreciation to those National Societies that have already revised their Statutes in line with the standards set out in the new Guidance document,

welcoming the adoption of the Volunteer Charter by the 21st session of the General Assembly of the IFRC (Antalya, Turkey, 6–8 November 2017) and *encouraging* National Societies to take inspiration from the Charter in developing their Statutes; the Volunteer Charter aims to clarify volunteers’ rights and responsibilities, including

the right to a safe working environment, the right to protection, the right to information about the risks they face, the right to participate, to be heard and to be recognized for their contribution and the right to insurance.

welcoming the steps undertaken by the IFRC and the ICRC as well as by the Joint Statutes Commission towards the effective promotion and implementation of the new Guidance document,

1. *adopts* the new Guidance document for National Society Statutes at the level of the Movement;
2. *calls upon* National Societies, in accordance with their past commitments, to conduct a regular and periodic review of their statutory base instruments and complementary frameworks and, in line with the decisions of the IFRC General Assembly (2017) and Governing Board (October 2018), to review their Statutes in accordance with the new Guidance document within the next five years from the time of adoption of the present resolution and to continue with regular reviews at least once every ten years;
3. *encourages* National Societies to include the review of their Statutes as a key commitment in their own development processes, plans and strategies;
4. *calls upon* the ICRC and the IFRC, at the level of their respective headquarters, regions and field representations at the request of National Societies, as well as the Joint Statutes Commission to:
 - continue their active support to strengthen National Societies' Statutes
 - engage, jointly with National Societies, in eliciting the support of relevant public authorities in strengthening National Society legal and, as appropriate, statutory base frameworks
 - formulate a specific and tailored National Society development offer to National Societies for the strengthening of their Statutes (e.g. in such areas as integrity risk prevention and management on the basis of Chapter 6 of the Guidance document)
 - monitor the progress of National Societies and assess the compliance of their Statutes with the new Guidance document;
5. *encourages* the development by the IFRC, the ICRC and the Joint Statutes Commission of new and strengthened approaches for effective and contextualized advice and recommendations to National Societies on their Statutes, taking into consideration:
 - the wide variety of approaches and different traditions and contexts, including through the development of concrete illustrations of the implementation of the various standards set out in the Guidance document
 - strengthened peer-to-peer approaches, including *inter alia* through relevant National Society governance or technical networks established at regional or sub-regional levels
 - the support provided by National Societies working internationally and, more generally,
 - a more direct, concrete and contextualized dialogue with National Societies on the basis of the new Guidance document;
6. *requests* the Joint Statutes Commission to report to the Council of Delegates in 2021 on the progress made by National Societies in revising and strengthening their Statutes in line with the new Guidance document and the other operative paragraphs of the present resolution;
7. *adopts* the Volunteer Charter at the level of the Movement and invites the Movement components to apply it at all times.



ANNEXES

GUIDANCE FOR NATIONAL SOCIETY STATUTES 2018

Adopted by the IFRC Governing Board on 11 October 2018

The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (from the Preamble to the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement)

- Humanity** *The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.*
- Impartiality** *It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.*
- Neutrality** *In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.*
- Independence** *The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.*
- Voluntary service** *It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.*
- Unity** *There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.*
- Universality** *The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.*

Process of developing 2018 Guidance Document

In 2016, a review of the *Guidance for National Society Statutes* (2000) was initiated, focusing on revising the Guidance Document.

The purpose of the review was to ensure a Guidance Document that is fit for purpose, user-friendly and accessible from a leadership perspective, which enables National Societies to make informed choices that are compatible with different contexts.

The review was led by a core group chaired by the Danish Red Cross and composed of: Argentine Red Cross, the Burundi Red Cross, Cook Islands Red Cross Society, Haiti Red Cross Society, Mongolian Red Cross Society, Palestine Red Crescent Society, Spanish Red Cross, Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan and Uganda Red Cross Society, the IFRC, the ICRC and the Joint Statutes Commission. The core group held five meetings and consulted with the wider IFRC membership through an online consultation targeting all National Societies and the IFRC statutory organs (April–June 2017), and with workshops held at the 2017 IFRC General Assembly, in which almost all 190 National Societies.

Funding for the process was provided by the Argentine Red Cross, the British Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, Palestine Red Crescent Society, Spanish Red Cross, Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan, the IFRC and the ICRC, in addition to in-kind contributions of people, expertise and time provided by all core group members.

The Guidance Document was approved by the IFRC Governing Board at its 38th session in October 2018 based on a mandate from the IFRC General Assembly (Antalya, Turkey, 6–8 November 2017). It is envisaged that the Guidance Document will be presented to the 2019 Council of Delegates for approval by the Movement.

INTRODUCTION

Sound Statutes or constitution (hereinafter “Statutes”) are essential for a strong National Society. They describe the identity of the National Society, including what it intends to do to respond to humanitarian need, and explain its leadership and organizational model. They ensure transparency about how power is allocated within the organization and help safeguard a National Society’s integrity.

The *Guidance for National Society Statutes, 2018* (hereinafter “Guidance Document”) has been developed, based on a review of the previous version of 2000, to guide and inspire the leadership of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (hereinafter “National Societies”) in their efforts to review, update and strengthen their Statutes. It replaces the previous version.

The Guidance Document is intended to support National Societies to develop Statutes that enable them to carry out their humanitarian mandates and roles effectively and in accordance with the mission and Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (hereinafter “the Movement”). It attempts to reflect the wide variety of organizational models and approaches adopted by National Societies from different legal traditions and operational contexts.

How a National Society structures itself depends on many internal and external factors, including the services it provides, how it engages volunteers and financial resources, the size and geography of the territory it covers, and the national political and legal structures.

The Guidance Document distinguishes between the standards that a National Society’s Statutes are expected to meet and introduces greater flexibility in how these standards can be achieved. For example, the Guidance Document does not make any judgement as to whether a National Society should adopt a centralized or decentralized organizational model, as long as the model chosen enables it to respond to humanitarian needs across its national territory and that the Fundamental Principle of unity is met. The document also makes suggestions that, while not mandatory, are worth considering as good practice in many contexts.

The document includes new content, including a chapter entitled “Volunteers”, The Guidance Document builds on other initiatives, including, but not limited to, the following:

- [IFRC National Society Development Framework](#)
- [IFRC Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification process \(OCAC\)](#)
- [ICRC Safer Access Framework \(SAF\)](#)
- [IFRC Volunteer Charter](#)
- [IFRC Integrity Policy](#)
- Dashboard of the IFRC [Compliance and Mediation Committee \(CMC\)](#)

The Guidance Document contains eight chapters.

Each chapter is structured as follows:	
Introduction and overview	Brief text summarizing the scope of the chapter and the key questions that a National Society should ask itself when reviewing its Statutes in order to address the standards described.
Standard	Defines the requirement that must be met.
Must	Elaborates and details the standard, where required. Every “Must” element has to be met or safeguarded for the standard to be achieved. There are often different ways of meeting a “Must” element.
Could	Included as recommendations or inspiration in relation to some of the standards. “Could” elements are not considered a requirement to meet the standard, but are generally recommended as good practice.

Illustrations	<p>Examples intended to provide a fuller understanding of the standard, and potential approaches to meet its “Must” and/or “Could” elements. Two types of material are included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sample texts: Actual extracts from National Society Statutes to illustrate how National Societies have addressed or phrased particular issues in their Statutes. They are not “model clauses” and it is not recommended that National Societies copy them into their own Statutes. ■ Examples: Descriptions of how National Societies have organized themselves or thought about a particular issue. They provide insight into strategic decisions that have contributed to the formulation of statutory text, or, in some cases, how statutory text is turned into practical action. For some standards, the examples have been selected with a view to showcasing the diversity that can exist. Again, the examples are provided to promote analysis and reflection; the decisions made should be seen as unique to individual National Societies. <p>Most illustrations are available in the electronic version of this Guidance Document. Illustrations reflect the practice of National Societies at the time of writing (October 2018), and will be adapted and complimented over time. National Societies that wish to contribute further illustrations are invited to contact Guidance.Document@ifrc.org.</p>
Explanatory text	<p>Provides further explanation of standards and of how National Societies may reflect these in their Statutes or supplementary regulatory framework.</p>

Terminology

National Societies use different terminologies based on national practice. To ensure clarity, the Guidance Document consistently uses certain terms that may have different equivalents in National Societies around the world.

To assist the reader, the table below lists the terms used and gives common equivalent terms. This is followed by an explanation of more technical terms.

In this Guidance Document	Equivalent terms that your National Society may use
Recognition Act	Red Cross/Red Crescent law or decree, legal base, legal base instruments, the national act under which the National Society is recognized in national law, incorporation act, charter
Statutes	Constitution, articles of incorporation, rules, bylaws, statutory base, statutory base instruments
General assembly	Annual meeting, congress
Governing board	National council, governing council, committee, board of directors
President	Chairperson, head of governance, chair of the board
Board members	Directors, trustees
Secretary-general	CEO, executive director
Branches	Chapters

Other terms used	
Auxiliary	Refers to the specific and distinctive partnership between public authorities and National Societies, and the areas in which National Societies supplement or substitute public humanitarian services.
Compliance	Meeting the requirements of legislation, rules and regulations, specified standards, the terms of a contract and accepted practices, including a National Society’s own Statutes and internal regulations.

Conflict of interest	A conflict of interest occurs when a person's personal interests conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of the National Society. Personal interests include direct and indirect interests as well as those of family, friends or other organizations a person may be involved with or have an interest in (for example, as a shareholder). A conflict of interest may be actual, potential or perceived, and may be financial or non-financial. These situations present the risk that a person will make a decision based on, or affected by, these influences, rather than the best interests of the National Society, and must be managed accordingly.
Good faith	Acting honestly and with sincere intentions.
Governance	The processes by which organizations set direction and priorities, are accountable to stakeholders, comply with external requirements and ensure compliance with internal rules and agreements. Responsibility for these functions typically sits with a governing board or similar (based on a mandate from the National Society's supreme governance body, the general assembly), which usually bears ultimate legal responsibility to ensure the National Society operates in line with national laws.
Incorporation	Refers to a group of people with a common goal formalizing their relationship according to the requirements set out in national legislation.
Integrity	The extent to which a National Society operates in pursuit of its respective declared objectives, policies and standards in full accordance with the Fundamental Principles.
Management	The processes of deploying resources and expertise to implement decisions and achieve National Society goals. Most National Societies employ people to carry out management functions. However, management tasks are also regularly carried out by volunteers, in particular at local organizational levels, where paid staff are not employed.
Member	Someone who has formally agreed to the conditions of membership as required under the National Society's Statutes.
Qualified majority	A requirement for a majority in a vote greater than 50% (simple majority). Often used for reaching a decision in particularly important matters such as modifying Statutes, or certain elements of Statutes.
Quorum	The number of officers or members of a body (such as the general assembly or governing board) that, when duly assembled, is legally competent to transact business. The requirement for a quorum provides protection against unrepresentative action in the name of the body by an unduly small number of persons.
Sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment	Respectively, actual or threatened physical or psychological intrusion of a sexual nature; abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes; and any unwelcome sexual advance or unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
Volunteer	A person who carries out volunteering activities for a National Society, occasionally or regularly. Volunteering with the Red Cross Red Crescent is organized by recognized representatives of National Societies and is aimed at promoting their services and activities, always working in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It is carried out by people motivated by free will, and not by a desire for material or financial gain, or by external, social, economic or political pressure.
Whistle-blower	An individual who reports a serious incidence of misconduct, a violation of a National Society's internal rules, or a serious threat or harm to the interests of the National Society, based on a reasonably held suspicion that wrongdoing has occurred.



How to use the Guidance Document

The Guidance Document has been developed to help the leadership of National Societies make informed choices when developing or reviewing their Statutes so that their Statutes are compatible with their national legal and operational contexts, whilst also complying with the Fundamental Principles.

It is recognized that National Societies operate in diverse contexts, which have implications for their Statutes. For example, some National Societies face comprehensive and detailed regulations under national law, while others face little national regulation. These contexts may affect the amount of detail that a National Society includes in its Statutes.

Not all standards included in this guidance need to be incorporated into the Statutes. It is important, however, that the standards form part of the basic legal documents of the National Society. They may, therefore, be reflected in other documents, such as the Recognition Act or the National Society’s internal rules, regulations, policies and procedures. What is important is that they are reflected in a document, which has had significant governance input and scrutiny, and which cannot be changed at short notice – a policy approved by the National Society general assembly, for instance. **For the sake of simplicity, the Guidance Document will refer to Statutes only.**

Typical hierarchy of National Society governance documents

All National Societies have a basis in national law; usually a **Recognition Act** adopted by the parliament.

The National Society itself will have **Statutes** that set out the high-level purpose, roles, relationships, structures and processes of the organization. Their purpose is to shape the organization and provide a long-term framework that enables the organization to function and take decisions in a transparent and effective manner.

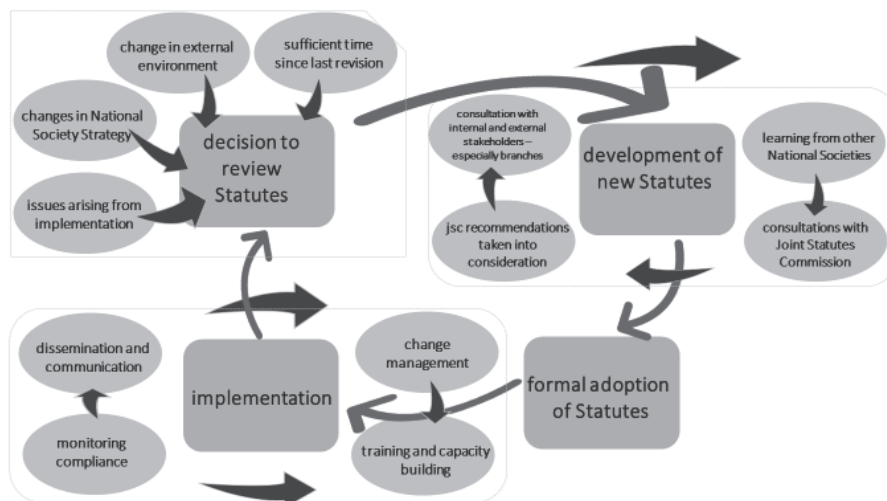
Statutes do not go into enough detail to deal with day-to-day issues; for this reason, National Societies develop further **rules, policies and procedures** at various levels, which are generally easier to amend than Statutes. While this document focuses on National Society Statutes, it recognizes that some of the standards may be addressed in National Society Recognition Acts, or in internal rules and policies.

Hierarchy of National Society governing documents

It is also recognized that national legislation has primacy for National Societies. If the requirements of national legislation are incompatible with the Fundamental Principles and with the mission and values of the Movement, the National Society should initiate a dialogue with the public authorities to recommend and achieve a change in the relevant legislation or to find other solutions. This would usually require some element of support from other Movement components, as appropriate.

The structure of National Society Statutes does not need to mirror the structure of this Guidance Document. Similarly, National Societies are not expected to replicate the formulations used in the Standards word for word, but to use the Standards to craft their own appropriate statutory texts.

Process of developing or reviewing Statutes



The purpose of reviewing and revising Statutes is to ensure that the core structures and processes of a National Society enable the organization to effectively achieve its mission. At a minimum, a National Society should review its Statutes every ten years.

Key questions to consider in a Statutes review process include:

- **Suitable organization:** Do the National Society's objectives respond to humanitarian needs, and do the structures of the National Society enable it to meet these needs effectively and efficiently? Have there been any strategic changes in a National Society's activities or direction that have implications for its internal relationships and structuring?
- **Legally up to date:** Are the Statutes in compliance with national legislation? Several aspects addressed by this Guidance Document, such as membership, volunteering and financial matters, are likely to be regulated by national legislation, which may change over time.
- **Alignment with the Movement and the IFRC:** Do any of the policies and recommendations adopted within the Movement and the IFRC necessitate amendments to the Statutes? For example, it may be appropriate to reflect global initiatives and policies to secure more effective and accountable, or better representation of women and youth in senior positions in the Statutes.

Reviewing and revising Statutes should be seen as a regular change process that is well prepared and managed, directed by the National Society's leadership and integrated into governance cycles, including that of the general assembly. Accountability to key stakeholders, such as branches and membership, should be integrated into the process through regular dialogue, consultation, reporting and feedback. Establishing a reference group, or similar, with participation from across the organization and key external stakeholders, can be a good way of achieving this.

The Guidance Document should be used to guide the review itself, the objective being to adopt Statutes the standards defined in the Guidance Document.

In some countries, the National Society is required to inform and obtain approval from the relevant authorities in respect of amendments to certain statutory provisions.

National Societies are required to consult with the Joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes (Joint Statutes Commission – JSC) on the development of their Statutes and laws. The JSC has a mandate to make recommendations on the Statutes and laws of National Societies based on compliance with relevant standards. National Societies are required to take the recommendations of the JSC into account, as well as to keep the JSC duly informed of any progress or new developments.

The delegations and offices of the IFRC and the ICRC, as well as of other National Societies, can be a great source of inspiration, advice and knowledge in any such process.

Key documents and resources

- [Joint Statutes Commission](#), Advisory Note no. 3: Recommendations to National Societies on their Statutes Revision Process, Joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes

Illustrations

Designing Statutes for sustainability

For a resource-constrained National Society in Africa, a key driver for Statutes revision has been cost: the Statutes, as originally drafted, included provision for a general assembly of 96 delegates to meet every four years, a governing council of 32 delegates to meet annually, and a national executive of 10 delegates to meet quarterly. At branch level, boards of 7–10 members in each of the 16 branches should meet quarterly.

A calculation by the National Society suggested that running the governance structure as set out in the Statutes would cost 350,000 US dollars in a year in which there was no general assembly, and significantly more in general assembly years – a very significant cost for a National Society operating in a highly resource-constrained environment.

The revision process addressed both the size of governance bodies and the frequency of meetings. The challenge was to find a balance between adequate representation of branches and their ownership of national decision-making and oversight, and the need to make timely and effective decisions on the one hand, and costs that could realistically be sustained by the National Society in the long term on the other.

Working with organizational politics

Changing Statutes often means altering power balances within a National Society. Finding agreement between stakeholders to change can, therefore, be problematic, especially in decentralized structures where branches have high levels of autonomy.

One manager responsible for updating Statutes in a highly decentralized European National Society spoke of the importance of building relationships and trust with the branch leaders who would need to approve change. This involved visiting branches individually and investing time in ensuring that these individuals understood what was being proposed and why. This took time, at the beginning, but meant that by the time branches met, the key actors understood the various positions, and which proposals needed further discussion and negotiation.

Using external guidance and common Movement standards was crucial in demonstrating to branches that some changes were non-negotiable. At the same time, not every desired change could be achieved; consensus could not always be reached.

Statutes and organizational agility (Canadian Red Cross)

The Canadian Red Cross needs to be able to adapt rapidly to changing circumstances, including a significant rise in the number of disasters. The National Society's ability to scale up to provide high-quality, innovative and consistent services to clients, to engage volunteers and to steward donors is critical. This means being prepared to re-evaluate and change long-established operating models when necessary. It also means having a statutory framework in place that enables the organization to be agile and adapt quickly.

Changing National Society Statutes requires time and significant organizational investment. The Canadian Red Cross has, therefore, aimed to keep its Statutes as simple as possible, creating the basic framework to allow the organization to function. This allows organizational governance and management to focus on more flexible tools such as strategic and operational plans, and organizational policies, which can be adapted more rapidly to changing circumstances, as needed.

Beyond Statutes: Youth in the Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan

At the time of writing, both the president and the secretary-general of the Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan are aged under 40. Young people play a strong role in the National Society. Yet, the Statutes themselves say very little about youth involvement in the National Society, beyond that it is a goal of the National Society to develop a youth movement. There is, for example, no requirement to have youth members of the governing board.

The National Society does have a youth policy, which states that young people should have access to decision-making within the National Society. This mirrors wider government policy, which places strong emphasis on young people's engagement within the country.

A strong culture that has developed around youth engagement over a number of years, and the encouragement and example provided by having young people in senior leadership positions, have enabled the National Society to successfully engage young people within its decision-making.



Chapter 1: National Society Identity

The standards in this chapter establish the “fundamentals” of being a National Society, including its core mission and objectives primarily as a humanitarian organization in its own country, but also as a component of the Movement. Therefore, the standards reflect the distinct features of being a National Society, namely the Fundamental Principles, the auxiliary role to public authorities and the entitlement to display the emblem.

Key questions

- Are the National Society's intended mission and roles well reflected in the existing Statutes?
- What values underpin the National Society's work and are they sufficiently reflected and recognizable for all members, volunteers and staff?
- Is the legal form accorded to the National Society best suited to its distinct and privileged status?
- Does it meet its responsibilities as a component of the Movement, as well as its obligations surrounding the use of the emblem?

STANDARD 1.1

The Statutes are in compliance with the Fundamental Principles.

Must

The Statutes must include the full text of the Fundamental Principles.

All aspects of the Statutes must demonstrate a commitment to act in accordance with, and be guided by, the Fundamental Principles at all times.

TEXT BOX: Fundamental Principles from a Statutes Perspective

- The National Society's objectives should describe what actions it will carry out to put the principle of humanity into practice.
- Its Statutes should reiterate that a National Society's services are delivered with impartiality and, consequently, without discrimination.
- In order to maintain its neutrality, a National Society must ensure that its objectives, constituencies, relationships, as well as its core tasks, are not perceived as taking sides, for instance, in situations of armed conflict or in political disputes. In order to maintain its neutrality.
- A National Society's relationship with the public authorities must be constructed in such a way for it to be able to maintain its independence.
- The National Society must have an organizational model that enables voluntary service.
- The National Society must be open to all. It must have a structure that allows it to operate with unity across the national territory.
- The National Society's objectives and core tasks must reflect the Movement's universality, including a commitment to help other components of the Movement.

Further explanatory text

The text of the Fundamental Principles can appear in the Preamble to the Statutes or in the core text, as preferred by the National Society.

A National Society may be suspended from membership of the IFRC if it ceases to fulfil the conditions for admission provided for in the IFRC Constitution, in particular, if, “because of modification, its Statutes are no longer in conformity with the Fundamental Principles” (IFRC Constitution, Article 12.2.a).

Key documents and resources

- The official text of the Fundamental Principles can be found in the [Preamble to the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement](#)
- [The Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross, Commentary by Jean Pictet, Henry Dunant Institute, 1979](#)

STANDARD 1.2

The Statutes make reference to the National Society's legal status under national law, as well as its auxiliary role to the public authorities in the humanitarian field.

Must

The Statutes must state the legal status of the National Society under national law, as well as how it is recognized by the public authorities, and its auxiliary role

Further explanatory text

A National Society's status in the domestic legal order is, in principle, defined and accorded through its formal Recognition Act, as adopted by the parliament or through a decree or regulation adopted by the executive branch of government. This should recognize the National Society as a voluntary aid society, auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field.

TEXTBOX: What does "auxiliary role" mean in relation to Statutes?

Many National Society Statutes refer to an auxiliary role when describing the National Society mission and objectives (refer to Standard 1.3). Where the word "auxiliary" does not exist in the national language, wording should be sought to convey the distinct and balanced relationship inherent in the auxiliary function. Beyond the National Society's Recognition Act and Statutes, the auxiliary role may be further detailed in other national legislation, national disaster response plans or similar.

Many National Societies have a regular dialogue with their public authorities, for instance, in connection with the International Conference, where they discuss this auxiliary role.

How a National Society is incorporated has implications for its Statutes, rules and procedures, internal structures, duties and liabilities under national law, tax status, reporting requirements, and relations with members, volunteers and other target groups. It is therefore recommended that National Societies continuously reflect on the best mode of incorporation, and aim for a legal form that is aligned with their humanitarian mandates and ambition. In many countries, the modalities of incorporation are not set in stone, but require a thorough legal, fiscal and risk analysis.

Some National Societies are incorporated and registered as private institutions, usually as humanitarian or voluntary aid organizations. Others are registered as public institutions, and some have found that registration under company law is more desirable.

National Societies may also set up subsidiary organizations to manage certain aspects of their operations. This could be to limit legal risk to the National Society in high-risk activities, such as blood or other biomedical services, or income-generating activities, or to conform to national legislation governing some of its activities, or purely for tax reasons. These may take non-profit, or for-profit legal forms, depending on the activity and the legal options available under national legislation.

Key documents and resources

- [Statutes of the Movement, Article 3](#)
- ["Specific nature of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in action and partnerships and the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field"](#), Resolution 2, 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, 2007
- ["Furthering the auxiliary role: Partnership for stronger National Societies and volunteering development"](#), Resolution 4, 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, 2011
- [IFRC: Guide to the Auxiliary role of Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, 2015](#)

STANDARD 1.3

The Statutes reflect the National Society's mission and objectives.

Must

The Statutes define the mission and objectives of the National Society with regard to a National Society's agreed mandates and roles as defined in the following:

- [1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols](#)
- [Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement](#) (particularly Articles 3 and 4 of the Statutes)
- Resolutions adopted by the statutory meetings of the Movement and the [strategic framework of the IFRC](#)
- Applicable national laws and agreements

Further explanatory text

The Statutes should be specific about what the National Society is set up to do, but not restrict its activities in meeting changing humanitarian needs. Statutes should avoid listing National Society activities in such detail that the possibility for operational change is limited, as well as remaining so general that the Statutes provide insufficient clarity and direction.

In rare cases, the Statutes may be used by some states to restrict or challenge a National Society's operational space. In such situations, it may be better to describe broader objectives. In other cases, the opposite may apply, and including a more detailed description of a National Society's activities in the Statutes may serve as leverage to remind governments of a National Society's mandate and roles.

The objectives included in the Statutes will be further elaborated in a National Society's strategic and operational plans (or equivalent). See IFRC: Strategic Planning Guidelines for National Societies.

STANDARD 1.4

The Statutes reflect the status of the National Society as a component of the Movement and as a member of the IFRC.

Must

The Statutes must define the National Society as a component of the Movement and as a member of the IFRC.

Further explanatory text

The key documents of the Movement and the IFRC of relevance to National Society Statutes are as follows:

- [Fundamental Principles](#) and the [Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement](#)
- Resolutions adopted by the [Council of Delegates](#) and the [International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent](#)
- [Constitution of the IFRC](#)
- Decisions of the [IFRC General Assembly](#) and the [IFRC Governing Board](#)

A National Society may consider spelling out its obligations in greater or lesser detail in its Statutes, but, in many contexts, simply stating implies a duty to adhere to all membership duties and obligations.

STANDARD 1.5

The Statutes commit the National Society to use the emblem in accordance with relevant rules and regulations.

Must

The Statutes require the National Society to have internal regulations in place on the use of the emblem and the use of its own logo by its staff, members and volunteers.



A National Society's emblem regulations must be in accordance with the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, applicable Movement rules and regulations on the use of the emblem (see "Key documents and resources" below), in addition to applicable national legislation defining the use and protection of the emblem (such as national legislation on the implementation of the Geneva Conventions and the National Society Recognition Act).

Could

The Statutes could describe the design of the National Society's logo.

Further explanatory text

Responsibility for authorizing the use of the emblem by the National Society rests with the state and is usually recognized in the Recognition Act.

A National Society has a duty to cooperate with its public authorities to ensure respect for the emblem, including through information and dissemination activities and campaigns.

A National Society is also committed to adopting internal regulations on its use of the emblem, to inform its members, staff and volunteers of these, and to ensure they comply with them.

Key documents and resources

Various documents of relevance to emblem regulation can be accessed below:

- <https://www.icrc.org/en/war-and-law/emblem>
- <http://www.ifrc.org/en/who-we-are/the-movement/emblems/>



Chapter 2: Members

Most National Societies are membership-based organizations, embedded within their communities. A key rationale for operating as a membership-based organization is that it gives supporters formal influence on the direction, performance and operations of the organization.

This chapter describes the aspects of individual membership that should be regulated in National Societies, bearing in mind that membership usually implies a formal legal status. National Society membership is voluntary, which implies that it originates in individual, informed consent.

The chapter does not apply to the few National Societies that do not have individual members. The issue of National Societies whose members are themselves collective entities, such as branches, is addressed in Chapter 5, "Organizational Structure and Territorial Coverage".

Key questions

- Who can become a member of the National Society?
- How can the National Society involve people from across the community as members?
- What rights and responsibilities should members have?
- What mechanisms exist to ensure that members know their rights and their responsibilities, and are they adequate? What is the procedure for suspending or expelling members, on what grounds and under what circumstances?

STANDARD 2.1

The National Society must be open to all who want to be a member.

Must

The Statutes must stipulate that the National Society's membership is open to all without any form of discrimination based on gender, ethnic origin, nationality or citizenship, age, disability, language, political opinions, religious beliefs, social background, or any other similar grounds.

Illustrations

Timor-Leste Red Cross Society: Extract from Statutes

Membership of the Timor-Leste Red Cross Society is open to anyone regardless of age, race, sex, religious beliefs, language, class, political opinions, nationality or any other similar criteria.

Article 15: Gender Equality

The Timor-Leste Red Cross Society promotes gender equality in its membership.

Recognizing that people want to contribute to the organization in different ways (Spanish Red Cross)

The Spanish Red Cross recognizes various types of individual engagement with the organization. There are 1.3 million members who pay a membership fee and have a formal member agreement with the Spanish Red Cross.

Volunteers who carry out regular volunteering activity and have signed an agreement are considered as members of the National Society, and have the right to vote and be elected once they have volunteered for 12 months. This applies to up to 200,000 volunteers.

In addition, the Spanish Red Cross recognizes that some people want to contribute time to the National Society without having a formal agreement. For example, an academic may offer occasional pro bono courses for Red Cross volunteers. Such people are described as “assimilated members” in the Statutes, giving them a formal status that is distinct from that of member or volunteer.

Further explanatory text

In the event that national legislation prevents a National Society from being open to all (for example, by restricting or prohibiting non-nationals from becoming members), the National Society should engage in dialogue with the relevant authorities and, in the meantime, do whatever is possible to accommodate the standard through other means (for example, by giving non-nationals the possibility to support the National Society as volunteers or as donors).

It is important that the National Society attracts members from the widest possible cross-section of the community. If some sections of the community are under-represented, the National Society should consider new ways of engaging them. Being “open to all” is more than a statement in the Statutes, and a National Society should continuously assess its practices, procedures and organizational culture to ensure that its membership is fully representative of the national population at large (including minority groups), and take action to become more representative, wherever necessary.

Any membership fee should be set at a level that does not exclude any section of the population from becoming members.

Key documents and resources

- [IFRC Strategic Framework on Gender and Diversity Issues, 2013–2020](#)
- [IFRC: Gender and Diversity Organisational Assessment Toolkit \(2016\)](#)

STANDARD 2.2

The Statutes define membership and the rights and responsibilities of members.

Must

The Statutes must define membership in a way that distinguishes members from staff and volunteers. This does not imply that members cannot be volunteers or staff, but that these roles are distinct.

Where the National Society has different categories of membership (for example, ordinary members, life members, honorary members, corporate members), this must be reflected in the Statutes.

The Statutes must, if applicable, describe the procedure for setting the membership fee (often determined by the general assembly) and collecting the membership fee (for example, collected by the local branch).

The rights and responsibilities of membership, and, where applicable, different categories of membership, must be described in the Statutes.

At a minimum, membership rights must include:

- the right to present proposals and raise issues with relevant authorities in the National Society
- the right to receive notice of and attend relevant meetings.

At a minimum, membership responsibilities must include:

- adhering to the Fundamental Principles
- respecting National Society regulations regarding the use of the emblem (see Standard 1.3)
- paying a membership fee, if applicable
- abiding by the National Society's rules, policies and procedures of relevance to members.

For National Societies in which the membership takes part in the election of the National Society leadership at different organizational levels, the rights of members must include:

- standing for election, if the eligibility criteria are met
- participating and voting in meetings of the local assembly and, if elected, in the assemblies of the higher levels of the organization (how this is done is closely related to the structure of the National Society).

This is further elaborated in Chapter 4, "Leadership (Governance and Management)".

Could

The membership fee could be set at different levels to encourage under-represented groups to participate in the National Society, for instance, different age groups.

The National Society could decide to waive the membership fee for certain groups, such as volunteers (see Standard 3.2).

To protect a National Society's independence and neutrality, it could be decided that patrons, honorary members or similar do not automatically enjoy the right to participate in National Society decision-making processes.

The National Society should ensure that member rights and responsibilities are disseminated to all members, and could decide to reference this in the Statutes.

STANDARD 2.3

The Statutes define the process of becoming a member and how membership ends.

Must

The Statutes must describe how and where to apply for membership and how membership ends.

The Statutes must reflect the requirement to keep an up-to-date register of members (or equivalent), and define where, in the organization, this responsibility lies.

The conditions under which membership automatically ends must be listed (for instance, death or non-payment of membership fees).

The Statutes must define the circumstances in which a member can be suspended or expelled, and the procedure involved. Disciplinary processes must ensure procedural fairness and due process guarantees, and be initiated in response to serious cause (see Chapter 6, "Compliance, Integrity and Dispute Resolution", for more details).

National Society Statutes or internal regulations must set out procedures for dealing with grievances or disputes involving members. In some countries, this is required by law. Chapter 6, "Compliance, Integrity and Dispute Resolution", includes more details about dispute resolution procedures.



Chapter 3: Volunteers

This chapter covers those aspects of volunteering that need to be regulated in a National Society's Statutes. Recognizing that National Societies depend on volunteers to deliver their humanitarian services, and in order to contribute to the promotion of volunteering, the chapter also suggests ways in which National Society Statutes may protect volunteers' rights and engage volunteers in leadership and decision-making processes within a National Society.

In regulating volunteering in its Statutes, a National Society should strive to create an environment in which volunteers may engage in the work of the National Society and are given opportunities to participate in the institutional life of the organization. In general, procedures for acting as a volunteer should be simple and flexible, while also reflecting the need to establish appropriate rules and safeguards to ensure volunteers adhere to the Fundamental Principles and to the National Society's policy and regulatory frameworks. All forms of volunteer engagement with the National Society should originate in individual, informed consent.

Key questions

- Is the National Society's statutory and regulatory framework conducive to the engagement of volunteers from all parts of the community?
- What rights and responsibilities do volunteers have? Do they allow volunteers to participate effectively in the life and processes of the National Society at all levels?
- Is it clear for which reasons and how volunteers can be suspended or excluded?

STANDARD 3.1

The National Society must be open to all who want to volunteer.

Must

The Statutes must stipulate that the National Society is open to all who want to volunteer without any form of discrimination based on gender, ethnic origin, nationality or citizenship, age, disability, language, political opinions, religious beliefs, social background, or any other similar grounds.

Further explanatory text

As with Standard 2.1, a National Society that is not open to all potential volunteers because of national legislation must engage in dialogue with the

relevant authorities to try to change this restriction, and, in the meantime, to do whatever is possible to accommodate the standard through other means (for example, linking non-nationals as online volunteers with other National Societies).

As with members, a National Society should aim for a diversity of volunteers that reflects that of the communities it serves. Diversity is closely linked to a National Society's image, relevance and access, and it is something that should be proactively and continuously pursued. National Societies should work to involve vulnerable groups – including target groups – as volunteers.

Being open to all does not imply that the National Society cannot define prerequisites for specific volunteer roles. On the contrary, some volunteer roles may require a National Society to seek appropriate skills and conduct background checks. For example, the National Society should check for previous offences for roles that involve contact with children and youth.

Key documents and resources

- [IFRC Strategic Framework on Gender and Diversity Issues, 2013–2020](#)
- [IFRC: Gender and Diversity Organisational Assessment Toolkit \(2016\)](#)
- [IFRC Youth Policy, 2017](#)
- [IFRC Youth Engagement Strategy \(YES\), 2013](#)

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STANDARD 3.2

The Statutes define volunteers and the rights and responsibilities of volunteers.

Must

The Statutes must define volunteers in a way that distinguishes them from other types of individual engagement with the National Society. This does not imply that volunteers cannot be members, or that staff cannot volunteer for the National Society, but that these roles are distinct.

The rights and responsibilities of volunteers must be clearly described. Volunteer rights must include:

- receiving appropriate support, for example, in the form of an induction and sufficient training to carry out volunteer tasks
- participating in designing and improving the activities in which they are involved
- being protected whilst engaged with the National Society (including safety and security, protection from abuse, bullying and sexual harassment, and psychosocial support)
- being reimbursed for reasonable costs incurred whilst volunteering.

At a minimum, volunteer responsibilities must include:

- adhering to the Fundamental Principles
- respecting National Society regulations regarding the use of the emblem (see Standard 1.3)
- abiding by the National Society's volunteer regulations, including a code of conduct.

The National Society must ensure that its disciplinary and dispute resolution procedures (described in Chapter 6) also apply to volunteers.

Could

To promote the involvement of volunteers in decision-making processes, National Societies could give volunteers the right to attend general assemblies at local or central level.

The National Society could also give volunteers the right to vote in governance elections based on established criteria (for example, length of engagement as a volunteer).

The National Society could decide to give volunteers (who are not already members) the right to be elected to governance positions.

One way of giving volunteers the right to vote and/or be elected is to grant them membership status, whilst waiving the membership fee. This will require the informed consent of volunteers.

The National Society should ensure that volunteer rights and duties are disseminated to volunteers, and could decide to make reference to this in the Statutes.

Further explanatory text

Most National Societies have both members and volunteers, and there is often an overlap between the two categories. Leadership volunteers, in particular, are often also members. For individuals with multiple engagements in the National Society, it is important to be clear about when they are acting in which role, as this has legal implications in many countries, for example:

- Certain laws may apply to volunteers, but not to members.
- Insurance may apply to volunteers and members in different ways.
- If a volunteer carries out paid work as casual or contracted labour, this may require an employment contract, in compliance with national labour law.

The rights and duties of volunteers are often disseminated to them through a volunteer agreement or code of conduct that sets out the rights and responsibilities of both the National Society and the volunteer.

Key documents and resources

- [IFRC Volunteering Policy](#), adopted at the IFRC General Assembly (2011)
- [IFRC Volunteer Charter](#), adopted at the IFRC General Assembly (2017)
- [IFRC Volunteer Legal Toolkit](#) (2011)



Chapter 4: Leadership (Governance and Management)

This Chapter addresses the theme of National Society leadership. The standards focus on ensuring leadership that is capable of delivering timely, effective and transparent decisions that have received adequate scrutiny and oversight to ensure that they are seen as legitimate by all stakeholders.

Governance and management functions can be organized in various ways. What is important is that leadership functions are allocated to specific leadership bodies or positions, and that effective checks and balances ensure that decisions receive adequate scrutiny, and that no individual or body accrues disproportionate power over the direction and decisions of the National Society.

Key questions

- Do decisions involve adequate scrutiny and are sufficient mechanisms in place to ensure that governance positions or bodies do not accrue disproportionate power?
- Are the National Society's key constituencies adequately represented in decision-making?
- Are leadership responsibilities clear and comprehensive, and can decisions be made in a timely and transparent manner?
- How does the National Society ensure that its leaders are able, and that they are seen as legitimate?
- Does the National Society have mechanisms in place to ensure that its leaders adhere, at all times, to the highest standards of integrity and ethics?

STANDARD 4.1

The Statutes ensure that there are effective checks and balances in leadership decision-making.

Must

The National Society must ensure that all key leadership functions and responsibilities have been defined and fall under the responsibility of a position or body within the National Society or are shared amongst them.

The Statutes must ensure that there are sufficient checks and balances among the various leadership positions and bodies. This means that no single leadership position and/or body may have unchecked power and authority.

Checks and balances with an executive president (Spanish Red Cross)

The president of the Spanish Red Cross is both the highest governance representative of the organization and its leading manager.

The president's functions are detailed in the Statutes, and include being the highest representative of the Spanish Red Cross, managing, promoting and coordinating the activities of the Spanish Red Cross, determining the organizational management structure, and being the highest authorizing officer of the organization.

The president is elected by the general assembly, which also elects a national committee of 43 representatives, chaired by the president, which meets at least three times a year, and ensures there are checks and balances to the president's significant powers and responsibilities.

While the president can bring items for debate and decision to the National Committee, so too can a quorum of one third of the Committee's members.

The committee can also propose to the general assembly that the president be fired, and can require the president to convene a general assembly.

The Spanish Red Cross also appoints various commissions to advise and support the president in supervising management activities, including budgetary control, hiring and investment commissions.

Checks and balances through a separation of governance and management (Canadian Red Cross)

Canadian Red Cross provides checks and balances in decision-making through separating the governance and management functions of the organisation. The Board, which consists of 16 members, is responsible for

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overseeing the organization and hiring/managing the Secretary General/CEO. The day to day operational power of the organization lies with the Secretary General, who is accountable to the Board for the management of all activities and affairs of the Society, including to:

- (i) Implement at all levels of the Society the mission, strategic goals and priorities formulated by the Board; and
- (ii) organize and manage the activities of the Society in order to deliver services in the most effective and efficient manner possible through the collaborative efforts of staff and Volunteers.

The Board of Directors meets at least four times per year to:

- (a) exercise an oversight role and monitor the Society's performance;
- (b) ensure adequate governance policies are in place for sustainable, cost effective, legal, and ethical organizational performance and actions;
- (c) approve the Society's operational plan and budget;
- (d) approve the annual audited financial statements of the Society and present them to the Members;
- (e) hire and set the terms of employment of the Secretary General

Further explanatory text

It is important for the health of a National Society that checks and balances are in place to prevent any one person or body from having the authority to alienate the organization from its principles, values and mission.

Key checks and balances are provided through:

- rotation and election processes, as described under Standard 4.4
- reporting and scrutiny lines: an individual or body prepares or proposes a decision, while another individual or body approves or confirms it.

Reporting and scrutiny lines can exist between governance bodies (for instance, between a governing board and the general assembly), between governance and management functions, and between different levels of governance, for example, between branch and national governance bodies.

One approach to creating checks and balances within a National Society is to fully separate the individuals carrying out governance and management functions. Those involved in governance functions set direction and strategy, and monitor management implementation and compliance; the management function implements strategy and reports to governance. The governance function can fire the senior management if dissatisfied with performance, while the governance function is usually accountable to the National Society membership.

This approach can function well at national level where, typically, there are paid staff to carry out management functions; the boundary between governance and management functions can, however, break down at local level, where individual volunteers may, in practice, carry out both governance and management roles. In such cases, central governance bodies usually have a key role to play in ensuring checks and balances at local level.

Some National Societies are organized in such a way that governance and management roles overlap. One example is the practice of an executive president, i.e. an elected president, which is also the most senior management position. The role of an executive president is usually full-time. This means that the same individual is both responsible for management activities and for overseeing management performance. In this situation, it is particularly important that other checks and balances are in place, for instance:

- frequent general assembly, or governing board meetings, to which the executive president must report
- provision to call an extraordinary board meeting, if requested by a certain number of board members
- the right of board members to place items on the agenda of board meetings
- the use of standing subcommittees with a clear role, scope and oversight function, reporting to the whole board or to the general assembly
- regular internal audits with direct access to the board
- independent mechanisms to deal with allegations involving the executive president.

STANDARD 4.2

The Statutes define the governance bodies and positions at all levels and their respective functions.

Must

The Statutes must define, for all National Society governance bodies:

- the length of their term and their composition, and how members are selected
- their powers
- their relationship to other governance bodies (for example, who they report to)
- who is responsible for convening meetings and what notice is required, how often they meet, and provisions for calling extraordinary meetings
- who takes decisions between meetings
- procedures for decision-making, including quorum and majority voting rules, and what happens if a quorum is not present
- rules and proceedings, which could include provision for using technology to convene meetings.

The Statutes must further define, for all individual governance positions at all organizational levels:

- who can be elected to these positions, and how they are chosen
- any minimum qualifications individuals must have to stand for these positions
- how long they can be in position (i.e. rotation requirements)
- their powers and responsibilities
- how they can be removed from their position, and on what grounds
- what happens if the individual in post steps down or is removed before the end of their term.

These requirements are discussed further under Standard 4.3, “The Statutes ensure the legitimacy and capacity of the National Society’s governance bodies and positions”.

Could

It could be decided to establish subsidiary bodies of the general assembly, governing board or other assemblies. Such bodies may have a different composition and competences: committees are typically made up of board members and possibly also co-opted members, and carry out specific tasks with powers delegated by the “parent” body. Advisory bodies (including external experts) may be set up to provide advice to inform decisions made by other bodies.

Committees and advisory bodies can be permanent (standing) or ad hoc. Permanent committees should be formed only when there is a need for a role or function to be performed by board members on an ongoing basis. In the event that standing committees or advisory bodies are formed, their composition, powers, procedures and decision-making processes should be formalized.

Typical examples of standing committees include Finance, Election/Nominations, Audit and Risk, Ethics and Integrity, Governance (looking at board performance), Diversity and Gender, and Youth.

Further explanatory text

Most National Society governance bodies include:

- **General assembly** and subsidiary commissions and committees. This is likely to be the highest authority within the National Society, which approves all major strategic decisions and is likely to decide or strongly influence the composition of the governing board and hold it to account.
- **Governing board** and subsidiary commissions and committees. This is likely to be the body that governs and oversees the organization between general assemblies, holding the management function to account and making ongoing strategic decisions.
- **Assemblies and boards** at other levels of the organization and subsidiary commissions and committees are likely to oversee branches and sub-branches.



Most National Society governance positions include:

- president
- vice-president(s)
- treasurer

Common governance functions include:

Strategic direction and long-term planning

- setting vision and strategic direction, and defining overarching goals
- making decisions about planning and resources
- developing an organizational culture to achieve goals.

Branch structure/members/volunteers

- ensuring appropriate branch structure
- monitoring membership and volunteering
- reporting to members and other stakeholders
- setting the membership fee.

Supervising management and ensuring compliance

- appointing, monitoring performance and termination of the top management (secretary-general and, possibly, her/his deputies, based on the secretary-general's recommendations. The rest of the management team/staff should be hired through regular HR procedures, overseen by the secretary-general)
- monitoring the performance of the organization
- ensuring organizational sustainability and monitoring finances, including ensuring that the National Society has diverse and sustainable sources of income, primarily raised domestically
- ensuring compliance with relevant legislation
- ensuring appropriate financial controls, including audit, and appointing auditors
- overseeing risk management
- setting relevant organizational policies and ensuring they are enforced
- ensuring mechanisms are in place to hear, investigate and respond to feedback received from key stakeholders and constituents.

Additional constitutional tasks

- ensuring that Statutes and internal regulations are up to date.

There is no universal formula regarding the size of a governance body. As a general rule, local committees are usually effective with 7–10 members, while a national governing board may be effective with 10–20 members, depending on the size of the National Society. Any subsidiary committees should generally be small (3–5 members).

Factors to be considered when deciding the size of a governance body:

- the efficiency and effectiveness of decision-making and action
- diversity and representation
- the expertise required for good decisions to be made (for instance, legal expertise, financial knowledge)
- the cost of meetings, especially if people are to meet face-to-face regularly
- the number of people willing and able to serve in the function, in particular, at local level, where there may only be a few volunteers.

STANDARD 4.3

The Statutes ensure the legitimacy and capacity of the National Society's governance bodies and positions.

Must

The Statutes describe the rules and procedures of the election and/or appointment of governance positions and members of governance bodies at all levels. These must be fair and transparent and promote diversity within governance. They must cover the following points:

Who elects/appoints

- which body/bodies elect(s) or appoint(s) the members of the different governance bodies
- how National Society stakeholders, such as members and/or volunteers, are included in the governance selection process at different levels of the National Society
- who can vote and under what procedures.

Who can be elected/appointed

- Eligibility criteria for elected and appointed positions should ensure competent leadership for the National Society. They must also consider the independence and reputation of the National Society. Eligibility criteria for governance positions must exclude staff from running for elected office. If a governance member is recruited as a staff member, he/she must resign from elected office. However, in some contexts, national law requires staff representation on the governing board. In such cases, the procedure for the election of staff representative(s) must be described.
- How candidates are screened against eligibility criteria. This will often be regulated through the terms of reference of an election committee.
- Grounds for non-eligibility, and grounds and procedures for removing elected individuals from office. (Link to Chapter 6, "Compliance, Integrity and Dispute Resolution").
- In the case of government-appointed governance positions, the Statutes must ensure that:
 - ⊙ government-appointed members never constitute a majority nor a blocking minority, and that
 - ⊙ government-appointed members, like other board members, sign and are bound by a code of conduct or other similar behaviour framework.

How elections take place

- For governance positions filled by election, elections must be free and fair, and conducted by secret ballot.
- There must be a definition of voting rules, quorum and required majorities.

Provision for governance positions falling vacant

- There must be provision for positions falling vacant between elections, typically, the election of a replacement.
- There must be specific provision for the position of president falling vacant for whatever reason. Often, a vice-president will act as president, or the governing board will appoint an acting president until elections are held.

Code of conduct

Governance members must sign up to a code of conduct that sets basic expectations for how they perform their roles. The code of conduct must spell out the following commitments:

- to act, at all times, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles
- to demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity
- to act in good faith and in the best interests of the National Society
- to act with reasonable care and due diligence



- not to misuse information or their position, and to respect the confidentiality of sensitive information
- to disclose and manage conflicts of interest
- not to abuse their power or authority, for example, by using National Society assets for personal purposes, or by undermining the secretary-general's authority with staff
- not to breach the policies of the National Society
- to abstain from all forms of fraud and corruption
- to abstain from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment
- to promote collaboration, cooperation and partnership among governance members.

Conflicts of interest

The Statutes must require individuals in governance positions to declare all potential or actual conflicts of interest, or issues that could be perceived as a

conflict of interest. It is usually part of the code of conduct. (Link to Chapter 6, “Compliance, Integrity and Dispute Resolution”.)

If anyone discloses a potential or actual conflict of interest, then the disclosing member must abstain from debates and voting on matters that concern him/her.

If the conflict of interest is of a serious and permanent nature, he/she must resign from his/her functions with the National Society and, in the interim, abstain from voting.

Could

Statutes could make provision for election to governance bodies and positions through electronic voting, including remote voting.

The National Society could define specific profiles or eligibility criteria for certain governance roles, for example, president, vice-president(s), treasurer and youth representative(s). For instance, it is reasonable to require a treasurer to have financial experience and skills.

Statutes could make provision for co-opting members of governing bodies to ensure the necessary competences to carry out their functions. This could include the requirement to co-opt certain defined skill sets if these are not represented among elected members, or a general requirement to co-opt individuals with experience from outside the National Society. For example, if a National Society had minimum requirements for a treasurer position, but no qualified person stood for election, the National Society may, therefore, be required to identify and co-opt someone with the necessary skills.

Appointment and/or co-option could also be used in advisory committees, such as a finance committee.

Any co-option should be based on established and transparent procedures and be within the control of elected governance members, meaning that the number of elected members should exceed the number of co-opted members.

Provision could be made for replacing governance members who are not fulfilling their commitments, for instance, by not attending a certain number of meetings (for example, missing three meetings without justification).

Illustrations

Increasing the diversity of participation in governance structures (Uganda Red Cross Society)

The Uganda Red Cross Society Statutes ensure both minimum gender ratios and youth participation in National Society governance structures.

At board level, 2 of the 13 voting board positions are reserved for women's representatives. In addition, the vice-chair and chair must be of a different gender, as must the two youth representatives.

Within youth structures, at least one-third of youth council members must be of either gender, and any representations of youth councils to higher bodies in the National Society must be balanced between men and women. This last measure is mirrored across the organization: branches send one male and one female volunteer to the general assembly.

Defining and co-opting adequate skills at board level (Uganda Red Cross Society)

Following a major crisis, the Uganda Red Cross Society has adjusted its Statutes to ensure that the governing board co-opts external experts to join the board as full voting members. This is in response to an analysis that previous governing boards drawn from National Society branch representatives did not necessarily have the skills required to oversee and shape the development of a complex organization or hold the executive to account.

The 13-person board should now include 4 co-opted members with competences in the areas of business development and resource mobilization, risk management and finance, media and public relations, and project/programme management – all critical skill sets not easily resourced from within the membership. The criteria that the National Society has identified for the position of risk management and finance include:

- membership of a relevant professional body
- demonstrable experience of financial management or audit over at least five years, preferably including experience in a senior management position in a reputable national or international organization
- demonstrable experience in applying the practices, procedures and systems of financial management in a reputable organization.

Guided by approved guidelines defining the requisite skills and competences, the chair and the secretary-general have been tasked by the board to propose a shortlist of potential candidates for each of these four roles, which will, in turn, be to the general assembly for approval.

Ensuring political neutrality among board members: Extract from Statutes (Red Cross Society of Georgia)

In the event that a member of the presidium obtains a post in a political party, he/she will automatically loses his/her membership in the presidium.

Further explanatory text

Depending on the exact legal structure of the National Society (refer to Standard 1.4), being a board member may imply a financial and legal responsibility to ensure that the organization complies with applicable national law and adheres to its mission, as follows:

- **Financial liability** – Individual board members can be financially liable should the organization incur debts.
- **Legal liability** – Board members may also be legally liable for decisions made by the governing board.

While boards may take out insurance to protect individual members in case they are sued for alleged wrongful acts, insurance is unlikely to protect board members against any reckless decisions that are made.

To ensure legitimacy and effectiveness, governance bodies should possess a diverse mix of competences and experience. The National Society should, therefore, proactively pursue diversity of perspective and experience in its governing bodies. This could include, but is not limited to, encouraging gender balance, representation of youth, and of ethnic minorities and/or people with disabilities. Attention should also be given to ensuring the representation of affected populations.

Free and fair elections, through a secret ballot, are important because they provide constituents with the opportunity to change the leadership, if they are dissatisfied.

The co-option of a certain number of governance members can be an effective way of ensuring the diversity, competencies and experience necessary for an efficient decision-making and oversight. The same can be said of appointments to advisory committees.

The issue of government-appointed board members (not to be equated with elected persons who are employed in the public sector) relates to the Fundamental Principle of independence. In some contexts, it is considered a way of facilitating strategic discussions with key authorities and a natural expression of the balanced relationship between the National Society and its government. In other contexts, the issue may be out of the direct control of the National Society. Whatever the situation, everything possible should be done to avoid political or other interference in the affairs of the National Society, but also to avoid any perception of such interference. The most important safeguarding tools are mentioned in the “Must” section above.

Managing potential conflicts of interest is important for the National Society’s image and for upholding the Fundamental Principles. Generally, the Statutes should ensure that the National Society is able to maintain autonomy of action

and decision-making towards public authorities, as well as towards other key stakeholders, such as private sector corporations.

STANDARD 4.4

The Statutes ensure a regular rotation of governance positions.

Must

The Statutes must specify the duration of the term of office for all governance positions at all levels (i.e. central and local level) to ensure that rotation occurs regularly.

There must be a limitation on the number of consecutive terms that an individual can serve in the same governance position at central level (for instance, a maximum of two consecutive terms of four or five years in the same position, with the option of standing for the position again after the duration of one term).

The Statutes must ensure that election/selection takes place no later than at the end of each term.

Could

The Statutes could include a limitation on the number of consecutive terms of office that individuals can serve at branch or local governance level.

The Statutes could include provisions to ensure a level of continuity and institutional memory within boards, for example, by ensuring that only a proportion of board members come up for re-election at any one time.

Further explanatory text

Limiting the number of terms contributes to ensuring that new perspectives and ideas come into the governance of the National Society. It also provides an important check and balance.

At branch level, where there may be fewer potential candidates, it may be appropriate to extend the number of terms that governance members may serve.

Illustrations

Red Cross Society of Georgia: Extract from Statutes

The president of the Red Cross Society of Georgia is elected by the general assembly for four years. The same person can only be elected for two consecutive terms, according to Article 27 of the current Statutes. [...]

The members of the presidium are elected by the general assembly for four years. The same person can only be elected for two consecutive terms. The members of the presidium are accountable to the general assembly. [...]

The members of the local presidium are elected by the local conference for four years. They are accountable to the local conference. The same person can only be elected for two consecutive terms.

STANDARD 4.5

The Statutes define the roles, authority and responsibilities of the top management positions and the procedures related to their appointment and termination.

Must

The Statutes must define the core functions of the top management position(s) and its/their reporting lines. These functions ensure that decision-making authority is clearly defined in relation to other leadership position(s) and that lines of accountability are clearly defined.

The Statutes must describe procedures for the appointment and termination of the top management position(s). In many National Societies, the secretary-general will be appointed, supervised and their term of office will be terminated by the governing board. The governing board will usually define the profile and the performance standards of top management to ensure accountability and to monitor performance. In other National Societies, the governing board also approves the appointment of the secretary-general's closest deputies, based on the secretary-general's recommendations.

There must be provisions in place to dismiss top management promptly if necessary. In National Societies with an executive president, who is not appointed, but elected, refer to Standard 4.1.

The Statutes must include eligibility criteria for the top management position(s), for example, proscribing involvement in activities that could be considered as compromising their ability to carry out their management roles in accordance with the Fundamental Principles, or that could place the image and reputation of the National Society at risk.

Further explanatory text

The Statutes should not provide for the detailed management structure, but only describe the functions of the head of management.

The role of the head of management is to execute governance decisions and to be responsible for day-to-day operations. The senior management takes direction from the board and is responsible for day-to-day operations. Senior management is responsible for:

- communicating expectations (purpose, objectives, strategy and policy) to the entire staff
- implementing and following up on governance decisions
- managing day-to-day operations and programme implementation to meet expectations
- drafting budgets and financial reports
- reporting results to governance
- working with governance to ensure the consistent and effective external representation of the National Society.

In National Societies with a separation of governance and management, the secretary-general usually attends the meetings of the governing board in an advisory capacity. S/he does not have the right to vote.



Chapter 5: Organizational Structure and Territorial Coverage

The focus of this chapter is National Society cohesion, in line with the Fundamental Principle of unity and the National Society's duty to carry out its humanitarian work throughout the national territory. The chapter addresses the key issues that National Society Statutes must cover to ensure that – whatever its structure – a National Society can meet its humanitarian commitments effectively and sustainably.

National Society structures often reflect the territorial organization of the state. Some have federated structures, while others are based on a centralized organizational model. Some National Societies may have two or more organizational levels, while others do not have branches or local structures at all. Many National Societies have created separate legal entities to manage aspects of their operations, whether for legal reasons, or to protect the National Society from risk.

Key questions

- allows it to extend its activities to the entire territory of the state?
- Do the structure and organization of the National Society ensure its cohesion and unity?
- Are decisions in the National Society taken at the most appropriate level?
- Has the National Society ensured a good balance between accountability to central structures and local initiative and authority? How does the National Society enable local structures to participate effectively in centralized decision-making processes?
- How does the National Society manage any separate legal entities?

STANDARD 5.1

The Statutes must define the National Society's organizational structure.

Must

The Statutes must describe the structure, which allows the National Society to respond to humanitarian needs across the whole territory, including central and local bodies.

The Statutes must define the procedures for the establishment and dissolution of branches and other entities. The establishment of branches and any separate legal entities must include approval at the central level (for example, by the governing board or the general assembly).

The Statutes must ensure that provision is made for needs to be met across the territory in the event that a branch is dissolved or is not functioning.

Further explanatory text

As humanitarian needs change over time, it is advised that the organizational structure is continuously assessed and adapted, if necessary. Consequently, statutory provisions related to organizational structure should not be so rigid that they cannot be amended if need be. It is also advised that the Statutes define the organizational structure in a way that promotes innovation and collaboration across the organization.

STANDARD 5.2

The Statutes must ensure that the National Society decides, acts and speaks as one.

Must

The Statutes must describe a clear delineation of roles between the different layers of the National Society.

The National Society must be governed by a central body. Centralized functions must include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- protecting the integrity of the National Society, including maintaining the Fundamental Principles and ensuring respect for the emblem
- contacts with central authorities
- international relations, including contacts and agreements with other components of the Movement
- overall policy frameworks (in areas such as finance, human resources, volunteering, and compliance and integrity) and risk management
- coordinating national programmes to ensure that resources are used according to humanitarian needs and that there is consistency in service delivery
- overall financial coordination, oversight and accountability, including consolidated budgeting, financial accounts and audit
- disciplinary procedures and dispute resolution (in the event that disputes cannot be solved locally).

The Statutes must ensure that rules and procedures are in place to define local authority as well as accountability to the central level, and to enable branches to participate effectively in National Society decision-making processes. At a minimum, this implies the following:

- For National Societies with branches and/or other entities that have independent legal status or enjoy a high level of autonomy, the Statutes of these structures must comply with, and not contradict, the National Society Statutes.
- Branch leadership must be represented at the National Society's general assembly.
- Branches must be empowered to execute their activities effectively while abiding by decisions, policies and regulations adopted at the central level. This also applies to National Societies with legally separate or very autonomous entities (such as legally independent branches, separate commercial enterprises, separate youth organizations or similar).
- The Statutes must specify high-level reporting and communication lines between the different levels of the National Society.

Statutes must state the consequences of branches or other entities failing to comply with decisions or policies adopted at the central level, the ultimate example of which could be expulsion and/or revocation of the right to use the name and emblem of the National Society. This is also addressed in Chapter 6, “Compliance, Integrity and Dispute Resolution”.

How a National Society structures itself in order to work effectively across the national territory will depend on a range of factors, including internal factors, such as the services it provides and how it mobilizes volunteer and financial resources, and external factors, such as the size, geography and political structure of its national environment.

This illustration draws on four National Societies:

- the British Red Cross, which is one legal entity, and managed and led centrally
- the Burundi Red Cross, which is one legal entity, but in which community-level branches have significant autonomy, and there are two levels of intermediary branch
- the Danish Red Cross, which is also one legal entity, but where branches have significant powers, and there are no intermediary branches in place
- the Austrian Red Cross, which is a federal structure in which regional branches are legally independent, and have their own individual governing boards and Statutes.

In all four cases, National Society Statutes describe the different components of the organization and how these fit together. In the Austrian Red Cross, this includes providing a framework that shapes how the separate legal entities work together.

This diversity is summarized in the following table:

National Society	Legal entities ²	Organizational levels
British Red Cross	1	Different for each service area
Burundi Red Cross	1	4 (1 national, 18 provincial, 119 communal, 2,918 local units)
Danish Red Cross	1	2 (1 national, 200+ branches)
Austrian Red Cross	Over 20	4 (1 national, 9 legally independent regional branches, with 2 further organizational levels, including further legal entities in 1 region)

Further explanatory text

Every National Society needs to find the right balance between the authority of local entities and their accountability to the central level.

Local authority is about promoting initiative, speed and effective humanitarian action. It is also about giving scope for leaders and volunteers to have meaningful roles within the organization.

Accountability to the central level is about unity, but also about risk management, image and reputation. While a strong branch reflects positively on the whole National Society, an inactive branch, or a branch that makes poor decisions, can have reputational risks for the National Society as a whole.

The handling of disputes and conflicts between different entities of the National Society is dealt with in Chapter 6, “Compliance, Integrity and Dispute Resolution”.

² Not including spin-off enterprises and similar structures



Chapter 6: Compliance, Integrity and Dispute Resolution

Compliance and integrity are critical to the perception and image of a National Society. Breaches may impact negatively on the reputation of a National Society, and on the Movement as a whole.

Acting with integrity helps to ensure that a National Society is accountable to its stakeholders for the quality of services and the use of resources in exercising its mandate and performing its role. To systematically address alleged problematic behaviour within the National Society, including its leadership, members, staff and volunteers, a National Society should establish an integrity framework that defines the integrity and ethical standards to be upheld and sets out rules and procedures to effectively address breaches.

To avoid conflicts turning into public crises, it is also important to establish dispute resolution procedures. While disciplinary procedures involve steps to sanction, dispute resolution procedures aim to resolve conflicts for which other procedures, for example, human resource procedures, do not exist, such as disputes between National Society members.

Most elements of this chapter are cross-cutting and should be read in conjunction with other chapters. Therefore, National Societies are not expected to have a separate chapter on compliance and integrity in their Statutes, but to address compliance and integrity in all relevant places across their Statutes, and to have mechanisms, policies and procedures in place that prevent and address potential compliance and integrity breaches.

Key questions

- Does the National Society live up to the highest standards of integrity?
- Has the National Society defined organizational integrity and ethical standards, as well as standards for individual leaders, members, staff and volunteers? Can it demonstrate these if called upon?
- Does the National Society have procedures and mechanisms in place to ensure compliance, prevent abuse of power and address possible integrity breaches while guaranteeing procedural fairness?
- Does the National Society have adequate procedures and mechanisms to ensure effective internal dispute resolution?

STANDARD 6.1

The Statutes state the integrity and ethical standards to be upheld.

Must

In relation to individuals

The Statutes define or reference the integrity and ethical standards that must be upheld at all levels of the National Society, including zero tolerance for violations of these standards. The integrity and ethical standards include, as a minimum:

- adhering to the Fundamental Principles, and to the policies and regulations of the National Society
- protecting confidentiality and maintaining the trust of those that the National Society serves
- acting and making decisions in the interests of the National Society when acting on its behalf
- treating everyone with dignity and respect and, therefore, abstaining from:
 - ⊙ discrimination based on gender, ethnic origin, nationality or citizenship, age, disability, language, political opinions, religious belief, social background, or any other similar grounds
 - ⊙ xenophobia and other forms of racism
 - ⊙ bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment
 - ⊙ sexual exploitation and abuse

- acting honestly and with integrity in all transactions and dealings, which includes abstaining from fraud and corruption, abuse of power and nepotism
- avoiding conflicts of interest and handling actual or possible conflicts of interest appropriately. What constitutes a conflict of interest will often be defined through a policy (see also Chapter 4, “Leadership (Governance and Management)”, and its Standard 4.3 regarding individuals and conflicts of interest in governance positions).

The Statutes commit the National Society to adopt relevant policies and a code of conduct (or a similar ethics and behaviour framework) for individuals in governance positions, staff and volunteers. Standard 4.3 describes more specific requirements for a code of conduct for governance bodies and positions.

In relation to branches and other entities

The Statutes must commit branches and any other entities within the National Society to ensure that individuals uphold the integrity and ethical standards described above.

Key documents and resources

- IFRC Policy on the Protection of Integrity of National Societies and Bodies of the IFRC

STANDARD 6.2

The Statutes define the procedures that ensure compliance with integrity and ethical standards and how breaches are addressed.

Must

The Statutes must describe, or make reference to, regulations that describe the mechanisms, processes and procedures to investigate and – in the event of non-compliance with defined integrity and ethical standards – sanction individuals as well as collective entities, including branches.

The Statutes must describe which bodies can sanction non-compliance, on what basis, and the applicable sanctions. Disciplinary procedures must be characterized by procedural fairness and due process guarantees.

The Statutes must commit the National Society to adopt staff regulations in accordance with national labour law, defining processes and procedures relating to potential contractual breaches.

The National Society must have a procedure to receive, investigate and respond to complaints and allegations against anyone associated with the National Society, including a whistle-blower protection policy that specifies that the National Society will not retaliate against, and will protect the confidentiality of, anyone making complaints in good faith, in particular, beneficiaries, staff, volunteers and members.

Could

The National Society could establish an internal governance body with a mandate to oversee compliance and integrity within the National Society, possibly co-opting external members (refer to Standard 4.2), or an external body such as an ombudsman, or an independent ethics committee.

Further explanatory text

Handling complaints and whistle-blowing

A complaints procedure is essential as it gives everyone, including less senior staff, volunteers and those whom the National Society serves, an opportunity to report serious wrongdoing without fear of retaliation. A deliberate failure to adhere to these standards and protections is a serious matter and should subject the perpetrator to disciplinary action. Such procedures serve as a deterrent and help to right any wrongs committed in the name of the National Society, but they do require a National Society to be able to investigate complaints transparently. For this reason, many organizations engage an external organization or body to guarantee procedural fairness during investigations.

To come under whistle-blowing protection, complaints must be of a serious nature, including:

- a criminal offence, such as fraud
- actions that endanger people’s health and safety

- a miscarriage of justice
- law-breaking by the National Society
- covering up wrongdoing
- abuse of power, including sexual abuse and exploitation
- any other serious violation of integrity and ethical standards as mentioned under Standard 6.1.

An effective whistle-blowing procedure must be disseminated to all National Society stakeholders. It ensures that people coming forward with allegations in good faith are protected from retaliation or disadvantage; this often involves protecting the anonymity of the whistle-blower. It also provides protection for senior staff and leaders, who can be the target of malicious accusations, by ensuring that accusations are dealt with rapidly and fairly, and that appropriate sanctions are taken against people making malicious accusations.

Disciplinary procedures and procedural fairness

Disciplinary procedures in case of breaches of integrity and ethical standards need to be well thought through and documented. If not handled in a principled and transparent manner, a National Society risks exacerbating any internal tensions and leaving itself open to external legal challenge. A key concept underpinning any disciplinary procedure is procedural fairness, i.e. the capacity to demonstrably deal with any disciplinary issue on its merits, in a structured and transparent manner, in line with existing rules and regulations.

Procedural fairness and due process guarantees involve, at a minimum:

- informing any party involved promptly and in writing of the nature of the complaint
- testing the complaint on its merits by a non-partisan body that takes into account whether an act has been committed in good faith or in bad faith
- providing any party concerned with the opportunity to comment and be heard
- issuing warnings, where possible, depending on the gravity of the case
- the proportionality of sanctions, which means that the suspension and expulsion of volunteers and members (including governance members) can only take place for serious cause, namely the display of character incompatible with the Fundamental Principles, serious violations of the National Society's internal regulations and policies, or engagement in activities that are detrimental to the reputation, image or activities of the National Society
- a system for hearing appeals at another organizational level, or an external arbitration procedure.

Possible sanctions could include suspension and expulsion (members and volunteers), removal from office (members of governance or an entire board), intervention in a branch, or withdrawal of the right to use the name and the emblem of the National Society from a branch or other entity.

If a National Society is faced by a complaint that it cannot properly deal with, and if all other means have been considered and attempted, a National Society can submit allegations of breaches of integrity to the IFRC Compliance and Mediation Committee. This will require its full cooperation with the committee.

Key documents and resources

- Federation-wide fraud and corruption prevention policy, IFRC, 2019 (Anticipated)

STANDARD 6.3

The Statutes provide for mechanisms and procedures for dispute resolution.

Must

The Statutes must provide for dispute resolution mechanisms and procedures to resolve conflicts arising within the National Society, especially for disputes concerning branches, volunteers and members that are not covered by existing procedures, such as human resource policies.

Could

The Statutes could commit members, volunteers, branches and other entities of the National Society to utilize whatever dispute resolution mechanism the National Society has to settle disputes, and to notify the governing board in a timely manner in the event that a dispute remains unresolved.

Further explanatory text

All National Societies will experience disputes and conflict from time to time. Disputes can lead to healthy discussion, but they can also escalate to a level where they place the National Society's functioning and reputation at risk. Avoiding this situation is the key rationale for a dispute resolution mechanism. Typical mechanisms include the following:

Conciliation and mediation

Conciliation and mediation processes involve a third party external to the dispute supporting the disputing parties to reach agreement. The third party could come from within the National Society: a senior board member or manager, for instance, or from outside, including professionals skilled in such processes. It is critical that both parties to the dispute agree on who will provide this service: if one of the disputants does not accept the third party, then any outcome is unlikely to be seen as fair and valid.

Arbitration

In arbitration, the dispute is referred to a third, independent person. The arbitration process is private, the arbitrator decides the outcome, and the decision is binding. The advantage of arbitration compared to involving the national courts is that the arbitrator's decision is usually reached more quickly.

If it is revealed that a dispute relates to non-compliance with integrity and ethical standards, as defined under Standard 6.1, then it should be dealt with according to the disciplinary procedures described under Standard 6.2.



Chapter 7: Financial Matters

The purpose of this chapter is to ensure that principled and accountable financial management and resource mobilization practices are in place to protect the National Society's image and reputation.

Key questions

- Are sufficient safeguards in place to ensure that the National Society accepts resources in accordance with the Fundamental Principles and the Movement's regulatory frameworks?
- Has the National Society assigned clear responsibility for all aspects of financial management?
- Does the National Society have sufficient accountability measures in place, including an external audit of its consolidated accounts?

STANDARD 7.1

The Statutes define how resources are mobilized and managed in a transparent, accountable, efficient and principled way.

Must

The Statutes must include a definition of the financial year of the National Society.

The Statutes must stipulate the main categories of income for the National Society, such as membership fees, funds raised for programmes and projects, donations and income-generation activities.

The Statutes must commit the National Society to mobilize resources in a transparent, principled and accountable way.

The Statutes must clarify responsibilities relating to the management of financial resources – refer also to Chapter 4, "Leadership (Governance and Management)" – in particular:

- the drafting of the budget and financial reports
- advice on the budget and financial reports
- approval of the budget and financial reports
- auditing accounts
- determining the acceptability of funds and donations.

The Statutes must define the financial relationships between the central and branch levels, and between the central level and other subsidiary entities, in particular, in relation to:

- the mobilization, attribution and spending of resources
- any financial obligations between the branches or other subsidiary entities and the central level and/or vice versa
- the obligation of all branches and any subsidiary legal entities to submit annual accounts to the central level for consolidation and supplementary auditing (see Standard 7.2 for more detail).

Could

The Statutes could commit the National Society to establish an independent and effective internal audit function that gives management reasonable assurance on the effectiveness of the National Society's internal control environment and to acts as an agent for change by making recommendations for continual improvement.

More details could be found using this link.

The Statutes could commit the National Society to establish an independent and professional investigation function to examine and determine the veracity of allegations of corrupt or fraudulent practices and misconduct on the part of its members, staff and volunteers.

More details could be found using the following links:

Uniform Guidelines for Investigations,

CFE Code of Professional Standards Interpretation and Guidance

Key documents and resources

- [National Society Development Framework, IFRC, 2013](#), which focuses on the sustainability of National Societies through domestic fundraising initiatives and diversification of funds
- Movement Policy for Corporate Sector Partnerships and annex, Resolution 10 (Council of Delegates, Seoul 2005)
- Movement Wide Resource Mobilisation Principles, Resolution 2 (Council of Delegates, 2017)
- Regulations on the use of the emblem of the red cross or the red crescent by the National Societies adopted by the 20th International Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference (Vienna, 1965) and revised by the Council of Delegates (Budapest, 1991).

STANDARD 7.2

The Statutes commit the National Society to conduct an independent, professional and external audit of its consolidated accounts annually.

Must

The manner of appointment, the qualifications and the format of reporting by an external audit must be defined by the Statutes.

The audit must be conducted by an external, qualified and independent auditor at the end of each financial year.

Financial statements must be consolidated, i.e. combining the financial statements of headquarters, branches and all related entities including service enterprises (such as blood banks, hospitals, ambulances) bearing or benefiting from the use of the emblem.

Further explanatory text

Consolidated financial statements are the combined financial statements of the headquarters, branches and all other entities.

An annual external audit of consolidated financial statements is one of a National Society's duties, as defined in the IFRC constitution.

An external audit is an independent examination of the financial statements prepared by the organization. It results in an audit opinion about whether the financial statements give a “true and fair” view of the organization’s finances, and whether funds are used in accordance with the objectives as outlined in the Statutes.

As the manner of appointment and the qualifications of an external auditor, as well as the format of reporting may vary in different jurisdictions, a National Society should, before including or revising such provisions in its Statutes, check national regulations to ensure compliance.

Depending on the size and complexity of National Society finances, the following audit options could be considered:

- government audit agency
- audit firm
- single auditor (retired or active, certified).

Auditing consolidated financial statements does not imply that auditors will check every branch and entity of the National Society. Instead, auditors test the validity of the accounts through a sample of transactions.

As described in Chapter 4, “Leadership (Governance and Management)”, auditors are appointed by governing bodies (governing board or the general assembly). Being independent means that the auditor has not been involved in keeping the accounting records, and is not personally connected in any way with the organization being audited. It is good practice to change auditor on a regular basis.



Chapter 8: Final Provisions

Key questions

- Are provisions for revising the Statutes clear and do they ensure a transparent and participatory process?
- Under what circumstances can the National Society be dissolved?
- Are processes in place to ensure that the Statutes (and any revisions) are disseminated within the National Society?

STANDARD 8.1

The Statutes define the procedures and rules for their revision.

Must

The responsibility to adopt revisions to a National Society’s Statutes rests with the general assembly or its equivalent.

The Statutes must state the required quorum and majority to revise the Statutes.

Draft amendments to a National Society’s Statutes must be submitted to the Joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Society Statutes (JSC), whose recommendations must be taken into account.

The Statutes must stipulate the required notice period for the submission of draft amendments to the general assembly.

The Statutes must describe which body decides how the Statutes are to be interpreted in the event of uncertainty or dispute.

Further explanatory text

In some National Societies, amending the Statutes requires prior consultation with the relevant authorities.

Most National Societies require a qualified quorum and/or majority for changes to Statutes to be passed (for example, two-thirds of members have to be present and two-thirds of those present and voting must be in

favour of the proposed amendment). While such requirements aid organizational stability, they may also reduce a National Society's capacity to adapt rapidly.

STANDARD 8.2

The Statutes contain provisions for the dissolution and liquidation of the National Society.

Must

The Statutes must describe under what conditions the National Society can be dissolved. In contexts where the establishment of a National Society is regulated by law, the dissolution of the National Society must be in accordance with the applicable provisions.

The National Society can only be dissolved by a decision of the society's highest governance body, normally the general assembly. The decision to dissolve the National Society must be made with a qualified quorum and majority.

The Statutes must define, subject to the requirements of national law, the disposal of the National Society's remaining assets.

STANDARD 8.3

The Statutes are disseminated to all stakeholders in the National Society at all levels.

Must

The Statutes must be translated into the official languages of the state in which the National Society is established.

If the Statutes exist in several official languages, they must define which language takes precedence in the case of conflict of interpretation between different versions.

The Statutes must be disseminated throughout the National Society, and made available to any National Society member or volunteer upon request.

Could

The National Society could decide to translate the Statutes into other languages or dialects in use across the national territory.

The Statutes could be made available through the National Society website and other relevant communications channels.

VOLUNTEER CHARTER

We the Volunteers of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

United in our mission to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, will uphold and abide by the Fundamental Principles of Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary service, Unity and Universality.

We protect life and health and we ensure respect for human beings. We promote human dignity, mutual understanding, solidarity, cooperation and lasting peace.

We accomplish our mission in total independence, free from any political, ideological or economic interference that could divert us from helping people in need.

We endeavour to relieve the suffering of people, guided solely by their needs, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Never do we discriminate against nationality, gender, race, religious beliefs, class, political opinion or any other grounds.

We do not take sides in hostilities, nor do we engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious, ideological or similar nature.

We are not prompted by any desire to gain.

We know that our emblems should protect us from harm, nevertheless our lives are sometimes put at risk.

We call upon our National Society to ensure our participation, protection, respect, and to provide the means and support we need to accomplish our humanitarian commitment.

We are the Red Cross and the Red Crescent

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1.1.5 RESOLUTION 4

ENHANCING TRANSPARENCY, GENDER BALANCE AND ROTATION IN THE ELECTION AND COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMISSION OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT: ADOPTION OF THE GUIDELINES FOR CANDIDATES

The Council of Delegates,

recalling Article 17 of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) establishing the composition of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Standing Commission), which shall include five members of different National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies (National Societies), each elected in a personal capacity by the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference), two representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), one of whom shall be the President and two representatives of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), one of whom shall be the President; as well as Rule 21 of the Rules of Procedure of the Movement establishing the rules governing the election of members of the Standing Commission,

recalling also Article 10(4) of the Statutes of the Movement requiring the International Conference to elect members of the Standing Commission, taking into account personal qualities and the principle of fair geographical distribution,

recalling further Resolution 3 of the 1995 Council of Delegates, “Future of the Movement”, endorsing the Profile for Candidates for Election to the Standing Commission,

recalling further Resolution 12 of the 2017 Council of Delegates, “Reinforcing gender equality and equal opportunities in the leadership and work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”, and its call upon the ICRC, the IFRC, National Societies and the Standing Commission to take concrete measures to address the question of gender equality and equal opportunities at all levels of their own leadership,

noting with satisfaction the commitment of the Movement to enhance standards of integrity and compliance as well as to promote equitable gender balance across all of the components and statutory bodies of the Movement,

welcoming with appreciation the work of the Standing Commission for developing concrete proposals to enhance transparency, gender balance and rotation in its election and composition,

emphasizing its expectation that candidates for election to the Standing Commission should comply at all times with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement and with the highest standards of integrity and ethics that membership in the Standing Commission implies,

1. *adopts* the Guidelines for Candidates for Election to the Standing Commission drawn up by the Standing Commission, which replace the 1995 Profile for Candidates for Election to the Standing Commission, and *urges* members of the Standing Commission, future candidates for election, and all components of the Movement to comply with them;
2. *urges* the candidates standing for election to the Standing Commission to submit their nominations at least 60 days before the opening of the International Conference in which the election will take place;
3. *urges* elected members of the Standing Commission not to stand again for election if they have already served two four-year terms;
4. *encourages* fair geographical distribution as well as equitable gender balance to be taken into account when nominating candidates for election to the Standing Commission;
5. *urges* all members of the International Conference to take into account in the elections of the Standing Commission, including at the 33rd International Conference, the personal qualities and the principle of fair geographical distribution as well as equitable gender balance when electing the five elected members of the Standing Commission at the International Conference, and thus notably by choosing at least two women and two men among the candidates;
6. *urges* the ICRC and the IFRC, when appointing their respective representatives to the Standing Commission pursuant to Article 17(1) of the Statutes of the Movement, to ensure equitable gender balance;

7. *takes note of and welcomes* the Standing Commission's interpretation that the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the Movement should be considered as gender-neutral and that, unless the contrary intention appears, words and expressions indicating the masculine or feminine are not limited to the indicated gender;
8. *encourages* members of the Council of Delegates and of the International Conference to ensure equitable gender representation in their delegations attending the said meetings;
9. *calls upon* all components of the Movement to continue to work towards implementing Resolution 12 of the 2017 Council of Delegates, including the taking of concrete measures to ensure equitable gender representation at all levels of their organizations, and to ensure that women are lent support to move into leadership and governance positions in the Movement;
10. *invites* the Standing Commission to bring the present resolution and its recommendations to the attention of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and to subsequent International Conferences.

GUIDELINES FOR CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION TO THE STANDING COMMISSION OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

A. Responsibilities of the Standing Commission

The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Standing Commission) is the trustee of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference) between two International Conferences, carrying out the functions laid down in Article 18 of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement). The principal functions of the Standing Commission, as set out in Article 18 and in decisions of the Movement, encompass the following administrative, executive and governing responsibilities:

- (1) to decide on the place and dates of the International Conference, if not set by the previous International Conference, and the Council of Delegates, and prepare the provisional agendas and programme of the International Conference
- (2) to establish by consensus the list of observers to the International Conference and to the Council of Delegates
- (3) to promote the International Conference and secure optimum attendance
- (4) to encourage and further the implementation of the resolutions of the International Conference
- (5) to promote harmony in the work of the Movement and, in this connection, coordination among its components
- (6) examine matters which concern the Movement as a whole
- (7) to settle, in the interval between International Conferences, and subject to any final decision by the Conference
 - any difference of opinion which may arise as to the interpretation and application of the Statutes and Rules of Procedure
 - any question which may be submitted to it by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) or the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in connection with any difference which may arise between them
- (8) to select recipients for and administer the award of the Henry Dunant Medal and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity³
- (9) to establish by consensus ad hoc subsidiary bodies to assist it in its work.

³ The Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity was created by the Council of Delegates in Rio de Janeiro in 1987.

B. Principles governing membership of the Standing Commission

The Standing Commission comprises nine members, including five members from different National Societies and elected in a personal capacity, and four members who are representatives of the ICRC and the IFRC in accordance with Articles 10(4) and 17 of the Statutes of the Movement, as well as Rule 21 of the Rules of Procedure.

Pursuant to Article 10(4) of the Statutes of the Movement and Rule 21(1) of the Rules of Procedure, the International Conference shall elect the five members of the Standing Commission, taking into account:

- the personal qualities of candidates best qualified to fulfil the responsibilities of the Standing Commission
- the principle of fair geographical distribution.

Additionally, the Movement is committed to enhancing gender equality, diversity and equal opportunities at all levels of its leadership. Therefore, in order to support the achievement of equitable gender balance, all components of the Movement and all Member States taking part in the vote during the International Conference for the election of the five members of the Standing Commission referred to in Article 17(1)(a) of the Statutes of the Movement, are strongly encouraged and invited to select on their ballot paper at least two female and two male candidates.

In the same way, the ICRC and the IFRC are urged to ensure equitable gender balance when appointing their respective representatives to the Standing Commission pursuant to Article 17(1)(b) and (c) of the Statutes of the Movement.

C. Requirements for candidates

As per Rule 21 of the Rules of Procedure of the Movement, nominations for the Standing Commission shall be delivered, with the curriculum vitae of each candidate, to the chair of the International Conference Bureau no later than 48 hours before the opening of the meeting in which the election will take place. However, all candidates standing for election to the Standing Commission are urged to submit their nominations at least 60 days before the opening of the International Conference. This earlier submission is intended to improve the nomination process for candidates so as to ensure the transparency of the process and the quality of the nominations, in line with enhanced eligibility and integrity requirements. It will also encourage the nominations to be circulated 45 days before the opening of the International Conference at the time of dispatching official working documents.

Nominations must be submitted in one of the working languages of the International Conference.

1. Membership in a National Society

Pursuant to Article 17(1)(a) of the Statutes of the Movement, candidates take part in the election in a personal capacity and they must be a member of a National Society. Their nominations must include a confirmation of membership, such as a certificate of membership or other relevant document.

Several candidates to the election may be members of the same National Society, but no more than one member of the same National Society may be declared elected to the Standing Commission.

2. Declaration of candidacy

Pursuant to Article 10(4) of the Statutes of the Movement and Rule 21(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Movement, the personal qualities of candidates shall be taken into account in both the nomination and election of candidates. Therefore, candidates as well as elected members must be able to certify that at no time before their nomination they have been:

- involved in the commission of any violation of international humanitarian law or of internationally recognized standards of human rights law
- the subject of a conviction for a criminal offence or conduct which gave rise to a civil penalty which would otherwise risk the reputation or standing of the Movement
- sanctioned by any component of the Movement for:
 - violations of any Movement component's Code of Conduct

- the display of character or morality incompatible with the seven Fundamental Principles of the Movement
- fraudulent or corrupt conduct
- failure to declare a conflict of interest
- sanctioned for the violation of laws or policies relating to sexual exploitation, abuse, discrimination or harassment
- involved in any major dispute or controversy in or outside the Movement that would otherwise risk the reputation of the Movement.

Candidates should note that they may be asked to provide further information in relation to any information submitted in their nominations.

Elected members remain fully accountable for failure to disclose pertinent information and for statements included in their nominations. They are expected to maintain the highest levels of integrity and ethical standards and to preserve the image, reputation and functions of the Standing Commission and of the Movement.

3. Profile and qualifications of candidates and membership

As noted above, pursuant to Article 10(4) of the Statutes and Rule 21(1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Movement, the personal qualities of candidates shall be taken into account in both the nomination and election of candidates. The ideal qualities for members of the Standing Commission have been grouped under the following headings: **leadership, motivation, integrity, character, knowledge, experience and availability to attend meetings and handle the Standing Commission's affairs.**

(a) Leadership

The candidate should have a vision both for the Movement and for its role and influence within the larger international humanitarian community; to be capable and willing to address with creativity and determination the challenges facing the Movement; and to be able to motivate and inspire fellow Standing Commission members and other leaders of the Movement to take constructive and positive action to carry out that vision.

(b) Motivation

Membership of the Standing Commission should not be sought for reasons of personal ambition, prestige or as an honorary position within the Movement. Candidates should be motivated to act together with other members to serve in a personal and non-partisan capacity, in the sole interests of the Movement and in the fulfilment of its humanitarian mission and goals.

(c) Integrity

Candidates should have a proven record of knowledge of and compliance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement, the Statutes of the Movement and the highest integrity and ethical standards. They should be inspired at all times in their decisions and actions by the Fundamental Principles. They should be committed to exercising their mandate in their own personal capacity, in the sole interest of the Standing Commission and the Movement, to the exclusion of any outside influence or conflict of interest that would otherwise influence or bind their positions and decisions.

(d) Character

The candidate should possess independent judgement; be sensitive to others and respect their concerns and opinions; be resolute and non-partisan in making decisions, and tolerant in carrying them out; have the courage to recommend what is right, even if that choice may not be popular; be reliable in meeting responsibilities and deadlines; be ready to work in a spirit of collegiality within the Standing Commission to create the conditions that promote unity and harmony among the components of the Movement.

(e) Knowledge

The candidates should be familiar with the Fundamental Principles; the provisions of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols and other relevant instruments of international law; be well informed about the origins and historical development of the Movement; and be familiar with, and respectful of, the Statutes, Rules of Procedure and key decisions and policies of the Movement.



A sound understanding of how the various components of the Movement function is required, particularly with regard to the IFRC and the ICRC.

The candidate should understand and respect the purpose and functions of the Standing Commission, and its relationship with the respective components of the Movement and to the other statutory bodies of the Movement; the purpose, functions and interrelationships of the components of the Movement; the relationship between the Movement and States party to the Geneva Conventions; and the role of the Movement within the larger international humanitarian community, in particular its relations with the United Nations system.

Fluency in English is strongly desirable as it would facilitate communication among members of the Standing Commission; knowledge of at least one other official language of the Movement is desirable.

(f) Experience

Experience with a National Society and/or with another component of the Movement is highly desirable, preferably with experience and understanding in matters of governance.

Beyond experience in the Movement, national and international affairs, the candidate should be especially discerning with regard to human events and actions, particularly within the larger international community; have experience of working in a multicultural environment; and have an interest in understanding and keeping up to date with developments in international socioeconomic and political affairs that have a direct impact on the Movement's activities.

(g) Availability

The candidate must be available to attend meetings of the Standing Commission and to carry out its assignments, including taking part in discussions in person or remotely and undertaking specific tasks. Membership of the Standing Commission entails a significant commitment in terms of time and travel.

The five members of the different National Societies, each elected in a personal capacity, should not simultaneously hold any elective or governance functions in the IFRC, so as to ensure their availability and independence of judgement in the event of any difference that may arise between the ICRC and the IFRC being brought to the attention of the Standing Commission.

Members should not hold any active high-ranking positions in government, a legislative body or any other organization which may constitute a conflict of interest, reflect adversely on the Movement or be incompatible with the Fundamental Principles.

4. Term limit

Elected members of the Standing Commission are encouraged not to stand again for election if they have already served two four-year terms.

1.1.6 RESOLUTION 5

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT POLICY ON ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

The Council of Delegates,

recalling and *reiterating* the deep concern expressed by the 2017 Council of Delegates on the mental health and psychosocial needs that arise as a consequence of armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies, including those arising in the context of migration or as a result of other situations, such as marginalization, isolation and extreme poverty, and *recalling* the continued and urgent need to increase efforts to address concerns in this area and the important complementary work that the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) is doing to respond to these needs,

recalling that the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of the Movement's volunteers and staff is often affected in the course of their work, and *reiterating* the request of the 2017 Council of Delegates resolution for National Societies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to address the mental health and psychosocial needs of volunteers and staff,

recognizing the link between substance use and addictive behaviours with mental health and psychosocial wellbeing and *recalling* the commitments by the Movement to address the harmful use of substances and addictive behaviours, including Resolution 29 "The fight against drug abuse" of the 25th International Conference of the Red Cross,

recalling the request by the 2017 Council of Delegates to formulate a Movement policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs that builds on common approaches and contributes to the harmonization of different Movement responses, and *recognizing* that this policy will contribute to strengthening the Movement's collective capacity and capability to address mental health and psychosocial needs,

1. *adopts* the proposed Movement policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs and *requests* all the components of the Movement to implement this policy and apply it in their work aimed at addressing mental health and psychosocial needs or when supporting other components of the Movement in doing so;
2. *reiterates* the 2017 Council of Delegates' call to increase the resources allocated to addressing this humanitarian issue, with a view to strengthening the Movement's collective capacity and capability to address mental health and psychosocial needs, and *calls* on all National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC to guarantee the 'basic level' of psychosocial support response as contained within the Movement's mental health and psychosocial support framework; develop their capacity to provide services at other levels of the framework; and assess, refer and advocate in relation to the full spectrum of mental health and psychosocial support within the framework;
3. *requests* the ICRC and the IFRC to monitor the implementation of this policy, document progress, including learnings and challenges, and report to the Council of Delegates on the progress made in 2021.



INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT POLICY ON ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS

A. INTRODUCTION

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs refers to work conducted in all contexts by the components of the Movement. It presents eight policy statements to frame and address the mental health and psychosocial needs of affected populations, including staff and volunteers.

At the Council of Delegates in 2017, the Movement adopted a resolution – *Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs* – which recognized the urgency to strengthen the Movement’s collective response to mental health and psychosocial needs, and requested the formulation of a “Movement Policy on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs”.

This policy applies to all three components of the Movement – National Societies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) – in their mental health and psychosocial support activities. It recognizes the variety of complementary activities carried out by them in all contexts in accordance with their different mandates. It seeks to provide a policy framework supporting all three components of the Movement in ensuring the quality of mental health and psychosocial support responses.

This policy includes:

- an overview of mental health and psychosocial needs
- the Movement’s mental health and psychosocial response and approach, and
- eight policy statements with supporting guidance.

This policy aligns with and builds upon relevant Movement commitments, policies and resolutions. It is informed by professional standards, guidelines and relevant global frameworks.⁴

This policy replaces the IFRC policy on psychological support (2003). The Council of Delegates will review it in 2027.

Understanding mental health and psychosocial needs

Mental health and psychosocial needs exist along a continuum ranging from positive mental health, through mild and temporary forms of distress, to chronic and more severely disabling mental health conditions. Responding to mental health and psychosocial needs is critical for people’s survival and daily functioning and for their enjoyment of human rights and access to protection and assistance. It is key to achieving universal health coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals. Mental health and psychosocial support is a global public good that contributes to healthy societies in all countries, irrespective of socio-economic status.

Although mental health and psychosocial needs are not always visible, they are nevertheless real, urgent and, in some cases, life-threatening. Mental health conditions are among the leading causes of ill-health and disability worldwide. Yet nearly two-thirds of people with known mental health and psychosocial needs never seek help, due to a lack of access to care and treatment, and the stigma surrounding this issue. In 2019 WHO estimated that more than 80% of people with mental health conditions are without any form of quality, affordable mental health care. At the same time, 800,000 people die due to suicide every year, and it is the second leading cause of death among young people.

Armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies have an immense long-term impact on mental health and psychosocial wellbeing. Rates of mental health conditions increase extensively after emergencies and especially in situations of armed conflict. Psychosocial difficulties increase too when, for instance, people are separated from or lose members of their family or friends, living conditions become very difficult and people are exposed to violence and cannot access assistance. Emergencies affect or destroy community and family resources and undermine personal coping strategies and social connections,

4 These include: Inter-Agency Standing Committee (2007) *Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings*, IASC: Geneva; International Committee of the Red Cross (2018) *Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Guidelines*, ICRC: Geneva; World Health Organization (2013) *Mental Health Action Plan 2013–2030*, WHO: Geneva; Resolution 29 “The fight against drug abuse” of the 25th International Conference of the Red Cross, Geneva, 1986,

which would normally support people. Human, social and economic consequences are long-term and far-reaching and affect entire communities and societies.

Most people show resilience and are able to manage their distress provided that they can activate their personal coping strategies and have access to basic services and external resources, such as the support of their families, friends and community. Early and appropriate mental health and psychosocial support helps prevent distress from developing into more severe conditions. Children face particular risks if their mental health and psychosocial needs are not addressed early. People with severe and/or chronic mental health conditions may find their condition gets worse in certain contexts and they need additional help. However, local mental health and psychosocial support services are under great strain in all contexts or may not exist at all. Even where services and support are available, access may be extremely difficult because of their location, the financial cost, security issues, poor awareness and the stigma associated with mental health.

The Movement's response and approach

Addressing mental health and psychosocial needs is a central part of the Movement's broader objectives to prevent and alleviate human suffering, to protect life, health and dignity and to promote health and social welfare among individuals, families and communities, including staff and volunteers working in all contexts. The Movement engages in humanitarian diplomacy to ensure that States and other actors address mental health and psychosocial needs, and it is involved in the development of international standards and practices to ensure quality of care in very challenging circumstances.

States have the primary responsibility to respond to the mental health and psychosocial needs of people in their territory. The components of the Movement have important complementary and supportive roles, including the auxiliary role of National Societies.

Key terms and their definitions

The following terms are defined in relation to their use in this policy and across the Movement more broadly.

What is 'mental health and psychosocial support'?

Mental health and psychosocial support describes any type of local or outside support that aims to protect or promote psychosocial wellbeing and/or treat mental health conditions.⁵

What is 'mental health'?

- Mental health is defined by the World Health Organization as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work

productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

What does 'psychosocial' mean?

Psychosocial is a term used to describe the interconnection between the individual (i.e. a person's internal, emotional and thought processes, feelings and reactions) and her or his environment, interpersonal relationships, community and/or culture (i.e. her or his social context).

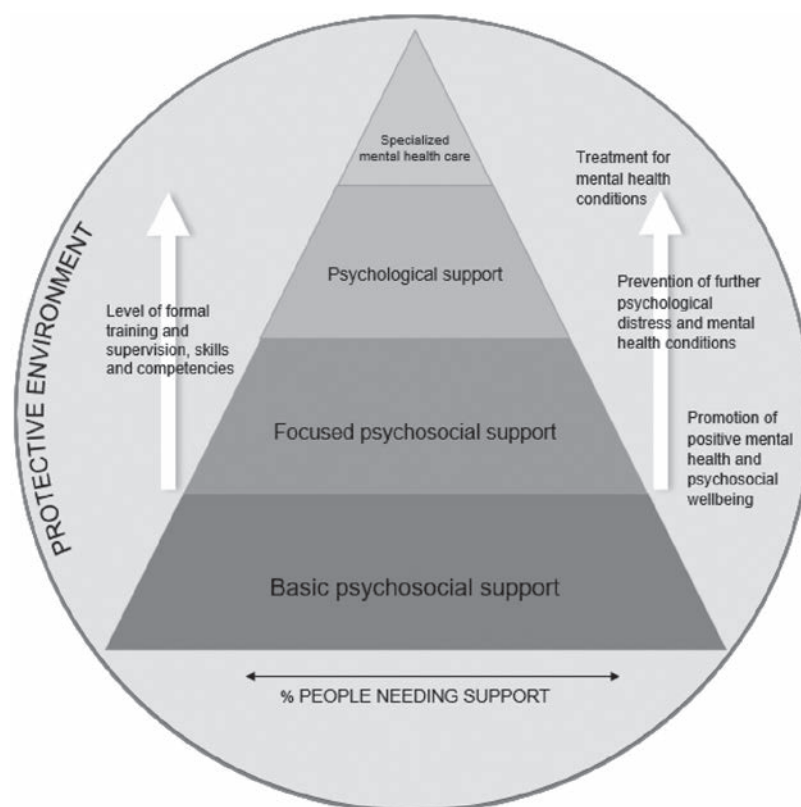
What is 'psychosocial support'?

Psychosocial support refers to actions relating to the social and psychological needs of individuals, families and communities.

The Movement's mental health and psychosocial support framework

Each component of the Movement responds to mental health and psychosocial needs in accordance with its role and mandate. The pyramid model below represents the framework of mental health and psychosocial support services that are required to address the needs of individuals, families and communities in all contexts. A key to organizing mental health and psychosocial support is to develop a layered system of complementary support that meets the needs of different groups. This multi-layered approach does not imply that all Movement components must provide services in all layers. However, Movement components are expected to assess, refer and advocate in relation to the full spectrum of mental health and psychosocial support presented in the model, from basic psychosocial support through to specialized mental health care.

⁵ Adapted from the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (2007) *Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings*, IASC: Geneva, p. 1.



Specialized mental health care – the top layer of the pyramid – includes specialized clinical care and treatment for individuals with chronic mental health conditions and for persons suffering such severe distress and over such a period of time that they have difficulty coping in their daily lives. Examples of activities include treatment centres for survivors of torture and alternative approaches to drug therapy. Services are provided within State health-care and social welfare systems and in detention facilities.

Psychological support – the third layer of the pyramid – includes prevention and treatment activities for individuals and families who present with more complicated psychological distress and for people at risk of developing mental health conditions. Examples of activities include basic psychological interventions, such as counselling or psychotherapy, which are usually provided in health-care facilities with accompanying outreach work or in community facilities, where this is culturally acceptable.

Focused psychosocial support – the second layer – includes promotion of positive mental health and psychosocial wellbeing and prevention activities, with a specific focus on groups, families and individuals at risk. Examples of activities include peer support and group work. Focused psychosocial support can be provided by trained and supervised Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers and/or trained community members.

Basic psychosocial support – the first layer of the pyramid – promotes positive mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, resilience, social interaction and social cohesion activities within communities. Activities in this layer are often integrated into health, protection and education sectors and should be accessible to 100% of the affected population, where possible. Examples of activities include psychological first aid (PFA) and recreational activities. Basic psychosocial support can be provided by trained Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers and/or trained community members.

B. POLICY STATEMENTS AND GUIDANCE

There are eight policy statements which guide the Movement's work in providing mental health and psychosocial support.

National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC each have responsibilities to address mental health and psychosocial needs in accordance with:

- their mandate and role
- the needs and gaps identified in the specific contexts in which they are working
- their resources, capacities and expertise.

1. Ensure impartial access to mental health and psychosocial support and prioritize prevention and early response

The Movement always responds to mental health and psychosocial needs on the basis of and in accordance with the Fundamental Principles.

We will therefore:

- Ensure that all activities and decisions of the Movement on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs are based on assessments of people's different needs, vulnerability to specific impacts, risk factors and barriers to assistance, are context-specific and culturally sensitive and reflect the principles of humanity and impartiality, including non-discrimination.
- Ensure early access to mental health and psychosocial support, in particular for people affected by emergencies. We will seek to prevent individuals, families and communities from experiencing further distress and difficulties with functioning and coping.
- Acknowledge and emphasize early detection and prevention of mental health and psychosocial needs occurring in childhood. We will tailor promotion, prevention and treatment approaches from pregnancy to infancy and through to adolescence.
- Consider factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, socio-economic factors, state of health, legal status and minority status as well as people's individual experience of deprivation of liberty, family separation, detainment and exposure to violence, including sexual and gender-based violence. Multiple individual factors such as these may combine to increase vulnerability to poor mental health and impact daily life. We will ensure that an assessment of these factors is incorporated into programming.
- Acknowledge the link between substance use, mental health and psychosocial wellbeing and consider measures to address the harmful use of substances along with mental health and psychosocial needs.
- Establish ways to identify and ensure access to people with mental health and psychosocial needs. We will advocate for effective access to appropriate services for people with mental health and psychosocial support needs.
- Promote the recognition of mental health as equally important as physical health.

2. Ensure comprehensive and integrated support and care for people with mental health and psychosocial needs

Mental health and psychosocial needs vary greatly and have many different factors associated with them. A comprehensive, multi-layered approach is therefore recommended in promoting mental health and psychosocial wellbeing. This includes basic psychosocial support, focused psychosocial support, psychological support and specialized mental health care.

We will therefore:

- Ensure that people in need of different types of mental health and psychosocial support are assisted in a dignified and appropriate way. We will provide relevant information and make referrals to available services where needed.
- Advocate to public authorities or other relevant actors for appropriate mental health and psychosocial support and for effective access to existing services for people with mental health and psychosocial support needs. Advocate for the provision of interpreting by qualified interpreters in contexts where people with mental health and psychosocial needs do not speak the local language.
- Assess needs for different types of mental health and psychosocial support (from basic psychosocial support through to specialized mental health care) and map available services and expertise, including those provided by Movement components. We will integrate mental health and psychosocial needs, capacities and priorities into all needs assessments.
- Integrate mental health and psychosocial support into all services and ongoing programmes, including protection, physical health, nutrition, shelter, water and sanitation, food, livelihoods, education, dissemination of information and support to separated families and families of the missing, as relevant to the mandate and role of the respective components of the Movement.

3. Recognize the resilience, participation and diversity of people in all mental health and psychosocial activities

The participation of people with mental health and psychosocial needs in response activities strengthens community engagement and accountability, mitigates the risk of doing harm and ensures that support is provided in a context-specific and culturally sensitive manner.

We will therefore:

- Ensure the full, equal and meaningful involvement of individuals with mental health and psychosocial needs, their families/caregivers and members of the community in decision-making processes. We will respect people's own priorities in relation to their mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, focusing especially on those most vulnerable to discrimination, exclusion and violence.
- Ensure that all mental health and psychosocial support takes into account the culture, language, religious or spiritual beliefs, established habits, attitudes and behaviour of affected individuals, families and communities. We will ensure that staff and volunteers have the knowledge and skills required to fully consider these aspects.
- Give a voice and platform to people with mental health and psychosocial needs and to their families/caregivers in a dignified way. It is crucial to listen to the voices and perspectives of individuals with mental health and psychosocial needs and their families/caregivers, including people with severe and/or chronic mental health conditions. People with lived experience should inform mental health and psychosocial support interventions.

4. Ensure protection of safety, dignity and rights

Failure to ensure people's safety, dignity and rights may cause great mental health and psychosocial concerns and increase existing vulnerabilities. Through protection activities, the components of the Movement can contribute to preventing or limiting exposure to risk and ensure that services do no harm.

We will therefore:

- Promote implementation of, and respect for, international and national legal frameworks which are relevant to helping prevent, reduce and respond to mental health and psychosocial needs, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law and refugee law. It is crucial that the specific risks and threats faced by people with severe and/or chronic mental health and psychosocial needs are identified and addressed.
- Take action to prevent and reduce the risk and extent of mental health harm and psychosocial distress by seeking to minimize threats and vulnerability to such threats, as relevant to the mandate and role of the components of the Movement.

5. Address stigma, exclusion and discrimination

People with mental health and psychosocial needs often face stigma and discrimination, which can sometimes have severe consequences for their safety, health and dignity, exclude them from society and prevent them from accessing assistance and protection. By addressing stigma and marginalization, we help to prevent further harm and promote dignity, inclusion and non-discrimination.

We will therefore:

- Commit to focusing on the positive elements of mental health and psychosocial wellbeing for individuals, families and communities through mental health promotion and prevention activities, rather than taking a deficit and illness approach to our work.
- Work through existing mechanisms of support that individuals, families and communities recognize, trust and can access.
- Integrate mental health and psychosocial support into other relevant programming areas and structures to reduce stigma linked with accessing mental health and psychosocial support.
- Provide timely, accurate and relevant information about mental health and psychosocial wellbeing tailored to specific target groups. Suitable communication methods (including social media) will be selected, depending on context and audience. Messages about mental health and psychosocial

wellbeing should aim to positively influence attitudes and behaviours towards people with mental health and psychosocial needs and not place them at risk of further isolation and stigmatization.

6. Implement and contribute to the development of interventions based on mental health and psychosocial support standards and practices that are internationally recognized and informed by evidence

As mental health and psychosocial support often involves highly sensitive issues, well-intentioned but ill-informed action has the potential to cause harm. By applying and contributing to evidence-informed mental health and psychosocial support and ensuring that all staff and volunteers responding to mental health and psychosocial support needs are regularly trained, supervised and equipped, we reduce the risks of doing harm and ensure dignity and quality in the services delivered.

We will therefore:

- Ensure that all people involved in, preparing for, responding to and supporting mental health and psychosocial needs follow standards of care, ethical and professional guidelines and codes of conduct. Staff and volunteers will recognize the limits to their skills and knowledge and when to seek further help.
- Provide ongoing training, supervision and follow-up for all staff and volunteers to ensure that harmful practices do not occur when addressing mental health and psychosocial support needs. Training and relevant curricula should equip staff and volunteers with the skills and knowledge needed for their roles.
- Implement interventions based on mental health and psychosocial standards and practices which are internationally recognized and informed by evidence. We will regularly monitor and evaluate programmes to ensure quality of care.
- Contribute, where possible, to data collection, research and innovation on mental health and psychosocial needs and practices in accordance with ethical guidelines.

7. Protect the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of staff and volunteers

The mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of staff and volunteers is often affected as they work in difficult and stressful environments and are exposed to highly distressing experiences owing to the nature of mental health and psychosocial support work. The Movement exercises its duty of care and, in doing so, we not only promote the safety, health and wellbeing of staff and volunteers, but also ensure the quality of the services we provide.

We will therefore:

- Ensure that staff and volunteers have the required knowledge and psychological support skills to cope with stressful situations, look after themselves effectively and seek support when needed.
- Equip and support managers and other leaders to reduce work-related stressors for staff and volunteers.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers are equipped with the required skills to support people with mental health and psychosocial needs. We will integrate relevant mental health and psychosocial aspects into core training.
- Ensure that staff, volunteers and facilities providing mental health and psychosocial support services are protected at all times, including during armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies.
- Ensure that specific and additional mental health and psychosocial support is available to individuals and teams who are exposed to distressing events owing to the nature of their work.

8. Develop mental health and psychosocial support capacity

Human resources are the most valuable asset of mental health and psychosocial support services. These services rely on the capacity, competence and motivation of staff and volunteers. The Movement will contribute to building sustainable mental health and psychosocial support systems by strengthening its mental health and psychosocial support capacity and partnering with public authorities and other stakeholders.



We will therefore:

- Ensure the ongoing training, mentoring, monitoring and supervision of staff and volunteers providing mental health and psychosocial support and that they are supported and supervised by a mental health and psychosocial support professional.
- Advocate for the creation and expansion of professional development pathways and educational opportunities for mental health and psychosocial support staff and volunteers in contexts where mental health and psychosocial support is limited or not available (for example, in resource-poor settings).

1.1.7 RESOLUTION 6

RESTORING FAMILY LINKS: STRATEGY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT 2020–2025

The Council of Delegates,

deeply concerned about the suffering endured by those who have lost contact with, have no news of or are separated from their loved ones as a consequence of armed conflicts, disasters and other emergencies as well as in the context of migration,

stressing the importance of clarifying the fate and whereabouts of missing persons, *highlighting* in this regard the right of families to know the fate and whereabouts of their relatives, as provided by international humanitarian law (IHL), *recalling* other relevant international obligations, as applicable, and *taking into account* the important role of States in this respect,

further stressing the importance of restoring contact between separated family members and *recalling* other relevant obligations, including international humanitarian law obligations, as applicable, to facilitate, in every possible way, the reunion of families dispersed as a result of armed conflict and to allow for the exchange of family news,

recalling the respective mandates of the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement), based on the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977, the Statutes of the Movement and resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, including the role of the Central Tracing Agency of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the auxiliary role of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies) in providing support to their respective public authorities in the humanitarian field,

recalling the Restoring Family Links (RFL) Strategy 2008–2018 adopted in Resolution 4 of the Council of Delegates in 2007 and *noting with satisfaction* the achievements made during the course of its implementation, while *recognizing* that further efforts are required to strengthen the capacity of the Family Links Network to assist people who are without news of or separated from members of their families and *acknowledging* the need to deliver Restoring Family Links within a broader framework of protection activities conducted by the Movement,

recalling the RFL resolution adopted at the 2017 Council of Delegates and the Background report which outlined the preliminary main orientations of the new draft RFL Strategy, *expressing appreciation* for the efforts and commitment of the ICRC and the RFL Strategy Implementation Group in developing the RFL Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2020–2025 and *recalling* the Global Strategy on Migration adopted by the 2017 General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC),

1. *adopts* the Restoring Family Links Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2020–2025 (annexed to this resolution);
2. *calls upon* all National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC to:
 - a. promote knowledge and understanding of this Strategy at all levels of their respective organizations
 - b. implement the measures outlined in this Strategy as part of their organizational strategies and plans at national, regional and international level and
 - c. allocate the necessary resources to carry them out;

3. *encourages* the ICRC and the IFRC to enhance their cooperation with a view to supporting National Societies in their efforts to implement the Strategy and *encourages* National Societies to establish partnerships to support each other in building their RFL capacity;
4. *requests* the components of the Movement to bring the RFL Strategy 2020–2025 to the attention of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent with a view, in particular, to encouraging the member States of the Conference to support the RFL activities carried out by the Movement and its efforts in aspects concerning privacy, including as it relates to personal data protection;
5. *invites* the ICRC to continue to chair the RFL Strategy Implementation Group for the purpose of supporting and monitoring the implementation of the RFL Strategy 2020–2025;
6. *commends* the work undertaken by the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection Application Group, *encourages* it to continue to support the application of the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection and *calls upon* the components of the Movement to provide expertise and resources for this process, including a dedicated resource to assist National Societies with implementing the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection;
7. *commends* the establishment of the RFL Leadership Platform and *calls upon* it to continue to address critical issues for the future of RFL services, to steer the implementation of the RFL Strategy 2020–2025 and to encourage other leaders in the Movement to champion it;
8. *welcomes* the proposal to create a Movement RFL Medal for outstanding services in the field of RFL and *invites* the RFL Leadership Platform to develop regulations and conditions for the Medal, in consultation with all the components of the Movement, and submit them to the 2021 Council of Delegates for adoption, together with the nominations of the first recipients of the Medal;
9. *invites* the components of the Movement to report to the 2023 Council of Delegates on the results achieved through the implementation of the RFL Strategy 2020–2025 and the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection.

RESTORING FAMILY LINKS STRATEGY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT 2020–2025

Document prepared by the Central Tracing Agency of the International Committee of the Red Cross together with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, September 2019 (Original: English).

Introduction

Clarifying the fate and whereabouts of missing persons⁶ and ensuring contact between separated family members is first and foremost the responsibility of the State authorities. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement), however, has a crucial role to play. Restoring Family Links (RFL) lies at the origin of the Movement and at the heart of the work of its components. RFL is the embodiment of the principle of humanity, and it is in this domain that the unique character of the Movement's global network is truly demonstrated. Every year, hundreds of thousands of people benefit from the Movement's RFL services.

The Family Links Network comprises the Central Tracing Agency (the CTA), the RFL units at the International Committee of the Red Cross (the ICRC) delegations and the RFL/tracing services of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies). RFL can only be successful if the Family Links Network can count on each of its members. All the components – the ICRC, the National Societies and the International Federation

6 "While there is no legal definition of a missing person under international law, the ICRC understands missing persons as individuals of whom their families have no news and/or who, on the basis of reliable information, have been reported missing as a result of an armed conflict – international or non-international – or of other situations of violence or any other situation that might require action by a neutral and independent body. (Definition based on ICRC, *Missing Persons: A Handbook for Parliamentarians*, Geneva, 2009, available at: www.icrc.org/en/publication/1117-missing-persons-handbook-parliamentarians). This includes disasters and the context of migration ... There is no element of time and no presumption of death included in the ICRC's definition of a missing person. Hence, the ICRC considers persons to be missing from the moment their families report them missing, meaning there is no 'waiting period' before considering a person missing. At the other end of the spectrum, a person is considered no longer missing when the family has received sufficient, reliable and credible information on the fate and whereabouts of their sought relative." ("The Missing", *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 99, No. 905, 2017, pp. 536–537).

of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (the IFRC) – have a shared responsibility to maintain and strengthen this Network and its services. To this end, the Movement adopted the first Restoring Family Links Strategy for the Movement 2008–2018 at the 2007 Council of Delegates.⁷ The present RFL Strategy 2020–2025⁸ builds on and follows up on the first Strategy, ensuring that RFL is fit for purpose and taking into account the important new challenges of today and the developing complexities of the future.

PART I: RESTORING FAMILY LINKS STRATEGY

1. Vision

- All people are able to maintain links with their loved ones and are protected from separation and going missing.
- All people are able to access Restoring Family Links services and interact with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Family Links Network wherever they are.
- All people without news of their family members receive answers about the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones as rapidly as possible.
- Throughout the time of search and separation, the families of missing persons and separated families are supported by the Movement to ensure their dignity and well-being and, where possible, to restore family unity.

2. The Restoring Family Links mission of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Whenever people are at risk of being separated or going missing, have been separated or are without news of their loved ones as a result of armed conflicts, disasters and other emergencies or in the context of migration, the Movement responds efficiently and effectively by mobilizing its own resources and the authorities to prevent families from being separated and people from going missing, maintain and restore family links and family unity, clarify the fate and whereabouts of missing persons and support the families left behind according to their needs.

3. The scope of Restoring Family Links services

Our RFL services cover the full spectrum from prevention of family separation and disappearances and maintaining family contact, to searching for missing persons, providing answers to their families, restoring family links and providing support to families during the search and supporting family reunification.

We provide RFL services in the context of armed conflicts, disasters, emergencies, migration and other situations requiring a humanitarian response.

4. Restoring Family Links operating principles and approach

1. We place people at the centre of our services; we develop and deliver our services together with affected people and ensure a personalized, long-term follow-up.
2. We ensure the protection of personal data and strictly abide by the Fundamental Principles and the mission of the Movement so that people are able to fully trust our services.
3. We are committed to systematically providing the full spectrum of RFL services to migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers,⁹ regardless of their legal status, all along migration routes from countries of origin through countries of transit to the countries where they settle.
4. We operate on the basis of assessed needs, giving first priority to the most vulnerable groups and individuals, such as unaccompanied and separated children, detainees, the elderly, persons with disabilities and individuals with specific protection needs, including survivors of trafficking, torture, violence or other forms of trauma.

7 The duration of the RFL Strategy 2008–2018 has been extended by the RFL Resolution of the 2017 Council of Delegates until the adoption of the new RFL Strategy by the Council of Delegates in 2019.

8 In view of the rapidly changing environment, it was deemed preferable to set the duration of the present RFL Strategy at six rather than eleven years.

9 The Movement uses a deliberately broad description of migrants to include all people who leave or flee their place of habitual residence to seek safety or better prospects, which includes, among others, labour migrants, stateless migrants and migrants deemed irregular by public authorities as well as refugees and asylum seekers, notwithstanding the fact that they constitute a special category under international law (IFRC Policy on Migration, 2009, available at: https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/03/Migration-Policy_EN.pdf).

5. We integrate RFL services into a multidisciplinary response to the needs of the families of missing persons and separated families which may include mental health and psychosocial support and legal, administrative and socioeconomic assistance. This is a long-term process and requires a shared long-term commitment by all stakeholders both politically and in terms of resources.
6. We operate as a truly global and grass-roots network and invest in strengthening our response capacity and improving regional and supra-regional cooperation and coherence within the Movement.
7. Notwithstanding the utilization and growing importance of technology and connectivity, we commit to maintaining personal contact and personalized searches as a core strength of our RFL services.
8. We invest in research and analysis and in the continuous development of modern technology across the Network. We monitor and leverage the means and tools offered by digital technology and integrate them into our RFL services.
9. We mobilize and engage in partnerships with all actors and stakeholders who implement a principled approach and can contribute to RFL services without compromising the security of the people concerned and the Movement's identity and Fundamental Principles.
10. We maintain our independence from States, parties to a conflict and other stakeholders and cannot be instrumentalized.

5. The external environment

This section attempts to take stock of new, emerging and fast-changing issues that have impacted the way we deliver RFL services globally since the previous RFL Strategy 2008–2018.

Missing persons and their families

The uncertainty associated with not knowing the fate and whereabouts of a loved one causes great suffering and can be extremely distressing. For a parent, child, sibling, wife or husband, knowing what has happened to their loved one can be even more important than water, food or shelter. The family members of people that have gone missing will not stop searching until they know their fate and whereabouts. In trying to find an answer, they exhaust their resources and might even put themselves and other family members at risk.

People go missing as a result of armed conflicts, disasters and other emergencies as well as in the context of migration, and this has damaging and long-lasting humanitarian consequences. People going missing in situations of conflict and violence is not only an immeasurable tragedy for the families and communities affected but might also affect the peace process.

The problem of the missing takes on a truly global dimension in its overlap with migration. Thousands of people go missing every year along precarious migration routes around the world. The vast majority of people who die in such circumstances remain unidentified. Improving the response to these challenges in order to provide answers to the families of missing migrants requires the coordination and harmonization of practices among a wide range of actors across multiple countries, regions and continents.

Internal displacement

Armed conflicts, violence and disasters can force people to leave their homes, leading to accelerated and collective movements. Displaced people might seek assistance and protection within their own country or might find refuge across international borders.

Of the 70.3 million people displaced globally at the end of 2018, the majority – 41.3 million people – remained displaced within their own country due to conflict and violence. In 2018, an additional 17.2 million people were newly displaced by disaster.¹⁰

In situations of internal displacement, people face specific needs and vulnerabilities as they often live in precarious conditions, unable to meet their basic needs and at heightened risk of violence, including sexual violence or other forms of abuse. They often face obstacles in rebuilding their lives because

¹⁰ See Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2019*, available at: <http://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2019/>. See also www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html.

they lack official documentation and adequate access to essential services, accommodation and employment. All these situations bring about complex assistance and protection needs, including those arising from family separation. Large numbers of people go missing and families become separated when displaced by conflict, violence and disasters.

This is often due to the unplanned nature of flight, i.e. people might flee in different directions and have trouble finding one another again, or children and older or disabled people may remain behind and/or lose contact with their families and care-givers. Screening procedures carried out by the authorities upon arrival at the displacement location may separate families because women and children, who are not usually perceived as a security threat, are let go without being adequately informed as to the fate and whereabouts of their male relatives who are taken into custody. Concerns about family unity are sometimes disregarded when newly displaced people are accommodated in camps or during large organized returns carried out by the authorities. Unaccompanied children are particularly vulnerable to forced recruitment into armed groups, exploitation, sexual and gender-based violence and trafficking.

Protracted displacement due to conflict, violence or disaster often exacerbates the suffering of the families of people that have gone missing. These families find themselves in a “double limbo” because they do not know what has happened to their relatives and because they face uncertainty about whether or when they will be able to resolve their situation of displacement.

Migration

Migration is a complex phenomenon touching all parts of the world. Migration trails stretch across entire regions and continents, often through dangerous areas and countries affected by conflict, violence and adverse conditions. Routes change very frequently, making the response to humanitarian needs even more difficult. The United Nations estimated the number of migrants at 191 million in 2005 and more than 257 million in 2017.¹¹ While many migrants arrive safely in a country of destination and integrate into new communities, others endure great hardships and face countless risks. Losing contact with family members is one of these risks. Children are especially vulnerable; some travel on their own, and others lose contact with their family during the journey.

There are many reasons why migrants might lose contact with family members, including incidents in their country of origin or as they travel through countries of transit to their destination as well as illness, injury, detention, trafficking, deportation and a lack of means, access or resources. A recent assessment has shown that migrants hardly ever anticipate or prepare for the possibility of being separated.¹² Every year, thousands of migrants die or go missing on their journey, leaving their families waiting for answers about their fate. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) recorded nearly 25,000 migrant deaths globally between January 2014 and July 2017, 14,500 in the Central Mediterranean alone. The real figure could be much higher, and for other regions few figures are available and there is less visibility. When migrants die, their bodies are not always properly cared for nor are steps taken to ensure they can be identified by the relevant authorities. In addition, in the context of migration, it is much more difficult to identify, contact and organize the families of missing persons as they may be dispersed across different countries.

Climate and the environment

Climate change is one of the most serious challenges of our and future generations. The frequency and severity of extreme weather events and climate uncertainty have increased and will continue to do so. Over the past decade alone, there have been around 3,000 weather-related disasters, not including other crises, such as conflicts or population movements, where climate may have been a threat multiplier. This amounts to one weather- or climate-related disaster almost every day.¹³

Climate shocks are experienced acutely in coastal areas and some of the world’s poorest regions, including large parts of Central and South-West Asia, the Horn of Africa and North Africa,¹⁴ and these same countries and regions are consistently affected by recurring disasters. This results in the poorest and most vulnerable communities suffering the greatest consequences through loss of life, economic

11 <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/>

12 Restoring Family Links Assessment: Migration Europe, December 2018.

13 *The Red Cross Red Crescent ambition to address the climate crisis*, IFRC, 2019.

14 European Commission, European Political Strategy Centre, *10 Trends Shaping Migration*, 2017.

setbacks and livelihood erosion. Armed conflict, unplanned urbanization, environmental degradation and social marginalization, together with factors such as disability, age, gender and social and economic inequalities, all exacerbate the impacts.

The expected future trends of more frequent and severe weather extremes and an increase in climate events will potentially contribute to growing population movements both within countries and across international borders, requiring a scaling up of humanitarian response, including the provision of RFL services.

The digital revolution

Rapid advances in digital technology and the exponential increase in mobile phone use, social media networks and access to the internet are having a transformative impact on all aspects of people's lives and on RFL services. An ever-increasing number of people can keep in contact with family members and trace a missing relative through such means as well as find information and access services. Therefore, connectivity must be part of RFL services as it is one of the first things affected people ask to be assisted with.

However, digital technology cannot replace the multifaceted activities carried out by the Family Links Network. It is when people are unable to find their relatives and restore contact with them on their own that a personalized, active and sustained search by the Family Links Network becomes essential. This work is therefore also becoming more complex and difficult.

Technology offers tremendous new opportunities to the Family Links Network for leveraging enhanced proximity to affected people, searching for missing persons and improving collaboration with other stakeholders. On the other hand, new information and communication technology may lead to new risks which need to be carefully addressed, in particular through strict personal data protection standards.

The use of such new technology will have a substantial impact on internal work processes and require a fundamental overhaul and upgrading of the capacities of the Family Links Network.

Individuals may have limited means to search for their loved ones. Authorities and stakeholders may prevent access to communication or may monitor it as a means to exert control over a population – especially in situations of armed conflict. Modern technology exposes people to an increased risk of their personal data being used to harm them. These concerns may prevent individuals from using new technologies when searching for missing loved ones. The Family Links Network's trusted RFL services, with their effective access and compliance with data protection standards, therefore remain an important and secure option for many individuals.

Data protection

Attention to personal data protection has grown substantially in the last decade, with the introduction of new data protection regulations in many countries to keep pace with the tremendous development of digital technology and the opportunities it offers. As the transfer of personal data across international borders is a core dimension of RFL services, these new legal frameworks and technologies have a fundamental impact on them. The cross-border nature of RFL activities and this evolving landscape in which the components of the Family Links Network operate require adherence to strict data protection standards as well as careful and regular assessment of the impact of new technologies on RFL.

The RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection¹⁵ has been developed to address this challenge and is the first such document applicable to all the components of the Movement. It serves as a guide, setting out minimum principles and commitments aimed at enabling the flow of personal data needed within the Movement to perform RFL activities while ensuring that personal data is collected and processed lawfully, fairly and only for humanitarian purposes. Such limitations are necessary to safeguard the fundamental rights and freedoms of affected people and maintain their trust in the Family Links Network. This is particularly true in the face of increasing data security risks and a concerning trend towards the adoption of legislation and measures at the domestic level to gain access to such data for non-humanitarian purposes.

15 RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection, 2015, available at: www.icrc.org/en/document/rfl-code-conduct.

6. The Family Links Network

Roles within the Movement and the structure of the Family Links Network

The role of the ICRC

As a neutral, independent and impartial humanitarian organization, the ICRC has the role of protecting and assisting people affected by international and non-international armed conflict and other situations of violence. Article 5.3 of the Movement's Statutes expands this role to include other types of situations and establishes a permanent basis on which the ICRC can take any humanitarian initiative compatible with its status as a specifically neutral and independent organization and intermediary.

The ICRC has the important task of reminding the authorities of their obligations under international humanitarian law and other relevant bodies of law with regard to family links and carrying out direct action in the field when and for as long as required and possible.

The part played by the ICRC in RFL, including its lead role within the Movement, is more precisely defined by the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977; the Statutes of the Movement, in particular Article 5.2(e) specifying the role of the ICRC in ensuring the operation of the Central Tracing Agency (CTA) as provided in the Geneva Conventions; resolutions of the Movement's statutory bodies, in particular those of the 25th and 26th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference) (Geneva, 1986 and 1995), which recall and commend the role of the ICRC's CTA as coordinator and technical adviser to National Societies and governments; and resolutions of the Council of Delegates, including the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures.

Based on these resolutions, in addition to its operational responsibilities, the ICRC, through the CTA, is tasked with coordinating, providing advice and strengthening the capacity of its partners within the Movement in RFL matters in all situations requiring a humanitarian response from the Movement. The CTA promotes consistency within the Family Links Network, provides methodologies and guidelines¹⁶ and builds information systems¹⁷ for the whole Family Links Network.

As coordinator, the CTA, in consultation with Movement partners, decides what action is to be taken in armed conflicts or other situations of violence, based on its mandate. In other circumstances requiring an international effort, it coordinates the international activities of other National Societies' RFL services, when needed and in close consultation with the National Societies of the affected countries, to ensure the most effective response possible to RFL needs.

As technical adviser, the CTA establishes guidelines and working procedures for RFL services in all situations. It helps organize and conduct training seminars and regional meetings for the purpose of sharing and consolidating knowledge and experience and planning and reflecting on progress in implementing the RFL Strategy.

The CTA manages the RFL Pool of Specialists¹⁸ and deploys it when required, in coordination and consultation with the National Societies, and with the IFRC in situations where the latter acts as Lead Agency.

The role of the National Societies

The functions of National Societies are set out in Article 3 of the Movement's Statutes. National Societies must carry out their humanitarian activities in conformity with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement. They must act in accordance with their own statutes and national legislation and are recognized as auxiliaries to their public authorities in the humanitarian field. In particular, their role is to assist the victims of armed conflict, as provided in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their

16 <https://flextranet.familylinks.icrc.org/en/Pages/home.aspx>

17 "Information system, an integrated set of components for collecting, storing, and processing data and for providing information, knowledge, and digital products." (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*) "Any specific information system aims to support operations, management and decision-making. An information system is the information and communication technology (ICT) that an organization uses, and also the way in which people interact with this technology in support of business processes." (Wikipedia)

18 A group of RFL specialists who can be deployed at short notice for RFL as an integral part of the Movement's response. The RFL Pool of Specialists was created in 2009 as part of the implementation measures set out in the RFL Strategy for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2008–2018 and within broader initiatives to strengthen the Movement's RFL rapid deployment capacities to provide a reliable and flexible response to RFL needs in disasters, conflicts or other emergencies. The RFL Pool of Specialists contains practitioners from National Societies and the ICRC and is led by the ICRC Central Tracing Agency, which is responsible for managing the pool and activating it at the request of the Movement component(s) in question, in accordance with clearly defined procedures.

Additional Protocols, and the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies who are in need of help (Arts 3.1 and 3.2 of the Movement's Statutes). They contribute, as far as they are able, to the development of other National Societies (Art. 3.3). The Seville Agreement stresses that a National Society is responsible for its own development. The National Society Development Framework¹⁹ of the IFRC further develops this concept.

As outlined in Resolution XVI of the 25th International Conference, National Societies have an important role as components of the international network for tracing and reuniting families. They must continue their work as long as needs exist, and this may extend well beyond the end of a conflict, disaster or other emergencies.

National Societies are also called upon to act in accordance with resolutions adopted at the statutory meetings of the Movement, resolutions of regional Red Cross and Red Crescent conferences and policy frameworks adopted by the IFRC covering migration and natural disasters.

In view of the Movement's responsibility for helping to preserve or restore family unity, National Societies need to incorporate their RFL activities into an overall plan of action. They also draw the attention of the public, humanitarian agencies and governments to the existence and significance of their RFL activities. In addition, National Societies are responsible for setting up or consolidating an effective national RFL network. Depending on the circumstances, they work with the CTA, the relevant ICRC delegations and/or the tracing/RFL services of other National Societies. They decide what action is to be taken during disasters and may call on the ICRC to deploy the RFL Pool of Specialists where the RFL response required is beyond their capacity.

The role of the IFRC

The functions of the IFRC are defined in Article 6 of the Movement's Statutes and in the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures. Amongst other functions, the Secretariat has the lead role regarding the development of National Societies and the coordination of support for their institutional development.

Although the Movement's Statutes do not specifically mention the part played by the IFRC in RFL, it strives, in coordination with the ICRC, to support National Societies in including RFL in their development plans and ensuring that disaster preparedness and response plans emphasize the role and importance of RFL.

In the event of a disaster,²⁰ the Secretariat ensures that assessments take into account the need for RFL and the degree to which the National Societies of affected countries can respond. The role of the Secretariat also includes liaising with the ICRC to support the CTA in its lead role in RFL and cooperating in the deployment of the RFL Pool of Specialists.

The RFL Leadership Platform, the RFL Strategy Implementation Group and the Application Group for the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection

Established on the basis of the RFL Resolution adopted by the 2017 Council of Delegates, the RFL Leadership Platform serves as a forum in which the leadership of the ICRC and its CTA, together with leaders from National Societies active in this field and from the IFRC, representatives of affected people and RFL experts, engage collectively to address critical issues with a view to shaping the RFL services of the future.

The Leadership Platform steers the implementation of the RFL Strategy 2020–2025, tackling obstacles encountered in this process and making any necessary adjustments. It identifies priority issues of common concern on which the group as a whole, a subgroup or individual members commit to follow-up and implement specific initiatives and work to be undertaken within the RFL Strategy Implementation Group.

Relevant external actors in the humanitarian, academic and private sectors are involved in the Platform to explore and follow up on the realization of relevant partnerships with a view to strengthening RFL

19 The National Society Development Framework, adopted by the IFRC's General Assembly in 2013 and available at: <https://www.ifrc.org/Global/Documents/Secretariat/201505/1269801-NSD%20framework%202013-EN-LR.pdf>.

20 "Natural or technological disasters and other emergency and disaster situations in peace time which require resources exceeding those of the operating National Society" (Art. 5.1 B, Seville Agreement, 1997).

operations and the capacity of the Movement to prevent family separation, help clarify the fate and whereabouts of missing persons and support separated families and the families of missing persons.

The members of the group act as ambassadors of RFL services at the global and regional level internally within the Movement and also externally to enhance the recognition, coherence and strength of the Family Links Network.

In line with the provisions of the first RFL Strategy for the Movement 2008–2018, the Implementation Group, composed of National Societies from all the regions, the ICRC and the IFRC, was set up and has met regularly since 2008 to monitor the implementation of the RFL Strategy and provide guidance and support for this process. Between 2016 and 2019, the Implementation Group led the development of the RFL Strategy 2020–2025.

In follow-up to the development of the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection in 2015, the Application Group for the Code of Conduct (Application Group) was set up in 2016 with the participation of National Societies from the different regions, the ICRC and the IFRC. Its role is to support National Societies and the ICRC in the promotion and systematic implementation of the Code of Conduct internally within the Movement and externally. The mandate of the Application Group was confirmed by the RFL Resolution adopted at the Council of Delegates in 2017.

Status of the Family Links Network and implementation of the RFL Strategy 2008–2018²¹

A considerable number of achievements have been made in the course of the last ten years, and sustained efforts are now essential to maintain and drive them forwards. They include the following:

- in-depth assessments of RFL needs and the capacity of the Family Links Network to respond to them have been carried out in more than 50 countries
- the Family Links Network has significantly increased its service provision, casework and operational cooperation amongst its members
- the establishment of regional RFL platforms in many parts of the world has provided the basis for growing exchanges on practices, cooperation and coordination and the development of RFL strategies at the regional level
- an RFL Pool of Specialists and a rapid response mechanism have been established for emergency situations and deployed 28 times since their activation in 2009 to support the local response
- advances have been made in integrating RFL into National Society strategic and development plans and emergency preparedness and response plans
- a series of important methodology guidelines have been produced for the Network²²
- a key achievement in terms of digital technology has been the development of a web-based ecosystem with several components²³ for the entire Family Links Network
- the development of the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection has been an essential step to ensure that all members of the Family Links Network are able to take the necessary measures to fulfil data protection requirements.

In some important areas of the RFL Strategy 2008–2018, progress has been limited or measures have only been implemented by parts of the Network:

21 Main sources are the progress reports to the Council of Delegates in 2009, 2011 and 2015, a global survey carried out with National Societies in 2017, the background report to the 2017 Council of Delegates and numerous needs and capacity assessments conducted between 2010 and 2018.

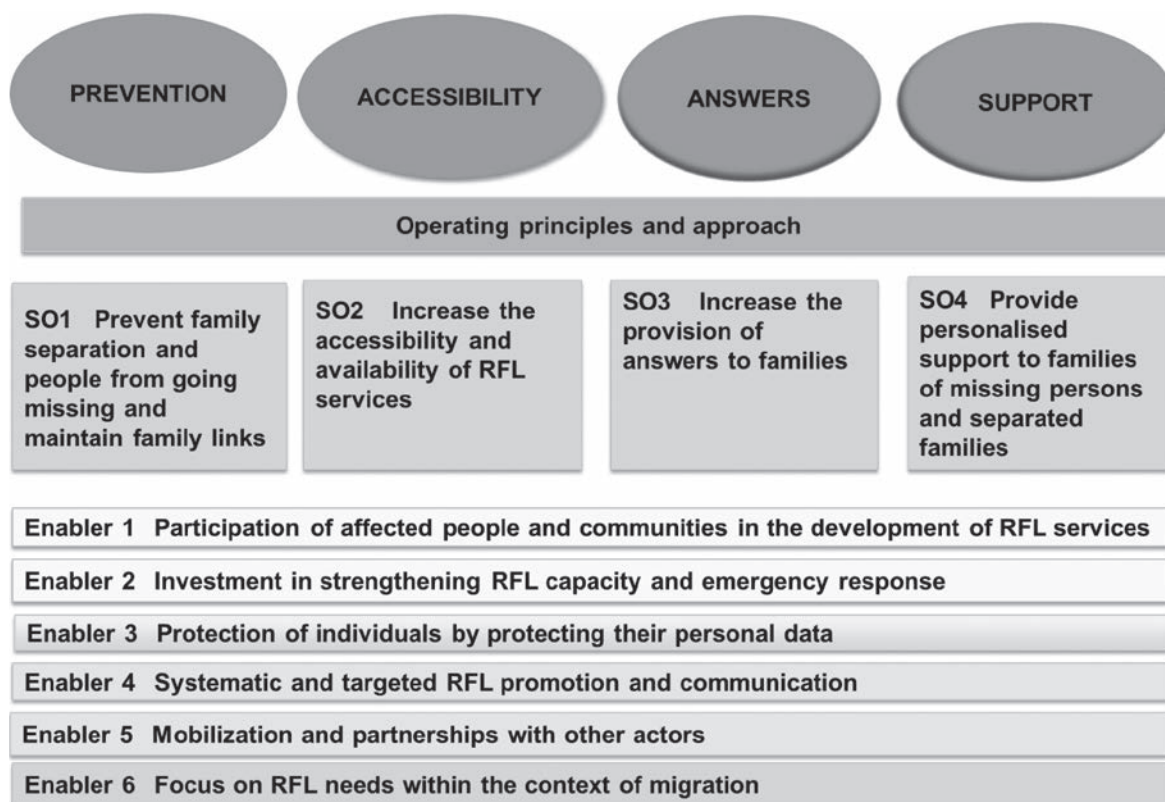
22 Guidelines have been developed regarding, in particular, RFL needs assessments, RFL in disasters, RFL in migration and RFL communication plans. All guidelines can be found on the Family Links Extranet at: <https://flextranet.familylinks.icrc.org/en/Pages/home.aspx>.

23 The online tools comprise 1) a publicly accessible website which provides information on available services as well as an online tracing database where users can register people as missing or safe in relation to specific crises and consult photos of people searching for their family members, 2) information-sharing platforms restricted to members of the Family Links Network to transfer files and develop best practice, and 3) two databases used exclusively by the National Societies and the ICRC to manage individual cases (Family Links Answers and Prot6 respectively).

- while the RFL services of some National Societies are strong, well-functioning and adequately resourced, many others remain weak for a variety of reasons, including lack of commitment by the leadership, organizational weaknesses and high turn-over of staff and volunteers
- an RFL performance management tool for the Network has not so far been developed; monitoring and evaluation is not standardized across the Family Links Network, and it is not yet able to consolidate global RFL statistics
- resource allocation for RFL remains limited in a large number of National Societies, and a majority are wholly dependent on the ICRC for funding; investment by the ICRC in some areas has also been lower than initially planned
- only about half of the countries' disaster preparedness and response plans include a role for their National Society in RFL
- numerous assessments have shown that RFL services are not sufficiently known by affected people and other stakeholders
- the growing importance of RFL in relation to migration has exposed weaknesses in the standardization and harmonization of data collection and processing, intensified the need for transregional cooperation and coordination and further underlined the need for the Family Links Network to use unified ICT tools
- there is still only a limited awareness of personal data protection requirements, which need to be integrated into all the Network's working methods, based on the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection, in order to guarantee that such requirements are adequately fulfilled; this will also require additional support in terms of expertise and resources for the Family Links Network.

Sustained efforts are needed to maintain the achievements made, to extend their reach and to continue implementing those measures identified in the RFL Strategy 2008–2018 that remain relevant. The RFL Strategy 2020–2025 therefore combines dimensions of continuity with important new areas that have become relevant and require urgent attention in today's environment.

7. Summary chart for the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025



8. Strategic objectives, enablers and expected results

Strategic objectives	Expected results
<p>Strategic Objective 1</p> <p>Prevent family separation and people from going missing and maintain family links</p>	<p>Preventing families from being separated and people from going missing is a cornerstone of RFL services and is systematically addressed through efforts aimed at mobilizing and persuading the authorities and direct action by the Family Links Network.</p> <p>Affected people receive locally adapted information, means and tools from the Family Links Network to maintain or restore contact with their loved ones when they are unable to do so by their own means.</p> <p>Affected people can securely upload, store, access and manage personal information and preventively register with the Family Links Network.</p> <p>When communication systems have broken down or risk putting people in danger (particularly in situations of conflict and violence), people are offered connectivity by the components of the Movement, in cooperation with other stakeholders, to maintain and restore contact with their loved ones, obtain information and communicate with the Family Links Network.</p>
<p>Strategic Objective 2</p> <p>Increase the accessibility and availability of RFL services</p>	<p>Affected people are aware of RFL services, trust them, know how to access them and, wherever possible, are able to make personal contact with staff and volunteers of the Family Links Network.</p> <p>Affected people are able to interact with the Movement in real time and receive services safely and remotely wherever they are.</p> <p>To the full extent possible, all affected people are given the possibility to receive RFL services from the Family Links Network, based on the information they are able to provide concerning the relatives they are searching for.</p>
<p>Strategic Objective 3</p> <p>Increase the provision of answers to families</p>	<p>People receive answers about the fate and whereabouts of missing family members as rapidly as possible.</p> <p>The authorities are mobilized to take all feasible measures to account for persons reported missing and to provide families with an individualized response on the fate and whereabouts of their missing relatives, particularly if they were deprived of their liberty. The authorities benefit from the support of the components of the Movement, including forensic expertise.</p> <p>As a matter of priority, the Family Links Network collects information on missing persons as early as possible and explores all avenues to find answers through individual, long-term follow-up.</p> <p>The Family Links Network maintains and develops its global, grass-roots level, personalized, exhaustive and sustained searches for missing persons as a unique feature of its RFL services.</p> <p>The Family Links Network uses and further develops a unified, global, interconnected, coherent and secure system to collect, process and manage personal data. It develops technology and methods to efficiently search for potential matches in the data of the Family Links Network and the data of other organizations and relevant stakeholders in full respect for the protection of personal data. It also ensures that information is provided to families in an individualized and secure manner.</p>
<p>Strategic Objective 4</p> <p>Provide personalized support to the families of missing persons and separated families</p>	<p>The emotional suffering of the families of missing persons and people separated from their families is relieved through the personal contact and mental health and psychosocial support provided by the components of the Movement.</p> <p>Families are supported in their efforts to be reunited with their relatives.</p> <p>The multifaceted needs of the families of missing persons and separated families are addressed without discrimination and through a holistic, multisectoral approach in collaboration with the authorities and other stakeholders.</p>

Enablers	Expected results
<p>Enabler 1</p> <p>Participation of affected people and communities in the development of RFL services</p>	<p>RFL needs and capacities are assessed, and services are developed and delivered flexibly together with affected people and communities, taking into account the local context and the rapidly changing environment. In keeping with its commitment to transparency and accountability, the Family Links Network is in regular dialogue with affected people about their needs.</p> <p>People receive feedback on action taken, and the Family Links Network demonstrates its commitment to being influenced by those who have lived experience of family separation or a missing family member and involve them in decisions. The resilience of affected people is strengthened, and they are empowered to take action by themselves.</p>
<p>Enabler 2</p> <p>Investment in strengthening RFL capacity and emergency response</p>	<p>RFL is recognized as a core service of the Movement and is fully integrated into the operational response and adequately resourced to meet needs.</p> <p>The capacities of the Family Links Network and the sustainability of RFL services are strengthened to make it a truly global and efficient network that is able to respond rapidly to help prevent family separation and people from going missing, conduct searches, provide answers to families, address needs arising from family separation and support family reunification.</p> <p>Preparedness and surge mechanisms allow for a rapid and effective response in emergencies.</p>
<p>Enabler 3</p> <p>Protection of individuals by protecting their personal data</p>	<p>The safety, dignity and rights of affected people are protected through the way the Family Links Network protects their personal data, thus preserving and reinforcing the trust of people in the Movement.</p> <p>Personal data is collected, stored and otherwise processed by the Family Links Network in accordance with its RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection and applicable data protection laws.</p> <p>The risks and impact of the processing of personal data by the Family Links Network are systematically assessed.</p> <p>The principle of “do no harm” is upheld in all actions undertaken in relation to the personal data of affected people.</p>
<p>Enabler 4</p> <p>Systematic and targeted RFL promotion and communication</p>	<p>Affected people are aware of, understand and trust the RFL services of the Family Links Network.</p> <p>Through systematic, coherent, targeted and contextually adapted promotion and communication, the relevant stakeholders with whom the components of the Movement aim to cooperate and from whom they need political and operational support and financial and material resources understand the importance and value of RFL. They understand and respect the required independence and exclusively humanitarian purpose of RFL, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles.</p>
<p>Enabler 5</p> <p>Mobilization and partnerships with other actors</p>	<p>Coordination, cooperation and partnerships with relevant stakeholders, such as State authorities, humanitarian organizations and private companies, are developed and strengthened at the global, regional, national and local level. This engagement is carried out in accordance with the respective mandates and working modalities of the components of the Movement, in full compliance with the Fundamental Principles and personal data protection standards, and increases access to people and data, improves the response to the needs of affected people and strengthens the capacity of the Family Links Network.</p>
<p>Enabler 6</p> <p>Focus on RFL needs within the context of migration</p>	<p>Migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, and their families are able, regardless of their legal status, to safely access the full range of RFL services along migration routes from countries of origin through countries of transit to the countries where they settle.</p> <p>The fate and whereabouts of missing migrants and the identity of deceased migrants is clarified by the authorities concerned through mobilization and active support by the Family Links Network.</p> <p>The Family Links Network realizes its potential through strong and active transregional cooperation among its components to ensure a coherent approach with harmonized systems, criteria and working modalities.</p>



PART II: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Strategic Objective 1: Prevent family separations and people from going missing and maintain family links

<p>Expected results</p>	<p>Preventing families from being separated and people from going missing is a cornerstone of RFL services and is systematically addressed through efforts aimed at mobilizing and persuading the authorities and direct action by the Family Links Network.</p> <p>Affected people receive locally adapted information, means and tools from the Family Links Network to maintain or restore contact with their loved ones when they are unable to do so by their own means.</p> <p>Affected people can securely upload, store, access and manage personal information and preventively register with the Family Links Network.</p> <p>When communication systems have broken down or risk putting people in danger (particularly in situations of conflict and violence), people are offered connectivity by the components of the Movement, in cooperation with other stakeholders, to maintain and restore contact with their loved ones, obtain information and communicate with the Family Links Network.</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>The National Societies and the ICRC will:</p>
<p>1.1</p>	<p>Systematically analyse the causes of separation and of people going missing, engage with the authorities and other stakeholders to raise their awareness of the risk and humanitarian consequences of family separations and people going missing, and advise them on implementing legislation and strategies, including contingency plans, disaster response plans, early warning systems and other means, to prevent families from being separated and people from going missing.</p>
<p>1.2</p>	<p>Develop and share updated information and messages with people to prevent family separation and help people maintain family links, and develop contextualized operational guidance, practices and tools and effective means to reach and engage with affected communities and people.</p>
<p>1.3</p>	<p>Register and follow up on specific vulnerable groups and individuals, such as unaccompanied and separated children, detainees, the elderly, persons with disabilities, injured and sick persons and vulnerable migrants, where appropriate.</p>
<p>1.4</p>	<p>Offer appropriate means to maintain family links (e.g. traditional means such as Red Cross messages and safe and well messages) in situations where there is no connectivity or where the use of communication technology poses a risk and for categories of people whose RFL needs cannot be covered using such technology.</p>
	<p>The ICRC will:</p>
<p>1.5</p>	<p>Develop and offer, in cooperation with National Societies, online services to enable affected people to self-register and securely store their data with the Family Links Network as a safe depository and allow them to control and manage their personal data themselves.</p>
	<p>The National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC will:</p>
<p>1.6</p>	<p>Provide, to the extent possible, energy, connectivity and communication tools (charging stations, internet and Wi-Fi hot spots, airtime, mobile devices and free calls) as an integrated form of aid to affected people, while ensuring full compliance with the “do no harm” principle.</p>
<p>1.7</p>	<p>Explore public and private sector partnership agreements to provide a large-scale response to enable affected people to access the internet and other communication networks, and strengthen the Movement’s preparedness and response, particularly in emergencies, by ensuring a better and more timely use of available resources and better coordination with key stakeholders.</p>

Strategic Objective 2: Increase the accessibility and availability of RFL services

Expected results	<p>Affected people are aware of RFL services, trust them, know how to access them and, wherever possible, are able to make personal contact with staff and volunteers of the Family Links Network. Affected people are able to interact with the Movement in real time and receive services safely and remotely wherever they are.</p> <p>To the full extent possible, all affected people are given the possibility to receive RFL services from the Family Links Network, based on the information they are able to provide concerning the relatives they are searching for.</p>
Implementation	The National Societies and the ICRC will:
2.1	Strengthen branch networks and outreach in areas of high needs so that the Family Links Network can interact personally with affected people, raise their understanding of RFL and offer RFL services.
2.2	Assess the feasibility of appropriate online services, contact centres and hotline solutions, integrate them into their respective contexts and evaluate and adapt business processes and human resources set-ups accordingly.
2.3	Ensure their acceptance criteria for requests to search for missing persons and help clarify their fate and whereabouts are aligned with the definition of missing persons ²⁴ and, in this way, allow families approaching the Family Links Network to receive all feasible RFL services.
2.4	Appropriately manage the expectations of enquirers by clearly explaining priorities in active casework and follow-up of tracing requests, the limitations, the timeframe and arrangements for re-contacting the enquirers and explore measures to mitigate loss of contact with enquirers.
	The ICRC will:
2.5	Develop, together with National Societies, affected people and technology partners, a digital interface ("single-entry portal") and online services solution, through which people can provide and receive information and request, access and choose services digitally.
	The National Societies , the ICRC and the IFRC will:
2.6	Regularly assess how and through which channels affected people search for information and communicate in order to identify the best ways to engage with them and enhance awareness of RFL services.

Strategic Objective 3: Increase the provision of answers to families

Expected results	<p>People receive answers about the fate and whereabouts of missing family members as rapidly as possible.</p> <p>The authorities are mobilized to take all feasible measures to account for persons reported missing and to provide families with an individualized response on the fate and whereabouts of their missing relatives, particularly if they were deprived of their liberty. The authorities benefit from the support of the components of the Movement, including forensic expertise.</p> <p>As a matter of priority, the Family Links Network collects information on missing persons as early as possible and explores all avenues to find answers through individual, long-term follow-up.</p> <p>The Family Links Network maintains and develops its global, grass-roots level, personalized, exhaustive and sustained searches for missing persons as a unique feature of its RFL services.</p> <p>The Family Links Network uses and further develops a unified, global, interconnected, coherent and secure system to collect, process and manage personal data. It develops technology and methods to efficiently search for potential matches in the data of the Family Links Network and the data of other organizations and relevant stakeholders in full respect for the protection of personal data. It also ensures that information is provided to families in an individualized and secure manner.</p>
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24 See footnote 1.

Implementation	The National Societies and the ICRC will:
3.1	Remind the authorities of their obligation to take all feasible measures to account for persons reported missing, assess the authorities' capacities and willingness to provide answers to the families of missing persons and offer relevant support.
3.2	Whenever needed, take action as early as possible when people go missing by collecting all the relevant information available and reinforce personal, proactive, sustained and long-term searches and searches using digital technology.
3.3	Ensure the quality, standardization and coherence of data collected on missing persons across the Family Links Network and consistent individualized follow-up by each component.
3.4	Review work processes to ensure that quality casework is carried out in a timely manner, assess business processes ²⁵ and make any modifications required as a result of the integration of new technologies.
3.5	Mobilize and engage with all relevant authorities and institutions (e.g. health care, morgues, immigration and detention) and other stakeholders to clarify the fate and whereabouts of missing persons and provide answers to their families.
3.6	Ensure that National Society staff and volunteers who might be called upon to collect human remains possess the required know-how, equipment and psychological support.
	The ICRC will:
3.7	Provide guidance to the Family Links Network to review work processes, with a view to improving the quality of casework and adapting work processes in line with new technologies, and encourage National Societies to adopt the new tools developed.
3.8	Ensure the relevance of existing RFL information and communication technology (ICT) services and tools within the ecosystem already developed for the Family Links Network, including roll-out, interoperability and integrated search mechanisms, using a service management approach to keep them in line with business needs and processes.
3.9	Explore, leverage and integrate digital technologies, such as facial, visual and pattern recognition technology, translation and transliteration technology, big data and satellite imagery, and research for tracing purposes with a view to identifying potential matches in databases.
3.10	Leverage the use of digital technologies which enable automatic, safe and secure cross-checking and matching of personal data between the databases of the Family Links Network, other humanitarian organizations, the authorities and other stakeholders.
3.11	Establish agreements with relevant stakeholders to enable secure cross-checking with their databases for solely humanitarian purposes and cooperate with the stakeholders concerned to ensure harmonization and quality of collected data to optimize digital searches.
3.12	Collect and centralize information about protected persons during armed conflict and transmit it, through the CTA, to National Information Bureaus or similar mechanisms, with a view to preventing such persons from becoming unaccounted for and helping ensure that families are informed of their fate and whereabouts.
3.13	Provide support, including technical advice, to authorities and, when relevant, National Societies, for the establishment of National Information Bureaus or similar mechanisms.
3.14	Offer its expertise and support, where needed, to reinforce the capacity of relevant authorities and structures, such as medico-legal systems and forensic services.

²⁵ Internal processes to carry out RFL work.

Strategic Objective 4: Provide personalized support to the families of missing persons and separated families

Expected results	<p>The emotional suffering of the families of missing persons and people separated from their families is relieved through the personal contact and mental health and psychosocial support provided by the components of the Movement.</p> <p>Families are supported in their efforts to be reunited with their relatives.</p> <p>The multifaceted needs of the families of missing persons and separated families are addressed without discrimination and through a holistic, multisectoral approach in collaboration with the authorities and other stakeholders.</p>
Implementation	The National Societies will:
4.1	Broaden their operational involvement to include multidisciplinary services for the families of missing persons, such as protection and legal, administrative and economic support, in collaboration with other actors, according to existing needs, contextual constraints and their strengths and capacities.
	The National Societies and the ICRC will:
4.2	Maintain contact with the families of missing persons for the entire duration of the search and holistically assess their particular needs with them, including broader protection and assistance needs.
4.3	Provide emotional and mental health and psychosocial support to separated families and the families of missing persons as well as to Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers.
4.4	Ensure a contextualized division of roles between the ICRC and National Societies in addressing the needs of the families of missing persons and engaging with the authorities, based on their respective capacities.
4.5	Ensure a transfer of expertise and know-how and provide guidance to National Societies that are ready and have the capacity to engage in programmes to address the multifaceted needs of the families of missing persons.
4.6	Support the reunification of separated families, in line with the applicable legal framework and taking into account the specificities of each context and each individual case.
4.7	<p>Conduct activities to support family reunification, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provision of information, referral to qualified institutions and organizations, and legal, administrative and practical support ■ help with obtaining documents, including ICRC Emergency Travel Documents ■ facilitation of physical reunification ■ follow-up of and support to families after reunification in coordination with the relevant authorities, institutions and organizations.
	The National Societies , the ICRC and the IFRC will:
4.8	Assess the capacities of the authorities and other stakeholders and mobilize, coordinate and engage with them to address the multifaceted needs of families.
4.9	Recognize and promote the right to family life and the principle of family unity.

Enabler 1: Participation of affected people and communities in the development of RFL services

Expected results	<p>RFL needs and capacities are assessed, and services are developed and delivered flexibly together with affected people and communities, taking into account the local context and the rapidly changing environment. In keeping with its commitment to transparency and accountability, the Family Links Network is in regular dialogue with affected people about their needs.</p> <p>People receive feedback on action taken, and the Family Links Network demonstrates its commitment to being influenced by those who have lived experience of family separation or a missing family member and involve them in decisions. The resilience of affected people is strengthened, and they are empowered to take action by themselves.</p>
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Implementation	The National Societies , the ICRC and the IFRC will:
1.1	Conduct context analysis and assessments involving affected people and communities to understand the diversity of the RFL needs, priorities, preferences, vulnerabilities, capacities and coping mechanisms of affected people and communities.
1.2	Empower affected people and communities, including but not limited to volunteers, and use their knowledge, skills and capacities by enhancing their participation in all phases of the RFL programme cycle (assessment, planning and design, implementation and service delivery, monitoring, evaluation and learning).
1.3	Reach out and listen to affected people and communities, provide them with information on channels for submitting feedback, establish mechanisms to collect and respond to feedback and report back on how their feedback has been addressed.
1.4	Empower affected people at the strategic level through meaningful involvement in boards and other decision-making bodies and active participation in advocacy, research and strategy development.
1.5	Strengthen knowledge, skills and competencies in community engagement and the accountability of staff and volunteers.
1.6	Use, adapt and develop community engagement tools, integrate community engagement and accountability into RFL strategies, policies and procedures and share knowledge and experiences with other components of the Movement.

Enabler 2: Investment in strengthening RFL capacity and emergency response

Expected results	<p>RFL is recognized as a core service of the Movement and is fully integrated into the operational response and adequately resourced to meet needs.</p> <p>The capacities of the Family Links Network and the sustainability of RFL services are strengthened to make it a truly global and efficient network that is able to respond rapidly to help prevent family separation and people from going missing, conduct searches, provide answers to families, address needs arising from family separation and support family reunification.</p> <p>Preparedness and surge mechanisms allow for a rapid and effective response in emergencies.</p>
Implementation	The National Societies will:
2.1	<p>Integrate RFL into their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ organizational structure at headquarters and at branch level ■ strategic and development plans and statutes ■ regular core budget allocations ■ performance management, financial management and reporting systems.
2.2	Integrate RFL into their contingency and operational plans and into multidisciplinary activities.
2.3	Optimize the recruitment and retention of RFL volunteers and staff through their inclusion in National Society human resources management systems.
2.4	Ensure that staff and volunteers have the necessary know-how, guidance and guidelines to respond to protection needs identified during the delivery of RFL services by referring such issues to a relevant protection actor or addressing them with the responsible authorities when possible.
2.5	Collect key RFL statistics, based on commonly agreed definitions, and transmit them to the CTA twice yearly.
2.6	Adopt processes, guidelines and tools for monitoring, reporting and evaluation, based on guidance from the CTA.
	The ICRC will:
2.7	Develop, in consultation with National Societies, training manuals and guidelines, as required, including on data protection, the use of ICT tools and business processes, data literacy and data management.

2.8	Support, enhance and reinforce regular data collection and compilation of global RFL statistics, on behalf of the Family Links Network and based on agreed definitions, and analysis in relation to RFL Strategy implementation measures.
2.9	Develop, in cooperation with National Societies and the IFRC, a generic RFL performance management framework and tools, including indicators, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment.
2.10	Manage the RFL Pool of Specialists, reinforce it at the global and regional level and ensure that it has the necessary means, resources and training.
	The National Societies and the ICRC will:
2.11	Assess existing and potential RFL needs and their capacity to address them, making use of existing handbooks and guidelines and taking into account the capacity of other actors and coordination mechanisms, and integrate the results of the assessments into operational and development plans, including follow-up and implementation monitoring.
2.12	Conduct training of trainers and the training and coaching of staff and volunteers to ensure they possess the required knowledge of RFL methodology and processes (including data protection), the technical skills to use tools (including modern digital technology) and the interpersonal skills (such as empathy) necessary to build a relationship of trust with affected people and provide them with mental health and psychosocial support.
2.13	Mobilize and deploy the RFL Pool of Specialists, whenever needed and as early as possible, as part of domestic, regional and international emergency response, doing so in coordination with the IFRC when deployment occurs in disaster situations.
2.14	Develop regional plans of action to implement the RFL Strategy, based on contextualized needs and priorities, and identify appropriate indicators.
	The National Societies , the ICRC and the IFRC will:
2.15	Revise their approach to capacity building and invest in targeted support to strengthen RFL services and related dimensions of National Society development, based on assessed needs and priorities and mutual commitments by the Movement partners.
2.16	Establish a pool of experts for supporting capacity building in RFL and strengthen bilateral and multilateral partnerships between National Societies and peer-to-peer learning to strengthen their capacities.
2.17	Conduct lessons learnt exercises following emergency operations, in cooperation with other stakeholders, integrate the findings into revised contingency plans and needs and capacity assessments and share them within the Movement.
2.18	Integrate RFL into multi-stakeholder scenario-building exercises as part of the contingency planning process at national level and identify capacity gaps and preparedness actions to improve future responses.
	The IFRC will:
2.19	Promote the RFL Strategy internally, support its implementation at the national, regional and international level and put RFL on the agenda of relevant conferences and other fora, with a particular focus on emergency preparedness plans, strategic integration, National Society development, disaster management and training guidelines.
2.20	Integrate RFL into contingency planning mechanisms, including the training of rapid response personnel, standard emergency procedures and multidisciplinary coordination, assessment and response mechanisms and operations.
2.21	Integrate the RFL response into its funding mechanisms, such as the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund and emergency appeals.



Enabler 3: Protection of individuals by protecting their personal data

Expected results	<p>The safety, dignity and rights of affected people are protected through the way the Family Links Network protects their personal data, thus preserving and reinforcing the trust of people in the Movement.</p> <p>Personal data is collected, stored and otherwise processed by the Family Links Network in accordance with its RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection and applicable data protection laws.</p> <p>The risks and impact of the processing of personal data by the Family Links Network are systematically assessed.</p> <p>The principle of “do no harm” is upheld in all actions undertaken in relation to the personal data of affected people.</p>
Implementation	The National Societies and the ICRC will:
3.1	Integrate the provisions of the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection into their relevant policies, procedures, working methods and training.
3.2	Conduct Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) for all means, tools and partnerships considered for RFL service delivery and communication, analyse possible risks of harm and/or encroachments on the rights and freedoms of data subjects and the impact on the perception of the Movement and take into account additional considerations, where appropriate, in the context of conflict and violence and when processing the personal data of vulnerable groups.
3.3	Systematically assess and respect the principle of “do no harm” in any programme and action in relation to RFL and missing persons and their families, particularly when considering the sharing and processing of personal data.
3.4	Monitor and evaluate compliance with data protection standards by developing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and integrating them into existing instruments.
3.5	Undertake efforts to influence the development of domestic legal and regulatory frameworks to: (1) recognize and respect the exclusively humanitarian purpose of personal data processing by the Movement and the public interest and vital interest bases for such processing; (2) restrict access to personal data collected for RFL activities by the authorities or for purposes that are not exclusively humanitarian; and (3) allow the National Societies to obtain and process personal data, including cross-border transfers, and to store such data wherever it deems necessary in order to safeguard the rights of data subjects.
	The National Societies , the ICRC and the IFRC will:
3.6	Systematically promote the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection.
3.7	Provide support in terms of expertise and resources to National Societies requiring such assistance to enable them to meet data protection requirements.

Enabler 4: Systematic and targeted RFL promotion and communication

Expected results	<p>Affected people are aware of, understand and trust the RFL services of the Family Links Network.</p> <p>Through systematic, coherent, targeted and contextually adapted promotion and communication, the relevant stakeholders with whom the components of the Movement aim to cooperate and from whom they need political and operational support and financial and material resources understand the importance and value of RFL. They understand and respect the required independence and exclusively humanitarian purpose of RFL, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles.</p>
Implementation	The National Societies will:
4.1	Position RFL as a reference service in their domestic context and integrate RFL into their national communication and resource mobilization plans.

4.2	Develop and implement specific communication strategies for emergency and regular situations with clear objectives, key messages and means and tools adapted to the target audiences.
4.3	Provide regular and adapted information about RFL activities and results to affected people, donors, the authorities and other stakeholders.
	The ICRC will:
4.4	Compile and share key global RFL statistics of the Family Links Network with all components of the Movement.
	The National Societies and the ICRC will:
4.5	Produce communication and promotional tools with coherent key messages and guidelines that can be easily adapted to and implemented in different contexts.
4.6	Make use of social media and appropriate communication means and tools to promote RFL among affected people, other stakeholders and the general public.
4.7	Explore, develop and implement communication campaigns at the regional and global level.
	The National Societies , the ICRC and the IFRC will:
4.8	Produce communication tools and share them across the Movement, making use of platforms such as the FLExtranet, FedNet and the GO Platform.
4.9	Reinforce and facilitate interaction between communication, fundraising/resource mobilization and RFL departments and include RFL in related Movement and external fora.
4.10	Systematically promote the RFL Strategy at the global, regional and national level vis-à-vis the authorities and other relevant stakeholders and underline the independence of RFL services to prevent them from being instrumentalized.

Enabler 5: Mobilization and partnerships with other actors

Expected results	Coordination, cooperation and partnerships with relevant stakeholders, such as State authorities, humanitarian organizations and private companies, are developed and strengthened at the global, regional, national and local level. This engagement is carried out in accordance with the respective mandates and working modalities of the components of the Movement, in full compliance with the Fundamental Principles and personal data protection standards, and increases access to people and data, improves the response to the needs of affected people and strengthens the capacity of the Family Links Network.
Implementation	The National Societies and the ICRC will:
5.1	Engage with the authorities, civil society actors and other stakeholders able to help prevent separation and clarify the fate of missing persons, and advocate for the rights of affected people in order to ensure that their needs are met.
5.2	Mobilize the authorities to facilitate and contribute to the fulfilment of the role and mandate of National Societies and the ICRC in the field of RFL.
5.3	Systematically identify stakeholders and update and share stakeholder mapping at the regional and global level within the Network.
5.4	Devise appropriate operational agreements and partnerships with national and local authorities and organizations focused on shared standards, cooperation, complementarity and referrals, making use of global and regional framework agreements where they exist, and share practice within the Family Links Network.
5.5	Ensure that the authorities understand the personal data protection principles applied by the Family Links Network, so that it is permitted to operate freely, and conclude non-disclosure agreements for affected people's data.

	The ICRC will:
5.6	Devise, with the support of National Societies and the IFRC, appropriate common operational frameworks, framework agreements and partnerships with global and regional organizations focusing on shared standards, cooperation, complementarity and referrals, which can be adapted and implemented contextually. ²⁶
5.7	Work with social media providers to explore mechanisms for referral and/or comparison of personal data from social media to facilitate follow-up by the Family Links Network when people are unable to contact their family members.
5.8	Invite relevant external actors to be part of the RFL Leadership Platform with a view to exploring and developing partnerships in relevant domains, e.g. research, technology and resource mobilization operations.
	The National Societies , the ICRC and the IFRC will:
5.9	Explore private sector partnership schemes to develop and strengthen RFL service capacity, RFL technology, research and resource mobilization. ²⁷
5.10	Develop guidance and establish global partnerships with telecommunication companies and operators and other relevant actors (e.g. Télécoms Sans Frontières, ITU and GSMA) to help frame locally adapted agreements, and share experiences involving local agreements with the other components of the Movement.
5.11	Develop cooperation with the media (radio, television, newspapers, etc.) for RFL communication purposes.

Enabler 6: Focus on RFL needs within the context of migration

Expected results	<p>Migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, and their families are able, regardless of their legal status, to safely access the full range of RFL services along migration routes from countries of origin through countries of transit to the countries where they settle.</p> <p>The fate and whereabouts of missing migrants and the identity of deceased migrants is clarified by the authorities concerned through mobilization and active support by the Family Links Network.</p> <p>The Family Links Network realizes its potential through strong and active transregional cooperation among its components to ensure a coherent approach with harmonized systems, criteria and working modalities.</p>
Implementation	The National Societies and the ICRC will:
6.1	Strengthen transregional Family Links Network cooperation, communication, peer-to-peer learning, coordination and the exchange of relevant information and personal data along the migration routes from countries of origin through countries of transit to countries where migrants settle.
6.2	Harmonize their operational approaches, operational procedures, standards and acceptance criteria along migration routes.
6.3	Advocate for migrants in detention or detention-like settings to be able to maintain or restore family links, assess the need for family links services in such settings and, wherever relevant and feasible, provide such services. ²⁸

26 Such operational agreements and partnerships should take into account relevant existing Movement policies, such as Resolution 10 of the 2003 Council of Delegates on Movement action in favour of refugees and internally displaced persons and minimum elements to be included in operational agreements between Movement components and their external operational partners, and Resolution 2 of the 2011 Council of Delegates on Movement components' relations with external humanitarian actors.

27 See Resolution 10 of the 2005 Council of Delegates on Movement Policy for Corporate Sector Partnerships.

28 For further information on this subject, please see "Guidelines for National Societies Working in Immigration Detention" (2018), available at the ICRC.

6.4	Reinforce their efforts to clarify the fate and whereabouts of missing migrants through the collection and analysis of data from the families of missing migrants, survivors, witnesses, other organizations, the media, the authorities and other relevant sources.
6.5	Collaborate with forensic authorities and other institutions by exchanging relevant data with them, supporting the centralization of data and facilitating contact with families, under the necessary conditions and safeguards and for the exclusively humanitarian purpose of clarifying the fate and whereabouts of missing migrants and helping identify the human remains of deceased migrants.
6.6	Develop and implement strategies to locate the families of deceased persons who have been identified.
	The National Societies , the ICRC and the IFRC will:
6.7	Systematically include migrants in needs assessments, taking into account their communication and information needs and the communication means and tools available to them and paying special attention to vulnerable individuals and groups.
6.8	Strengthen cooperation and coordination on migration-related activities along migration routes and globally on migration-related issues.
6.9	Monitor the evolution of migratory flows, collecting, analysing and exchanging information rapidly to ensure agility and flexibility in their operational response.
6.10	Include RFL in relevant strategic and policy documents, including migration strategies.
	The IFRC will:
6.11	Include RFL, to the extent possible, in its migration-related policies, advocacy, communication, training and other activities and liaise with the ICRC in this regard.
6.12	Include, with the support of the ICRC, the topic of RFL in the agenda of its Global Migration Task Force and other related platforms and fora and implement actions resulting from them.
6.13	Raise the profile of RFL in its contributions to the work of external national, regional and global migration-related fora, events and conferences.

PART III: RFL STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND RESOURCING

The responsibility for implementing this Strategy is shared by all components of the Movement. The National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC are individually responsible for incorporating the Strategy's content into their own strategies, plans and training programmes at the national, regional and international level and for enhancing awareness about it internally within the Movement, including at the leadership level, and externally among relevant stakeholders.

It is understood that National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC are not in a position to carry out every single implementation measure set out in this Strategy in every country. Rather, they will identify priority measures of particular relevance for a specific context and region, based on assessments of needs, their own capacities and those of other actors. While global coherence and harmonization is indispensable, contextual adaptation is necessary in relevant aspects.

The RFL Strategy will serve as the framework for developing contextual action plans. Regional RFL platforms will serve as suitable fora for establishing regional strategies and action plans based on this Strategy, driving forward its implementation and identifying appropriate indicators to monitor its implementation.

The RFL Strategy Implementation Group, the Application Group and the RFL Leadership Platform will, collectively and through their regional members, continue to support and monitor the implementation of this Strategy and report back to the Council of Delegates.

Acknowledging that adequate resourcing has been one of the challenges in implementing the RFL Strategy 2008–2018, the ICRC, National Societies and the IFRC will continue to explore and seek to establish innovative funding tools and mechanisms to secure the financial resources needed to support the successful implementation of the RFL Strategy 2020–2025.

1.1.8 RESOLUTION 7

STRENGTHENING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MOVEMENT POLICY ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT: TEN YEARS ON

The Council of Delegates,

expressing its deep concern about the situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other persons and communities affected by internal displacement, including as a result of armed conflict, violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, disasters, the effects of climate change and other emergencies, and *acknowledging* the inadequacy of current responses to this issue,

taking into consideration the complex and interrelated nature of the various causes of displacement and its effects,

stressing the value of the complementary mandates and expertise of the different components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) in helping address displacement-related challenges and of the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field,

emphasizing the importance of a holistic response that considers the specific needs and vulnerabilities of IDPs, the impact of their displacement on host communities and the needs of those who are at risk of displacement and those who stay behind,

recognizing that a people-centric approach, fostered by the Movement's access and proximity to communities, is key to achieving greater humanitarian impact,

recalling that IDPs are not a faceless group and that their specific needs, vulnerabilities, capacities and coping mechanisms may differ according to their gender, age, physical and mental health and personal circumstances,

recognizing that internal displacement can sometimes be a first step towards cross-border movements into neighbouring countries and beyond and that such situations require comprehensive and coordinated responses to maximize protection and assistance for all those in need,

stressing the importance of respect for international humanitarian law, which applies in situations of armed conflict, and for international human rights law, which applies at all times, in preventing displacement, and *recalling* that these bodies of law, within their respective spheres of application, protect all persons affected by displacement, such as IDPs and resident and host communities,

underlining the relevance of international disaster law and environmental law in mitigating displacement induced by disasters or the effects of climate change,

recognizing the protection that national laws and policies can provide to people at risk of displacement and during displacement, and *emphasizing* the importance of the efforts of all the components of the Movement, in accordance with their mandates, to support States in incorporating international humanitarian law, human rights law, international disaster and environmental law and relevant regional legal frameworks into their national laws, regulations and policies applicable to IDPs,

emphasizing the need to take effective measures to address the root causes of internal displacement, and prevent actions that may aggravate the humanitarian situation of IDPs,

welcoming the efforts of the United Nations in developing the GP20 Plan of Action for Advancing Prevention, Protection and Solutions for Internally Displaced People 2018–2020 to mark the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, and the continuing efforts of the African Union in promoting the ratification and implementation, by its member States, of the Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), which celebrates its tenth anniversary this year,

recalling and reaffirming the commitment of the components of the Movement to improving protection of and assistance to IDPs, as expressed in Resolution 5 on the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement, adopted by the Council of Delegates ten years ago, and based on previous resolutions adopted by the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Resolution XXI, Manila 1981; Resolution XVII, Geneva 1986; Resolution 4A, Geneva 1995; and Goal 2.3 of the Plan of Action of the 27th International Conference, Geneva 1999) and by the Council of Delegates (Resolution 9, Budapest 1991; Resolution 7, Birmingham 1993; Resolution 4, Geneva 2001; and Resolution 10, Geneva 2003), and *recognizing* the linkages with the 2009 Policy on Migration of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC),

recognizing the continuing relevance of the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement in providing clarity, focus and guidance to the Movement's response and *reiterating* the need to ensure it is better known and implemented by all the components of the Movement,

1. *urges* all the components of the Movement, acting in line with their respective mandates and the Fundamental Principles, to ensure that their responses to the protection and assistance needs of IDPs and host communities, including the support provided to other components of the Movement and responses undertaken in cooperation with other entities, are informed by the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement, thereby strengthening its implementation;
2. *calls upon* all the components of the Movement to enhance their responses to internal displacement, especially in the following areas: urban internal displacement, where relevant;²⁹ prevention of displacement and protection during displacement; and durable solutions;
3. *requests*, in the context of internal displacement in urban settings, that all the components of the Movement integrate both the short- and longer-term needs of urban IDPs outside camps and those of their host communities into their analysis and responses, which can be done by combining structural interventions at the level of urban services and domestic legal and policy frameworks with tailored responses to help IDPs rebuild their lives, such as cash-based assistance among other approaches, and by integrating IDP-related issues into tools and approaches specific to urban settings;
4. *requests*, while reaffirming that States have the primary responsibility with regard to preventing displacement and providing protection and assistance during displacement, that all the components of the Movement intensify efforts to help prevent the conditions leading to displacement and, where not possible, to ensure people's safety, dignity and physical and psychological integrity throughout their displacement, keeping in mind that women, men, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities may have specific vulnerabilities based on interrelated factors, such as their gender, age, physical and mental health, ethnicity, religion or indigenous culture, that need to be considered, including, for example, the risk of sexual violence;
5. *recommends* strengthening National Society capacity to assess and respond to IDP protection needs by implementing the "minimum protection approach",³⁰ as described in the Protection within the Movement Framework,³¹ when engaging with IDPs and that all the components of the Movement pay specific attention to the prevention of family separation during displacement, engage with the authorities to increase awareness of and access to restoring family links (RFL) services for affected people and provide RFL services in line with the [Movement's RFL Strategy 2020–2025](#);
6. *requests*, with regard to durable solutions, that all the components of the Movement improve their coordinated response in support of voluntary, safe and dignified choices for IDPs by engaging with the authorities on the full spectrum of durable solutions (return, local integration and resettlement in another part of the country), in line with IDPs' rights and driven by their priorities and intentions, taking into account the perspectives of host communities and residents of potential areas of integration, return or resettlement, and by increasing the Movement's capacity to support people's efforts to rebuild their lives, including through more effective coordination and cooperation with development organizations;
7. *calls upon* all the components of the Movement to engage with IDPs and other people and communities affected by displacement in a more structured and systematic way, providing them with useful and protection-relevant information and ensuring their meaningful participation in the analysis of needs and the design of adequate responses as well as in the implementation and evaluation of those responses, in line with the [Movement's wide Commitments on Community Engagement and Accountability](#), and encourages National Societies to implement the [IFRC's Minimum Standards for Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Emergencies](#) to this end;
8. *encourages* all the components of the Movement, according to their respective mandates and with a view to preventing displacement and protecting IDPs, to step up their efforts to support authorities in

29 In the resolution and related documents, "urban settings/areas" and "cities" are used interchangeably to refer to socially complex and densely built and populated areas that have an influence over a larger area. This includes urban centres of various sizes and their outskirts. "Urban displacement" refers to internal displacement to and within cities, i.e. rural to urban, inter-urban and intra-urban.

30 The "minimum protection approach" describes how National Societies can increase their capacity to analyse, prioritize and react to violations of the rights of the individuals they are assisting, either through direct representations to the authorities or by referring cases to another protection actor.

31 Protection Advisory Board, "Protection within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement", 2018, available on the Protection in the Movement CoP Platform.

the development and implementation of domestic laws, regulations and policies that uphold States' obligations and the rights of IDPs as well as the protections that should be afforded to them and in the integration of IDP protection into broader legislative and policy efforts, including those aimed at the domestic implementation of obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law and those aimed at comprehensive disaster risk management and climate change adaptation, informed by an evidence-based analysis of the context;

9. *calls upon* all the components of the Movement to dedicate more resources to strengthening the capacity of National Societies to respond to internal displacement and, to this end, *requests* the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the IFRC to collaborate in developing common training tools on the Movement's approach to internal displacement, applicable legal frameworks and relevant standards and to create a Movement Reference Group on Internal Displacement to serve as a community of practice to foster exchanges of experience and lessons learned and to promote and monitor implementation of this resolution;
10. *requests* the ICRC, in close coordination with the IFRC, to report to the Council of Delegates in 2021 on the implementation of this resolution;
11. *invites* the ICRC and the IFRC to give due consideration to making this topic the subject of a resolution at the 2023 International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

1.1.9 RESOLUTION 8

ADOPTING A MOVEMENT STATEMENT ON MIGRANTS AND OUR COMMON HUMANITY

The Council of Delegates,

1. *recalls and reaffirms* past resolutions on topics relating to migration adopted by the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (including Resolution 21, 24th International Conference, Manila, 1981; Resolution 17, 25th International Conference, Geneva, 1986; Resolution 4, 26th International Conference, Geneva, 1995; Resolution 1, Annex, Declaration "Together for Humanity", 30th International Conference, Geneva, 2007; and Resolution 3, 31st International Conference, Geneva, 2011) and by the Council of Delegates (including Resolution 9, Budapest, 1991; Resolution 7, Birmingham, 1993; Resolution 4, Geneva, 2001; Resolution 10, Geneva, 2003; Resolution 5, Geneva, 2007; Resolution 4, Nairobi, 2009; and, in particular, the "Movement Call for Action on the Humanitarian Needs of Vulnerable Migrants", adopted by Resolution 3, Antalya, 2017);
2. *recalls* the Policy on Migration adopted by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 2009 (which was also welcomed by the whole Movement in Resolution 4 of the Council of Delegates, Nairobi, 2009) and the IFRC's Global Strategy on Migration 2018–2022;
3. *Encourages* the creation of national and cross-border coordination platforms for information sharing to strengthen collaboration, in line with best practice and international standards in protection of personal information and data protection, as outlined in the resolution on Restoring Family Links.
4. *adopts* the "Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity";
5. *urges* all components of the Movement to bring this Statement to the attention of States and other relevant stakeholders.

Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity

We, the representatives of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, have come together from over 190 countries to adopt and deliver this Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity.

We are neutral humanitarian organizations and, as such, do not seek to encourage, discourage or prevent migration. We also recognize that the management of migration poses significant challenges for States in many parts of the world. However, we are increasingly concerned for the safety and well-being of vulnerable migrants, refugees and other persons in need of international protection. Urgent steps are needed to save lives.

All migrants – including those in an irregular situation – have human rights, including the rights to life, liberty and security of person. They must be protected from torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary detention, *refoulement* and threats to their lives, and they must have access to justice and essential services.

International law also requires special protection for certain categories of persons, such as refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons. Gaps in the implementation of this protection can have life-threatening consequences for the persons involved.

In 2017, we made a “Call for Action on the Humanitarian Needs of Vulnerable Migrants”, setting out the steps we believe States should take to protect migrants from harm. We called for particular attention to be paid to the most vulnerable migrants, such as unaccompanied and separated children, and for guarantees of access to essential services, irrespective of legal status. We also called on States to only use migration-related detention as a measure of last resort, with liberty and alternatives to detention always being considered first, and to commit to ending the detention of children and family separation for immigration-related reasons. Unfortunately, all these steps are still urgently needed.

In 2011, the States Parties to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 represented at the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent were requested “to ensure that relevant laws and procedures are in place to enable National Societies, in conformity with the Statutes of the Movement and, in particular, the Fundamental Principles, to enjoy effective and safe access to all migrants without discrimination and irrespective of their legal status”. We call on States to fulfil this commitment, to support us in carrying out our humanitarian mandate and to respect our impartiality, independence and neutrality, including in relation to migration management. We also call on States to ensure that assistance of a strictly humanitarian and impartial character is never considered unlawful.

We have been greatly encouraged by the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, both including critical commitments to address protection and assistance needs. We stand ready to support States in the implementation of the Global Compacts in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.

As auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are committed to supporting States to ensure that the humanitarian needs of migrants – as well as those of vulnerable persons in host communities – are met. While our areas of strength vary, we can help in a number of ways, from providing emergency relief and basic health services, supporting the ability of migrants to maintain family links, to supporting authorities in promoting longer-term social inclusion and fulfilling their obligations under international law.

We seek to foster our collaboration with States in a climate of mutual trust, with positive solutions and frank and constructive dialogue.

Let us work together, reaffirming our common humanity, to help all those in need.

1.1.10 RESOLUTION 9 STRENGTHENING MOVEMENT COORDINATION AND COOPERATION (SMCC 2.0)

The Council of Delegates,

acknowledging the continuously growing demands on humanitarian actors to respond more effectively and efficiently to increasingly complex emergencies on a greater scale,

acknowledging the continued competition within the humanitarian sector, to which the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) is not immune,

confirming the imperative for the Movement to be a leading, well-coordinated and cost-effective humanitarian network that ensures, at all times, the best possible collaboration and complementarity between all Movement components in response and related preparedness for greater collective impact, including supporting the continued development of the operational and leadership capacities of the local National Society,

reaffirming the necessity for the Movement to be able to scale up and conduct coherent and measurable responses to medium and large-scale emergencies in order to maximize the support collectively provided to vulnerable and affected people and communities,

recalling Resolution 1 of the 2017 and 2015 Council of Delegates and Resolution 4 of the 2013 Council of Delegates, all of which tasked the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), together with National Societies, with continuing their joint work on strengthening Movement coordination and cooperation (CD/17/R1, CD/15/R1 and CD/13/R4),

further recalling Resolution 6 of the 1997 Council of Delegates, which adopted the “Agreement on the Organization of the International Activities of the Components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement” (the Seville Agreement); Resolution 8 of the 2005 Council of Delegates, which adopted the “Supplementary Measures to Enhance the Implementation of the Seville Agreement” (SA/SM); and their follow-up reports, which together have provided the foundations for Movement coordination and cooperation,

noting with appreciation the continuous and demonstrated improvements in Movement coordination and cooperation as well as the mindset change since the 2013 Council of Delegates and thanking all the Movement components concerned for their steady and concrete support and contributions,

welcoming the report on the implementation of the most recent Council of Delegates resolution on SMCC (R1/CD17), which is annexed to this resolution, and *acknowledging* the value of exploring, testing and critically evaluating new approaches, as was done for the One International Appeal fund-raising approach, in the spirit of working together,

mindful that the quality of Movement coordination in operations, which has seen a growing number of successes but has yet to reach its full potential, requires evidence-based understanding of the conditions that contribute to and positively or negatively influence the collective impact and cost-effectiveness of the Movement response,

acknowledging the need to continue transformational areas of work, such as achieving the interoperability of systems, as they require a continued longer-term commitment, while also exploring additional areas of work, given the growing importance of agile and interconnected systems in achieving operational complementarity and ensuring the readiness of the Movement to respond to future needs,

recognizing that, in order to reach its full potential, it is necessary for the SMCC process to be taken to a new level in terms of impact and scale, taking into account the expertise and resources available across the Movement; it must also maintain a purely operational focus, continue promoting and fostering the right mindset in all circumstances and be given a new impetus, with active participation, full ownership, and much more solid commitment and greater investment by all Movement components,

reaffirming the need for all components of the Movement to actively engage in the SMCC process to achieve a more coherent and impactful collective humanitarian contribution by the Movement as a whole,

resolves as follows:

1. *endorses* the report on the implementation of the 2017 Council of Delegates resolution on SMCC whose main findings are as follows:
 - a. the SMCC process has resulted in strengthened coordination in a number of response operations during the review period and has reinforced the Movement’s reflex to coordinate in ways that were not considered five years ago
 - b. advancements in technical areas, such as improving interoperability in logistics, security and surge mechanisms, and the expansion of tools and training, help to facilitate operational coordination
 - c. SMCC progress has also helped donors and other stakeholders to see the “Red Pillar” as a more coherent and more predictable partner
 - d. coordination remains a complex endeavour, and principal challenges include ensuring that the right mindset is cultivated across the Movement, that political leadership is appropriate and sustained, that the benefits of coordination are well understood, that coordinated resource mobilization is efficient and results in increased funding, and that sound data is available on the operational dividends of coordination
 - e. with the foundations for inclusive and predictable Movement coordination in place, the Movement is now ready to pursue a greater ambition to fully achieve the potential of SMCC
 - f. better integration of National Societies at both the strategic and operational level is vital, as is securing stronger investment from all Movement components;

2. *accepts* the proposed rebranding of the initiative as Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation 2.0 (SMCC 2.0) which reflects continuity in the process to date while also demonstrating a willingness to elevate and bring a new impetus to SMCC that more effectively encompasses the Movement as a whole;
3. *endorses* the SMCC 2.0 priorities identified in the report which aim to improve the capacity of the Movement to efficiently provide complementary responses to medium- and large-scale emergencies, including by reinforcing and complementing the activities of National Societies in affected countries, with workstreams focusing on:
 - a. ensuring efficient and well-coordinated use of the conferred responsibilities of Movement components in supporting the conduct of operations and other activities and in influencing stakeholders at every level
 - b. ensuring Movement-wide consistent data management to enhance operational response, ensure accountability and provide timely information on the Movement footprint to internal and external stakeholders, with a view to increasing our overall humanitarian funding and reinforcing the relevance and visibility of Movement operations
 - c. pursuing the development of the interoperability of systems to ensure agile and flexible support to operations
 - d. understanding and utilizing the capacities of Movement components to contribute to a response, including the domestic competencies of National Societies, with a view to ensuring services are provided efficiently and meet the required standard of quality
 - e. ensuring Movement readiness for response by employing existing SMCC tools to promote common planning and analysis and coordinated activities, reflecting on whether other tools are required, developing an evidence base on what works well in coordination and considering different operational models to suit different contexts
 - f. promoting complementary domestic and international response while ensuring the coherent and sustained development of local capacities, including in resource mobilization and in alignment with the localization agenda, emphasizing the need for operations that are as local as possible and as international as necessary
 - g. enhancing the scalability of the response in large-scale crises in a manner that reinforces the position of the Movement as a key global responder;
4. *requests* the existing Steering Group, in collaboration with National Societies, as further detailed in Article 5 below, to continue driving and monitoring the process, ensuring Movement-wide contributions and buy-in and reporting regularly to the Standing Commission and to all Movement components on progress;
5. *requests* the active participation of all Movement components, especially National Societies, in the development and implementation of activities and mechanisms linked with the above priorities and therefore calls for the creation of a National Society Reference Group to advise and support the Steering Group on a regular basis on the general direction of SMCC 2.0 and to promote and advocate for its implementation;
6. *recommends* the creation of an operational SMCC 2.0 cell reporting to the Steering Group and comprising personnel from the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies, which will be responsible for guiding the implementation of this resolution by all Movement components, with the possibility of a National Society or National Societies being invited by the Steering Group to lead certain workstreams under its overall direction;
7. *welcomes* the implementation of the new priorities over a four-year period, so that outcomes can be better evidenced, with a comprehensive mid-term progress report to be presented at the Council of Delegates in 2021.

1.1.11 RESOLUTION 10

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT ON OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS DATED 28 NOVEMBER 2005 BETWEEN MAGEN DAVID ADOM IN ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINE RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

In the spirit of the humanitarian mission and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement), and the themes of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference),

The Council of Delegates,

recalling the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by Magen David Adom in Israel (MDA) and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) on 28 November 2005, in advance of the Diplomatic Conference convened to negotiate and adopt the Third Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and pave the way for the future recognition of MDA and the PRCS as components of the Movement, and in particular the following provisions of the MoU:

1. MDA and PRCS will operate in conformity with the legal framework applicable to the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel in 1967, including the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 on the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.
2. MDA and PRCS recognize that PRCS is the authorized National Society in the Palestinian territory and that this territory is within the geographical scope of the operational activities and of the competences of PRCS. MDA and PRCS will respect each other's jurisdiction and will operate in accordance with the Statutes and Rules of the Movement.
3. After the Third Additional Protocol is adopted and by the time MDA is admitted by the General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies:
 - a. MDA will ensure that it has no chapters outside the internationally recognized borders of the State of Israel.
 - b. Operational activities of one society within the jurisdiction of the other society will be conducted in accordance with the consent provision of resolution 11 of the 1921 international conference.

(...)

4. MDA and PRCS will work together and separately within their jurisdictions to end any misuse of the emblem and will work with their respective authorities to ensure respect for their humanitarian mandate and for international humanitarian law.

(...)

6. MDA and PRCS will cooperate in the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding (...).

taking note, with appreciation, of the report of October 2019 on the implementation of the MoU prepared by the Hon. Robert Tickner AO, the Independent Monitor appointed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), with the full endorsement of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Standing Commission), to monitor and facilitate progress achieved in the implementation of the MoU, including recurring issues linked to operational elements relevant to the MoU,

recalling Resolution 5 adopted by the Council of Delegates in November 2017 concerning the implementation of the MoU and the AOA between MDA and the PRCS, as well as Resolution 8 of the 32nd International Conference,

reaffirming the importance for all components of the Movement to operate at all times in accordance with international humanitarian law and with the Fundamental Principles, Statutes and regulatory frameworks of the Movement,

noting that all National Societies have an obligation to operate in compliance with the Constitution of the IFRC and the “Policy on the protection of integrity of National Societies and bodies of the International Federation”,

recalling both the dispute resolution mechanism set out in Resolution 11 of the 1921 International Conference as well as the Compliance and Mediation Committee of the IFRC, and recognizing the rights of National Societies thereunder,

expressing strong disappointment that after nearly 14 years the MoU is not yet fully implemented and particularly noting the recent difficulties, delays and limitations by Israeli public authorities on the licensing of PRCS ambulances to operate in East Jerusalem and noting the potential related negative humanitarian consequences, whilst at the same time voicing appreciation to the MDA for the advocacy efforts made to its authorities to resolve the situation,

expressing deep regret that the assurances given by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel have not yet been fully honoured, as contained in the letters of 15 November 2015 and of 11 September 2017 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel to the Independent Monitor, in which the Ministry expressed readiness to support MDA to ensure full implementation of its commitments under the MoU, and achieve compliance with the geographic scope provisions, including completing these measures “well in advance of the 33rd International Conference in 2019”,

recognizing that full implementation of the MoU will represent an important achievement for the Movement and that this will contribute to the strength and unity of the Movement,

reaffirming the necessity for effective and positive coordination between all components of the Movement in support of the full implementation of the MoU,

1. notes with continued regret that full implementation has still not been achieved;
2. requires, in order to maintain trust in the humanitarian action of components of the Movement, that all National Societies discharge their humanitarian mandate in accordance with international humanitarian law and with the Fundamental Principles, Statutes and regulatory frameworks of the Movement;
3. requires MDA to further engage with its authorities to end the misuse of the MDA logo in the territory considered within the geographic scope of the PRCS, and strongly urges MDA to continue to work with its authorities and with other key stakeholders to ensure that any markings used in this territory are clearly distinguishable from the MDA logo;
4. strongly urges the State of Israel to honour, without delay, its commitment to ensure that emergency medical services operating within the geographical scope of the PRCS “will, on a permanent basis, bear a logo different than the MDA logo, which will be clearly distinguishable from the MDA official logo”, as set out in the 11 September 2017 letter of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
5. also calls on the State of Israel to create the necessary conditions to enable MDA to comply, well in advance of the 2021 Council of Delegates, with its obligations with respect to the geographic scope provisions of the MoU, in particular:
 - a. MDA will ensure that it has no chapters outside the internationally recognized borders of the State of Israel.
 - b. Operational activities of one society within the jurisdiction of the other society will be conducted in accordance with the consent provision of resolution 11 of the 1921 international conference.
6. affirms, in particular, that MDA’s ability to fully comply with its obligations under the MoU will be adversely impacted if the Government commitments in support of MDA as set forth in the second, fifth and sixth paragraphs of the 11 September 2017 letter of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel are not implemented, and that, in consequence, a call to activate the dispute resolution mechanism set out in Resolution 11 of the 1921 International Conference as well as the possibility of recourse to the Compliance and Mediation Committee of the IFRC may result;
7. welcomes the strengthening of the Liaison Committee referred to under the AOA, ensuring a minimum of four Liaison Committee meetings per annum, and encourages continued work between the two National Societies in fulfilling their shared humanitarian mandates, commitments and their practical liaison and coordination in daily operations;

8. *reaffirms* the decisions of the Council of Delegates and the 32nd International Conference in 2015 that the monitoring process should continue and *requests* the ICRC and the IFRC to renew the mandate of an Independent Monitor until the 2021 Council of Delegates;
9. *agrees* that the roles of the Independent Monitor under the terms of reference as aligned with this resolution include, but are not limited to, the following main functions:
 - a. undertake monitoring visits no less than twice a year, and provide at least one interim report to the Movement prior to the 2021 Council of Delegates;
 - b. provide written reports after each visit as well as additional updates to be shared with the PRCS, MDA, ICRC and IFRC, as well as the Standing Commission, in relation to his / her activities and findings;
 - c. engage as necessary with all relevant stakeholders, including the authorities;
 - d. provide an evidence-based analysis and validation of the information provided by the two National Societies regarding the implementation of the MoU, with specific reference to the licensing of the PRCS ambulances and to ensure the ability of PRCS to carry out its operations in East Jerusalem;
 - e. document progress on the commitments made under the AOA;
 - f. call upon assistance from a support group of National Societies, chosen in consultation with the ICRC, IFRC and the two National Societies, and eminent individuals from within or outside the Movement;
 - g. explore constructive options within the Movement to address issues identified in the reports;
 - h. communicate any recommendations or concerns on the implementation of the MoU to the ICRC and the IFRC, as well as the Standing Commission, in advance of the 2021 Council of Delegates;
10. *encourages* National Societies, when requested, to engage with their governments to help facilitate the implementation of the MoU, international humanitarian law, the Fundamental Principles, Statutes and regulatory frameworks of the Movement;
11. *requests* the ICRC and the IFRC to provide logistical and technical support to the monitoring process and to ensure the provision of a report on implementation of the MoU to the 2021 Council of Delegates and through it to the 34th International Conference;
12. *reaffirms* its collective determination to support full implementation of the MoU and expresses its strong desire to see full implementation achieved and validated well in advance of the 2021 Council of Delegates as an important symbol of hope and success.

1.1.12 RESOLUTION 11 AGENDA AND PROGRAMME OF THE 33RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

9–12 DECEMBER 2019

International Conference Centre of Geneva
Agenda and programme

Monday 9 December

OPENING PLENARY OF THE CONFERENCE (5pm)

Opening ceremony

1. **Welcome addresses**
 - Chair of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
 - Federal Councillor and Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland
2. **Reading of the Fundamental Principles**
3. **Election of the Conference officers and establishment of the Conference subsidiary bodies**
(commissions and drafting committee)
4. **Keynote addresses**
 - President of the International Committee of the Red Cross
 - President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
5. **Organization of work**
 - Drafting committee, commissions, plenaries, pledges
 - Procedure for electing the members of the Standing Commission

6. **Outcomes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's Council of Delegates**

Report on relevant discussions and decisions of the Council of Delegates on issues such as the Movement's Statement on Integrity, the Policy on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs, the Strategy for Restoring Family Links and the Movement's Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity, and on the commitment to improve gender balance, diversity and transparency in the election of the Standing Commission.

The opening ceremony will contain artistic performances throughout.

Cocktail reception
hosted by the Swiss authorities

NETWORKING MORNING: CONNECTING AROUND A COMMON PURPOSE

Conference participants will be provided with the opportunity to network and connect with one another in advance of the formal proceedings of the Conference. The networking morning is open to Conference members and observers.

PLENARY:

7. Act today, shape tomorrow

Introduces the Conference and sets the scene for three days of exploring, learning about and deciding on humanitarian action in light of current and future challenges.

COMMISSION I: International humanitarian law (IHL): Protecting people in armed conflict

2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which are universally ratified. The 33rd International Conference presents an opportune moment for the members of the Conference to reaffirm their commitment to IHL and to work towards its full application and implementation, especially at the national level. While recent years have seen many shocking and egregious violations of IHL, the world is also witnessing situations of armed conflicts where many belligerents are fighting by the rules. IHL continues to govern their behaviour, successfully protecting victims and restricting the way hostilities are conducted. This commission provides the platform for an entire day of positive and pragmatic discussions on IHL, which includes five thematic spotlight sessions, listed below. Conference members will have an opportunity to share, learn, explore and engage in meaningful dialogue about key areas related to strengthening and implementing IHL.

A plenary session will set the scene for the subsequent five spotlight sessions.

Spotlight sessions will be a platform for smaller, interactive group debates on key thematic areas of IHL, many of which are grounded in the findings of the International Committee of the Red Cross's quadrennial reporting on contemporary challenges to IHL.

The morning segment will enable an in-depth exploration of three themes in parallel sessions:

- Influencing behaviour to enhance respect for IHL
- Preventing and responding to the consequences of urban warfare
- IHL: Different people, different impacts.

The afternoon segment will explore two themes in parallel sessions:

- IHL and new technologies
- Voluntary reporting and sharing of good practices.

A reconvening **plenary session** will connect the debates that took place during the spotlight sessions and preview the next day.

NETWORKING, HUMANITARIAN VILLAGE AND SIDE EVENTS

Participants will have the opportunity to connect with one another, visit the Humanitarian Village and attend side events³² that will take place during lunchtime and in the evening, outside of the formal agenda.

FOR THE RECORD: VOICES FROM THE CONFERENCE

Members and observers who register in advance will be able to share formal statements on the Conference's themes for the official record. This segment will run continuously throughout the Conference, in parallel to other sessions, commencing on the afternoon of 10 December and concluding on the morning of 12 December.

³² Side events are organized at the initiative of Conference participants and are not part of the formal Conference agenda. Their schedule will be published with the mailing of the official working documents of the Conference.

DRAFTING COMMITTEE

The drafting committee will work in parallel to the other sessions of the Conference from the afternoon of 10 December to lunchtime on 12 December.

Meet the candidates for election to the Standing Commission (Not part of the formal agenda of the Conference)

Wednesday 11 December

COMMISSION II: Shifting vulnerabilities

The theme of the day resonates well with the overarching slogan of the Conference – “Act today, shape tomorrow” – in recognition of the fact that the world is changing and will continue to change rapidly over the next decade. Many of these changes are likely to result in shifts in vulnerabilities, with different populations affected, different geographic areas touched and hidden vulnerabilities surfacing. This commission aims to highlight the interconnectedness and cross-cutting nature of these shifting vulnerabilities and explore how Conference members can jointly step up their efforts to prevent, prepare for and respond to the needs of the most vulnerable people.

A **plenary session** will set the scene for the subsequent six spotlight sessions.

Spotlight sessions will be a platform for smaller, interactive group debates.

The morning segment will enable an in-depth exploration of three themes in parallel sessions:

- Role of volunteers in community health
- Humanitarian consequences of the climate crisis
- Building safe and inclusive urban communities.

The afternoon segment will explore another three themes in parallel sessions:

- Mental health and psychosocial support
- Migration and displacement
- Digital transformation.

A reconvening **plenary session** will connect the debates that took place during the spotlight sessions and preview the next day.

NETWORKING, HUMANITARIAN VILLAGE AND SIDE EVENTS

The participants will have the opportunity to connect with one another, visit the Humanitarian Village and attend side events that will take place in the morning, during lunchtime and in the evening, outside of the formal agenda.

FOR THE RECORD: VOICES FROM THE CONFERENCE

Runs throughout the day.

DRAFTING COMMITTEE

Runs throughout the day.

PLENARY:

8. Election of the Members of the Standing Commission

- Explanation of election proceedings
- Roll call and electronic voting
- Announcement of results or continuation of election

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COMMISSION III: Trust in humanitarian action

Trust is the foundation of humanitarian action and the ability to work together for a common purpose. The Movement's work depends on the trust of people and communities, authorities at national and local levels, key partners and stakeholders, and the public at large. Building and maintaining their trust is closely linked to fostering acceptance of the Movement. That acceptance, in turn, improves security, improved security increases access to people affected by conflict and disaster, and increased access enables the Movement to help people in need in an impartial manner. Trust is also crucial when it comes to building community resilience, not only in responding to crises but also in anticipating and preventing risk. Trust is the red thread that connects the sessions of the Conference, with the aim of exploring how Movement components, States and other partners can best cooperate to maintain and strengthen trust in principled humanitarian action.

A **plenary session** will set the scene for the subsequent three spotlight sessions.

Spotlight sessions will be a platform for smaller, interactive group debates.

The morning segment will enable an in-depth exploration of three themes in parallel sessions:

- Community engagement and accountability
- Integrity, compliance and risk management
- A conducive environment for effective humanitarian action.

A reconvening plenary session will connect the debates that took place during the opening plenary and the spotlight sessions on trust, as well as deliberations and topics covered in the first two commissions of the Conference.

NETWORKING, HUMANITARIAN VILLAGE AND SIDE EVENTS

The participants will have the opportunity to connect with one another, visit the Humanitarian Village and attend side events that will take place in the morning and during lunchtime, outside of the formal agenda.

FOR THE RECORD: VOICES FROM THE CONFERENCE

Runs until 10am.

DRAFTING COMMITTEE

Runs until lunchtime.

PLENARY: REPORTS AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

9. Reports

- Report on Resolution 1, "Strengthening international humanitarian law protecting persons deprived of their liberty" (32IC/15/R1)
- Report on Resolution 2, "Strengthening compliance with international humanitarian law" (32IC/15/R2)
- Report on Resolution 3, "Sexual and gender-based violence: Joint action on prevention and response" (32IC/15/R3)
- Report on Resolution 5, "The safety and security of humanitarian volunteers" (32IC/15/R5)
- Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements dated 28 November 2005 between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and Magen David Adom in Israel (32IC/15/R8)
- Report on the outcomes of the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
- "International humanitarian law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts – Recommitting to protection in armed conflict on the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions".

10. Report on the work of the 33rd International Conference in commissions and spotlight sessions (Chairperson's Paper), and overview of pledges

11. Report of the drafting committee

12. Adoption of the resolutions of the 33rd International Conference

- Bringing IHL home: A roadmap for better national implementation of international humanitarian law
- Addressing mental health and psychosocial needs of people affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies
- Time to act: Tackling epidemics and pandemics together
- Restoring Family Links while respecting privacy, including as it relates to personal data protection
- Climate-smart disaster laws and policies that leave no one behind
- Women and leadership in the humanitarian action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
- Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements dated 28 November 2005 between Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society.

An additional omnibus resolution may be submitted to the 33rd International Conference to acknowledge the outcomes of the Conference commissions, the relevant outcomes of the Movement's Council of Delegates and other reports.

13. Closing of the 33rd International Conference

**1.1.13 RESOLUTION 12
PROPOSAL OF PERSONS TO FILL THE POSTS
OF OFFICERS AT THE 33RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT**

The Council of Delegates,

having examined the list of candidates nominated by the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for election as officers of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

endorses the list of candidates (see annex) and *requests* the Chairman of the Council of Delegates to transmit it to the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for approval.

**ANNEX
PROPOSAL OF PERSONS TO FILL THE POSTS OF OFFICERS
AT THE 33RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT**

Reference: Article 14 of the Statutes of the Movement: "When meeting prior to the opening of the International Conference, the Council shall propose to the Conference the persons to fill the posts mentioned in Article 11, paragraph 3": the Chairman, the Vice-Chairmen, Secretary General, Assistant Secretaries General and other officers of the Conference.

Officer role	Name, position	Conference member (NS/State)	Region	Gender
Chair of the Conference	Ms Natia Loladze, President, Georgia Red Cross Society	NS	Europe	F
Chair of the Drafting Committee	H.E. Maria Socorro Flores, Ambassador of Mexico	State	Americas	F
Rapporteur of the Conference	Mr Bas van Rossum, the Netherlands Red Cross	NS	Europe	M
Vice-Chair of the Conference	H.E. Athaliah Molokomme, Ambassador of Botswana	State	Africa	F
Political Advisor of the Conference	Ms Moamena Kamel, Egyptian Red Crescent Society	NS	MENA	F
Conference Chairs of Thematic Commissions				
Chair of Commission 1: IHL	H.E. Carole Lanteri, Ambassador of Monaco	State	Europe	F
Chairs of Commission 2: Shifting Vulnerabilities	Ms Delia Chatoor, Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society	NS	Americas	F
	H.E. Nazhat Shameem Khan, Ambassador of Fiji	State	AP	F
Chair of Commission 3: Trust in Humanitarian Action	Mr Georges Kettaneh, Secretary-General, Lebanese Red Cross	NS	MENA	M
Other officers				
Rapporteur IHL	Mr Adriano Iaria, Italian Red Cross	NS	Europe	M
Rapporteur Shifting Vulnerabilities	Mr Rakibul Alam, Bangladesh Red Crescent, Youth Representative	NS	AP	M
Rapporteur Trust	Mr Epeli Lesuma, Fiji Red Cross Society, Youth Representative	NS	AP	M
Secretary General of the Conference	H.E. Didier Pfirter, Ambassador of Switzerland	State	Europe	M
Assistant Secretaries General of the International Conference	Ms Kate Halff	ICRC	-	F
	Mr Frank Mohrhauer	IFRC	-	M

1.2 AGENDA AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE 33RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

1.2.1 AGENDA AND PROGRAMME

Monday 9 December

OPENING PLENARY OF THE CONFERENCE (5pm)

Opening ceremony

- 1. Welcome addresses**
 - Chair of the Standing Commission
 - Federal Councilor and Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland
- 2. Reading of the Fundamental Principles**
- 3. Election of the Conference officers and establishment of the Conference subsidiary bodies**
(commissions and drafting committee)
- 4. Keynote addresses**
 - President of the International Committee of the Red Cross
 - President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- 5. Organization of work**
 - Drafting committee, commissions, plenaries, pledges
 - Procedure for electing the members of the Standing Commission
- 6. Outcomes of the Movement's Council of Delegates**

Report on relevant discussions and decisions of the Council of Delegates on issues such as the Movement's Statement on Integrity, the Policy on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs, the Strategy for Restoring Family Links and the Movement's Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity, and on the commitment to improve gender balance, diversity and transparency in the election of the Standing Commission.

The opening ceremony will contain artistic performances throughout.

Cocktail reception
hosted by the Swiss authorities

NETWORKING MORNING: CONNECTING AROUND A COMMON PURPOSE

Conference participants will be provided with the opportunity to network and connect with one another in advance of the formal proceedings of the Conference. The networking morning is open to Conference members and observers.

PLENARY:

7. Act today, shape tomorrow

Introduces the Conference and sets the scene for three days of exploring, learning about and deciding on humanitarian action in light of current and future challenges.

COMMISSION I: International humanitarian law (IHL): Protecting people in armed conflict

2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which are universally ratified. The 33rd International Conference presents an opportune moment for the members of the Conference to reaffirm their commitment to IHL and to work towards its full application and implementation, especially at the national level. While recent years have seen many shocking and egregious violations of IHL, the world is also witnessing situations of armed conflicts where many belligerents are fighting by the rules. IHL continues to govern their behaviour, successfully protecting victims and restricting the way hostilities are conducted. This commission provides the platform for an entire day of positive and pragmatic discussions on IHL, which includes five thematic spotlight sessions, listed below. Conference members will have an opportunity to share, learn, explore and engage in meaningful dialogue about key areas related to strengthening and implementing IHL.

A plenary session will set the scene for the subsequent five spotlight sessions.

Spotlight sessions will be a platform for smaller, interactive group debates on key thematic areas of IHL, many of which are grounded in the findings of the International Committee of the Red Cross's quadrennial reporting on contemporary challenges to IHL.

The morning segment will enable an in-depth exploration of three themes in parallel sessions:

- Influencing behaviour to enhance respect for IHL
- Preventing and responding to the consequences of urban warfare
- IHL: Different people, different impacts.

The afternoon segment will explore two themes in parallel sessions:

- IHL and new technologies
- Voluntary reporting and sharing of good practices.

A reconvening **plenary session** will connect the debates that took place during the spotlight sessions and preview the next day.

NETWORKING, HUMANITARIAN VILLAGE AND SIDE EVENTS

Participants will have opportunities to connect with one another, visit the Humanitarian Village and attend side events³³ that will take place during lunchtime and in the evening, outside of the formal agenda.

FOR THE RECORD: VOICES FROM THE CONFERENCE

Members and observers who register in advance will be able to share formal statements on the Conference's themes for the official record. This segment will run continuously throughout the Conference, in parallel to other sessions, commencing on the afternoon of 10 December and concluding on the morning of 12 December.

³³ Side events are organized at the initiative of Conference participants and are not part of the formal Conference agenda. Their schedule will be published with the mailing of the official working documents of the Conference.

DRAFTING COMMITTEE

The drafting committee will work in parallel to the other sessions of the Conference from the afternoon of 10 December to lunchtime on 12 December.

Meet the candidates for election to the Standing Commission (Not part of the formal agenda of the Conference)

Wednesday 11 December

COMMISSION II: Shifting vulnerabilities

The theme of the day resonates well with the overarching slogan of the Conference – “Act today, shape tomorrow” – in recognition of the fact that the world is changing and will continue to change rapidly over the next decade. Many of these changes are likely to result in shifts in vulnerabilities, with different populations affected, different geographic areas touched and hidden vulnerabilities surfacing. This commission aims to highlight the interconnectedness and cross-cutting nature of these shifting vulnerabilities and explore how Conference members can jointly step up their efforts to prevent, prepare for and respond to the needs of the most vulnerable people.

A **plenary session** will set the scene for the subsequent six spotlight sessions.

Spotlight sessions will be a platform for smaller, interactive group debates.

The morning segment will enable an in-depth exploration of three themes in parallel sessions:

- Role of volunteers in community health
- Humanitarian consequences of climate crisis
- Building safe and inclusive urban communities.

The afternoon segment will explore another three themes in parallel sessions:

- Mental health and psychosocial support
- Migration and displacement
- Digital transformation.

A reconvening **plenary session** will connect the debates that took place during the spotlight sessions and preview the next day.

NETWORKING, HUMANITARIAN VILLAGE AND SIDE EVENTS

The participants will have opportunities to connect with one another, visit the Humanitarian Village and attend side events that will take place in the morning, during lunchtime and in the evening, outside of the formal agenda.

FOR THE RECORD: VOICES FROM THE CONFERENCE

Runs throughout the day.

DRAFTING COMMITTEE

Runs throughout the day.

PLENARY:

8. Election of the Members of the Standing Commission

- Explanation of election proceedings
- Roll call and electronic voting
- Announcement of results or continuation of election

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COMMISSION III: Trust in humanitarian action

Trust is the foundation of humanitarian action and the ability to work together for a common purpose. The Movement's work depends on the trust of people and communities, authorities at national and local levels, key partners and stakeholders, and the public at large. Building and maintaining their trust is closely linked to fostering acceptance of the Movement. That acceptance, in turn, improves security, improved security increases access to people affected by conflict and disaster, and increased access enables the Movement to help people in need in an impartial manner. Trust is also crucial when it comes to building community resilience, not only in responding to crises but also in anticipating and preventing risk. Trust is the red thread that connects the sessions of the Conference, with the aim of exploring how Movement components, States and other partners can best cooperate to maintain and strengthen trust in principled humanitarian action.

A **plenary session** will set the scene for the subsequent three spotlight sessions.

Spotlight sessions will be a platform for smaller, interactive group debates.

The morning segment will enable an in-depth exploration of three themes in parallel sessions:

- Community engagement and accountability
- Integrity, compliance and risk management
- A conducive environment for effective humanitarian action.

A reconvening plenary session will connect the debates that took place during the opening plenary and the spotlight sessions on trust, as well as deliberations and topics covered in the first two commissions of the Conference.

NETWORKING, HUMANITARIAN VILLAGE AND SIDE EVENTS

The participants will have the opportunity to connect with one another, visit the Humanitarian Village and attend side events that will take place in the morning and during lunchtime, outside of the formal agenda.

FOR THE RECORD: VOICES FROM THE CONFERENCE

Runs until 10am.

DRAFTING COMMITTEE

Runs until lunchtime.

PLENARY: REPORTS AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

9. Reports

- Report on Resolution 1, "Strengthening international humanitarian law protecting persons deprived of their liberty" (32IC/15/R1)
- Report on Resolution 2, "Strengthening compliance with international humanitarian law" (32IC/15/R2)
- Report on Resolution 3, "Sexual and gender-based violence: Joint action on prevention and response" (32IC/15/R3)
- Report on Resolution 5, "The safety and security of humanitarian volunteers" (32IC/15/R5)
- Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements dated 28 November 2005 between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and Magen David Adom in Israel (32IC/15/R8)
- Report on the outcomes of the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
- "International humanitarian law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts – Recommitting to protection in armed conflict on the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions".

10. Report on the work of the 33rd International Conference in commissions and spotlight sessions (Chairperson's Paper), and overview of pledges

11. Report of the drafting committee

12. Adoption of the resolutions of the 33rd International Conference

- Bringing IHL home: A roadmap for better national implementation of international humanitarian law
- Addressing mental health and psychosocial needs of people affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies
- Time to act: Working together to prevent and respond to epidemics and pandemics
- Restoring family links while respecting privacy, including as it relates to personal data protection
- Climate-smart disaster laws and policies that leave no one behind
- Women and leadership in the humanitarian action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

An additional omnibus resolution may be submitted to the 33rd International Conference to acknowledge the outcomes of the Conference commissions, the relevant outcomes of the Movement's Council of Delegates and other reports.

13. Closing of the 33rd International Conference

1.2.2 RESOLUTION 1 BRINGING IHL HOME: A ROAD MAP FOR BETTER NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

The 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

reaffirming that international humanitarian law (IHL) remains as relevant today as ever before in international and non-international armed conflicts, even as contemporary warfare presents new developments and challenges,

recalling that IHL, as applicable, must be fully applied in all circumstances, without any adverse distinction based on the nature or origin of the armed conflict or on the causes espoused by or attributed to the parties to the conflict,

recognizing that the efforts carried out by States and the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) to eliminate or minimize dire humanitarian consequences of armed conflicts could also contribute to addressing the root causes of conflict and its various consequences,

recalling that persons taking no active part in the hostilities shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction founded on race, colour, religion or faith, sex, birth or wealth, or any other similar criteria,

recognizing that women, men, girls and boys of different ages, disabilities and backgrounds can be affected differently by armed conflict, and that these differences need to be considered when implementing and applying IHL, in order to safeguard adequate protection for all,

stressing that the best interests of the child as well as the specific needs and vulnerabilities of girls and boys should be duly considered when planning and carrying out military training and humanitarian actions, as appropriate,

highlighting that 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, *welcoming* their universal ratification, and *expressing* the hope that other IHL treaties will also achieve universal acceptance,



stressing that parties to armed conflicts have taken measures in many instances to ensure during their military operations that IHL is respected, such as when cancelling or suspending attacks on military objectives because the expected incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, damage to civilian objects, or a combination thereof, would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated; when enabling civilians to exchange personal news with family members, wherever they may be; or when treating detainees humanely,

deeply concerned nevertheless that there continue to be violations of IHL, which can cause dire humanitarian consequences, and *stressing* that better respect for IHL is an indispensable prerequisite for minimizing negative humanitarian consequences and thereby improving the situation of victims of armed conflict,

recalling that domestic implementation of international obligations plays a central role in fulfilling the obligation to respect IHL, and *recognizing* the primary role of States in this regard,

noting the significant role and mandates of the components of the Movement in promoting the application of IHL and in accordance with the Statutes of the Movement, in particular the unique role of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies) as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, based on which they disseminate and assist their governments in disseminating IHL and take initiatives in this respect, and cooperate with their governments to ensure respect for IHL and to protect the distinctive emblems recognized by the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols,

recognizing the positive impact that the integration of IHL into military practice can have on battlefield behaviour, for example, through issuance of doctrine, procedures that incorporate IHL principles and concepts, legal advisers advising commanders on IHL during military operations, and training on IHL commensurate with individuals' military duties and responsibilities,

stressing the basic value of respect for human dignity in times of armed conflict, which is not only enshrined in IHL but also in the rules and principles of different faiths and traditions, as well as military ethics, and *recognizing* the importance of dialogue among relevant actors and ongoing efforts in this respect,

emphasizing the vital importance of building on existing efforts to achieve more effective implementation and dissemination of IHL and of demonstrating the benefits of IHL for all parties to armed conflict and for the protection of all victims of armed conflict,

convinced that the measures recommended below provide a useful road map for effective implementation of IHL at the national level,

1. *urges* all parties to armed conflicts to fully comply with their obligations under IHL;
2. *calls upon* States to adopt necessary legislative, administrative and practical measures at the domestic level to implement IHL, and *invites* States to carry out, with the support of the National Society where possible, an analysis of the areas requiring further domestic implementation;
3. *acknowledges with appreciation* States' efforts and initiatives taken to disseminate IHL knowledge and promote respect for IHL, by raising awareness among civilians and military personnel, and to put in place implementation measures, and *strongly encourages* the intensification of such measures and initiatives;
4. *encourages* all States that have not already done so to consider ratifying or acceding to IHL treaties to which they are not yet party, including the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions, and *recalls* that States may declare that they recognize the competence of the International Fact-Finding Commission as established under Article 90 of Protocol I additional to the Geneva Conventions and that this may contribute to an attitude of respect for IHL;
5. *acknowledges* the effective role and increasing number of national committees and similar entities on IHL involved in advising and assisting national authorities in implementing, developing and spreading knowledge of IHL, and *encourages* States that have not yet done so to consider establishing such an entity;
6. *recalls* the outcomes of the fourth universal meeting of national committees and similar entities on IHL held in 2016, and *calls for* the strengthening of cooperation between such entities on the international, regional and cross-regional levels, in particular by attending and actively participating in the universal, regional and other regular meetings of such entities, as well as through the new digital community for national committees and similar entities on IHL, created on the basis of the recommendations made by the participants in the 2016 universal meeting;

7. *strongly encourages* States to make every effort to further integrate IHL into military doctrine, education and training, and into all levels of military planning and decisionmaking, thereby ensuring that IHL is fully integrated into military practice and reflected in military ethos, and *recalls* the importance of the availability within States' armed forces of legal advisers to advise commanders, at the appropriate level, on the application of IHL;
8. *encourages* States and the components of the Movement, in particular National Societies, to take concrete, and where appropriate, coordinated activities, including through partnerships with academics and practitioners where suitable, to disseminate IHL effectively, paying particular attention to those called upon to implement or apply IHL, such as military personnel, civil servants, parliamentarians, prosecutors and judges, while continuing to disseminate IHL at the domestic level as widely as possible to the general public, including to youth;
9. *calls upon* States to protect the most vulnerable people affected by armed conflicts, in particular women, children and persons with disabilities, and to provide that they receive timely, effective humanitarian assistance;
10. *encourages* States and the components of the Movement, while continuing to rely on proven effective methods of dissemination of IHL, to explore new innovative and appropriate methods to promote respect for IHL, including using digital and other means, such as video games, and where possible to consider therein the voices of people affected by armed conflict and their perception of IHL;
11. *recalls* the obligations of High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I to enact any legislation necessary to provide effective penal sanctions for persons committing, or ordering to be committed, any grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I, as applicable, and to take measures necessary for the suppression of all other acts contrary to those Conventions or to other applicable IHL obligations, and further *recalls* obligations with respect to the repression of serious violations of IHL;
12. *also recalls* the obligations of the High Contracting Parties of the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I to search for persons alleged to have committed, or have ordered to be committed, such grave breaches, and to bring such persons, regardless of their nationality, before its own courts or, in accordance with provisions of its own legislation, hand such persons over for trial to another High Contracting Party concerned, provided such High Contracting Party has made out a *prima facie* case;
13. *invites* States to share examples of and exchange good practices of national implementation measures taken in accordance with IHL obligations as well as other measures that may go beyond States' IHL obligations, including by making use of existing tools and of national committees and similar entities on IHL, where they exist, consistent with International Conference resolutions, including this road map.

1.2.3 RESOLUTION 2

ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS OF PEOPLE AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICTS, NATURAL DISASTERS AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

The 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

expressing deep concern about the unmet mental health and psychosocial needs of people affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies, including the needs of migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, *stressing* that mental health and psychosocial needs increase extensively as a result of these situations and that pre-existing conditions may resurface or be exacerbated, and *underscoring* the urgent demand to increase efforts to respond to them by means of prevention, promotion, protection and assistance,

recognizing that mental health and psychosocial well-being are critical to the survival, recovery and daily functioning of people affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies, to their enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms and to their access to protection and assistance,

recalling the Constitution of the World Health Organization, which recognizes that health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity; and further recognizes

that the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition,

recognizing that early and appropriate mental health and psychosocial support is important to prevent distress from developing into more severe conditions and that children and youth face particular risks if their mental health and psychosocial needs are not addressed early, and *acknowledging* that most people show resilience and do not develop mental health conditions provided they have access to basic services and family- and community-level resources,

recognizing also that unmet mental health and psychosocial needs have far-reaching and longterm negative human, social and economic impacts, which affect individuals, communities and society as a whole, and that meeting these needs, in particular in armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies, is critical to achieving universal health coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals,

recalling Resolution 3, “Sexual and gender-based violence: Joint action on prevention and response” of the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference), which calls upon States and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies) to make every feasible effort to ensure, insofar as possible, that survivors of sexual violence and, where appropriate, gender-based violence have unimpeded and ongoing access to psychological and psychosocial support,

recognizing that the mental health and psychosocial well-being of volunteers and staff responding to humanitarian needs is often affected as they are exposed to risks and potentially traumatic events and work under stressful conditions, and that the safety, security, health and well-being of staff and volunteers are vital to the provision of sustainable quality services, and *recalling* the relevant recommendations and commitments set out in Resolution 4, “Health Care in Danger: Continuing to protect the delivery of health care together”, and Resolution 5, “The safety and security of humanitarian volunteers”, of the 32nd International Conference,

recognizing also that factors such as, but not limited to, pre-existing mental health conditions, substance use and addictive behaviours, age, gender, disability, state of health, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, legal status, deprivation of liberty, displacement and exposure to violence can further increase risk and impact needs and vulnerability and that diversity factors should be considered in order to ensure effective access to, and the culturally sensitive provision of, mental health and psychosocial support services for all people affected,

reaffirming the fundamental premise and commitment to “do no harm” by taking into account the perspectives of people with lived experience, and by promoting applicable standards of care, ethical and professional guidelines and evidence-informed, participatory and culturally sensitive approaches that protect and promote mental health and psychosocial well-being,

recognizing that the stigma and often hidden nature of mental health and psychosocial needs are key challenges that need to be addressed with medium- and long-term strategies, as appropriate to the context, at individual, family, community and societal levels,

affirming that the existing international legal frameworks, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, as applicable, provide for protections that may be relevant to mental health and psychosocial well-being, and *recognizing* that respect for those protections may significantly contribute to addressing the challenges in preventing and meeting mental health and psychosocial needs,

affirming also that States have the primary responsibility to address the humanitarian needs, including mental health and psychosocial needs, of people affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies, in accordance with the applicable legal frameworks,

recognizing that the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) have important complementary and supportive roles in addressing the mental health and psychosocial needs of affected people, including the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, as reflected in the Geneva Conventions of 1949, their Additional Protocols of 1977, the Statutes of the Movement and resolutions of the International Conference,

acknowledging the important and diverse work carried out by the components of the Movement to address mental health and psychosocial needs, including basic psychosocial support through to specialized mental health care provided in close proximity to the affected people and their communities, *welcoming* the Movement’s efforts to strengthen its response to these needs, and *taking note* of the Movement’s new policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs adopted by the 2019 Council of Delegates,



recalling all relevant resolutions adopted by the International Conference and the United Nations (UN) and other commitments addressing mental health and psychosocial needs, including Resolution 29 of the 25th International Conference, *expressing appreciation* for existing relevant work and initiatives by the World Health Organization and other relevant agencies and parts of the UN system, regional organizations, States, humanitarian organizations and other relevant actors aimed at addressing mental health and psychosocial needs,

underlining the complementary character of the work of the Movement and the International Conference in relation to the above work and initiatives, and *emphasizing* the importance of coordinating the response with other local and international actors and building on local needs and available resources,

1. *calls upon* States, National Societies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to increase efforts to ensure early and sustained access to mental health and psychosocial support services by people affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies;
2. *also calls upon* States, National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC to invest in local and community-based action, embedded in local and national services, on a longer-term basis to prevent, prepare for and respond to mental health and psychosocial needs, including by strengthening local and community resilience and the capacities of volunteers;
3. *encourages* States and National Societies to enhance their cooperation to address these needs, as appropriate, building on the National Societies' often unique humanitarian access to affected people and auxiliary role to the public authorities in the humanitarian field;
4. *calls upon* States, National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC, in accordance with their respective roles, mandates and capacities, to ensure that mental health and psychosocial support responses include psychosocial, psychological and specialized mental health care;
5. *also calls upon* States and the components of the Movement to integrate mental health and psychosocial support into all activities addressing humanitarian needs, including prevention and protection, and ensure that mental health and psychosocial support and responses addressing other humanitarian needs, such as shelter, food, livelihoods, education and support to separated families and families of the missing, are mutually reinforcing;
6. *calls upon* States to ensure that mental health and psychosocial support is an integral component in domestic and international emergency response systems, including disaster laws, preparedness plans and emergency response coordination mechanisms, and *calls upon* the components of the Movement, particularly National Societies, to support this effort in accordance with their respective mandates;
7. *calls upon* States and the components of the Movement to take action to address stigma, exclusion and discrimination related to mental health and psychosocial needs through approaches that respect the dignity and reinforce the participation of affected people, in particular persons with lived experiences, in a context-specific, culturally and faith-sensitive way;
8. *encourages* States to work to strengthen the quality and capacity of the workforce, including volunteers, responding to the mental health and psychosocial needs of people affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies, in close coordination and cooperation with the components of the Movement;
9. *calls upon* States and the components of the Movement to take measures to protect and promote the mental health and psychosocial well-being of staff and volunteers who are responding to humanitarian needs across all sectors, equipping them with the necessary skills, tools and supervision to cope with stressful situations and responding to their specific mental health and psychosocial needs.

1.2.4 RESOLUTION 3

TIME TO ACT: TACKLING EPIDEMICS AND PANDEMICS TOGETHER

The 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

expressing deep concern over the threat that epidemics and pandemics pose to global health, the economy and stability, particularly in the world's most vulnerable areas and in complex settings where epidemics may be particularly difficult to address,

acknowledging the increasing recognition and importance of effective preparedness, which can save time, money and lives,

recalling Sustainable Development Goal 3 and its aim to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages,

also recalling that the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) recognize that National Societies cooperate with the public authorities in the prevention of disease, the promotion of health and the mitigation of human suffering for the benefit of the community,

further recalling that Resolution 2 of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference) recognized that public authorities and National Societies, as auxiliaries in the humanitarian field, enjoy a specific and distinctive partnership, entailing mutual responsibilities and benefits, based on international and national laws, in which the national public authorities and the National Society agree on the areas in which the latter supplements or substitutes for public humanitarian services within its mandate and in conformity with the Fundamental Principles,

further recalling that Resolution 4 of the 31st International Conference encouraged relevant government departments and other donors to provide a predictable and regular flow of resources adapted to the operational needs of their National Societies,

recalling that Resolution 1 of the 30th International Conference stressed the need to strengthen health systems and develop national health plans with the involvement of National Societies and to include the empowerment of volunteers and affected groups,

acknowledging the importance of the complementarity and coordination of the actions of the different components of the Movement to prevent, mitigate and respond to epidemics and pandemics with the action of other relevant actors in the field,

acknowledging that epidemics and pandemics may have a different impact on girls, boys, women and men and on young and older persons as well as on people living with disabilities and people with chronic health conditions and others whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable at the time of an epidemic or pandemic,

recognizing with gratitude the humanitarian work undertaken by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and National Societies, working closely with key partners such as the World Health Organization, in response to recent epidemics and pandemics, including outbreaks of measles, polio, dengue and cholera, Ebola virus disease outbreaks and the Zika virus disease epidemic,

acknowledging the wide range of activities that Movement components regularly undertake to prepare for and respond to the needs of vulnerable communities before, during and after epidemics and pandemics,

acknowledging the commitment of States Parties to the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR) to ensure the effective core capacities to prevent, detect, assess, report and respond to epidemics and pandemics,

emphasizing the importance of National Societies working in close coordination with national authorities and other local and international organizations responding to epidemics and pandemics in order to assist States Parties in meeting their obligations to comply with the IHR,

emphasizing the role that National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC could play, in collaboration with other partners such as the World Health Organization, in further strengthening countries' epidemic and pandemic core capacities including, but not limited to, planning, preparedness, coordination with other local and

international organizations, prevention and control, immunization, community engagement and accountability, communication with the public, and emergency response,

recalling the WHO Health Emergency and Disaster Risk Management Framework,

acknowledging that neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action extending beyond the provision of clinical care is a critical tool in epidemic and pandemic response, particularly in areas of insecurity,

recalling the obligations to respect and protect the wounded and sick, health-care personnel and facilities, as well as medical transports, and to take all reasonable measures to ensure safe and prompt access to health care for the wounded and sick, in times of armed conflict or other emergencies, in accordance with the applicable legal frameworks,

taking into account the particular challenges in meeting health needs when epidemics occur in areas where health care is under-resourced and where access to care is difficult,

1. *invites* States to enable and facilitate Movement components, in accordance with their mandates and capacities and with international law, to contribute to a predictable and coordinated approach to epidemics and pandemics, including effective international cooperation and coordination, and engagement with and support to affected communities;
2. *encourages* States to include National Societies, according to their mandate, capacities and as humanitarian auxiliaries to their public authorities, in national disease prevention and control and multisectoral preparedness and response frameworks and, where possible, to provide funding in support of their role in this regard;
3. *further encourages* National Societies to offer support to their public authorities, as appropriate, in their State's efforts to strengthen core capacities as part of obligations to comply with the IHR, ensuring that special provisions are effectively in place for the efficient and expedited delivery of a public health response for affected populations during crisis situations, coordinating with other local and international organizations and focusing, in particular, on building early warning and rapid response capacity in hard-to-reach, vulnerable, underserved and high-risk communities with due attention to the varied needs of girls, boys, men and women;
4. *emphasizes* the need for promotion of active community engagement in outbreak prevention, preparedness and response, based on a multi-sectoral, multi-hazard and whole-of-society approach, and *encourages* States and National Societies to build on evidence-based approaches to community-centric outbreak prevention, detection and response;
5. *also encourages* States and National Societies to further develop innovative tools, guidance and strategies to support implementation of the above measures and to strengthen their capabilities to respond and to utilize data and technology to improve the quality of response to epidemics and pandemics;
6. *reiterates* the importance of prioritizing and investing in prevention and preparedness as well as providing catalytic funding to support early action, including by National Societies;
7. *reiterates* also the importance of mobilizing resources and building capacities to enable developing countries and their National Societies to respond to the epidemic and pandemic threats;
8. *calls upon* Movement components, public authorities and all other actors to take appropriate steps, in accordance with their national and regional contexts, to ensure, as far as possible, that the health and safety of their volunteers and staff responding to epidemics/pandemics, including mental health and psychosocial well-being, are adequately maintained;
9. *requests* the IFRC to prepare a progress report on the implementation of this resolution to the 34th International Conference in 2023.

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1.2.5 RESOLUTION 4

RESTORING FAMILY LINKS WHILE RESPECTING PRIVACY, INCLUDING AS IT RELATES TO PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

The 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

concerned by the numbers of families separated and people going missing as a result of, *inter alia*, armed conflicts, disasters and other emergencies, forced displacement, as well as in the context of migration, smuggling of migrants and trafficking of persons, by the lack of sufficient measures to prevent people from going missing and to clarify the fate and whereabouts of those who do, by the fact that many human remains are never identified and by the suffering of families who do not know the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones,

recalling the longstanding cooperation between States and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) to restore family links (RFL),

recalling also the importance of clarifying the fate and whereabouts of missing persons, and of restoring and maintaining contact between separated family members, and relevant international obligations, in particular those related to the right of families to know the fate of their relatives, as applicable,

recalling further the mandate of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) based on the Geneva Conventions of 1949, their Additional Protocols of 1977, the Statutes of the Movement and resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference), and *recalling*, in this regard, the Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC, including its role as coordinator and technical adviser to National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies) and governments, as defined in the report adopted by the 24th International Conference,

recalling further the mandate of National Societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, as reflected in the Geneva Conventions of 1949, their Additional Protocols of 1977, the Statutes of the Movement and resolutions of the International Conference, including Resolution 2 of the 30th International Conference and Resolution 4 of the 31st International Conference,

recalling further the adoption by the Movement of its Restoring Family Links Strategy (2008–2018) in Resolution 4 of the 2007 Council of Delegates,

recalling further that personal data protection is closely related to privacy, and *taking into account* that processing of personal data is an integral part of RFL services and necessary for the performance of the mandate of the components of the Movement,

recognizing that it is important for beneficiaries to be able to trust all components of the Movement with their personal data, and that their data is protected,

recalling that the ICRC and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and their employees and representatives enjoy privileges and immunities, to the extent applicable, in order to enable them to perform their respective mandates and to do so in full conformity with the Movement's Fundamental Principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence,

concerned that humanitarian organizations may come under pressure to provide personal data collected for humanitarian purposes to authorities wishing to use such data for other purposes,

1. *calls upon* States to take effective measures to prevent persons from going missing, to clarify the fate and whereabouts of persons who have gone missing, to restore family links and facilitate reunification of families, and to avoid, as far as possible, family separation, consistent with applicable legal frameworks, and *encourages* States to consider measures to protect men, women, boys and girls, in particular those in vulnerable situations, including persons with disabilities;
2. *requests* States to take all possible measures, consistent with applicable international obligations, to ensure the dignified treatment of people who have died as a result of armed conflicts, disasters and other emergencies, as well as in the context of migration, and to centralize and analyse data in accordance with applicable legal frameworks in order to try to identify deceased persons and provide answers to their families, and *welcomes* the support provided in this process by the ICRC in the form of forensic expertise;
3. *calls upon* the components of the Movement to work closely with States, in line with their mandates and the Movement's Fundamental Principles, and *also calls upon* States to make use of the services of

- their National Society, in its role as an auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, to clarify the fate and whereabouts of missing persons and to enable individuals and their families to establish, restore or maintain contact, including along migratory routes;
4. notes the adoption by the Movement of its Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 in Resolution 6 of the 2019 Council of Delegates, and *encourages* States to continue their support for the services of the components of the Movement in the field of RFL, as appropriate, in particular by:
 - a. reaffirming and recognizing the specific role of the National Society of their country in providing RFL services, if applicable
 - b. strengthening the National Society's capacities, including through the provision of resources
 - c. ensuring that the National Society has a clearly defined role in the context of the country's overall disaster risk management laws, policies and plans
 - d. exploring and establishing partnerships with the components of the Movement to provide connectivity to help separated families restore and maintain family links
 - e. granting the components of the Movement access to places where there are people in need of RFL services
 - f. cooperating with the components of the Movement, in accordance with their mandates and national, regional and international legal frameworks, by facilitating, if necessary, access to relevant personal data and responding to inquiries they may make in order to help establish the fate and whereabouts of missing persons;
 5. recalls that the Movement processes personal data under the framework set out in the *Restoring Family Links Code of Conduct on Data Protection*;
 6. recognizes the difficulty, and often impossibility, of acquiring consent in cases of missing or separated families, and the necessity that components of the Movement continue to rely upon alternative valid bases for processing of personal data, including as reflected in section 2.2 of the *Restoring Family Links Code of Conduct on Data Protection*, such as important grounds of public interest, vital interest, and compliance with a legal obligation;
 7. welcomes the Movement's efforts to proactively address and provide adequate safeguards against the risks associated with personal data processing, and *encourages* the Movement to continue to enhance the effectiveness of data processing practices;
 8. recognizes that the misuse of data may result in violations of privacy obligations that are set out in national, regional and international legal frameworks, including as such obligations relate to personal data protection, and may have a serious impact on the beneficiaries of RFL services and be detrimental to their safety and to humanitarian action more generally;
 9. also recognizes that it is of utmost importance to ensure that the processing and transfer of personal data between the components of the Movement for the particular purpose of providing RFL services remain as unrestricted as possible, consistent with the *Restoring Family Links Code of Conduct on Data Protection*, relevant international humanitarian law (IHL) instruments and the Statutes of the Movement;
 10. further recognizes that, whenever any component of the Movement collects, retains or otherwise processes personal data in the performance of RFL services, it should do so for purposes that are compatible with the exclusively humanitarian nature of its mandate, and *calls upon* States to respect the humanitarian purpose of the Movement's processing of personal data, in line with Articles 2 and 3 of the Statutes of the Movement;
 11. urges States and the Movement to cooperate to ensure that personal data is not requested or used for purposes incompatible with the humanitarian nature of the work of the Movement, and in conformity with Article 2, including paragraph 5 thereof, of the Statutes of the Movement, or in a manner that would undermine the trust of the people it serves or the independence, impartiality and neutrality of RFL services;
 12. welcomes the Movement's *Restoring Family Links Code of Conduct on Data Protection* as an appropriate foundation for personal data protection;
 13. requests the Movement to periodically review and update the *Restoring Family Links Code of Conduct on Data Protection*, and requests States to support the components of the Movement in their efforts to implement.

1.2.6 RESOLUTION 5

WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP IN THE HUMANITARIAN ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

recalling the mission of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, to protect life and health and ensure respect for the human being,

affirming the importance of women being represented at the decisionmaking level, in the spirit of the Fundamental Principles of the Movement,

recognizing and recalling previous relevant resolutions of the statutory meetings of the Movement, including Resolution 12 of the 2017 Council of Delegates, “Reinforcing gender equality and equal opportunities in the leadership and work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”, calling upon the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies) and the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to take concrete measures to address the question of gender equality and equal opportunities at all levels of their own leadership, and *recognizing and recalling* as well relevant global non-Movement commitments,

recognizing women as agents in risk reduction and first responders in humanitarian crises, including armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies, and the importance of their perspectives always being heard and included from the outset in humanitarian responses, particularly in those countries most affected by humanitarian crises,

recognizing that the empowerment and inclusion of women and girls should extend not only to their essential contributions to crisis prevention, mitigation and response, but also to development assistance, peacebuilding, mediation, reconciliation and reconstruction, and conflict prevention, and that the inclusion of and leadership from women from different backgrounds are crucial to the success of these efforts and should be promoted, facilitated and enabled,

recognizing the importance of women’s groups and women from different backgrounds being involved in decision-making, so as to ensure that the humanitarian needs and priorities in the community are met and the diversity of everyone in the society that they belong to is represented,

remaining deeply concerned about the under-representation of women in governing bodies and senior management positions across all Movement components and in humanitarian organizations in general,

expressing deep concern about the under-representation of women in processes and bodies related to humanitarian work, including in senior positions in national, regional and international institutions, and about the lack of support for women assuming leadership roles in these settings,

expressing appreciation for the work being done and initiatives being carried out by the United Nations, regional organizations, States, humanitarian organizations and others aiming to enhance the role and responsibilities of women in the humanitarian sector, and *underlining* the complementary character of that work and those initiatives with the work of the Movement and of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference),

expressing appreciation also for the work carried out and efforts made so far by the components of the Movement to address gender inequalities and achieve gender parity, in accordance with their respective mandates and institutional focuses,

1. *urges* National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC to increase the representation of women from different backgrounds at all decision-making levels, including in governing bodies and management positions;
2. *requests* that National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC actively seek out and identify women leaders, particularly women in those countries most affected by humanitarian crises, and invest in them, and support and strengthen the pipeline of future women leaders through various means, such as career-path development and leadership programmes targeting women;

3. *urges* National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC to reach gender parity by 2030 at all levels, including in governing bodies and management, and *calls on* them to develop a more uniform, reliable and rigorous approach to gathering accurate, reliable, timely and sex-disaggregated information to be able to monitor and ensure progress;
4. *encourages* States, National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC to invest in research, involving women to identify good practices and how to remove the barriers to women's participation, in particular in leadership and decision-making in humanitarian responses;
5. *urges* States, National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC to support women's full, equal and meaningful participation, leadership and decision-making in international humanitarian forums at the global, regional and national levels;
6. *requests* that National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC report back on the progress on the implementation of this resolution to the 34th International Conference.

Resolution co-sponsors

Swedish Red Cross	Luxembourg Red Cross
Antigua and Barbuda Red Cross Society	Malawi Red Cross Society
Argentine Red Cross	Maldivian Red Crescent
Australian Red Cross	Malta Red Cross Society
Austrian Red Cross	Republic of the Marshall Islands Red Cross
Bahamas Red Cross Society	Mexican Red Cross
Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross Society	Red Cross of Monaco
Barbados Red Cross Society	Myanmar Red Cross Society
Belgium Red Cross	Namibia Red Cross
Belize Red Cross Society	Netherlands Red Cross
Bolivian Red Cross	Palau Red Cross Society
Botswana Red Cross	Palestine Red Crescent Society
Burundi Red Cross	Red Cross Society of Panama
Canadian Red Cross	Peruvian Red Cross
Red Cross Society of China	Portuguese Red Cross
Colombian Red Cross	Saint Kitts and Nevis Red Cross Society
Costa Rica Red Cross	Samoa Red Cross Society
Red Cross Society of Côte d'Ivoire	Senegalese Red Cross Society
Cyprus Red Cross Society	Red Cross of Serbia
Dominica Red Cross Society	Slovenian Red Cross
Egyptian Red Crescent Society	South Sudan Red Cross Society
Ethiopian Red Cross Society	Spanish Red Cross
Finnish Red Cross	Suriname Red Cross Society
Georgia Red Cross Society	Togolese Red Cross
Grenada Red Cross Society	Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society
Haitian National Red Cross Society	Uganda Red Cross Society
Honduran Red Cross	Uruguayan Red Cross
Icelandic Red Cross	Vanuatu Red Cross Society
Irish Red Cross	
Italian Red Cross	State co-sponsors:
Jamaica Red Cross	Bulgaria
Kazakh Red Crescent Society	Estonia
Kuwait Red Crescent Society	Iceland
Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan	Luxembourg
Lebanese Red Cross Society	Portugal
Lesotho Red Cross Society	Spain
Lithuanian Red Cross Society	Sweden

1.2.7 RESOLUTION 6

ACT TODAY, SHAPE TOMORROW

The 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

recalling and celebrating the establishment 100 years ago of the League of Red Cross Societies, now the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), by its founding National Societies, the American Red Cross, the British Red Cross, the French Red Cross, the Italian Red Cross and the Japanese Red Cross Society, amidst a devastating influenza pandemic, with the stated goals “to strengthen and unite, for health activities, already-existing Red Cross Societies and to promote the creation of new Societies”,

commending the IFRC network for its 100 years of service before, during and after crises, for bringing hope to vulnerable persons and aid to those in need, and for raising its voice on behalf of peace, dignity and the safety and well-being of communities to the highest level of government and international diplomacy,

celebrating the 70th anniversary of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, and *recognizing and reaffirming* their acute relevance to the protection of victims of armed conflict and to reducing war’s cost to humanity,

expressing its appreciation for the measures undertaken by States and by the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) in the implementation of the commitments adopted at the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference),

taking note of the *Factual Report on the Proceedings of the Intergovernmental Process on Strengthening Respect for IHL (Resolution 2 of the 32nd International Conference)*, prepared by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Switzerland, and of the progress report *Strengthening International Humanitarian Law: Protecting Persons Deprived of their Liberty (Resolution 1 of the 32nd International Conference)*, prepared by the ICRC,

taking note also of the 2019 report *International Humanitarian Law and the Challenges of Contemporary Armed Conflicts: Recommitting to Protection in Armed Conflict on the 70th Anniversary of the Geneva Conventions*,

taking note further of the outcomes of the 2019 Council of Delegates of the Movement, as referenced in the report delivered to the 33rd International Conference by the chair of the Council, in particular:

- Resolution 1, “Movement-wide commitments for community engagement and accountability”
- Resolution 2, “Statement on integrity of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”
- Resolution 8, “Adopting a Movement statement on migrants and our common humanity”,

expressing appreciation for the individual and collective pledges made by members and observers of the 33rd International Conference,

taking note of the International Conference chair’s paper, the report by the chair of the Drafting Committee and the report on the work of the 33rd International Conference as delivered by the Conference rapporteur,

1. *recognizes* that trust in principled humanitarian action is indispensable to the Movement’s ability to serve vulnerable persons, and *encourages* all members of the 33rd International Conference to act to preserve and develop this trust;
2. *calls upon* all members of the 33rd International Conference to act upon and to make their best effort to fully implement the resolutions of the International Conference and the individual and joint pledges to which they have subscribed;
3. *takes note* of Resolution 4 of the 2019 Council of Delegates which urges all the members of the International Conference to take into account, in all future elections of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Standing Commission), the candidates’ personal qualities, the principle of fair geographical distribution and the equitable balance between men and women;
4. *requests* the ICRC and the IFRC to report to the 34th International Conference on the follow-up by International Conference members on the resolutions and pledges of the 33rd International Conference;
5. *decides* to hold an International Conference in 2023, the date and place of which shall be determined by the Standing Commission.

1.2.8. RESOLUTION 7 DISASTER LAWS AND POLICIES THAT LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

The 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

recalling its prior resolutions focused on disaster laws, in particular Final Goal 3.2 of the 28th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference), Resolution 4 of the 30th International Conference, Resolution 7 of the 31st International Conference and Resolution 6 of the 32nd International Conference on strengthening legal frameworks for disaster risk management, Resolution 3 of the 32nd International Conference on sexual and gender-based violence, and Resolution 1 and the “Declaration: Together for Humanity” of the 30th International Conference in regard to the humanitarian consequences of environmental degradation and climate change,

recalling the United Nations General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, and other subsequent resolutions on these matters, as well as all UNGA resolutions on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters,

recalling further, United Nations General Assembly Resolution 73/139 of 2018, which encouraged States to strengthen their regulatory frameworks for international disaster assistance, taking the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance (known as the IDRL Guidelines) into account,

welcoming the progress that many States have made in strengthening their disaster laws since the 32nd International Conference, drawing, *inter alia*, on advice and support from their National Societies, and *commending* the States and National Societies that have made productive use of the Checklist on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction, as a reference tool, as recognized in Resolution 6 of the 32nd International Conference,

noting the research completed by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in the area of disaster law since the 32nd International Conference, including the findings of its 2017 report *Effective law and policy on gender equality and protection from sexual and gender-based violence in disasters* and the *Law and Disaster Preparedness and Response Multi-Country Synthesis Report* of 2019,

noting that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C,

noting that, in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Heads of State and Government and High Representatives pledged “that no one will be left behind”, stated that they would “endeavour to reach the furthest behind first”, and included targets in the Sustainable Development Goals related to resilience to disasters and climate change,

noting that the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction highlighted the importance of promoting “the coherence and further development, as appropriate, of national and local frameworks of laws, regulations and public policies” and of assigning “as appropriate, clear roles and tasks to community representatives with disaster risk management institutions and processes and decision-making through relevant legal frameworks”,

acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change,

noting that the objectives of the Paris Agreement include, *inter alia*, “increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production”, and that the agreement states that its parties “shall, as appropriate, engage in adaptation planning processes and the implementation of actions, including the development or enhancement of relevant plans, policies and/or contributions”,

noting the potential interplay between disasters, climate change, environmental degradation, and fragility, the catalytic role of disaster risk reduction in scaling up action on climate adaptation, and the critical role of disaster risk reduction in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

noting the focus on resilience and adaptation at the 2019 UN Climate Summit, the Global Commission on Adaptation’s “Preventing Disasters” Action Track and the establishment of the Risk-Informed Early Action Partnership,



noting the initiative of the IFRC, together with academic partners, to undertake research on best practice in the effective integration of disaster risk management and adaptation to climate change,

also noting the existing work of the IFRC and National Societies to support their States with their disaster laws, disaster response and recovery and adaptation to climate change,

noting important contributions in this area by many other actors, including governments, the World Meteorological Organization, the World Bank, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) initiative and the Platform on Disaster Displacement, among others,

stressing the importance of resources and capacity building for developing countries and National Societies for the development and implementation of laws and policies, as appropriate.

Effective disaster laws, policies, strategies and plans that address climate change

1. *encourages* States to assess whether their existing domestic disaster laws, policies, strategies and plans provide guidance to prepare for and address the evolving risks of weather-related disasters, ensure an integrated approach to disaster risk management and adaptation to climate change and promote gender-responsive approaches and community- engagement in risk analysis, planning and decision-making;
2. *further encourages* States that have not already done so, to consider, as appropriate, the integration of innovative approaches to disaster risk management in their laws, policies, strategies and plans, such as the use of:
 - a. anticipatory finance, including forecast-based triggers for the early and timely release of response funding to rapidly mitigate the impact of disasters
 - b. various risk transfer mechanisms
 - c. social protection programmes and mechanisms to strengthen resilience to disasters, channel assistance and restore livelihoods, as needed, after disaster events
 - d. cash and vouchers programmes to assist affected people
 - e. preventive measures to reduce existing risks and avoid the creation of new risks
 - f. risk-informed pre-disaster financing to improve the resilience of community infrastructure;
3. *recognizes* the new Checklist on law and disaster preparedness and response (the new Checklist) as a non-binding but important assessment tool to help States, when applicable, to review domestic legal frameworks for preparedness and response at the national, provincial and local level;
4. *invites* States to use the new Checklist to evaluate and improve, as needed, the content and implementation of their laws, regulations and policies related to preparedness and response, with support from National Societies, the IFRC, relevant UN agencies, local civil society, the private sector, academia, scientific and research institutions and other partners;
5. *reiterates* the importance of strong laws and policies on the facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and on domestic risk reduction, and the usefulness of the IDRL Guidelines and the Checklist on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction as non-binding assessment tools to help States, when applicable, to review domestic legal frameworks for, respectively, the management of international assistance and disaster risk reduction at the national, provincial and local level;

Leaving no one behind in disaster laws, policies, strategies and plans and in climate change adaptation plans, policies and contributions

6. *recognizes* the humanitarian consequences of climate change and environmental degradation, which contribute to poverty, displacement and health risks and may exacerbate violence and conflict, as well as their disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable and the unique challenges faced by small island developing States, among others;
7. *recognizes* the role of existing laws, policies, strategies and plans on disaster risk management in ensuring the adequate protection and inclusion of all people, and *calls* on States to ensure that they include a focus on the most vulnerable and promote their meaningful participation;

8. *encourages* States to consider, as appropriate, whether the disaster laws, policies, strategies and plans and climate change adaptation plans, policies and contributions:
 - a. guard against all forms of discrimination
 - b. address the rights and specific needs of people who might be overlooked, and the most vulnerable.
 - c. ensure the collection and protection of sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data
 - d. ensure the prior and informed consent, where possible, with regards to the collection of data
 - e. promote gender equality and encourage women and girls in leadership and decision-making roles
 - f. ensure contingency planning for sexual and gender-based violence, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, child protection and the care of unaccompanied and separated children
 - g. promote access to essential health services and medical support, including mental health and psychosocial support, as an element of disaster response and recovery
 - h. promote access to services to restore family links for persons separated by disasters;
9. *recognizes* the important contribution of young people in community-based volunteering and awareness-raising of climate-sensitive disaster preparedness and response initiatives, including early warning systems, and encourages all members of the International Conference to continue to engage with them;

Extending support and research

10. *encourages* National Societies, as auxiliaries to their public authorities in the humanitarian field, to continue to provide advice and support to their governments in the development and implementation of effective legal and policy frameworks relevant to disaster risk management and to climate change adaptation;
11. *requests* the IFRC to continue to support National Societies and States in the field of disaster laws, including with respect to the areas of concern mentioned in this resolution, through technical assistance, capacity building, the development of tools, models and guidelines, advocacy, ongoing research and promotion of the sharing of experiences, techniques and best practices among countries;
12. *welcomes* the efforts of National Societies to cooperate with States and other actors, particularly young people and youth volunteers, in meeting the humanitarian needs of persons affected by disasters and in promoting disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation action at the community level, including nature-based solutions, *encourages* them to scale up their efforts in light of the evolving risks related to climate change, and *encourages* States to contribute resources to enable them to do so;
13. *encourages* cooperation between States, regional organizations, National Societies and the IFRC in strengthening links between humanitarian, development and climate change adaptation efforts to reduce disaster and climate risk and enhance resilience;

Ensuring dissemination and review

14. *reaffirms* the important and continuing contributions of the International Conference as one of the key international fora for continued dialogue on the strengthening of disaster laws, rules and policies and, additionally, *welcomes* its contribution to dialogue on domestic legal and policy frameworks for adaptation to climate change;
15. *invites* States, National Societies and the IFRC, working in coordination with National Societies, to disseminate this resolution to appropriate stakeholders, including by bringing it to the attention of relevant international and regional organizations;
16. *requests* the IFRC, in consultation with National Societies, to submit a progress report on the implementation of this resolution to the 34th International Conference.



1.2.9 RESOLUTION 8

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT ON OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS DATED 28 NOVEMBER 2005 BETWEEN MAGEN DAVID ADOM IN ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINE RED CRESCENT SOCIETY

The 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent,

1. notes the adoption of Resolution 10 of the Council of Delegates on 8 December 2019 on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements dated 28 November 2005 between Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (see annex for the text of the Resolution);
2. endorses this Resolution.

ANNEX CD/19/R10 RESOLUTION

Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements dated 28 November 2005 between Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society

In the spirit of the humanitarian mission and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement), and the themes of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference),

the Council of Delegates,

recalling the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by Magen David Adom in Israel (MDA) and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) on 28 November 2005, in advance of the Diplomatic Conference convened to negotiate and adopt the Third Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and pave the way for the future recognition of MDA and the PRCS as components of the Movement, and in particular the following provisions of the MoU:

1. MDA and PRCS will operate in conformity with the legal framework applicable to the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel in 1967, including the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 on the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.
2. MDA and PRCS recognize that PRCS is the authorized National Society in the Palestinian territory and that this territory is within the geographical scope of the operational activities and of the competences of PRCS. MDA and PRCS will respect each other's jurisdiction and will operate in accordance with the Statutes and Rules of the Movement.
3. After the Third Additional Protocol is adopted and by the time MDA is admitted by the General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies:
 - a. MDA will ensure that it has no chapters outside the internationally recognized borders of the State of Israel.
 - b. Operational activities of one society within the jurisdiction of the other society will be conducted in accordance with the consent provision of resolution 11 of the 1921 international conference.
- (...)
4. MDA and PRCS will work together and separately within their jurisdictions to end any misuse of the emblem and will work with their respective authorities to ensure respect for their humanitarian mandate and for international humanitarian law.
- (...)
6. MDA and PRCS will cooperate in the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding (...).

taking note, with appreciation, of the report of October 2019 on the implementation of the MoU prepared by the Hon. Robert Tickner AO, the Independent Monitor appointed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), with the full endorsement of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Standing Commission), to monitor and facilitate progress achieved in the implementation of the MoU, including recurring issues linked to operational elements relevant to the MoU,

recalling Resolution 5 adopted by the Council of Delegates in November 2017 concerning the implementation of the MoU and the AOA between MDA and the PRCS, as well as Resolution 8 of the 32nd International Conference, reaffirming the importance for all components of the Movement to operate at all times in accordance with international humanitarian law and with the Fundamental Principles, Statutes and regulatory frameworks of the Movement,

noting that all National Societies have an obligation to operate in compliance with the Constitution of the IFRC and the “Policy on the protection of integrity of National Societies and bodies of the International Federation”,

recalling both the dispute resolution mechanism set out in Resolution 11 of the 1921 International Conference as well as the Compliance and Mediation Committee of the IFRC, and recognizing the rights of National Societies thereunder,

expressing strong disappointment that after nearly 14 years the MoU is not yet fully implemented and particularly noting the recent difficulties, delays and limitations by Israeli public authorities on the licensing of PRCS ambulances to operate in East Jerusalem and noting the potential related negative humanitarian consequences, whilst at the same time voicing appreciation to the MDA for the advocacy efforts made to its authorities to resolve the situation,

expressing deep regret that the assurances given by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel have not yet been fully honoured, as contained in the letters of 15 November 2015 and of 11 September 2017 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel to the Independent Monitor, in which the Ministry expressed readiness to support MDA to ensure full implementation of its commitments under the MoU, and achieve compliance with the geographic scope provisions, including completing these measures “well in advance of the 33rd International Conference in 2019”,

recognizing that full implementation of the MoU will represent an important achievement for the Movement and that this will contribute to the strength and unity of the Movement,

reaffirming the necessity for effective and positive coordination between all components of the Movement in support of the full implementation of the MoU,

1. notes with continued regret that full implementation has still not been achieved;
2. requires, in order to maintain trust in the humanitarian action of components of the Movement, that all National Societies discharge their humanitarian mandate in accordance with international humanitarian law and with the Fundamental Principles, Statutes and regulatory frameworks of the Movement;
3. requires MDA to further engage with its authorities to end the misuse of the MDA logo in the territory considered within the geographic scope of the PRCS, and strongly urges MDA to continue to work with its authorities and with other key stakeholders to ensure that any markings used in this territory are clearly distinguishable from the MDA logo;
4. strongly urges the State of Israel to honour, without delay, its commitment to ensure that emergency medical services operating within the geographical scope of the PRCS “will, on a permanent basis, bear a logo different than the MDA logo, which will be clearly distinguishable from the MDA official logo”, as set out in the 11 September 2017 letter of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
5. also calls on the State of Israel to create the necessary conditions to enable MDA to comply, well in advance of the 2021 Council of Delegates, with its obligations with respect to the geographic scope provisions of the MoU, in particular:
 - a. MDA will ensure that it has no chapters outside the internationally recognized borders of the State of Israel.
 - b. Operational activities of one society within the jurisdiction of the other society will be conducted in accordance with the consent provision of resolution 11 of the 1921 international conference.

6. *affirms*, in particular, that MDA's ability to fully comply with its obligations under the MoU will be adversely impacted if the Government commitments in support of MDA as set forth in the second, fifth and sixth paragraphs of the 11 September 2017 letter of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel are not implemented, and that, in consequence, a call to activate the dispute resolution mechanism set out in Resolution 11 of the 1921 International Conference as well as the possibility of recourse to the Compliance and Mediation Committee of the IFRC may result;
7. *welcomes* the strengthening of the Liaison Committee referred to under the AOA, ensuring a minimum of four Liaison Committee meetings per annum, and *encourages* continued work between the two National Societies in fulfilling their shared humanitarian mandates, commitments and their practical liaison and coordination in daily operations;
8. *reaffirms* the decisions of the Council of Delegates and the 32nd International Conference in 2015 that the monitoring process should continue and *requests* the ICRC and the IFRC to renew the mandate of an Independent Monitor until the 2021 Council of Delegates;
9. *agrees* that the roles of the Independent Monitor under the terms of reference as aligned with this resolution include, but are not limited to, the following main functions:
 - a. undertake monitoring visits no less than twice a year, and provide at least one interim report to the Movement prior to the 2021 Council of Delegates;
 - b. provide written reports after each visit as well as additional updates to be shared with the PRCS, MDA, ICRC and IFRC, as well as the Standing Commission, in relation to his / her activities and findings;
 - c. engage as necessary with all relevant stakeholders, including the authorities;
 - d. provide an evidence-based analysis and validation of the information provided by the two National Societies regarding the implementation of the MoU, with specific reference to the licensing of the PRCS ambulances and to ensure the ability of PRCS to carry out its operations in East Jerusalem;
 - e. document progress on the commitments made under the AOA;
 - f. call upon assistance from a support group of National Societies, chosen in consultation with the ICRC, IFRC and the two National Societies, and eminent individuals from within or outside the Movement;
 - g. explore constructive options within the Movement to address issues identified in the reports;
 - h. communicate any recommendations or concerns on the implementation of the MoU to the ICRC and the IFRC, as well as the Standing Commission, in advance of the 2021 Council of Delegates;
10. *encourages* National Societies, when requested, to engage with their governments to help facilitate the implementation of the MoU, international humanitarian law, the Fundamental Principles, Statutes and regulatory frameworks of the Movement;
11. *requests* the ICRC and the IFRC to provide logistical and technical support to the monitoring process and to ensure the provision of a report on implementation of the MoU to the 2021 Council of Delegates and through it to the 34th International Conference;
12. *reaffirms* its collective determination to support full implementation of the MoU and expresses its strong desire to see full implementation achieved and validated well in advance of the 2021 Council of Delegates as an important symbol of hope and success.

2

LISTE DES DÉLÉGUÉS LIST OF DELEGATES LISTA DE DELEGADOS قائمة المندوبين

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MEMBRES DE LA CONFÉRENCE MEMBERS OF THE CONFERENCE MIEMBROS DE LA CONFERENCIA

أعضاء المؤتمر

Selon le Règlement du Mouvement international, l'ordre alphabétique des membres de la Conférence est celui des noms de leur pays dans la langue française. Les indications relatives à la composition des délégations sont dans la langue choisie par la délégation.

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Movement, the alphabetical order of the members of the Conference shall be the alphabetical order of the French names of their respective countries. All details pertaining to the composition of delegations are in the language chosen by the delegation.

De acuerdo con el Reglamento del Movimiento, el orden alfabético de los miembros de la Conferencia es conforme al de los nombres de sus países en francés. Las indicaciones relativas a la composición de las delegaciones están en el idioma escogido por la respectiva delegación.

وفقاً للنظام الداخلي للحركة الدولية، يكون الترتيب الأبجدي لأعضاء المؤتمر هو الترتيب الأبجدي لأسماء بلدانهم باللغة الفرنسية. وتكون كل التفاصيل الخاصة بتشكيل الوفود باللغة التي يختارها كل وفد.

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Dr	Nilab Mobarez Secretary General		

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H.E.	Mr Nasir Ahmad Andisha Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Wali Suhrab Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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Advocate	Urban Mothibedi Panyane Chairman of the Board	Ms	Mabel Koketso Secretary General
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H.E.	Ms Nozipho Joyce Mxakato-Diseko Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Nelia Barnard Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Ms	Sicel'mpilo Shange-Buthane Director, Humanitarian Affairs, Department of International Relations and Cooperation	Mr	Mlulami Singaphi Counsellor, Humanitarian Affairs, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Ms	Kasturie Maharaj Deputy Director, Humanitarian Affairs, Department of International Relations and Cooperation	Ms	Mpho Somhlaba First Secretary, Humanitarian Affairs, Permanent Mission, Geneva

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Mr	Sokol Gjoka Director, Directorate of International Organisations, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Albania		

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M.	Mehdi Litim Représentant permanent adjoint, Mission permanente, Genève	Dr	Melissa Chanegriha Experte
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Mr	Peter Felten Head of Division for Humanitarian Assistance, Policy, Federal Foreign Office, Berlin, Germany	Ms	Carolin Huber Advisor, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr	Frank Jarasch Head of Division for Public International Law, Federal Foreign Office, Berlin, Germany	Ms	Jeannine Drohla Desk Officer, Division for International Humanitarian Law, Ministry of Defense, Berlin, Germany
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		Mr	Philipp Socha Desk Officer, Division for Public International Law, Federal Foreign Office, Berlin, Germany

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		Ms	Valerie Kainberger Intern

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Mr	Jeyhun Mirzayev Secretary General	Ms	Nigar Rustamzade Youth Delegate

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Mr	Vugar Hajjiyev Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Kamran Seyfullayev Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

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Mr	Mubarak Khalifa Alhadi Director General	Mr	Abdulla Yaser Abdulla Member of Youth Committee
Mr	Ali Ahmed Mohamed Kadhem Head of Public Relations and Members Affairs Committee		

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H.E.	Dr Sheikha Rana Bint Isa Al-Khalifa Undersecretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Mr	Talal Ebrahim Rashed Bukamal Executive Secretary, Ministry of foreign Affairs
H.E.	Mr Mansoor Ahmed Almansoor Vice-Chairman of the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law	Ms	Asma Al Kaabi Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr	Mohammed Abdulrahman Alhaidan Director of Legal Affairs Directorate	Mr	Majed Alnoaimi Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
		Ms	Rania Alsherooqi Third Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Mr	Md Feroz Salah Uddin Secretary General	Mr	Abdullah Al Razwan Adviser to the Vice-Chairman
Ms	Sayma Ferdowsy Deputy Director, International Relation and Communication	Mr	Rakibul Alam Rabby Youth Delegate

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humanitaire et chargé des relations avec
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Mme Tiene Lievens
Manager International Cooperation, Belgian
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S.E.	M. Geert Muylle Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent, Mission permanente, Genève	Mme	Laurence Grandjean Attachée, direction du Droit international public, SPF Affaires étrangères, Bruxelles
M.	Tom Neijens Représentant permanent adjoint, Mission permanente, Genève	M.	Jonas Périlleux Attaché, Autorité centrale de coopération avec les juridictions pénales internationales, SPF Justice, Bruxelles
M.	Johan Debar Ministre Conseiller, Mission permanente, Genève	Mme	Aude Van Grootenbruel Attachée, Service d'études, direction générale Secrétariats et coordination, SPF Chancellerie du Premier Ministre
Mme	Lieve Pellens Présidente de la CIDH	Mme	Alessia Veri Attachée, Service d'aide humanitaire, direction Aide humanitaire et transition, direction générale Coopération au développement et aide humanitaire (DGD), SPF Affaires étrangères, commerce extérieur et coopération au développement, Bruxelles
Mme	Laurence De Graeve Attachée, département Appui juridique, section Droit international et humanitaire, ministère de la Défense	Mme	Fabienne Reuter Conseillère, déléguée générale des Gouvernements de la Wallonie et de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Genève
Mme	Pauline Warnotte Capitaine, Conseillère juridique, Répétiteur militaire, Chaire de droit, École Royale Militaire	Mme	Audrey Moncarey Attachée à la délégation de la Wallonie et de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Genève
M.	Alexis Goldman Conseiller, direction du Droit international public, Service public fédéral (SPF) Affaires étrangères, Bruxelles		

BELIZE / BELIZE / BELICE / بليز

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Mr	Nigel Ebanks President	Ms	Lilia Bowman Director General
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BÉNIN / BENIN / BENIN / بنين

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M.	Mathias Agoligan Avoha Président national	M.	Epiphane Lucien Yelome Secrétaire général a.i.
M.	Eustache Orens Houdegbe Chef, Service Jeunesse et gestion des volontaires		

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S.E.	M. Eloi Laourou Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent, Mission permanente, Genève	M.	Simon Pierre Fandy Premier Secrétaire, Mission permanente, Genève
		Mme	Fifamè Goussoumede-Dovonou Attachée, Mission permanente, Genève

BHOUTAN / BHUTAN / BUTÁN / بوتان

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Dr	Dragyel Tenzin Dorjee Secretary General	Ms	Tashi Wangmo Member
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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Pema Tshewang
Minister, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr Dorji Rigtsal
Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Ms Tshering Lhadn
Minister Counselor, Permanent Mission, Geneva

**BOLIVIE (Plurinational State of) / BOLIVIA (État plurinational de) /
BOLIVIA (Estado Plurinacional de) / بوليفيا (دولة - متعددة القوميات)**

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Dr. Gonzalo De la Fuente Diaz
Presidente

BOSNIE-HERZÉGOVINE / BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA / BOSNIA Y HERZEGOVINA / البوسنة والهرسك

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Rajko Lazic
Secretary General

Ms Zaklina Ninkovic
International Relations Coordinator and
Assistant to the Secretary General

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E. Dr Nermina Kapetanovic
Ambassador, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr Darko Vidovic
Minister-counsellor, Head of the Human
Rights Department, Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Mr Bojan Masic
Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

BOTSWANA / BOTSWANA / BOTSUANA / بوتسوانا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Motlamorago Gaseitsiwe
President

Mr Kutlwano Mukokomani
Secretary General

Mr Monametsi Ramadi
Vice-President Youth

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E. Dr Athaliah L. Molokomme
Ambassador, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission, Geneva

BRÉSIL / BRAZIL / BRASIL / البرازيل

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Júlio Cals de Alencar
Acting President

Mr Thiago de Abreu Quintaneiro Matias
Head of Volunteering and Youth

Mr Ricardo de Castro Braz
Secretary General

Ms Marcelle Sampaio Marques Motta
National Coordinator of Humanitarian
Programs

Mr Edson Allemay dos Santos
Chief of Cabinet - President Office

Mr Silvio Antonio Mota Guerra
National Director of Finance

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Ms Maria Nazareth Farani Azevêdo Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Carlos Henrique Zimmermann Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
H.E.	Ms Maria Luisa Escorel de Moraes Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Clara Martins Solon Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Col.	Marcelo Cavaliere Colonel	Mr	Eden Clabuchar Martingo Second Secretary
Mr	Alvani Adão Da Silva Counsellor	Mr	Pedro Piacesi Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr	Leonardo Abrantes First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Vismar Ravagnani Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr	Comarci Nunes First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Bruno Alexandre Morais Lima Attaché, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr	Igor Barbosa First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Guilia Dabul Scortegegna de Medeiros Member
Ms	Daniele Farias Luz First Secretary	Ms	Juliana Benedetti Member
Mr	Rodrigo Morais Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Bruna Da Silva e Silva Intern
		Ms	Giulia Medeiros Intern

BRUNÉI DARUSSALAM / BRUNEI DARUSSALAM / BRUNEI DARUSSALAM / بروني دار السلام

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Muhammad Suhaimi Ibrahim President	Mr	Abdul Kadir Abdullah Secretary General
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H.E.	Mr Masurai Masri Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	PG Anak Nimatullah Athirah Muntassir Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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BULGARIE / BULGARIA / BULGARIA / بلغاريا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Hristo Genadiev Grigorov President	Ms	Preslava Volodieva Lilova-Georgieva Director International Cooperation and Programmes
Prof.	Krasimir Borisov Gigov Director General		

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

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Ms	Yana Yankova Mihaylova-Peycheva Chief expert, Human rights Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Bulgaria	Mr	Mihail Mihailov Mouhlov Intern, Permanent mission, Geneva

BURKINA FASO / BURKINA FASO / BURKINA FASO / بوركينا فاسو

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M.	Dénis Bakyono Président	Dr	Leon Die Kassabo Conseiller juridique
M.	Windlassida Lazare Zoungrana Secrétaire général	Mme	Sid-Bewendin Léa Balima Nikiema Coordonnatrice, Communication, principes et valeurs humanitaires
Mme	Iritakoné Larissa Toe Directrice, Développement économique et des centres de formation	M.	Serges Natori Délégué jeunesse

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M.	Passida Pascal Gouba Directeur général des Affaires juridiques et consulaires du ministère des Affaires étrangères et de la coopération	M.	Germain Zong Naba Pime Conseiller (juridique), Mission permanente, Genève
Mme	Salamata Odette Niamba Chef du Département des études, de la communication et des solutions durables	Mme	Julie Francine Yameogo Secrétaire permanente du Comité interministériel des droits humains et du droit international humanitaire
		M.	Emmanuel Ouali Deuxième conseiller

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M.	Pamphile Kantabaze Président	M.	Anselme Katyunguruza Secrétaire général
Mme	Christine Ntahe Membre de la Gouvernance	Mme	Marlène Iradukunda Volontaire

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

M.	Gatoto Joseph Représentant du Gouvernement Burundais
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CABO VERDE / CABO VERDE / CABO VERDE / كابو فيردى

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

M.	Arlindo Soares De Carvalho Président	M.	José Lopez Simédo Directeur de Cabinet du Président et Directeur du Département des catastrophes, des urgences et du secourisme
M.	Salomão Sanches Furtado Secrétaire général		

CAMBODGE / CAMBODIA / CAMBOYA / كمبوديا

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H.E.	Ms Chantinie Pum Secretary General	Ms	Kolab Luy Youth Delegate
Mr	Vaddanak Kieng Secretariat Senior Assistant		

État • State • Estado • الدولة

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	M Sokkhoeurn An Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Bunchheng Say First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr	Thunsereibandith Ngeth Counselor, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Phadora Shoka Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

CAMEROUN / CAMEROON / CAMERÚN / الكاميرون

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mme	Cécile Léonie Akame Mfoumou née Mendomo Présidente	M.	Renauld Gilles Arsène Bodiong Bombang Directeur de la Coopération
M.	Jean Urbain Zoa Secrétaire général	Dr	Aimé Gilbert Mbonda Noula Youth Delegate

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

M.	Théophile Olivier Bosse Conseiller, Mission permanente, Genève
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CANADA / CANADA / CANADÁ / كندا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Amit Mehra Vice-Chair, Board of Directors	Ms	Ann Clancy Chief of Staff
Mr	Gavin Giles Vice-Chair, Board of Directors	Ms	Catherine Gribbin Senior Legal Advisor, International Humanitarian Law
Ms	Sara John Fowler Chair, Board of Directors	Ms	Shelley Cardinal Speaker

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Ms Leslie Norton Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Rory Raudsepp-Hearne First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr	Alan H. Kessel Assistant Deputy Minister, Legal Affairs and Legal Advisers, Department of Global Affairs of Canada	Ms	Joelle Rousset Humanitarian Affairs Advisor
Col.	Rob Holman Deputy Judge Advocate General - Operational and International Law	Ms	Lorraine Anderson Legal Advisor
Ms	Kara Mitchell Deputy Director - Humanitarian Policy and Global Engagement	Ms	Katie Durvin Senior Policy Officer, Humanitarian Policy and Global Engagement
Ms	Angela Claire Veitch Deputy Director, International Law	Ms	Sekyen Tyoden Policy Officer
Ms	Tamara Mawhinney Minister-Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Olivia Marovelli Policy Officer
		Mr	Faisal Paktian Humanitarian Affairs officer
		Mr	Bradley Bates Legal Officer
		Ms	Jennifer Castello Program Assistant - Humanitarian Affairs

¹ This delegation recalled the position expressed in the communication addressed to the Depository of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and circulated by the Depository by Notifications GEN 3/14 of 21 May 2014

CHILI / CHILE / CHILE / شيلي

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*Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد*Sr. Patricio Alberto Acosta Sansarricq
Presidente Nacional

État • State • Estado • الدولة

*Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد*S.E. Sr. Frank Tressler Zamorano
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Misión Permanente, GinebraSra. Carla Serazzi
Representante Permanente Alternativa, Misión
Permanente, GinebraSr. Pablo Bustos
Primer Secretario, Misión Permanente,
GinebraSra. Pamela Moraga
Primera Secretaria, Misión Permanente,
GinebraSrta. Javiera Nunez
Asesora Jurídica, Ministerio de Relaciones
Exteriores de ChileSr. Juan Pablo Schaeffer
Agregado responsable de cuestiones
laborales, Misión Permanente, GinebraSr. Ricardo Matute
Asistente**CHINE / CHINA / CHINA / الصين**

Société nationale • National Society • Sociedad Nacional • الجمعية الوطنية

*Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد*Dr. Zhu Chen
President
Ms. Huiling Liang
Executive Vice President
Mr. Fulong Yu
Vice President
Mr. Hao Ren
Director of External Liaison Department
Mr. Lixin Yao
Director of Organization and Communication
Department
Ms. Liying Yu
Deputy Director of External Liaison
Department
Mr. Wenbo Ma
Head of International Organizations Division
Ms. Hui Ma
Head of Communication Division
Ms. Yi Long
Deputy Head of International Organizations
Division
Ms. Yue Chen
Deputy Counsellor, International Cooperation
Division
Ms. Jiou Wang
Deputy Head of Finance Division for Non-
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Assistant to the Secretary-General of Chinese
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Mr. George Joseph Ho
President of Hong Kong Red Cross, Branch of
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Dr. Chor Chiu Lau
Deputy Chairperson of Hong Kong Red Cross,
Branch of Red Cross Society of China
Ms. Yuen Han, Bonnie So
Secretary General of Hong Kong Red Cross,
Branch of the Red Cross Society of China
Ms. Chuen Ping, Eleanor Lam
Deputy Secretary General of Hong Kong Red
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Ms. Hiu Yee, Karen Poon
Head of International and Relief Service of
Hong Kong Red Cross, Branch of Red Cross
Society of China
Mr. Quin Va
President of Directive Council, Macau Red
Cross, Branch of Red Cross Society of China
Mr. Zongwei Zhang
Member
Mr. Longtian Zhang
Member

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Xu Chen Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Zhangwei Xie First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr	Dahai Qi Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Cheng Chen Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Ms	Jijuan LI Counsellor	Ms	Jinying WU Attache
Mr	Jianzhong Chen Deputy Director	Mr	Xinli Zhang Delegate

CHYPRE / CYPRUS / CHIPRE / قبرص

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Ms	Fotini Papadopoulou President	Ms	Amalia Erotokritos Member of the Council
Ms	Leda Koursoumba First Vice-President	Ms	Christina Kapartis Director General
Dr	Mustafa Hami Second Vice-President		

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H.E.	Mr George Kasoulides Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Michaelia Avani Second Secretary
Ms	Andrea Petranayi Counsellor, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Christos Makriyiannis Attaché

COLOMBIE / COLOMBIA / COLOMBIA / كولومبيا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Sra.	Judith Carvajal de Álvarez Presidenta Nacional	Sr.	Fabián Arellano Líder de Gestión del Riesgo
Dra.	Fabiola Pineda de Villegas Vicepresidenta de la Junta Directiva Nacional	Sra.	Silvia Patricia Gelvez Delgado Representante Nacional de Juventud
Sra.	Blanca Hilda Hernández Linares Vocal Junta Directiva Nacional	Sr.	Miguel Antonio Mejia Presidente, Sección Amazonas
Dr.	Juvenal Francisco Moreno Carrillo Director Ejecutivo Nacional	Dra.	Patricia Prada Ayala Representante Nacional de Damas Grises

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Excma.	Sra. Adriana del Rosario Mendoza Agudelo Embajadora, Representante Permanente, Misión Permanente, Ginebra	Crl.	Carlos Javier Soler Parra Director de Derechos Humanos del Ejército Nacional de Colombia, Ministerio de Defensa Nacional de Colombia
Sr.	Pedro Agustin Roa Arboleda Ministro Plenipotenciario - Dirección de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Colombia	Sra.	Diana Patricia Mejía Molina Ministra Consejera, Misión Permanente, Ginebra
		Sra.	Diana Esperanza Castillo Castro Segundo Secretario, Misión Permanente, Ginebra

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|---|
| Sr. | Juan Carlos Moreno Gutiérrez
Segundo Secretario, Misión Permanente,
Ginebra | Sra. | Leszli Kalli Lopez
Tercera Secretaria, Misión Permanente,
Ginebra |
| Sra. | Natalia María Pulido Sierra
Segunda Secretaria, Misión Permanente,
Ginebra | Mr | Juan Ruiz Quintero
Pasante, Misión Permanente, Ginebra |

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| M. | Moustadrane Ben Salim
Président | M. | Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed
Trésorier général |
| M. | Hassani Said
Vice-président en charge de la Politique et de
la stratégie | M. | Mohamed Dhiyaoudine
Coordinateur national Jeunesse |
| M. | Daniel Ali Soumaili
Secrétaire général | M. | Ali Hassani
Coordinateur |

CONGO / CONGO / CONGO / الكونغو

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

- | | | | |
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| Dr. | Christian Sédar Ndinga
Président | M. | Jean Emmanuel Paul Mababidy
Président départemental de la Croix-Rouge
Jeunesse de Pointe-Noire |
| M. | Gabriel Goma Mahinga
Président de la Jeunesse, 2 ^e Vice-président
chargé de la Coopération et des relations
extérieures | M. | André Dianzinga
Secrétaire général par intérim; Chef
du département Développement
organisationnel, institutionnel et des
ressources |
| Mme | Marie Charlotte Tula
Membre du Conseil national de gouvernance | | |

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- | | | | |
|------|---|----|--|
| S.E. | M. Aimé Clovis Guillond
Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent,
Mission permanente, Genève | M. | Martin Niama
Conseiller, Mission permanente, Genève |
|------|---|----|--|

COSTA RICA / COSTA RICA / COSTA RICA / كوستاريكا

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- | | | | |
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| Prof. | Glauco Ulises Quesada Ramírez
Presidente | Sr. | Idalberto González Jiménez
Gerente General |
| Sra. | Dyanne Marengo González
Directiva del Consejo Nacional | Sr. | Marcos Pérez Soto
Asesor Despacho de la Presidencia |

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- | | | | |
|-------------|--|------|---|
| Excma. Sra. | Elayne Whyte Gómez
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| Sra. | Adriana Solano Laclé
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| | | Sra. | Mariana Castro Hernández
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Sra. Alice Jelmini
Pasante, Misión Permanente, Ginebra

Sr. Marc Ramzy
Pasante

Sr. Francis Shin
Pasante

CÔTE D'IVOIRE / CÔTE D'IVOIRE / CÔTE D'IVOIRE / كوت ديفوار

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

M. Leonce Bruno Da
Président

M. Kignammand Camara
Coordinateur Jeunesse, Comité local
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leadership de la jeunesse

M. N'Guessan Emmanuel Kouadio
Secrétaire général

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S.E. M. Kouadio Adjoumani
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Mission permanente, Genève

M. Konan François Kouame
Premier Secrétaire, Mission permanente,
Genève

M. Karim Silue
Conseiller, Mission permanente, Genève

CROATIE / CROATIA / CROACIA / كرواتيا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Robert Markt
Executive President

Ms Branka Arlovic
Adviser for International Humanitarian Law
and Humanitarian Diplomacy

Ms Vesna Krivosic
Head of Tracing Service

Mr Christian Chylak
Member

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Funcionario, Dirección General de Asuntos
Multilaterales y Derecho Internacional,
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Mr	Klaus Nørskov Director of Communication and Advocacy	Mr	Jonathan Grant Somer Legal Adviser
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		Mr	Johannes Wieth-Klitgaard Intern
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M.	Abdi Farah Ahmed Président	M.	Abdi Khaireh Bouh Secrétaire général
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Ms Hanan Shouman Ms Laila Hiatham Rabie
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ÉQUATEUR / ECUADOR / ECUADOR / أكوادور

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Mr	Harri Viik President	Ms	Haide Laanemets Secretary of International Affairs
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Mr	Alton Sandile Lukhele First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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Mr	Karl Chang Associate General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, U.S. Department of Defense	Mr	Matthew McCormack Associate General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, U.S. Department of Defense

2 This delegation recalled the position expressed in the communication addressed to the Depository of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and circulated by the Depository by Notifications GEN 3/14 of 21 May 2014

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| M. Eric Carrey
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Mr	Samuel Kofi Addo Secretary General		

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First Secretary, Permanent Mission, GenevaMr Senthil Kumar Subramanian
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Mr	Liam O'Dwyer Secretary General		

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Mr	Justin Dolan Deputy Director, Humanitarian Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ireland	Mr	Niall Cremen Humanitarian Advisor
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Ms	Kristín S. Hjalmtýsdóttir Secretary General	Ms	Melanie Powell Project Manager Psychosocial Support
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Mr	Eli Bin Director General	Mr	Chaim Rafalowski DM Coordinator
Dr	Noam Nissim Yifrach Advisor	Mr	Tamer Abu Gaffer Youth Delegate
		Mr	Amit Akiva Delegate

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Mr	Michele Bonizzi Head of Health		
Mr	Francesco Caponi President, Tuscany Regional Branch		

3 This delegation recalled the position expressed in the communication addressed to the Depositary of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and circulated by the Depositary by Notifications GEN 3/14 of 21 May 2014

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Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

Mr Mitsukuni Miyakawa
Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

Mr Ken Kondo
Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

Mr Yasuo Kitano
First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr Tomoyoshi Maehira
First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Ms Saori Nagahara
First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr Go Takashima
Second Secretary (Lawyer), Permanent
Mission, Geneva

JORDANIE / JORDAN / JORDANIA / الأردن

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Dr Ibrahim Aljazi
Legal Consultant

Mr Abed Al-Rahim Fathi Boucai
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Member

Mr Mutlaq Mohammed El-Hadid
Head of Disaster Management Unit /Youth
Representative

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Mr Odai Abdel Wahab J. Al Qaralleh
Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Ms Ghadeer Elfayez
Counselor, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr Mohammad Erekat
Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr Rami Khawaldeh
Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

KAZAKHSTAN / KAZAKHSTAN / KAZAJSTÁN / كازاخستان

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Vice-President

Ms Assel Kalmagambetova
Volunteer Coordinator

Ms Aigul Kumasheva
Director of the Organizational Development
Department

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Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr Abzal Mambetalinov
First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

Mr Arman Baissuanov
Minister - Counsellor, Permanent Mission,
Geneva

Ms Meruyert Baikuatova
Third Secretary of the Ministry of foreign
affairs of Kazakhstan

KENYA / KENYA / KENIA / كينيا

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Mr	Francis Masika Governor	Mr	James Onsongo Nyamao Ag Head of Health Nutrition and Social Services
Ms	Jacqueline Wirangi Wasonga Kitulu 1st Deputy Governor	Ms	Suada Abdulla Disaster Risk Reduction Manager
Dr	Abbas Gedi Gullet Secretary General	Mr	Edwine Osiany Okuta Legal Adviser
Dr	Asha Mohammed Abdulrahim Secretary General Designate	Ms	Sarah Nduku Nzau Policy and Advocacy Officer
Mr	Idris Ahmed Irshad Deputy Secretary General	Dr	Halima Saado Abdillahi Participant
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Ms	Anna C.R. Keah Counsellor II	Ms	Emily Jepkoech Kimosop Senior Social Development Officer
		Mr	Nigel Mwaura Foreign Service Officer

KIRGHIZISTAN / KYRGYZSTAN / KIRGUISTÁN / كيرغيزستان

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Mr	Azamat Baialinov President	Ms	Aidai Erikova Head of Social Development Department
Mr	Chingiz Dzhakipov Director General	Ms	Bermet Usubalieva Head of Organizational Development Department
Ms	Sabina Ibraimova Deputy Director General		

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Ms	Saikal Esengeldieva First secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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KIRIBATI / KIRIBATI / KIRIBATI / كيريباتي

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Mr	Martin Puta Tofinga President	Mr	Depweh Kanono Secretary General
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Mr	Terieta Mwemwenikeaki Delegate
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KOWEÏT / KUWAIT / KUWAIT / الكويت

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Dr	Hilal M Al-Sayer President	Ms	Nevein Yosry Hasan Director of International Relation and Projects Management
Ms	Maha Barjas Al-Barjas Secretary General	Mr	Abdulrahman AlSaleh Head of Balsam Project
Dr	Musaed Al Enizi Director of Legal Department	Ms	Loulwah AlKhalidi Volunteer
Mr	Khaled Z A Z Al Naser Director of Public Relations and Media	Mr	Yousef Al Naki Volunteer
Ms	Mona Alshatti Director of the President's office	Ms	Awatef AlQallaf Volunteer

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H.E.	Mr Jamal Mohamed Issa Alghunaim Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission	Mr	Abdullah Alkhubaizi First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
		Dr	Nawaf Alshuraian Magistrat

LESOTHO / LESOTHO / LESOTO / ليسوتو

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Mr	Silas Lecholocholo Mosuhli President	Mr	Kopano Benjamin Masilo Secretary General
Ms	Mabataung Mildred Ntai 2nd Vice-President		

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H.E.	Mr Refiloe Litjobo Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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LETONIE / LATVIA / LETONIA / لاتفيا

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Mr	Viktors Jaksons President	Ms	Agnese Trofimova Head of International and Public Relations
Mr	Uldis Likops Secretary General		

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H.E.	Mr Janis Karklins Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Rolands Ezergailis Head of Division, International Treaties Division, Legal Department
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LIBAN / LEBANON / LÍBANO / لبنان

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Mme	Miriana Bader Directrice du secteur des Jeunesses	M.	Charbel Aidamouni First Aid and Public Safety Training Manager
M.	Hicham El Haddad Directeur de la section des Affaires internes	Ms	Samar Saade Abou Jaoude Coordinator between President and Secretary General, Planning Unit Coordinator, PMER Coordinator

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S.E.	M. Salim Baddoura Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent, Mission permanente, Genève	M.	Nabil Ferzli Deuxième Secrétaire
M.	Ahmad Soueidan Conseiller	M.	Hani Chaar Adviser

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Mr	Jerome NJ Clarke Jr. President	Mr	G. Ambullai Perry Secretary General
Mr	M. Wee Rogers Chairman on Finance and Risk Commission	Mr	Oniel Dyujah Bestman Communications and Reporting Officer

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Mr	Mare Eisa Secretary General	Ms	Hanan Mousa Amqawi Alsaity Deputy of Youth and Volunteers Office
Mr	Farag Omar Ali Omar Deputy Secretary General	Mr	Salah Eden Mohamed Elnassfai Secretary General consultant
Mr	Mohamed Elbanuni Director of Secretary General's Office	Mr	Yousuf Salih Buhadimah Marzouq Secretary General's personal assistant
Dr	Osama Azzam Sultan Head of International Relations Manager		

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H.E.	Mr Tamim Baiou Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Dr	Osama Omran Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr	Alsaddeeq Mohammed Ali Abushihiwah Member of the National Committee for International Humanitarian Law	Ms	Suad Aljoki First Secretary, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mr	Housam Hussein Mohamed Tantush Member of the National Committee for International Humanitarian Law	Mr	Almoktar Omar Saeid Ashnan Rapporteur and Coordinator of the National Committee for International Humanitarian Law

LIECHTENSTEIN / LIECHTENSTEIN / LIECHTENSTEIN / ليختنشتاين

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Ms Ulrike Charles Executive Director
H.S.H. Prince Nikolaus of Liechtenstein
Head of International Affairs

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H.E. Dr Peter Christian Matt Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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Ms Karin Lingg Minister, Office for Foreign Affairs, Vaduz
Mr Daniel Batliner Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Ms Alessia Risch Intern, Permanent Mission, Geneva

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Mr Remigijus Kalpokas Board Member
Ms Gintare Guzeviciute Secretary General

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H.E. Mr Andrius Krivas Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Ms Ruta Rudinskaite-Larsen Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Ms Dalia Vitkauskaitè-Meurice Counselor
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LUXEMBOURG / LUXEMBOURG / LUXEMBURGO / لكسمبرغ

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M. Marc Crochet
Directeur général adjoint

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Mme Anne Goedert Représentante permanente adjointe, Mission permanente, Genève
Mme Sandra Merens Secrétaire de légation
Mme Catherine Wiseler Conseillère, Mission permanente, Genève
M. Philippe Wealer Attaché, Développement et action humanitaire
Mme Catherine Kayser Agent Desk humanitaire (MAEE - Direction de la coopération au développement et de l'action humanitaire)

MADAGASCAR / MADAGASCAR / MADAGASCAR / مدغشقر

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Mme Alice Ralisoa Ep Rasitefanoelina Présidente
Mlle Mihary Amintsoa Razafimanantsoa Membre, Commission Jeunesse – Volontaire
Mme Andoniaina Ratsimamanga Secrétaire générale

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M. Christian Paul Andriamahavory
Secrétaire général du ministère de la Justice

MALAISIE / MALAYSIA / MALASIA / ماليزيا

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Her	Highness Dato' Seri DiRaja Tan Sri Tunku Puteri Intan Safinaz Binti Almarhum Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, Tunku Temenggong Kedah National Chairman	Mr	Sayed A. Rahman Bin Sayed Mohd Secretary General
		Mr	Saiful Izan Bin Nordin Manager, International Humanitarian Law, Legal and International Relations
Dr	Mohamed Alwi bin Abdul Rahman National Executive Board Member	Ms	Shi Jie Chew Youth Representative
Mr	Suhaimi bin Yacob National Executive Board Member		

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Dr Dato' Ahmad Faisal Muhamad Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Malaysia, Geneva	Ms	Kalpana Devi Rajantran First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Malaysia, Geneva
Dr	Hishamuddin bin Mohd Hashim Deputy Secretary General (Strategic), Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development	Ms	Rasyidah Zainal First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Malaysia, Geneva
Mr	Syed Edwan Anwar Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Malaysia, Geneva	Ms	Nur Azureen Mohd Pista First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Malaysia, Geneva
		Ms	Siti Nur Hajar Abu Bakar Principal Assistant Secretary

MALAWI / MALAWI / MALAUI / ملاوي

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Mr	Mcbain Laiton Kanongodza Secretary General	Ms	Lilian Sabe Mwandira Youth Delegate
Ms	Prisca Pililani Waluza Director of Programmes		

MALDIVES / MALDIVES / MALDIVAS / ملديف

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Mr	Aishath Niyaz First Vice-President	Ms	Aminath Masha Midhuhath Youth Member
Ms	Aishath Noora Mohamed Secretary General		

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Ms	Hawla Ahmed DiDi Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Gamar Abdulla Intern, Permanent Mission, Geneva

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Dr	Cheick Mohamed Cherif Cisse Vice-président	M.	Adama Diawara Point focal Jeunesse

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S.E.M.	Mamadou Henri Konate Ambassadeur, Représentant Permanent, Mission permanente, Genève	Mme	Ma Traore Conseillère en charge des questions humanitaires, Mission permanente, Genève
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Mr	Edward Gruppeta President	Ms	Marie Paulette Fenech Director General
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Mr	David Cassar Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Justine Micallef First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
		Ms	Nicoleta Croitoru Bantea Political Officer

MAROC / MOROCCO / MARRUECOS / المغرب

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Dr	Mohamed Assouali Coordinateur national des Programmes et des projets, membre de la Commission nationale du Droit international humanitaire (DIH)		

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Lt col	Mohcin Nadi Deputy Director	M.	Mohamed Amine Boukhris Premier Secrétaire, Mission permanente, Genève
Col	Mohamed El Azzouzi Responsable des affaires juridiques, Administration défense nationale	M.	Mohamed Yassine Kabbaj Premier Secrétaire, Mission Permanente, Genève
Prof.	Mohammed El Bazzaz Membre de la Commission nationale de Droit international humanitaire Maroc	M.	Mohammed Kamal El Khomssi Premier Secrétaire, Mission Permanente, Genève
M.	Hassan Oudghiri Conseiller, Mission Permanente, Genève	Mr	Badreddine Sarfat Conseiller, Administration
Mme	Asmaa El Kamchi Premier Secrétaire, Mission permanente, Genève	Mme	Nisrine Elhsissen Déléguée
		M.	Gabriel Manguilin Membre

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Mr Samoorgum Tīrvassen
President

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Ms Fee Young Li Pin Yuen
Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

MAURITANIE / MAURITANIA / MAURITANIA / موريتانيا

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M. Mohamed Lemine
Président

M. Mohamed Elemine Matallah
Responsable national Jeunes et secourisme

Mme Aminata Ba
2^e Vice-présidente

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Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent,
Mission permanente, Genève

M. Elghotob Houeiriya
Directeur de l'Action humanitaire

Mme Warda Mohamed Khouye
Conseillère, Mission permanente, Genève

MEXIQUE / MEXICO / MÉXICO / المكسيك

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Lic. Sr. Fernando Suinaga Cárdenas
Presidente

Sra. María Ruth Bitar Romo
Vicepresidenta de Damas Voluntarias

Sra. Beatriz Elena Nieves de Freaner
Vicepresidenta Nacional

Lic. Sr. José Antonio Monroy Zermeño
Director General

Lic. Sr. Eduardo Saturnino de Agüero Leduc
Vicepresidente

Lic. Sr. Fernando Felipe Rivera Muñoz
Coordinador Nacional de Voluntariado

Lic. Sr. Carlos Freaner Figueroa
Vicepresidente

Sra. Ana Sofía Quintanilla Torres
Damas Voluntarias

Sra. Carmen Lebrija de Suinaga
Presidenta Nacional de Damas Voluntarias

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Excmo. Sr. Alejandro Celorio Alcántara Consultor Jurídico, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores	Sr. Diego Ruíz Gayol Primer Secretario, Misión Permanente, Ginebra
Excma. Sra. Socorro Flores Liera Embajadora, Representante Permanente, Misión Permanente, Ginebra	Sra. María Eugenia González Anaya Primera Secretaria, Misión Permanente, Ginebra
Excmo. Sr. Juan Raúl Heredia Acosta Embajador, Representante Permanente Alterno, Misión Permanente, Ginebra	Sra. Alondra Lisette Mendoza Carlos Segunda Secretaria, Misión Permanente, Ginebra
Sra. Erika Gabriela Martínez Liévano Ministra, Misión Permanente, Ginebra	Sr. Rodrigo López Tovar Tercer Secretario, Misión Permanente, Ginebra
Sr. Alonso Martínez Ruiz Consejero, Misión Permanente, Ginebra	Sra. Magali Esquinca Guzmán Delegada, Misión Permanente, Ginebra
Sr. Alejandro Alba Fernández Primer Secretario, Misión Permanente, Ginebra	Sr. José Antonio Hernández Vega Delegado, Misión Permanente, Ginebra
Sr. Jorge González Mayagoitia Primer Secretario, Misión Permanente, Ginebra	Sra. Pía Gómez Robledo Delegada, Misión Permanente, Ginebra
	Sra. Sofía Varguez Villanueva Delegada, Misión Permanente, Ginebra

**MICRONÉSIE (ÉTATS FÉDÉRÉS DE) / MICRONESIA (FEDERATED STATES OF) /
MICRONESIA (ESTADOS FEDERADOS DE) / ميكرونيزيا (ولايات - موحدة)**

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Diaz Joseph President, National Board of Directors	Mr Frank Isao Executive Director
Ms Sylvia Elias Youth Representative, National Governing Board	

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms Varanise Temo Korosaya Bulabalavu Assistant Attorney General
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MONACO / MONACO / MÓNACO / موناكو

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M. Frédéric Platini Secrétaire général	Mme Anne Danziger Coordinatrice des programmes internationaux
M. Claude Fabbretti Directeur opérationnel de la Section humanitaire internationale et du secourisme civil	Mme Marine Ronzi Coordinatrice, Communication, relations internationales et jeunesse
	Mme Veronica Demaria Déléguée de la jeunesse

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S.E.	Mme Carole Lanteri Ambassadeur, Représentante permanente, Mission permanente, Genève	Mme	Suzana Vaz Attachée
M.	Gilles Realini Conseiller, Représentant permanent adjoint, Mission permanente, Genève	M.	Maxime Candes Stagiaire, Mission permanente, Genève
M.	Johannes de Millo Terrazzani Conseiller, Mission Permanente, Genève	M.	Louis Curau Stagiaire, Mission permanente, Genève

MONGOLIE / MONGOLIA / MONGOLIA / منغوليا

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Ms	Bolormaa Nordov Secretary General	Mr	Nyamsambuu Davaa Communication Officer
Ms	Davaajargal Batdorj Director of Programs and Cooperation Department	Ms	Nomin Orgodol Youth Delegate
		Mr	Munkhbaatar Dumaajav Volunteer

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Lundeg Purevsuren Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Tsetsegmaa Oyunsukh Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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MONTÉNÉGR0 / MONTENEGRO / MONTENEGRO / الجبل الأسود

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Gordana Mijovic President	Ms	Natasa Uskokovic International relations, Head
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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Milorad Šćepanović Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Ivana Boskovic Senior Adviser in the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare Montenegro
		Mr	Nikola Raznatovic First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

MOZAMBIQUE / MOZAMBIQUE / MOZAMBIQUE / موزامبيق

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H.E. M Jaime Chissano Ambassador, Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms Francelina Romao Health Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva

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H.E. Ms Ei Ei Tin Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms Htwe Tra Nandi First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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NAMIBIE / NAMIBIA / NAMIBIA / ناميبيا

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NAURU / NAURU / NAURU / ناورو

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Ms Stella Duburiya Country Focal Officer in Human Rights	
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NÉPAL / NEPAL / NEPAL / نيبال

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Mr	Tirtha Raj Wagle Minister, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Kumar Rai Member

NICARAGUA / NICARAGUA / NICARAGUA / نيكاراغوا

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		Srta.	Elvielena Diaz Obando Primera Secretaria

NIGER / NIGER / NÍGER / النيجر

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Gouv.	Ali Bandiare Président	M.	Ibrahim Ousmane Secrétaire général adjoint
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Mme	Abdoulkarim Fadima Altine Directrice de la Migration interne et des réfugiés, ministère de l'Intérieur		

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Mr Abubakar Ahmed Kende Secretary General	Mr Benjamin Nji Confidential Secretary
Mr Abdulrazaq Magaji Hussaini National Youth Coordinator	Mr Osadebe Lovely Ogwudile Change Manager
Mr Samuel Okon Ikon Branch Chairman	

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Mr Tunde Mukaila Mustapha Minister	Ms Theresa Chinyere Onuh Counsellor

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Ms Hanne Heggdal Vice-President	Ms Heidi Bang Senior Advisor
Ms Andrea Kristin Edlund Vice-President, Red Cross Youth	Ms Hanne Marie Mathisen Senior Advisor
Mr Bernt G. Apeland Secretary General	Ms Alessandra Nervi Senior Advisor
Mr Øistein Mjærum Director of Communication and Fundraising	Mr Preben Marcussen Advisor
Mr Haakon Jacob Røthing Head of Programmes	

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H.E. Mr Hans Brattskar Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms Elisabeth Garberg Andvig Adviser
Ms Mette Tangen Deputy Director	Ms Annette Seiergren Bjorseth International Law Adviser
Ms Ingunn Vatne Minister Counsellor	Mr Espen Persønn Flagstad Legal Adviser
Ms Cathrine Andersen Senior Adviser	Ms Ida Steinfeldt-Foss Intern

NOUVELLE-ZÉLANDE / NEW ZEALAND / NUEVA ZELANDIA / نيوزيلندا

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Ms	Niamh Lawless Secretary General	Dr	Rebecca Dudley International Humanitarian Law Advisor
Ms	Sarita Aldred National Youth Representative		

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Ms	Kate Bradlow Lead Advisor - Humanitarian	Ms	Maanya Tandon Legal Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Mr	Stuart John Dymond Special Adviser		

OMAN / OMAN / OMÁN / عُمان

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Ms	Kifah Al Lawati Counselor	Ms	Nouhad Makhoulouf Kassab Translator
H.E.	Mr Abdullah Al Riyami Charge d'Affaires, Permanent Mission of Oman in Geneva		

UGANDA / UGANDA / UGANDA / أوغندا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Halid Kirunda Chairman Central Governing Board	Mr	Mubaraka Majesi Youth President
Mr	Robert Kweyunga Kwesiga Secretary General		

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Col.	Godard Busingye Chief of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Defence	Ms	Daphine Teddy Nyanduri Registration Coordinator

OUZBÉKISTAN / UZBEKISTAN / UZBEKISTÁN / أوزبكستان

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Mr Polat Jonridovich Abdullakhanov
Head of the International Department

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	Mr Sarvar Pirmukhamedov Assistant

PAKISTAN / PAKISTAN / PAKISTÁN / باكستان

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Mr Naguib Ullah Malik Vice-Chairman	Mr Javed Ahmed Deputy Director PMER
Mr Justice Ahmad Farooq Sheikh Governing Board Member	Mr Muazzam Shah Youth Member
Ms Shahnaz Shahid Hamid Managing Board Member	

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Mr Hussain Muhammad Counsellor	Mr Imran Ahmad Assistant Private Secretary
Ms Fareena Arshad First Secretary	Ms Somayah Nasir Interne
	Ms Amna Shahid Malik Interne

PALAU / PALAU / PALAU / بالاو

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Saul Santy Asanuma President/Chairman	Mr JB Mad Victorino Youth Vice-Chairman
Ms Joanne Maireng Sengebau Secretary General/Executive Director	

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Ms Portia Klong Franz
Executive Assistant

PANAMA / PANAMA / PANAMÁ / بنما

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Lic. Sr. Renaldo Bedoya Arauz Primer Vicepresidente Nacional	Sra. Irene Perurena Comité Central

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	Sra. Siurania Elizabeth Mirones Castillo Tercera Secretaria

PAPOUASIE-NOUVELLE-GUINÉE / PAPUA NEW GUINEA / PAPÚA NUEVA GUINEA /

بابوا غينيا الجديدة

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Ms Janet Kathleen Philemon
Council Member

PARAGUAY / PARAGUAY / PARAGUAY / باراغواي

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Sr. Carlos Luciano Escobar Goiburú Presidente	Sr. Arturo Ojeda López Director General
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Excmo. Sr. Julio César Peralta Rodas Representante Permanente Alterno, Misión Permanente, Ginebra	Sr. Walter José Chamorro Milto Segundo Secretario
	Srta. Patricia Sulín Segunda Secretaria

PAYS-BAS / NETHERLANDS / PAÍSES BAJOS / هولندا

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Ms Marieke Van Schaik Secretary General	Ms Lotte M. Bernhard Senior Legal Advisor
Mr Mostafa Hilali Board Member	Mr Frank Tebbe Communication
Mr Juriaan Lahr Head International Assistance	Mr Arjen Vermeer Legal Adviser

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H.E. Ms Monique van Daalen Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr Eduardus Hermannes Theresia Maria Nijpels Chairman

Ms Christine Pirenne
Head Humanitarian Aid

Ms Karin Jones - Schaper
First Secretary

Mr Reint Vogelaar
First Secretary

Mr Bart Broer
Third Secretary

Ms Cara Pronk-Jordan
Senior Legal Advisor

Ms Eleonore van Rijssen
Senior Policy Advisor

Mr Ferry Koks
Policy Advisor

Ms Mireille Hector
Deputy Legal Advisor, MFA

Ms Vera Duin
Communications Officer

Ms Anna Houck
Humanitarian Policy Officer

Ms Laura Snoek
Assistant and Communications Officer

Ms Monique Tummers
Strategic Communications Peace and Security

Mr Mark van der Velden
Political Assistant Minister Kaag

Ms Reinette van der Waals
Coordinator MHPSS in crisis situations

Mr Jeroen van Dommelen
Spokesperson Minister Sigrid Kaag

Ms Fleur van Lit
Intern

PÉROU / PERU / PERÚ / بيرو

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Srta. Maria Josefina Garcia Roca
Presidenta Nacional

Sr. Jonathan Saporta
Funcionario

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Embajadora, Representante Permanente,
Misión Permanente, Ginebra

Sr. Carlos Briceño
Ministro, Representante Permanente Alternativo,
Misión Permanente, Ginebra

Sra. Tania Elizabeth Arzapalo Villon
Directora de Asuntos Internacionales,
Promoción y Adecuación Normativa,
Ministerio de Justicia y Derechos Humanos

Sra. Ana Teresa Lecaros
Ministra Consejera, Misión Permanente,
Ginebra

Sr. Cesar Arestegui
Consejero, Misión Permanente, Ginebra

Sr. Carlos Garcia
Primer Secretario, Misión Permanente,
Ginebra

Sr. Juan Carlos Pomareda
Tercer Secretario, Misión Permanente,
Ginebra

Srta. Aurora de la Libertad Cano Choque
Tercera Secretaria, Ministerio de Relaciones
Exteriores

PHILIPPINES / PHILIPPINES / FILIPINAS / الفلبين

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Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

Ms Elizabeth Simpao Zavalla
Secretary General

Gov. Corazon Alma Guitierrez De Leon
Secretary, Board of Governors

Mr Leonardo Preselda Ebajo
Director of Disaster Management Services

Mr Arkhereb Arca Montano
Head of EMS Unit, Safety Services

Ms Ma. Jessilou Limbago Morigo
Unit Head of Disaster Recovery, Disaster
Management Services

Mr Mark Brayn Saludes Yaung
Youth President

Gov. Mark Brayn Saludes Yaung
President, National Youth Council

Ms Maria Dina Cano De Leon
Volunteer

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Ms	Maria Teresa Almojuela Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Philippine, Geneva	Ms	Marean Sindayen Abarra Attache
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Ms	Sharon Johnnette Wettlaufer Second Secretary	Ms	Divina Trinidad Carolino Attache
		Mr	Chester Tajonera Attache
		Ms	Neil Aica Tintero Attache

POLOGNE / POLAND / POLONIA / بولندا

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Mr	Stanislaw Kracik President	Ms	Magdalena Stefanska Head of International Cooperation
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Mr	Miroslaw Broilo Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Grzegorz Gruca Vice President, Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH)
Ms	Zuzanna Kierzkowska Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Aleksander Szewczuk Counselor, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Ms	Urszula Goral Director, International Cooperation and Education Department, Personal Data Protection Office, Poland	Ms	Anita Kolodynska Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
		Ms	Agata Mazurek Expert, Permanent Mission, Geneva

PORTUGAL / PORTUGAL / PORTUGAL / البرتغال

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Mme	Susana Vaz Patto Directrice Département Juridique Ministère Affaires Étrangères	M.	Guilherme Murta Intern
Mme	Ana Rita da Costa Pereira Juriste, Département de Droit International, Département des Affaires Juridiques, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères		

QATAR / QATAR / QATAR / قطر

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Mr	Ali Hassen Al-Hammadi Secretary General	Ms	Zina Mahgoub Mohammed Elhussein International Humanitarian Movement Coordinator
Mr	Ibrahim Abdulla H M Al-Malki Executive Director	Ms	Rana Ali Hussein Alhelesi Grants and Partnership Development Advisor
Mr	Mohammed Salah D A Ibrahim Executive Director for Relief and International Development Division	Dr	Alfrazdag Khalafalla Ibrahim Humanitarian Studies Expert
Dr	Fawzi Oussedik Head of International Relations Department		

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H.E.	Mr Tariq Al-Ansari Director of the International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The State of Qatar	Mr	Talal Al-Naama Third Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr	Abdulla Al-Nuaimi Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Khalid Al-Obaidly Office Director of the Undersecretary of Ministry of Justice, Rapporteur Committee for International Humanitarian Law
Col.	Saad Al-Dosari Assistant Director - Human Rights Department - Ministry of Interior, Member of National Committee for International Humanitarian Law	Mr	Nazar Abdou Legal Expert, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Lt. Col.	Abdulla Alfadala Directorate of Legal Affairs - Ministry of Defense, Member of National Committee for International Humanitarian Law, Representative of Defense	Mr	Ahmed Al-Shikaki Expert, Permanent Mission, Geneva
		Mr	Ahmed Shikaki Expert, Permanent Mission, Geneva

RÉPUBLIQUE ARABE SYRIENNE / SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC / REPÚBLICA ARABE SIRIA /**الجمهورية العربية السورية**

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Mr	Ali Mansour Chairman of Hasakeh Branch - Executive Board Member	Mr	Ziad Msallati Consultant for International and External Relations
Mr	Khaled Erksoussi Secretary General	Ms	Nour Mardini Volunteer-Head Of Youth Department at HASAKA Branch
Mr	Talal Al Masri Deputy General Director, Financial Director		

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Ms	Rania Al Haj Ali Counselor, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Nibal Mohammad Attaché
		Mr	Zanina Ridha Permanent Mission, Geneva

**RÉPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE / CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC /
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Pasteur Antoine Mbao Bogo Président national	M.	Médard Jasmin Gouaye Secrétaire général
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RÉPUBLIQUE DE CORÉE / REPUBLIC OF KOREA / REPÚBLICA DE COREA / جمهورية كوريا

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Ms Eunyoung Park Director General, International Relations and Inter-Korean Office	Mr	Jaeseok Park Senior Officer
Ms Su sun Moon Director, Office of the President	Ms	Jin Lee Programme Coordinator, APDRC
Mr Jhi Young Yoon Head of International Relations Team	Ms	Jae-Yun KIM Senior Assistant, Office of the President

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Mr Chang On Lee Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr Youngmin Seo First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr Taejin Kim Political Attache	Ms Heesun Shin Counselor, Permanent Mission, Geneva
	Ms Jungmin Yeo Advisor, Permanent Mission, Geneva

**RÉPUBLIQUE DE MACÉDOINE DU NORD / REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA /
REPÚBLICA DE MACEDONIA DEL NORTE / جمهورية مقدونيا الشمالية**

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Prof. Dr Romel Velev President	Mr	Vladimir Vukelic Cooperation and Development
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Ms Natasha Hroneska Counselor / Chargé d'affaires a.i., Permanent Mission, Geneva

**RÉPUBLIQUE DE MOLDAVIE / REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA / REPÚBLICA DE MOLDOVA /
جمهورية مولدوفا**

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Mr	Iulian Grigorita Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Elena Gorodisteanu Principal consultant, International Relations Division, The Ministry of Justice, Republic of Moldova
Ms	Stela Braniste Head of International Relations Division	Ms	Adelina Harunjen Assistant
Ms	Cristina Cerevate Second Secretary	Ms	Doina Condrea Intern

**RÉPUBLIQUE DÉMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO / DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO /
REPÚBLICA DEMOCRÁTICA DEL CONGO / جمهورية الكونغو الديمقراطية**

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M.	Grégoire Mateso Wayi Président national	M.	Heritier Maponda Tubikamo Président de la Jeunesse et du genre
M.	Mango Kipoka Amani Président provincial, branche de Tanganyika	Dr	Jacques Katshitshi N'sal Secrétaire général
M.	Desire Yuma Président provincial, branche de Sud-Kivu	Mme	Mamie Mitanta Mubunji Secrétaire générale
M.	Julien Nkuyin Sisi Président provincial, branche de Kinshasa		

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M.	Joachim Mukuasa Directeur de Cabinet adjoint	Mme	Thérèse Tshibola-Tshia-Kadiebue Ministre Conseiller
M.	Serge Ndaie Musenge Premier Conseiller	M.	Jacques Maloyi Mantmu Attaché culturel

**RÉPUBLIQUE DÉMOCRATIQUE POPULAIRE LAO / LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC /
REPÚBLICA DEMOCRÁTICA POPULAR DE LAO / جمهورية لاو الديمقراطية الشعبية**

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Mr	Thongphachanh Sonnasinh Vice-President	Ms	Phonedavanh Sanbounleuxay Deputy Head of International Relations Unit
Mr	Kovit Pholsena International Relations Officer		

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Mr	Sisaketh Sitsangkhom Deputy Permanent Representative	Mr	Lee Yongyee Sayaxang Third Secretary
Ms	Valyna Bounsavath Responsible for humanitarian affairs of the Permanent Mission, Geneva		

RÉPUBLIQUE DOMINICAINE / DOMINICAN REPUBLIC / REPÚBLICA DOMINICANA /

الجمهورية الدومينيكية

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Dra. Ligia Leroux de Ramírez Presidenta	Lic. Sr. Rafael Bienvenido Hilario Coronado Representante de Juventud ante el órgano de gobierno, Director Nacional de Juventud
Sr. Miguel Ángel Sanz Flores Primer Vicepresidente del Consejo Nacional, Presidente de la Filial de Fantino, provincia Sanchez Ramírez	Sra. Mavel Vegazo Cabral Directora Programa Nacional de Doctrina Institucional y Derecho Internacional Humanitario
Dr. Fello Perez de la Rosa Vocal del Consejo Nacional y Presidente Provincial de Elias Piña	Dra. Esther Mariucha Batista Matos Responsable Nacional de Servicio Voluntario
Sr. Gilde Antonio Ramirez Moreta Presidente Provincial de Monte Plata	Srta. Ligia Maria Ramirez Leroux Miembro

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Sr. Francisco Caraballo Embajador, Representante Permanente, Misión Permanente, Ginebra	Sra. Ana Melba Rosario Rosario Ministra Consejera
Sr. Blaurio Alcántara Director Jurídico, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores	Sr. Rawell Salomón Taveras Arbaje Consejero, Misión Permanente, Ginebra
	Sr. Glenn Christian Apolinar Espinal Primer Secretario

RÉPUBLIQUE POPULAIRE DÉMOCRATIQUE DE CORÉE / DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF

KOREA / REPÚBLICA POPULAR DEMOCRÁTICA DE COREA / جمهورية كوريا الشعبية الديمقراطية

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Yong Ho Paek Executive Vice-Chairman	Mr Chang Hyok Kang Officer, Disaster Management Department
Mr Song Ryong Jon Deputy Secretary General	Mr Kwang Chol Kim DM Officer, Provincial RC Branch of North Hamgyong
Mr Il Hyok O Senior Officer, International Cooperation Department	

RÉPUBLIQUE TCHÈQUE / CZECH REPUBLIC / REPÚBLICA CHECA / الجمهورية التشيكية

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Dr Marek Jukl President	Dr Olga Šiková International Dept. Officer; Tracing Service Dept. Officer
Dr Josef Konecny Secretary General	

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Mr Martin Smolek Deputy Minister, MFA	Ms Veronika Bilkova Advisor, Institute of Int'l Relations
H.E. Mr Petr Gajdusek Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms Sarka Ostadalova Int'l Law Unit, Ministry of Defence
Mr Petr Válek Director of Int'l Law Department, MFA	Ms Renata Kelckova Int'l Law Department, MFA
Mr Martin Bulanek First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr Nikita Fesyukov Trainee

RÉPUBLIQUE-UNIE DE TANZANIE / UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA / REPÚBLICA UNIDA DE TANZANIA / جمهورية تنزانيا المتحدة

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	David Mwakiposa Kihenzile President	Adv.	Jonas Maheto Youth Officer
Mr	Julius Remius Kejo Secretary General	Dr	George Francis Nangale Member
Mr	Rahim Khamis Kalyango Youth Chaiperson		

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Elia Nelson Mtweve Minister Counselor	Dr	Marius Rutatenekwa Emmanuel Inspector, Tanzania Prison Force Dodoma
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ROUMANIE / ROMANIA / RUMANIA / رومانيا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.M.	Margareta of Romania President	Mr	Filip Scarlat Media Centre Project Manager
Mr	Iulian Bobirnea Youth Vice-President	Mr	Daniel Angelescu Media
Mr	Silviu Lefter Director General	Ms	Iuliana Tudor Romanian Red Cross Ambassador
Ms	Liana Greavu Chef de Cabinet	Ms	Daniela Lefter Volunteer
Ms	Liana Olimpia Luca Financial Director	Mr	Mihai Tiberiu Luca Volunteer
Ms	Daiana Andreianu Head of International Relations and IHL	H.R.H.	Prince Radu of Romania Volunteer

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Adrian Cosmin Vierita Ambassador, Permanent representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Maria Niara Sarafian Counsellor
Mr	Gabriel Sarafian Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Laura Stresina Counsellor
Ms	Codrina Vierita Ministry plenipotentiary, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Nicolae David Ungureanu Counsellor
Ms	Andreea Rurela Circiumaru Counsellor	Ms	Laura Georgeta Stresina Member
		Ms	Andreea Chilan Intern
		Ms	Iulia Duca Intern

ROYAUME-UNI / UNITED KINGDOM / REINO UNIDO / المملكة المتحدة

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Mr	David Bernstein Chair	Ms	Kimberly Brown Head of Humanitarian Policy
Mr	Robert Dewar Trustee	Ms	Eilidh Hughes International Law Support Officer
Mr	Alexander Matheou Executive Director of International	Mr	Lucian Cobley Carr Humanitarian Policy Team Coordinator
Mr	Michael Meyer Head of International Law	Mr	Felix Willuweit Youth Delegate

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Sir	Iain Macleod KCMG The Legal Advisor, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Head of Delegation	Mr	Dylan Winder Humanitarian and Protracted Crises Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom in Geneva
H.E.	Mr Julian Braithwaite Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom, Geneva	Ms	Tabitha Bonney Senior Lawyer, Ministry of Defence
Mr	Andrew Murdoch Legal Director, Foreign and Commonwealth Office	Ms	Deborah Baglole Policy Adviser, Department for International Development
Ms	Verity Robson Legal Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom in Geneva	Ms	Marwa Hassan Policy Officer, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
		Ms	Amanda Oeggerli Policy Officer, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom in Geneva

RWANDA / RWANDA / RUANDA / رواندا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Dr	Paul Bwito Président	Lady	Alexia Rubuga Présidente, section Jeunesse
M.	Apollinaire Karamaga Secrétaire général		

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Ms Marie Chantal Rwakazina Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	M.	Moses Rugema Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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SAINTE-LUCIE / SAINT LUCIA / SANTA LUCÍA / سانت لوسيا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Hubert Austin Pierre President	Ms	Laurencia Gaillard Director General
Ms	Carmen Miranda Charles Vice-President	Ms	Remia Keona Bruneau Youth Delegate

SAINT-MARIN / SAN MARINO / SAN MARINO / سان مارينو

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Silvano Innocentini Head of Delegation	Ms	Altea Rossi Youth Delegate
Ms	Anita Dedic Delegate		

SAINT-SIÈGE / HOLY SEE / SANTA SEDE / الكرسي الرسولي

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H.E.	Archbishop Ivan Juricovič Nonce Apostolique, Observateur permanent du Saint-Siège auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies et des Organisations internationales à Genève	Mgr.	Bernard Munono Muyembe Assistant de recherche auprès du Dicastère pour le service du développement humain intégral
Mgr.	Mauro Cionini Conseiller	M.	Carlo M. Marengi Attaché
M.	Timothy C. Herrmann Officiel de la Secrétairerie d'État, Section pour les relations avec les États	M.	Stefano Saldi Attaché
		Mgr.	Robert J. Vitillo Attaché
		Mlle	Elisabetta Corsi Stagiaire

SAMOA / SAMOA / SAMOA / ساموا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Tania Azenath Stunzner Acting President	Ms	Deborah Mine Koon Wai You Youth Board Member
Ms	Tautala Nivaga Mauala Secretary General		

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Violina Tailua Leilua State Solicitor - Civil Litigation and Opinions Division, Office of the Attorney General
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SAO TOMÉ-ET-PRINCIPE / SAO TOMÉ AND PRINCIPE / SANTO TOMÉ Y PRÍNCIPE /

ساو تومي وبرينسيبي

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Sr.	Justino dos Ramos Lima Secrétaire général	Lic.	Sr. Edson Fernandes Vilhete Coordonnateur jeunesse du district
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SÉNÉGAL / SENEGAL / SENEGAL / السنغال

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mme	Bafou Ba Présidente	M.	Mamadou Moustapha Ndiaye Président, Commission de la jeunesse
M.	Abdoul Azize Diallo Président	M.	Bayla Barry Coordonnateur des services de support (finances, RH, administration, communication)
M.	Mamadou Sonko Secrétaire général		

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

S.E.	M. Coly Seck Ambassadeur, Représentant Permanent, Mission permanente, Genève	M.	François Diene Conseiller
Mme	Fatou Gaye Ministre Conseiller	Mme	Adjaratou Khouredia Ndiaye Deuxième Conseillère en charge des questions humanitaires

SERBIE / SERBIA / SERBIA / صربيا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Prof.	Dr Dragan Radovanovic President	Mr	Ljubomir Miladinovic Head of International Relations Department
Ms	Sinjka Somer Vice-President	Ms	Sasa Avram Senior Officer
Mr	Ljubomir Miladinovic Secretary General		

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Dejan Zlatanović Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Viktor Jovanović Premier Conseiller
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SEYCHELLES / SEYCHELLES / SEYCHELLES / سيشيل

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Kisnan Evans Tamatave President	Ms	Julia Colette Servina Secretary General
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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Gayethri Murugaiyan Pillay Chargé D'Affaires, Counselor, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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SIERRA LEONE / SIERRA LEONE / SIERRA LEONA / سيراليون

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Sahr Christian Fayia President	Mr	Abu Bakarr Samura Vice-Chairman Africa Youth Network-RCRC
Mr	Kpawuru E.T. Sandy Secretary General	Ms	Finnah Hawa Tarawallie National Youth Chair
Mr	Abdul Karim Koroma Legal Adviser		

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Lansana Gberie Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Essate Weldemichael Assistant to the Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva
Mr	Samuel Saffa Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva		

SINGAPOUR / SINGAPORE / SINGAPUR / سنغافورة

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Benjamin Jeyaraj William Secretary General/ CEO	Ms Charis Chan Associate Director of International Services
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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E. Mr Umej Bhatia Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms Eunice Sin Second Secretary
Ms Nitya Menon Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr Jia Ming Benjamin Mak Policy Officer
Mr Shin Hao Toh Counsellor (Legal)	Ms Ai Lin Teoh Member
Mr Keefe Chin First Secretary	Mr Zheng Yu Kwek Member

SLOVAQUIE / SLOVAKIA / ESLOVAQUIA / سلوفاكيا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Dr Viliam Dobias
President

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H.E. Mr Juraj Podhorsky Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms Elena Jablonicka Health Attaché
Mr Metod Spacek Director of the International Law Department, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs	Ms Jana Polakova Delegate
Mr Tomas Grunwald Desk officer	Ms Dominika Reynolds Delegate
	Ms Lydia Tobiaso Delegate

SLOVÉNIE / SLOVENIA / ESLOVENIA / سلوفينيا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms Vesna Mikuž President	Ms Nuška Jerman Legal Advisor
Ms Cvetka Tomin Secretary General	Ms Maja Murn Youth and Volunteer Manager

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E. Ms Sabina Stadler Repnik Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms Irina Gorsic Minister Plenipotentiary
H.E. Mr Borut Mahnic Ambassador, Head of the International Law Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Dr Danilo Türk Former President of the Republic of Slovenia
	Ms Mateja Grasek Delegate
	Prof. Dr Vasilka Sancin

SOMALIE / SOMALIA / SOMALIA / الصومال

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Mr	Yusuf Hassan Mohamed President	Mr	Ahmed Abdi Bekal Executive Director
Mr	Ahmed Jama Abdulle Vice-President	Mr	Abdulkadir Ibrahim Haji Abdi Director of Organizational Development and Communication
Prof.	Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed Executive Director	Mr	Hassen Abdi Jama Head of Programs

SOUDAN / SUDAN / SUDÁN / السودان

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Osman Gafar Abdalla Essa Secretary General	Ms	Asma Khojali Yousif Siraj Elnour International Cooperation Director
Mr	Salahaldien Alhady Husien Mohammed Vice-President	Mr	Barakat Faris Badri Elkenani Operation Manager

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Osman Abufatima Adam Mohammed Charge d'affaires a.i, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Sudan, Geneva	Ms	Sahar Gasmelseed Diplomat
Mr	Hassan Hamid Hassan Ahmed Director of Humanitarian Affairs Department, MoFA, Sudan	Mr	Ahmed Abdelrafie Abdelmageed Taha Member

SOUDAN DU SUD / SOUTH SUDAN / SUDÁN DEL SUR / جنوب السودان

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	John Lobor Zakaria Lado-Lojong Secretary General	Mr	Emmanuel Bak Bol Kuony Legal Advisor
Ms	Monica Martin Sebit Bayari 1st Vice President	Mr	Thomas Jada James Jacob Member
Mr	Angelo Aruop Akeen Akarap National Youth Chairperson		

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Akech Chol Ahou Ayok Ambassador, Charge de Affairs, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Garsiano Mogga Elia Waja Counselor
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SRI LANKA / SRI LANKA / SRI LANKA / سرى لانكا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Jagath Bandu Abeysinghe President	Mr	Nimal Kumar Sella Hannadige National Secretary
Dr	S. D. Mahesh Prasad Gunasekara Director General		

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr A.L.A. Azeez Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Dayani Mendis Delegate
Ms	Dulmini Dahanayake Second Secretary	Mr	Manoj Amarasinghe Delegate
Ms	Rajmi Manatunga Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Gihan Indraguptha Delegate

SUÈDE / SWEDEN / SUECIA / السويد

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Ms	Margareta Wahlström President	Ms	Sofia Calltorp Head of International Department
Ms	Vera Carlbaum-Wrennmark President, Swedish Red Cross Youth	Ms	Nina Piquer Senior Policy Advisor
Ms	Emma Knaggård Wendt Governing board member	Ms	Helena Marja Sofia Sunnegårdh Legal Advisor
Mr	Martin Ärnlov Secretary General	Ms	Petra Nyberg Advisor to the President
Ms	Cecilia Tengroth Chief of Staff		

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Margot Walström Former Swedish Foreign Minister	Ms	Ewa Nilsson Counselor
H.E.	Ms Veronika Bard Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Kristofer Teodor Zaetterstroem Senior Policy Advisor
Ms	Mia Hallén Deputy Director	Dr	Ola Engdahl Senior Legal Adviser
Lt. Gen.	Dennis Gyllensporre Force Commander	Ms	Elizabeth Narowe Senior Program Specialist
Ms	Hedvig Hogg Lohm Deputy Director, Department for Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Ms	Sandra Lyngdorf Senior Advisor
Ms	Eva Pernilla Nilsson Deputy Director	Adv.	Magnus Sandbu Legal Advisor
Dr	Gustaf Lind Head of Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law, Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Ms	Emma Maria Christina Nordlund Humanitarian Officer
Mr	Jerzy Makarowski Minister Counsellor	Ms	Kajsa Aulin Communication Officer
Ms	Karin Bolin Minister Counsellor	Mr	Petter Lycke Desk officer for IHL
Mr	Martin Jeppsson Counsellor	Mr	Gustav Snell Expert
		Ms	Malin Sundstrom Assistant
		Ms	Erica Wide Intern
		Mr	Jacob Mikael Karlsson Intern, Humanitarian Affairs and Migration

SUISSE / SWITZERLAND / SUIZA / سويسرا

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Ms	Brigitta M. Gadiant Vice-President	Mr	Philippe Chervet Youth Delegate
M.	Thomas Heiniger President	Ms	Manuela Langenegger Youth Delegate
M.	Markus Mader Secretary General	Ms	Myriam Fojtú Advisor Dissemination and International Humanitarian Law
M.	Beat von Däniken Head of Department International Cooperation	Mr	Christian Moser SRC Outpatient Clinic for the victims of torture and war
Ms	Daniela Seuret Advisor International Relations	Ms	Nicole Windlin Head of Tracing Service
Ms	Eva Funk Deputy Advisor International Relations		

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S.E.	M. Ignazio Cassis Conseiller fédéral, Chef du Département fédéral des affaires étrangères	S.E.	M. Valentin Zellweger Ambassadeur, représentant permanent de la Suisse auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies (ONUG) et des autres organisations internationales à Genève, Chef suppléant de la délégation
S.E.	M. Manuel Bessler Ambassadeur, Directeur suppléant de la Direction du développement et de la coopération, délégué à l'aide humanitaire et chef du Corps suisse d'aide humanitaire (CSA), DFAE, Chef suppléant de la délégation	M.	Félix Baumann Suppléant du représentant permanent de la Suisse auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies (ONUG) et des autres organisations internationales à Genève
S.E.	Mme Heidi Grau Ambassadrice, Cheffe de la Division Sécurité humaine, DFAE	M.	Mirco Anderegg Chef suppléant du Droit international des conflits armés, EM A, DDPS
S.E.	Mme Nathalie Marti Ambassadrice, Vice-directrice de la Direction du droit international public, DFAE	S.E.	M. Yannick Roulin Ambassadeur

SURINAME / SURINAME / SURINAM / سورينام

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Melvin Oscar Tjon Sie Fat President
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TADJIKISTAN / TAJIKISTAN / TAYIKISTÁN / طاجيكستان

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Bahodur Qurboniyon Secretary General	Mr	Nabidzhon Sidikshoev Youth Delegate
Ms	Dilorom Mirova Deputy Secretary General		

TCHAD / CHAD / CHAD / تشاد

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S.E.	M. Ahmad Makaila Ambassadeur, Représentant Permanent, Mission permanente, Genève	Mme	Zigro Mbirimba Première Conseillère, Mission permanente, Genève
M.	Ali Brahim Ali Directeur des affaires juridiques, du contentieux et des droits de l'homme au ministère des Affaires étrangères, de l'intégration africaine, de la coopération internationale et de la diaspora	M.	Mahamat Alim Talha Conseiller

THAÏLANDE / THAILAND / TAILANDIA / تايلند

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Ms	Pichaya Svasti Director of International Relations Department	Ms	Tarika Wongsinsirikul Deputy Director, Red Cross Youth Bureau
		Mr	Tej Bunnag Assistant Secretary General for Administration

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Ms	Kanchana Patarachoke Director-General, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Mr	Worawut Smuthkalin Counsellor
Ms	Vichuda Kongpromsuk Director of Medical Service Division, Department of Corrections, Ministry of Justice	Ms	Chalongkwan Tavarayuth First Secretary
H.E.	Mr Phabpob Plangprayoon Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Jutha Saovabha Second Secretary
Col.	Sanee Promwiwat Deputy Director, Military Registration and Foreign Affairs Division, Judge Advocate General's Department	Ms	Prudchayaphorn Boontool Plan and Policy Analyst, Practical Level
		Ms	Manthana Masmalai Plan and Policy Analyst, Bureau of Security Strategies for Southern Border Provinces and Ethnic Affairs, Office of the National Security Council
		Ms	Chattraphon Ditthasriphon Justice Officer, Practitioner Level

TIMOR-LESTE / TIMOR-LESTE / TIMOR-LESTE / تيمور-ليشتي

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Ms Madalena Fernandes Melo Hanjan Costa
Soares
President

Mr Anacleto Bento Ferreira
Secretary General
Ms Sonia dos Santos Ramalho
Youth President

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Mr Francisco Dionisio Fernandes
Chargé d’Affaires, Permanent Mission of
Timor-Leste, Geneva

Ms Joana Filipa Martins dos Santos
Member

Mr Aurelio Barros
Diplomat

Ms Joana Santos
Legal Advisor

TOGO / TOGO / TOGO / توغو

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Président national a.i.

Mme Hafoudhoi Oussene epse Seddoh
Conseillère technique nationale en genre

M. Yawo Assium Lawson
Secrétaire général

M. Marcel-Alex Agbessi
Assistant, Département Communication

M. Koffi Agbéko Egah
Chef du Département Administration et
gestion des volontaires

M. Comlan Edmond Dossou
Secrétaire

M. Igneza Koudzo Nayo
Conseiller juridique

M. Kodjo Gagno Paniah
Membre

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S.E. M. Yackoley K. Johnson
Ambassadeur, Représentant Permanent,
Mission permanente, Genève

M. Agbessi Togbé Alangue
Conseiller chargé des affaires humanitaires

TONGA / TONGA / TONGA / تونغا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms Lorna Aloma Johansson
Treasurer

Mr Siotame Drew Havea
Board member

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Ambassador, High Commissioner

Ms Ilaisipa LKT Alipate
Principal Assistant Secretary

Mr Siale ‘Eti Teumohenga
Deputy Secretary, Prime Minister’s Office

Mr Siaoisi Kiu Kaho
Secretary

TRINITÉ-ET-TOBAGO / TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO / TRINIDAD Y TOBAGO / ترينيداد وتوباغو

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Ms Delia Margaret Chatoor
Vice-President

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms Makeda Antoine-Cambridge
Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva

TUNISIE / TUNISIA / TÚNEZ / تونس

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Dr	Youssef Mlayah Vice-président	Mme	Yosra Bouhlel Responsable Diffusion
M.	Meher Cheniti Trésorier	M.	Mohamed Fadhel Ghoul Responsable Secourisme
M.	Sofiène Ben Brahim Responsable national Migration	M.	Walid Khlifi SG, Comité régional gabes

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mme	Intissar Ben Attallah Minister plenipotentiary, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Sami Nagga Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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TURKMÉNISTAN / TURKMENISTAN / TURKMENISTÁN / تركمانستان

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Guvanch Hummedov Director of Subsidiary	Mr	Guvanch Gadamov Head of Disaster Response and Management Department
Mr	Allamyrat Atalyev IHL/RFL Co-ordinator	Mr	Atajan Muhammetnazarov Specialist

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Ahmetyar Kulov Premier secrétaire, Mission permanente, Genève	M.	Dovletmyrat Torayev Attaché, Mission permanente, Genève
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TURQUIE / TURKEY / TURQUÍA / تركيا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Dr	Kerem Kinik President	Ms	Süreyha Aydin International Relations Expert
Mr	Alper Uluca Director of International Operations	Mr	Orhan Hacimehmet Kizilaykart Cash Based Assistance Programmes, Coordinator
Mr	Mehmet Çakmak Head of OIC RED Network Unit, International Policies and Partnerships Department	Mr	Abdullah Kaya Movement Relations and Partnerships Specialist
Mr	Serdar Günel Head of Movement Relations and Partnerships	Ms	Madeleen Karen Castro Programme Officer
Mr	Öztürk Bülent Kizilaykart Cash Based Assistance, Deputy Programme Coordinator	Ms	Seda Nazzal Communication Assistant

Mr	Murat Ellialti Delegate	Mr	Akif Emre Aktas Youth Delegate
Mr	Alper Küçük Delegate	Mr	Ahmad Arar Volunteer
Mr	Kaan Saner Delegate	Mr	Bayram Altug Photographer
Dr	Naci Yorulmaz Delegate	Mr	Fatih Isci Photographer
Dr	Ibrahim Altan Delegate		

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H.E.	Mr Sadik Arslan Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Yasar Ozbek Counsellor
Ms	Gizem Alpman Celen Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Ozan Cakir First Secretary
Mr	Gonenc Agacikoglu Counsellor	Mr	Fatih Acar Expert
Mr	Ufuk Gunes Counsellor	Mr	Evrin Akin Yazgan Expert in Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency - Legal Consultancy Department
Mr	Ali Mural Nas Counselor	Ms	Beliz Celasin Rende Delegate
Ms	Menekse Onuk Counsellor	Mr	Sunal Yüksel Attaché

TUVALU / TUVALU / TUVALU / توفالو

Société nationale • National Society • Sociedad Nacional • الجمعية الوطنية

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Kiatoa Ulika President	Mr	Sopoanga Saufatu Secretary General
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UKRAINE / UKRAINE / UCRANIA / أوكرانيا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Liliia Bilous Director General	Mr	Maksym Dotsenko Deputy Director General
Dr	Ivan Usichenko Honorary President	Ms	Maryna Kozhedub Youth Leader
Dr	Mykola Polishchuk Acting President	Ms	Olena Stokoz Head of Organizational Development Department

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Yuriy Klymenko Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Ms	Olena Andrienko First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
		Mr	Denys Demchenko First Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

URUGUAY / URUGUAY / URUGUAY / أوروغواي

Société nationale • National Society • Sociedad Nacional • الجمعية الوطنية

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Sra. Ximena Pardo Casaretto
Presidenta

Lic. Sr. Lorenzo Ramiro Liesegang Armand Pilon
Director General

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Excmo Sr. Ricardo González Arenas
Embajador, Representante Permanente,
Misión Permanente, Ginebra

Sra. Soledad Martínez
Consejero

Sra. Alejandra Costa
Representante Permanente Alterno, Misión
Permanente, Ginebra

Dr. Yliana Abimorad
Secretaria

Sra. Valentina Sierra
Secretaria

Sra. Maria Soledad Martínez Bergara
Consejera, Misión Permanente, Ginebra

VANUATU / VANUATU / VANUATU / فانواتو

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Moses Stevens Jenery
President

Mr Dickenson Hellery Tevi
Organizational Development Coordinator

Mr Jacob Bani
National Vice-President

Ms Jessika Binihi
Youth and Volunteer officer at HQ

Ms Jacqueline Deroin de Gaillande
Secretary General

Ms Marie Harry
Youth Representative, National Board

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H.E. Mr Sumbue Antas
Ambassador, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission, Geneva

Ms Roline Tekon
Delegate

Mr Noah Patrick Kouback
Deputy Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission, Geneva

Ms Antonella Picone
Personal Assistant

VENEZUELA / VENEZUELA / VENEZUELA / فنزويلا

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Sr. Mario Villarroel
Presidente

Dr. Mario Santimone
Secretario General

Sr. David Castro
Vicepresidente

Dra. Norka Sierraalta
Comité de Damas

Dr. Miguel Villarroel
Segundo Vicepresidente

Sra. Yolande Camporini
Asesora

Sra. Norka Maria Sierraalta de Villarroel
Presidenta, Comité Social

Sr. Morris Villarroel
Asesor

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Excmo. Sr. Jorge Valero Embajador, Representante Permanente, Misión Permanente, Ginebra	Lic. Sr. Enzo Bitetto Gavilanes Primer secretario, Responsable del Escritorio de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario en el Despacho del Viceministro para Temas Multilaterales, Dirección de Organismos Internacionales del Ministerio del Poder Popular para Relaciones Exter
Sra. Arline Cristina Díaz Mendoza Consejera	
Sra. Luisangela Andarcia Primera Secretaria	Sr. Luis Damiani Segundo Secretario

VIET NAM / VIET NAM / VIETNAM / فييت نام

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Prof. Dr Thi Xuan Thu Nguyen President	Ms Thi Hong Thuy Luong Director, Investment and Resource Mobilization dept.
Dr Hai Anh Nguyen Vice President, Secretary General	Ms Thi Le Trinh Nguyen Head of Binh Doung Chapter - VNRC
Ms Thanh Bình Trần Deputy Chief	Ms Thi Lê Trinh Nguyen Head of Binh Duong Chapter

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Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E. Mr Duong Chi Dzung Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mme Hanh Duc Le Deputy Director General, Department of International law and Treaties
	Mme Thi Tuong Van Nguyen Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva

YÉMEN / YEMEN / YEMEN / اليمن

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H.E. Dr Nasser Mohsen Baoom Minister of Public Health and Population	Mr Ahmed Abobakr Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
H.E. Dr Ali Mohamed Saeed Majawar Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr Mohamed Majawar Second Secretary, Permanent Mission, Geneva
	Dr Ahmed Amin Ali Mohameed Aden – Yemen

ZAMBIE / ZAMBIA / ZAMBIA / زامبيا

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Mr William Chisoko National President	Mr Cosmas Sakala Health and Care Manager
Mr Kaitano Philip Chungu Secretary General	Ms Mwangala Sipumo Youth Representative (Volunteer)

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Mr Patrick Mtonga First Secretary (legal), Permanent Mission, Geneva	
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ZIMBABWE / ZIMBABWE / ZIMBABUE / زيمبابوي

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Mr	Edson Mlambo National President	Ms	June Munyongani Youth Coordinator
Mr	Maxwell Phiri Secretary General		

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Mr	Pearson Tapiwa Chigiji Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission, Geneva	Mr	Poem Mudyawabikwa Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission, Geneva
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**COMITÉ INTERNACIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE (CICR) /
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC) /
COMITÉ INTERNACIONAL DE LA CRUZ ROJA (CICR) / اللجنة الدولية للصليب الأحمر***Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد*

Mr	Peter Maurer President	Mr	Robert Mardini Head of Delegation and Permanent Observer to the UN in New York
Ms	Gilles Carbonnier Vice-President	Dr	Cordula Droege Head of the Legal Division
Mr	François Bugnion Honorary Member of the Assembly	Mr	Hugo Slim Head of Policy and Humanitarian Diplomacy
Ms	Katja Gentinetta Member of the Assembly	Ms	Katrin Wiegmann Head of the Division for Cooperation and Coordination within the Movement
Mr	Hugo Bazinger Member of the Assembly	Ms	Esperanza Martinez Head of the Health Unit
Dr	Juerg Kesselring Member of the Assembly	Mr	Adib Nahas Head of the External Resources Division
Ms	Elyse Mosquini Chief of Staff for the President and Secretary of the Assembly	Ms	Megan Rock Advisor on Humanitarian Action
Mr	Yves Daccord Director-General	Ms	Maria Thestrup Head of the Global Compliance Office
Mr	Balthasar Staehelin Deputy Director-General	Mr	Massimo Marelli Head of the Data Protection Office
Ms	Katie Sams Director of Financial Resources and Logistics	Ms	Kate Halff Deputy Head of the Division for Cooperation and Coordination within the Movement
Dr	Helen Durham Director of International Law and Policy	Ms	Lucia Cipullo Head of Project for Movement Meetings
Ms	Charlotte Lindsey-Curtet Director of Digital Transformation & Data	Ms	Lindsey Cameron Head of Thematic Legal Unit
Ms	Jennifer Hauseman Director of Communication & Information Management	Ms	Patricia Rey Gonzales Head of Strategic Communication
Mr	Dominik Stillhart Director of Operations	Mr	Ewan Watson Head of X-Media, Spokesperson
Ms	Sarah Epprecht Deputy Director of Operations	Mr	Jeremie Labbe Policy Advisor
Mr	Mary Werntz Deputy Director	Mr	Stephane Hankins Legal Advisor
Ms	Eva Svoboda Deputy Director of International Law and Policy		

**FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES SOCIÉTÉS DE LA CROIX-ROUGE ET DU CROISSANT-ROUGE /
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES /
FEDERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE SOCIEDADES DE LA CRUZ ROJA Y DE LA MEDIA LUNA ROJA /
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر**

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Francesco Rocca President	Dr	Julie Hall Chief of Staff, Director of the Office of the Secretary General
Mr	Abdoul Azize Diallo Vice-President	Prof.	Cécile Aptel Director PSK
Mr	Kerem Kinik Vice-President	Mr	Derk Segaar Director of Communications
Mr	Miguel Villarroel Vice-President	Mr	Frank Mohrhauer Director, Governance and Board Support
Mr	Zhu Chen Vice-President	Ms	Lucie Laplante General Counsel
Ms	Brigitta Gadiant Vice-President	Mr	Elkhan Rahimov Regional Director a.i., Europe
Dr	Abdulkader Husrieh Chair, Finance Commission	Mr	Milton Xavier Castellanos Mosquera Regional Director, Asia Pacific
Ms	Kathryn Forbes Chairman, Audit and Risk Commission	Mr	Sayed Hashem Regional Director, MENA
Mr	Bas van Rossum Chairman, Youth Commission	Dr	Simon Missiri Regional Director a.i, Africa.
Mr	Elhadj As Sy Secretary General	Mr	Walter Ricardo Cotte Witingan Regional Director, Americas
Mr	Jagan Chapagain Under Secretary General, Programmes and Operations	Ms	Anca Zaharia International Conference and Council of Delegates Coordinator
Dr	Jemilah Mahmood Under Secretary General, Partnerships		

2.2

**COMMISSION PERMANENTE DE LA
CROIX-ROUGE ET DU CROISSANT-ROUGE**
**STANDING COMMISSION OF THE
RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT**
**COMISIÓN PERMANENTE DE LA CRUZ ROJA
Y DE LA MEDIA LUNA ROJA**
اللجنة الدائمة للصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

Mr George Weber
Chairman

Mr Chrystold Chetty
Vice-Chairman

Dr Massimo Barra
Member

Mr Ibrahim Osman
Member

Mr Greg Vickery
Member

Mr Yves-Jean Duméril
Secretary

2.3

BUREAU DU COMMISSAIRE SUISSE OFFICE OF THE SWISS COMMISSIONER OFICINA DEL COMISIONADO SUIZO

مكتب المفوض السويسري

H.E. Mr Didier Pfrter
Commissioner of the 33rd International
Conference

Mr Julien Verazzi Abegglen
Advisor

2.4

OBSERVATEURS OBSERVERS OBSERVADORES

المراقبون

2.4.1 ENTITÉS ET ORGANISATIONS AYANT PARTICIPÉ EN QUALITÉ D'OBSERVATEURS / ENTITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT PARTICIPATED AS OBSERVERS/ ENTIDADES Y ORGANIZACIONES QUE HAN PARTICIPADO EN CALIDAD DE OBSERVADORAS / الكيانات والمنظمات التي شاركت بصفة مراقب

United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Olivier Adam Executive Coordinator	Ms	Celina Menzel Programme Analyst
Ms	Boram Kim Plan of Action Coordinator - Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda		

Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organisation - General Secretariat (ARCO)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Dr	Saleh Hamad Al Tuajiri Secretary General	Dr	Mohamed Ennadi Legal Adviser
Dr	Abdullah Mohammed Al Hazaa Secretary General's Advisor	Mr	Mohamed Haroun Alhawsawi Director of International Relations Department
Mr	Faissal Lghazaoui Interpreter		

Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Vaqif Sadiqov Ambassador. Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other International Organizations in Geneva	Mr	Kamran Seyfullayev Third Secretary. Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other International Organizations in Geneva.
Ms	Aydan Muradova Third Secretary. Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other International Organizations in Geneva	Mr	Vugar Hajiyev Counsellor. Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the UN Office and other International Organizations in Geneva

European Union - Commission of European Communities

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H..E.	Mr Walter Stevens Ambassador, Head of Delegation	Ms	Astrid Andersson Attaché / Assistant Policy Officer, Humanitarian Affairs
H.E.	Mr Carl Hallergard Ambassador, Deputy Head of Delegation	Ms	Linda Grefjord Desk Officer for relations with ICRC, DG ECHO
H.E.	Mr Janez Lenarcic European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management	Ms	Lydia Gronemeier Trainee, EU Delegation Geneva
Ms	Monique Pariat Director General, DG ECHO	Mr	Marc Schanck Policy Officer Humanitarian Affairs
Ms	Irene Horejs Acting Director for Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and Pacific, DG ECHO	Ms	Réka Dobri Policy Officer - Humanitarian Aid Thematic Policies, DG ECHO
Ms	Antje Knorr Head of Communication	Ms	Maristella Romani COHAFA Secretariat, General Secretariat of the Council (EU)
Ms	Susanne Mallaun Head of Unit - Strategic Partnerships with Humanitarian Organisations, DG ECHO	Mr	Grosclaude Alain Photographer
Mr	Daniel Weiss Team Leader - International Organisations, DG ECHO	Ms	Laura Vincent Assistant
Mr	Massimo Pronio Counselor	Ms	Laura Vincent Assistant
Mr	Pascal Delisle Counselor	Ms	Nadja Krotow Intern
Ms	Joachime Nason First Secretary / Head of section Humanitarian Affairs and Migration	Mr	Pablo Palomar Munoz Trainee
Mr	Kim Eling Senior expert, cabinet of European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management	Ms	Alice Valenza Trainee
		Mr	Pawel Kutyla Trainee
		Ms	Rachele Bocelli Trainee

International Committee of Military Medicine and Pharmacy (ICMM)

Major General Geert Laire
Secretary General of the ICMM

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

- Mr Steven Hill Political Affairs and Security Policy Division,
Head of Delegation NATO
- Mr Petr Chaluppecky Ms Nadia Marsan
Head, Multilateral Organizations Section, Senior Assistant Legal Advisor

Novo Nordisk

- Ms Mia Bülow-Olsen
Global Access to Care Lead

The Inter-governmental Authority for Development (IGAD)

- Mr Keflemariam Sebhatu Kidane Mr Yassin Esmael Mohamed Jibril
DRM, Program Coordinator Legal Advisor/ Ag. Program Manager for
Humanitarian Affairs

Human Rights Watch

- Mr Gerry Simpson
Associate Director, Crisis and Conflict
Division

Organization of American States (OAS)

- Mr Luis Toro
Senior Legal Officer

Pfizer

- Ms Cinthya Ramirez
Director Multilateral Engagement

United Nations Organization (General Secretariat)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

- Mr David Stephen Mathias Mr Jonathan Brunggel
Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs Humanitarian officer
of the United Nations

Médecins du Monde International

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

- M. Alexandre Kamarotos Mme Jessica Tropea
Membre du Conseil d'Administration Juriste référente pour les opérations
internationales
- Mme Anne Sinic
Responsable du pôle Expertises thématiques
et Plaidoyer

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

- Mr Vincent Defourny Dr Yuxi Liu
Director of the UNESCO Geneva Liaison Office Trainee
- Ms Paulina Krokocka trainee

Secours Islamique France

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

M.	Rachid Lahlou Président	Mme	Valentina Origoni Responsable Relations Extérieures et Plaidoyer
M.	Mahieddine Khelladi Directeur exécutif		

World Federation for Medical Education (WFME)

Dr	Siddhartha Bhandari	Dr	Xhorxhi Kaci
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Islamic Parliamentary Union (PUIC)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Aliasghar Mohammadi Sijani PUIC Deputy Secretary General	Mr	Osama Mahmoud Abdefattah Mohammed Directeur
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Fondazione Villa Maraini Onlus

Mr	Mauro Patti Head of Delegation	Mr	Stefano Spada Menaglia Communication Manager
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International Institute of Humanitarian Law (IIHL)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Prof.	Edoardo Greppi President	Prof.	Michel Veuthey Geneva Representative
Prof.	Nils Melzer Vice-President	Mr	Edoardo Gimigliano Project Officer
Dr	Stefania Baldini Secretary General	Dr	Gianluca Beruto Assistant to the Secretary General
Prof.	Fausto Pocar Honorary President	Mr	Guillaume Fournier Assistant of the Geneva Representative

Sovereign Military Order of Malta

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

S.E.	Mme Marie-Thérèse Pictet-Althann Ambassadeur de l'Ordre Souverain de Malte auprès des Nations Unies	S.E.	M Michel Veuthey Deputy Permanent Observer, Ambassador to monitor and combat human trafficking
M.	Jean-François Kammer Deputy Permanent Observer	Mme	Silvia Vandi Attaché
		Mme	Anne Massari-Vaudé Intern

Islamic Committee of the International Crescent (ICIC)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Mr Ali Mahmoud Buhedma President	H.E.	Mr Ömer Tash Asia and Europa Regional Representative Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
Prof.	Dr Mohamed H.A. Elsbali Executive Director	Mr	Olatunde Olawale Olayemi Program Officer

War Child (Netherlands)

Mr	Jan de Waegemaeker Director International Programmes	Dr	Eamonn Hanson Senior Policy Advisor
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Centre for International Development Northumbria University

Professor Matt Baillie Smith

Ms Bianca Fadel
Doctoral Researcher

Every Casualty Worldwide

Ms Rachel Nathania Eliza Taylor
Advocacy Director

Save the Children International

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Michel Anglade
Director - Geneva Advocacy Office

Ms Silvia Ciacci
Humanitarian Policy Advisor

Ms Nevena Saykova
Advocacy Officer

United for Global Mental Health

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms Amy Keegan
Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer

Ms Anna Watkins
Advocacy and Campaign Coordinator

University of Manchester

Dr Adele Aubrey
Manager

University of Nottingham

Dr Christy Shucksmith-Wesley

African Union (AU)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E. Mr Ajay Kumar Bramdeo
Permanent Representative and Permanent
Observer of the African Union

Mr Yakhdan El Habib
Ministre Conseiller, Affaires politiques et
juridiques

Dr Ahmed E. Ogwel Ouma
Deputy Director, Africa CDC

CERAH / Humanitarian Encyclopedia Project

Ms Joy Ching-Ya Muller
Knowledge Manager

Mr Pascal Imhof
Project assistant

Ms Sian Bowen
Communications Manager

International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Prof. Thilo Marauhn
President

Prof. Shuichi Furuya
Member

Prof. Elzbieta Mikos-Skuza
Vice-President

Commonwealth Secretariat

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms Aasirima Ahangama Hettiarachchi
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Mr Yashasvi Nain
Human Rights Officer

Mr Tony Sisule
Human Rights Adviser

Ms Rachel Allamand
Intern

DNV GL - Digital Solutions

Mr Karl John Pedersen
Principal Specialist, Digital Transformation

EPFL, Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne

Dr Klaus Schönenberger
Directeur, EssentialTech Centre

Fonds des Nations Unies pour la Population

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Dr Natalia Kanem
Executive Director, UNFPA

Mr Ruben Armando Escalante Hasbun
Consultant

Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Prof. Marco Sassòli
Director

Ms Alice Priddy
Senior Researcher

Mr Felix Kirchmeier
Manager of Policy Studies / Executive
Director, Geneva Human Rights Platform

Ms Emilie Max
Researcher

Geneva Call

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

M. Alain Délétraz
Directeur général

Dr Sandra Krähenmann
Thematic legal adviser

Ms Emilie Yakoubian
Communication Officer

Mr Souheil Reaiche
Operations coordinator

Mr Ezequiel Heffes
Thematic Legal Adviser

Ms Ximena Galvez
Legal and Policy Officer

Mr Pascal Bongard
Head of Policy and Legal Unit

Ms Eloise Albrici
Communication intern

Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect

Ms Elisabeth Pramendorfer
Senior Human Right Officer

Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies

Ms Francesca Da Ros
communications manager

Mr Amandeep Singh Gill
Senior Fellow

Handicap International

Ms Alma Al-Osta
Disarmament and protection of civilians
Advocacy Manager

Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les Réfugiés (UNHCR)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms Caroline Brass
Senior legal officer (IHL), UNHCR

Ms Nadine Walicki
GP20 Coordinator

Ms Maria kiani
Inter-Agency Coordination

HERE-Geneva

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop Executive Director	Ms	Geerte Cornelia Catharina Rietveld Research Assistant
Ms	Marzia Montemurro Research Director	Ms	Karin Wendt Researcher/HERE-Geneva

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Anna Beatrice Ramsay Fihn Executive Director	Mr	Daniel Hogsta Coordinator
Ms	Celine Nahory Coordinatrice		

International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA)

Ms	Emmanuelle Osmond Head of Coordination	Ms	Nishanie Jayamaha Learning and Programme Coordinator
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International Disability Alliance

Ms	Eleonora Guzzi Human Rights Officer	Ms	Kimberlyn Stephania Beltran Reyes Volunteer
Ms	Elham Youssefian Inclusive Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction Adviser	Ms	Camila Sandra Sofia Petzoldt Diaz Assistant International Hospital Federation (IHF)
Ms	Federica Settimi GLAD Secretariat Officer	Ms	Sylvia Basterrechea Administrative officer

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Andrée Lorber-Willis Director Division of Support Services	Ms	Aushee Gupta Intern
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KAICIID Dialogue Centre

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Johannes Langer Program Manager	Ms	Aleksandra Djuric-Milovanovic Network for Dialogue Coordinator -Social Inclusion of People Seeking Refuge in Europe Programme
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Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Christopher Lockyear Secretary General	Mme	Marie-Elisabeth Ingres Humanitarian Representative
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International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

M. Pascal Hufschmid Directeur	M. Marco Domingues Technicien
Mme Isabel Rochat Présidente du Conseil de fondation du Musée international de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge	Mme Marie-Carmen Cubillos Association des Amis du Musée
Mme Alessia Barbezat Responsable de la communication et des relations publiques	Mme Marie-Dominique De Preter Responsable du service culturel
Mme Catherine Burer Cheffe de projet Collections	Mme Marie-Laure Berthier Coordinatrice de projet Expositions et Collections
Mme Claire Normand Responsable du marketing	Mme Patricia Hilbrow Agente d'accueil
M. André Hamelin Agent d'accueil	Mme Peace Mury Agente d'accueil
Mme Fabienne Mendoza Assistante administrative	M. Pierre-Antoine Possa Responsable du Service des visites
M. Jean-Luc Bovet Administrateur	Mme Sandra Sunier Cheffe de projet Expositions et Publications
Mme Helene Baechler Agente d'accueil	M. Sebastian Kempf Civiliste
Mme Kristin Marks Agente d'accueil	Mme Susanne Staub Agente d'accueil
	M. Valerio Antonucci Agent d'accueil

NCTRC

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Bülent Cirakh President	Ms Fatos Hamit Secretary General
Mr Kemal Mustafa Vice-President	Ms Süheyla Cirakh Associate Governing Board Member

NetHope

Ms Alexandra Murillo Alpert
Director of Membership and NGO
Partnerships

Nonviolent Peaceforce International

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr Ronnie Delsy Head of Mission - Philippines	Ms Marion Sarah Lili Girard Executive Assistant
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Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Dr	James Munn Director of Humanitarian Policy	Ms	Nina M Birkeland Senior Adviser, Disaster Displacement and Climate Change
Ms	Emma O'Leary Senior Humanitarian Policy Advisor	Ms	Issie Cobb Communications and Advocacy Officer, NRC
Mr	Julien Marneffe Senior Humanitarian Policy and Protection Adviser	Ms	Andrea Farrés Jiménez Humanitarian Policy Intern
		Ms	Marta Dias Cardoso Humanitarian Policy and Protection Intern

Ordre Souverain et Militaire de Malte

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

M.	Marco Pangallo Delegate	M.	Daniel Milhomens da Moda Intern
M.	Yannick Galeazzi Attaché	Mme	Maria Consolata Spano Intern
Mme	Chloé Brincat Intern		

Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

S.E.	M. Henri Eli Monceau Ambassadeur, Représentant permanent de l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie auprès des Nations Unies et des autres organisations internationales à Genève et à Vienne	Mme	Nathalie Odounlami Beugger Chargée de Mission
		Mme	Hounsinou Omoloto Mission Employee
		M.	Kevin Dupont Assistant

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Nicoletta Giordano Head, International partnerships Division	Ms	Zahra Atbi Program Manager
Ms	Renate Held Director, Department of Migration Management	Ms	Kristina Galstyan Migration Policy Officer, International Partnerships Division
Ms	Angela Staiger Senior Humanitarian Policy Advisor	Ms	Lidija Levkov Humanitarian Policy Officer
Dr	Lorenzo Guadagno Programme manager, Migrants In Countries In Crisis	Mr	Kenyi Lukolo Intern

Organisation Météorologique Mondiale (OMM)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Jochen Luther Scientific Officer, Multi-Hazard Early Warning Services Division	Mr	Jonathan Fowler Chief of Communications and Public Affairs
		Dr	Xu Tang Member

Organisation Mondiale de la Santé (OMS)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mr	Alex Ross Director JPMB	Ms	Laila Christine Milad Participant
Ms	Catherine Kane Consultant	Dr	Mark Van Ommeren Mental Health and Substance Abuse (MSD)
Ms	Dévora Kestel Director, Mental Health and Substance Use, MSD/WHO	Dr	Mike Ryan Executive Director, WHO Health Emergencies Programme
Dr	Edith Van't Hof Member	Dr	Reinhilde Van de weerd Chief, FCV
Mr	Guillaume Simonian interagency focal point	Dr	Rudi Coninx Coordinator
Dr	Hyo-Jeong Kim Technical Officer	Ms	Sophia Kabir Executive Officer of the Executive Director, WHO Health Emergencies Programme
Ms	Inka Weissbecker Mental Health and Substance Use/WHO		

Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

H.E.	Ms Nassima Baghli Head of Delegation	Dr	Salima Dalibey Counsellor at the Permanent Delegation of the OIC to the UN Office in Geneva
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OXFAM

Ms	Charlotte Stemmer Geneva Representative	Ms	Fiona Smyth Oxfam Ireland
Mr	Jim Clarken CEO, Oxfam Ireland		

Overseas Development Institute (ODI)

Ms	Sorcha O'Callaghan Head of Humanitarian Policy Group	Mr	Ben Ramalingam Director, Global Alliance for Learning on Adaptation and Management
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Programme Alimentaire Mondial (PAM)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Gordana Jerger WFP Geneva Office Director	Ms	Marie-Helene Kyprianou Strategic Partnerships Advisor
Mr	Brian Lander Deputy Director	Ms	Aishwarya Raghuraman Intern
Mr	Anthony Craig Consultant	Ms	Mengze Liu Intern

Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

Mr	Mamadi Diakite Special Adviser, Security Humanitarian		Affairs and Fragile countries, Fast-Track Implementation Department
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United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Ms	Maria Luisa Silva Director, UNDP Office in Geneva		
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RCK

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Feride Hyseni President	Mr	Agron Humolli Secretary General
Dr	Basri Lenjani Vice President	Mr	Burim Seferi Disaster Management and Volunteering Coordinator

Sphere (former Sphere Project)

Mr	Romain Benicchio Strategic Communications and Membership Director
----	---

Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR)

Mr	Gareth Price-Jones Executive Secretary
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Terre des Hommes - Fédération Internationale

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Mme	Eylah Kadjar-Hamouda Secrétaire générale adjointe	M.	Steven Fricaud Chief Strategy Officers
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The Arab League

Excmo. Dr. Mhamed Kamali Premier secrétaire
--

The Oslo Center

Mr	Finn Jarle Rode Executive Director
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UniRef (University for Refugees)

Ms	Yvelyne Wood Executive Officer
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United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms	Meritxell Relano Deputy Director Office of Emergency Programmes	Ms	Kaitlin Brush Humanitarian Policy Specialist
Ms	Berina Arslanagic Participant	Ms	Maguette Ndiaye Emergency Specialist
Ms	Carole Vignaud Humanitarian Policy Specialist	Ms	Segolene Adam Chief, Humanitarian Policy Section
Mr	Eric Steven Frasco Intern (Office of Emergency Programmes)	Ms	Valentina Pascale Project Specialist
Mr	Hanyu Wang Intern	Mr	Bilal Sougou Child Protection Coordinator, Office of Emergency Programmes

UN-Habitat

Ms	Maimunah Mohd Sharif Executive Director
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United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

Ms Einas Osman Abdalla Mohammed
Researcher, Conventional Arms Programme

United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR)

Ms Elina Palm
Senior Programme Management Officer

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)

Chef de délégation / Head of Delegation / Jefe de Delegación / رئيس الوفد

Ms Helle Merete Lehmborg-Johansson Chief OAD Geneva	Mr Josef Reiterer Civil Military Coordination Officer
Ms Emily Phillips Consultant	Mr Simon Bagshaw Senior Policy Advisor
Ms Wendy Cue Senior Coordinator PSEA	Ms Vittoria Zea Groh member
Ms Isabelle de Muiser Humanitarian Affairs Officer	Ms Vittoria Zea Groh Member
	Ms Isabel Margarita Acheson Humanitarian Affairs Intern

World Vision International

Mr Kevin Savage Humanitarian research director	Mr Nathan McGibney Humanitarian Policy and External Engagement Advisor
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2.5 INVITÉS GUESTS INVITADOS

المدعوون

2.5.1 ORATEURS INVITÉS / GUEST SPEAKERS / ORADORES INVITADOS / المتحدثون المدعوون

CÉRÉMONIE D'OUVERTURE / OPENING CEREMONY / CEREMONIA DE APERTURE / حفل الافتتاح

Mr Ignazio Cassis
Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Swiss Confederation

COMMISSIONS PLENARIES AND SPOTLIGHTS SESSIONS / COMMISSIONS PLÉNIÈRES ET SÉANCES THÉMATIQUES / SESIONES PLENARIAS DE LAS COMISIONES Y SESIONES "EN EL CANDELERO" / الجلسات العامة للجان وجلسات إضاءة على مواضيع

Mr	Dapo Akande Professor in Public International Law, Oxford University	Ms	Nohémie Mawaka Founder, StatsCongo
Ms	Joanna Alexander Senior Director of Investigations, International Rescue Committee	Ms	Claudia Herrera Melgar Executive Director, CEPREDENAC
Ms	Ruth Rhodas Allen President, CDA Collaborative	Mr	Li Peng Deputy Secretary General, CACTA
Ms	Heba Aly Director, the New Humanitarian	Prof	Noel Sharkey Expert on Gender & Artificial Intelligence, University of Sheffield
Ms	Anahi Ayala Former Director for Humanitarian Programs, Internews	Ms	Angela Oduor CEO, Ushaidhi
Ms	Maya Brehm Adviser, Article 36	Ms	Veronica Pedrosa Journalist, Philippines
Ms	Imogen Faulkes Independent BBC correspondent	Mr	Louis Perez, PhD Université Paris 2 Panthéon Assas
Dr	Santosh Kumar Giri Community Activist, India	Mr	Nick Van Praag Executive Director, Ground Truth Solutions
Mr	Antoine Harary President, Eldeman	Mr	Naseer Shamma Maestro and Oud Master, Iraq
Ms	Cosmotina Jarret Judge, Constitutional Court of Sierra Leone	Ms	Maryke van Staden Director, Bonn Center for Local Climate Action and Reporting
Ms	Marina Krotofil BASF	Mr	Nathaniel Raymond Lecturer, Yale University
Col.	Jerry Lane Director of the Irish Defence Forces Legal Services	Ms	Olivia Tulloch, PhD CEO, Anthrologica

2.5.2 CROIX-ROUGE ET CROISSANT-ROUGE / RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT / CRUZ ROJA Y MEDIA LUNA ROJA / الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

Ms Malika Ait-Mohamed Parent
Chair, Joint IGRC / IFRC Commission for National Society Statutes

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2019

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

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3.1 CONVOCAATION

**To the Members of the
COUNCIL OF DELEGATES
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
Geneva, Switzerland, 8 December 2019**

REGISTERED

Geneva, 7 June 2019

Dear Sir, Madam,

As co-hosts of the 2019 Council of Delegates, we have the pleasure to send this notice of convocation.

In conformity with the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the Council will follow immediately after the General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (5-7 December) and precede the 33rd International Conference (9-12 December).

We look forward to welcoming you to the Council of Delegates, which will take place as follows:

**Sunday 8 December 2019
from 09:00 – 18:00 at the International Conference Centre of Geneva (CICG)
Rue de Varembe 15 – 1211 Geneva**

Enclosed with this convocation is the provisional agenda and programme of the Council, prepared by the Standing Commission as well as practical details including instructions for registering your participation in the Council.

In accordance with Rules 5 and 27 of the Rules of Procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, this convocation is addressed to all members invited to participate to the Council of Delegates.

Rule 6.2 of the Rules of Procedure requires that all observations, amendments or additions to the provisional agenda be received by the Standing Commission no later than 60 days before the opening of the Council (9 October 2019). We would appreciate, however, receiving all comments by 30 August.

Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure requires that any document submitted by a member of the Council for inclusion as an official working document must be received by the Standing Commission no later than 90 days before the opening of the Council (9 September 2019).

The official working documents for the various agenda items of the Council, including draft resolutions, will be shared 45 days before the opening of the Council (25 October 2019).

Yours sincerely,

Francesco Rocca

President

International Federation of Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies

Peter Maurer

President

International Committee
of the Red Cross

3.2 AGENDA AND PROGRAMME

COUNCIL OF DELEGATES OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Geneva, Switzerland, 8 December 2019

See 1.1.1 above

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3.3 CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

Chair

Mr Peter Maurer (International Committee of the Red Cross)

Secretaries

Ms Lucia Cipullo (International Committee of the Red Cross)

Ms Anca Zaharia (International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies)

3.4 HENRY DUNANT MEDAL AND THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT PRIZE FOR PEACE HUMANITY AWARD CEREMONY

Geneva, Wednesday, 4 December 2019

7:00 pm

RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT PRIZE FOR PEACE AND HUMANITY

Mr Hufschmid (Master of Ceremonies and Director of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum) said that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity was a Movement award that was conferred in extraordinary circumstances to recognize the efforts of a Movement component or an individual to build a more peaceful world through humanitarian action and the dissemination of the ideals of the Movement. It had been instituted by the Council of Delegates in 1987 to celebrate National Societies or individuals who had gone beyond the call of duty in working for true peace.

Dr Bellal (Master of Ceremonies and Senior Research Fellow of the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights) said that the Standing Commission selected candidates based on concrete accomplishments which had been inspired by the Programme of Action of the Red Cross as a Factor of Peace, adopted by the World Red Cross Conference on Peace in 1975 and by the “Fundamental Guidelines for the Contribution of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to a True Peace in the World” adopted by the Second World Red Cross Conference on Peace in 1984.

Although the term “peace” was a wide concept, the Movement saw peace not just as the absence of war, but as a dynamic process of cooperation among all states and peoples.

Mr Hufschmid said that cooperation was based on people’s capacity to listen to one another, a concept captured in the sculpture created by Geneva-based artist Hugo Hemmi as the award for the Prize for Peace and Humanity. The artist had worked with asylum seekers as well as consulting images of peace from the archives of the ICRC. He had also been inspired by the story of his great-grandparents who had fled Spain and by the numerous conversations he had had with passers-by in the neighbourhood where he had created the work of art.

Dr Bellal said that wisdom and respect were two qualities recognized and praised by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity.

Mr Weber (Chair of the Standing Commission) said that he was very pleased to announce that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity had been awarded to Dr Mohammed Al-Hadid. It was the fourth time that the Peace Prize had been awarded since its creation in 1987 and the first time that it had been awarded to an individual. Dr Al-Hadid’s nomination had been put forward by several National Societies, including the Palestine Red Crescent Society and Magen David Adom in Israel.

Amid applause, Dr Al-Hadid was invited to the stage to receive the Prize for Peace and Humanity

Mr Weber said that the citation for Dr Al-Hadid mentioned his remarkable steadfastness and commitment to the Principles and values of the Movement; he had shown courage in reaching out to sister Societies in humanity, peace and fellowship. He had begun his four-decade commitment to the Movement by managing several Jordan National Red Crescent Society operations and had served on the Movement’s Peace Commission.

Dr Al-Hadid had played a leading role in Movement operations during the 1990–1991 Gulf War, earning him deep appreciation in the Movement and friends in National Societies. He had persuaded Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society to meet for the first time and, under his skilful chairmanship, the 29th International Conference had recognized the two Societies and admitted them to the Movement. Dr Al-Hadid continued to encourage peace and harmony within the Movement by helping parties to find common ground in the Middle East, Cyprus and in other difficult contexts.

Under Dr Al-Hadid's guidance, the Jordan National Red Crescent Society had helped Jordan to host an unprecedented number of refugees, contributing to stability in the region. He had enabled Palestinians to travel to Jordan for treatment, facilitated the delivery of medicines to Gaza and negotiated for the lifting of blockades and the release of humanitarian workers. He continued to promote peace in the Middle East through civil society activities.

For his contribution to peace in the Movement and in the Middle East, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent had unanimously agreed to award Dr Mohammed Al-Hadid the Red Cross and Red Crescent Prize for Peace and Humanity.

Dr Al-Hadid (President of the Jordan National Red Cross Society) said that the daily greeting "*as-salamu alaykum*" or "peace be upon you" was used in the Middle East to denote benevolence, trust and the absence of malice. It served as a reminder of the responsibility to establish peace within oneself in order to be at peace with others. He was honoured and humbled to be the first individual to receive the prestigious Prize for Peace and Humanity and overwhelmed with gratitude that the work he was so passionate about had been recognized. He hoped that the recognition of his work would serve as an inspiration to others as he himself had been inspired by His Majesty the late King of Jordan, King Hussein and His Majesty Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein who had taught him to keep an open mind to the diversity of humankind and that intercultural respect was an obligation.

Many others deserved to share the Peace Prize and he was grateful to all those who had supported his nomination. He thanked his family, his colleagues in the National Society and the Standing Commission as well as the Palestine Red Crescent Society, Magen David Adom in Israel, the Cyprus Red Cross Society, the NCTRC and Dr Younis Al Khatib, Janet Davidson, Dr Freddy Pedersen, the late Philippe Cuvillier, the late Zoy Katevas De Sclabos, Sir Nicholas Young and Helena Korhonen.

He was proud of the role played by his country, Jordan, in promoting peace and its open-door policy in accepting refugees. As of 2015, some 40% of the population of Jordan was composed of non-Jordanians.

Growing up, he had never accepted inequality, injustice, oppression or suffering. It was heart-breaking to learn that the 20th Century had been the bloodiest on record. Yet it was possible to learn from history. The ongoing conflict between the Israelis and Arabs was one of the greatest tragedies and many had lost hope that the two peoples could ever live together in harmony. As people's awareness of each other increased and they took an interest in different cultures, legitimacies and identities, so they began to care for each other as they cared for themselves.

There would be no peace without economic and social development and harmonious integration was indispensable in order to reduce the disparities between rich and deprived countries and to eliminate the factors causing instability and tension. Contributions to peace could be made by strengthening friendship, collaboration and mutual assistance between organizations. Young minds were receptive to change and ready to accept new ideas: investment in youth would yield untold riches in the future.

Apparently, an enemy was needed to mobilise people: that enemy could be defined as ignorance, social injustice, hunger, poverty, hatred, terrorism, homelessness and illness. Societies must be humanized by moving from government by force to government by the rule of law in order to achieve security, stability and a culture of responsibility rather than a culture of impunity.

In concluding, he recalled the words of the cousin of the Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, Imam Ali, son of Abu Taleb, who had said that "*people are of two types: they are either your brothers in faith or your equals in humanity*". That was the magic of life: that ancient religions and philosophies could perceive the interconnectedness that bound people together in love and appreciation.

He thanked the Chair of the Standing Commission and all those behind the decision to award him the Peace Prize: it would provide an incentive for him to work even harder.

HENRY DUNANT MEDAL

Dr Bellal recalled the vision that still determined the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Mr Hufschmid said that, on becoming Director of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Museum, he had re-read *A Memory of Solferino* and he had been moved by so many aspects of that visionary work. Explaining that humanitarian work must be carried out by the public, Henry Dunant had written: “the imploring appeal must therefore be made to men and women of all countries and of all classes, to the mighty ones of this world and to the poorest workmen and women: for all can, in one way or another, each in his or her own sphere and within his or her own limitations, do something to help the good work forward.”

Dr Bellal said that the recipients of the Henry Dunant Medal had done exactly that.

First Awardee - Dr Villarroel Lander

Mr Weber said that the Henry Dunant Medal had been awarded to three individuals for their outstanding services to the Movement, the first of whom was Dr Mario Villarroel Lander.

Amid applause, Dr Villarroel approached the stage to receive the Henry Dunant Medal.

Mr Weber said that the citation of the tribute to Dr Villarroel mentioned that he was a lawyer by profession and a professor of law. He had joined the Venezuelan Red Cross at the age of 20 and had served as President of his National Society, Secretary-General of the Inter-American Committee of the Red Cross and President of the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Under his leadership, the League had become known as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

During his ten-year tenure as President of the IFRC, Dr Villarroel oversaw a long list of achievements, including the updating of the IFRC’s Constitution, the signing of a new headquarters agreement with the Swiss Confederation and the obtaining of permanent observer status at the United Nations. He had visited many member National Societies and field operations and been honoured with many State and National Society awards for his service and commitment.

In recent years, Dr Villarroel had refocused on his National Society, which had been a stabilizing force in Venezuela. He had played a vital role in ensuring the delivery of emergency aid. A charismatic and courageous leader, Dr Villarroel was esteemed by many colleagues in the Movement.

For his commitment and contribution to the development and promotion of the Movement’s Fundamental Principles and ideals, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent agreed to award the Henry Dunant Medal – the Movement’s highest distinction – to Dr Mario Villarroel Lander.

Dr Villarroel Lander (President of the Venezuelan Red Cross) expressed gratitude to the President of the Haiti Red Cross Society, Dr Jean-Pierre Guiteau, for having put his name forward to receive the Henry Dunant Medal and to the members of the Standing Commission for having voted in his favour. He thanked his wife and children for the support they had given to him for more than fifty years which had enabled him to dedicate so much of his life to the Movement. He thanked all those, including his father, who had inspired his work for the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

He thanked all of the colleagues who had supported his work and recognized the support given to both his National Society and his country by Francesco Rocca, the current President of the IFRC. He received the award with humility and dedicated it to the Red Cross volunteers of Venezuela, including those who had helped to distribute humanitarian aid in the beautiful country in which he was so proud to have been born.

He wished to send a message of Movement unity which could only be possible to the extent that each member National Society could live together in dignity and respect. He called on the international components of the Movement to create a level playing field and not to take over the space of other components. Volunteers must also strictly adhere to the Fundamental Principles. For more than 50 years, he had been a volunteer of the Movement and he had always followed the guiding principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence; he had never been a member of a political party or received favours from the government of his own country or that of another country. In closing, he reiterated his thanks to all and wished long life to Venezuela.

Second Awardee – Dr Manuela Cabero Morán

Mr Weber invited Dr Manuela Cabero Morán to the stage to receive her award.

Amid applause, Dr Manuela Cabero Morán approached the stage to receive the Henry Dunant Medal.

Mr Weber said that for nearly 25 years, Dr Manuela Cabero Morán had brought medical care to people facing war and disaster, using her own time in parallel to her work as a full-time anaesthesiologist.

At the height of the Balkans conflict, she had volunteered with Doctors of the World in Bosnia and, with the Spanish Red Cross, she had provided medical aid in Kosovo. During the Iraq War, she had treated the wounded in Baghdad. Soon after working with the IFRC's first medical team treating Ebola patients in Sierra Leone, Dr Cabero had cared for refugees on the Greek islands.

In addition to working in the field, Dr Cabero had helped to develop and promote the Health Care in Danger project, drawing on her vast field experience and qualification in medical ethics. Dr Cabero had served as vice-president of the Spanish Red Cross and was still an active volunteer.

Her efforts to save life demonstrated her dedication to humanitarian ideals. Her compassion, her determination, her courage in the face of risk and adversity were an inspiration to all who had met her.

For her contribution to saving lives and for her unwavering commitment to the promotion of the Movement's Fundamental Principles and ideals, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent agreed to award the Henry Dunant Medal – the Movement's highest distinction – to Dr Manuela Cabero Morán.

Dr Cabero Morán (Spanish Red Cross) said that she considered all within the Movement to be her dear friends and she knew many of those present personally. She thanked all of those who had put her name forward and the Standing Commission for awarding her the prize.

She did not think that she was deserving of the prize since nothing that she had done could be considered exceptional: she had simply followed the opportunities afforded to her in accordance with her training as a doctor and she had been able to take part in some of the most beautiful experiences, collaborating with others in providing humanitarian aid. She believed that the majority of those present could have received the award since all had followed professional, personal and human paths which deserved the greatest praise. She was therefore doubly grateful and accepted the prize with great humility, pride and joy on behalf of all humanitarian workers of the Red Cross and Red Crescent who made efforts on a daily basis to achieve a better world and to preserve human dignity and on behalf of all those threatened by catastrophes, wars and hunger. In concluding, she recalled the former slogan of the Spanish Red Cross which thanked all of the people for being there.

Third Awardee – Mr Michael Meyer

Mr Weber invited Mr Meyer to the stage to receive his award.

Amid applause, Mr Michael Meyer approached the stage to receive the Henry Dunant Medal.

Mr Weber said that Michael Meyer had given the Movement almost four decades of outstanding service in the fields of international humanitarian law and policy.

He had guided governments and National Societies on the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, contributing to the United Kingdom's ratification of the Additional Protocols and to legislation related to humanitarian law.

An active protector of the Movement emblems, he had contributed to the processes of adopting the red crystal and of admitting Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society to the Movement.

Mr Meyer had founded the Commonwealth Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference on international humanitarian law, the European network of National Society legal advisers and a summer school on humanitarian law at the University of Cambridge.

Many Movement initiatives and processes, including the International Conference, had long benefited from his commentaries, his contributions and his ability to motivate others.

Known for his humility and kindness, he shared his knowledge with enthusiasm and he was a trusted mentor to many, setting an inspiring example through his work ethic and his generosity to younger generations.

For his unwavering commitment and service to the development and promotion of the Movement's Fundamental Principles and ideals, the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent agreed to award the Henry Dunant Medal – the Movement's highest distinction – to Michael Meyer.

Mr Meyer (British Red Cross) said that he would speak slowly as he stammered. Growing up in Los Angeles, California, he had been eight years old when President John F. Kennedy, in his inaugural address, had made his famous call to public service. He remembered listening to that speech and, from that moment, he had been inspired to follow the path of public service. In his teenage years, there was great division in America. He had wished to do something to help bring people together. In his Red Cross and Red Crescent career, he had found a way to contribute to both objectives.

Martin Luther King Jr. had spoken of a time when people would be judged by the content of their character and by their abilities rather than on race or other irrelevant matters. He had been so fortunate as a person with a disability to have been given so many opportunities. The Movement had been founded on acceptance of diversity and inclusivity. Red Cross and Red Crescent international humanitarian law was about hope, unity and common humanity.

He had been privileged to feel a calling for his Movement work. To receive a medal for doing what he loved was a bonus. He wished to end by thanking the British Red Cross and all those who had supported his nomination and with whom he had worked. So long as they remained true to who they were, together the Movement would continue to make a positive and a practical difference to people in need and serve as a beacon and reassurance to the world.

In closing the meeting, Dr Bellal and Mr Hufschmid presented a short film of personal messages from young people in Geneva.



3.5 SUMMARY RECORD

Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Geneva, Sunday, 8 December 2019

First plenary meeting

9:00 am

3.5.1 OPENING AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Item 1: Opening of the Council by the Chair of the Standing Commission

Mr Weber, Chair, Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, warmly welcomed the participants and in particular the National Societies of Bhutan and the Marshall Islands, who were attending the Council of Delegates as new members for the first time.

The Council of Delegates played a crucial role as the forum where all of the components of the Movement could adapt, through policies, strategies and plans, to emerging humanitarian challenges and improve their collective and individual impact on the vulnerable populations they served. It was also a place in which the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement could strengthen its cohesion as a family and foster mutual respect, cooperation and collaboration.

It was a collective responsibility of the Council of Delegates to formally determine the agenda of the International Conference and to address the issues on which the Movement would take concerted humanitarian action with States. The voice of the Movement would only be credible if it entered the Conference united in purpose and with clear and well-defended positions. The Council would focus on issues that were common to all in the Movement in order to make collective actions and advocacy as effective and relevant as possible. The meetings would take place in a fundamental spirit of respect, unity, trust and gratitude and inspire all to do more on their return home.

The Red Cross Red Crescent had a long and proud history and it had placed humanitarian ideals on the map, but it needed to take action in order to be sustainably relevant. A major challenge faced by Movement partners in their collective endeavours was internal and external competition. The growth of the Movement, and of the humanitarian sector as a whole, had been helped by competition: it had given rise to greater accountability; more diverse programmes and services; a larger funding pool; creative adaptation and technological innovation. The Red Cross Red Crescent must be motivated by the desire to be the best performer, but not to the detriment of others. Movement partners inspired each other to achieve on an equal footing, maintaining a healthy, competitive spirit by focusing on the benefits they could bring to others. They accomplished their mission with a commitment to excellence, mutual trust and enhanced cooperation as part of a global and local structure.

The resolutions presented at the Council of Delegates were intended to be truly impactful for those served by the Red Cross and Red Crescent. They were the result of impressive work and intense consultation within the Movement. The decisions taken would only make a difference in operations and in ways of working if all components took responsibility for implementing them. The ten resolutions were divided into three groups: the first group sought to address the effectiveness of the Movement; the second group sought to strengthen action by unifying programmatic and policy approaches; and the third group set the agenda and chose the officers of the International Conference, to ensure that the Council of Delegates' participants chose the topics to be raised with States and identified the officers to manage the Conference in the days ahead. Under the first thematic grouping, the proposed resolutions would uphold high and transparent standards for integrity, accountability and gender parity and they would identify ways to maximize the operational impact of the Movement. The questions of "Trust, Accountability and Integrity" had become a common thread through the agendas and programs of the IFRC General Assembly, the Council of Delegates and the International Conference, and added that the Standing Commission itself had devoted a great deal of work to this topic in recent years. The Statement on the Integrity of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which was being brought to the Council, aimed to establish a link between all these efforts, to underline the commitment of

all the Movement components for integrity and ethical behaviour and to set a course for excellence of the Integrity approach across the Movement. Finally, the Standing Commission felt important to involve the Council of Delegates in a debate about whether the Seville Agreement was fit for purpose. The discussion on that sensitive issue should take place in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. The Red Cross Red Crescent had a duty to influence the global humanitarian agenda through the International Conference and to inspire its members to live up to the overarching theme of the meetings: “Act today, shape tomorrow”.

Item 2: Election of the Chair, Vice Chairs and Secretaries of the Council

Mr Weber, Chair, Standing Commission, said that the Standing Commission recommended the following officers for election: Chair, Mr Peter Maurer, President of the ICRC; Vice Chair, Ms Brigitta M. Gadiant, Vice-President of the Swiss Red Cross. The Secretaries would be Ms Lucia Cipullo of the ICRC and Ms Anca Zaharia of the IFRC.

It was so agreed.

Item 3: Adoption of the agenda of the Council

(document CD/19/3)

Mr Maurer, Chair of the Council of Delegates, said that the meetings of the Council of Delegates and the International Conference were important opportunities to make progress on the life-saving and life-changing concerns of millions of men, women and children in crisis. He welcomed the Marshall Islands Red Cross Society and the Bhutan Red Cross Society as members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent family. Individually and collectively, there was strength in diversity and unity in the common desire to respond to suffering through principled humanitarian action.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was a powerful force in the world through the values it embodied, the vision it represented and the pragmatism with which it acted. It had common roots in the Geneva Conventions, the Fundamental Principles and the emblems. Red Cross and Red Crescent actors were defined by the trust of populations. Volunteers and staff answered the call of crises, despite tragedies within their own communities and personal risk: he recognized their dedication and sacrifice.

The Movement’s strength lay in its reliable and extensive experience, working closely with affected communities across a broad range of crises, from preventing abuse, mitigating impacts and supporting the recovery of people, systems and structures. In the 19th century, the Movement had established humanitarian action as a central function of modern society and, over decades, it had adapted its response to crises and to the expectations of societies and States.

Innovation was not a new concept for the Movement: it had transformed its health response from providing frontline aid to soldiers to a multidisciplinary approach to global health challenges, pandemics, non-communicable diseases and mental health responses. People in crisis desired effective, integrated support to put lives back on track; caught in upheaval, they expected un-bureaucratic, integrated, fast and unconditional support. Humanitarian institutions must respond to multifaceted and interconnected needs.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent’s unique strength lay in its combination of local, national and international action through its branches and volunteers. The Movement could connect neutrally and impartially with States, non-state organizations and communities, acting both at the grassroots level and at the highest levels of political decision-making. In its encompassing approach, it alleviated the impacts of war, violence, underdevelopment and climate change, while also curbing suffering through international humanitarian law and long-term advocacy and partnership with political powers. From its earliest origins, professionalism and volunteerism had been at the core of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. Trust was the backbone of its actions in fragmented and divided societies and its actions were rooted in law – notably the Geneva Conventions – and remain guided by the Fundamental Principles.

At a time of great transformation and rapid change, Red Cross and Red Crescent actors were challenged by the complex dynamics of war, violence and disaster and needs were outpacing the capacity to deliver. There were an increasing number of humanitarian actors and protracted crises which required the Movement to go beyond short-term humanitarian responses and to develop people-centric sustainable responses. Increasingly, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement faced pressure from States and others, infringing on or questioning its principles, tightening humanitarian funding, denying the application of IHL and restricting access to communities in need. The Movement must defend their humanitarian space and attract greater support for neutral, independent and impartial humanitarian action. The Movement must stand together as pressures on it increased and maintain the ability to be both advocates for victims and the privileged interlocutors of States.



Progress was being made, as evident in the strong alignment between the IFRC's *Strategy 2030* and the ICRC's *Institutional Strategy 2019-2022*; notably in promoting a people-centric approach, strengthening trust, boosting prevention and sustainable humanitarian action and embracing digital transformation.

Participants at the Council of Delegates needed to be ambitious and practical as they looked for ways to improve on the key issues before them: committing to upholding integrity and to strengthening accountability to affected communities; taking important decisions to better address changing needs and vulnerabilities, particularly in the areas of mental health and psychosocial support, restoring family links, migration and internal displacement; and strengthening the ways in which the Movement cooperated and collaborated. Efforts must be redoubled to achieve consensus. As they prepared to attend the 33rd International Conference, it was critical that they should present a strong and unified Movement that was fit to face current and future challenges. Humanity would be measured by the recovery of people in need, with continuous improvements in leveraging, scaling and speeding up the response.

He invited Francesco Rocca, President of the IFRC, Yves Daccord, Director General of ICRC and As Sy, Secretary General of the IFRC to the stage, recognizing their work since the previous Council of Delegates in 2017.

He invited the Council of Delegates to adopt the provisional agenda contained in document CD/19/3.

The provisional agenda was adopted.

3.5.2 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

The Chair said that, in accordance with the Statutes of the Movement, participants were requested to respect the Fundamental Principles and refrain from engaging in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

There had been consultation on the resolutions but, if necessary, any changes could be discussed in break out groups. The order in which items were considered might not be the order in which they were listed on the agenda.

Accountability and Integrity

Item 6: Movement-wide commitments for community engagement and accountability (documents CD/19/6 and CD/19/6DR)

Ms Meige (IFRC), introducing the item, said that, thanks to its volunteers, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement had been part of the communities it served since the founding of the Movement. While its work had evolved over the years, much still needed to be done to strengthen accountability to communities by ensuring that they listened to people, acted on what they were told and allowed people to participate in decisions that affected them. In that way, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement would ensure that its work had impact and remained relevant, that communities were more resilient and that it had the trust of the people it served. A workshop at the 2017 Council of Delegates had concluded with a call for a Movement-wide approach to developing shared commitments on community engagement and accountability. The draft resolution on Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability (CD/19/6/DR) was the culmination of consultations with nearly 50 National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC. The resolution was aligned with standards such as the Core Humanitarian Standard on quality and accountability. Senior leaders in the Movement needed to be willing to push boundaries in order to change the way they worked and reshape power imbalances which continued to exist. There would need to be time, funding and space to test and adapt the way the Movement worked while mobilizing staff and volunteers.

Following the introduction by Ms. Meige, **Ms Wertz** (ICRC) went on to explain that the topic of improving accountability was people-focused. Adopting commitments for community engagement and accountability would maintain trust and ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of the Movement and the quality of its work. The Movement's organizations and people must remain deeply connected with communities. People affected by emergencies and crises must be able to participate fully in the identification of needs and in the design and implementation of solutions. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must build on people's existing capacities and implement activities together with communities. People and communities were experts of their own situations although they might need support to solve their problems. Red Cross

and Red Crescent actors must strengthen their abilities to listen to diverse groups, including women, persons with disabilities, children, older people and traditional community leaders, thereby ensuring that they were not excluding or causing harm, and that they were fulfilling their commitments to the principles of impartiality and humanity. The resolution provided a vision and commitments to strengthen accountability to the people they served.

Mr Saner (Turkish Red Crescent Society) said that, as member of a National Society experienced in community engagement, he wished to stress the requirement to build the capacities of National Societies. As mentioned in the annex to CD/19/6DR, which contained commitments and minimum actions, “the Movement still lacks a common definition and shared understanding of these concepts” and it needed to embrace the commitments as a tool to improve the quality of operations. The Turkish Red Crescent Society proposed that a joint commission should be established to monitor future progress with respect to community engagement and accountability.

Ms Balima Nikiema (Burkinabe Red Cross Society) said that her National Society had already begun to elaborate a strategy on community engagement and accountability and to train staff and volunteers on a corresponding approach. The Burkinabe Red Cross Society supported the adoption of the draft resolution.

Ms Guitierrez De Leon (Philippine Red Cross, speaking on behalf of the 11 National Societies of South-East Asia: Brunei Darussalam Red Crescent Society, Cambodian Red Cross, Indonesian Red Cross, Lao Red Cross, Malaysian Red Crescent Society, Myanmar Red Cross Society, Philippine Red Cross, Singapore Red Cross, Thai Red Cross Society, Timor Leste Red Crescent Society and Viet Nam Red Cross), said that at the 10th Asia Pacific Regional Conference, National Societies of the Asia Pacific region adopted *the Manila Call for Action in a Fast Changing World* including the commitment to “strengthen the culture of humanitarian principles and understanding, while upholding zero tolerance for fraud, corruption, and sexual exploitation and abuse, to maintain the highest standards of integrity, probity, transparency and accountability to our communities and partners”. National Societies had also committed to integrate protection, gender, community engagement and accountability into their policies and to include people with disabilities in National Society membership and programmes. The National Societies of South-East Asia fully supported the commitments set out in the annex to document CD/19/6DR and pledged to report on their progress in fulfilling their commitments.

Mr Kettaneh (Lebanese Red Cross) welcomed the draft resolution, which built on and clarified the contents of previous resolutions on the subject. He underlined the importance of improving transparency and adopting accountability measures to strengthen National Society work. Every National Society had its own vision and role, but all should devote their resources to local communities. It would have been helpful to have a simplified definition of commitments for community engagement and accountability set out in the annex to document CD/19/6DR. The annex might also have made reference to different expectations and it could have provided more information on the performance-measurement framework that would be developed. He wished to know what would happen to National Societies that were unable to collaborate with local communities. The draft resolution would help to improve National Society transparency and he supported it.

The Chair said that the comments made by the Turkish Red Crescent and the Lebanese Red Cross could be accommodated in the annex to document CD/19/6DR.

The draft resolution entitled “Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability” in document CD/19/6DR was adopted. (Resolution 1, CD/19/R1)

Item 4: International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Statement on Integrity (document CD/19/4DR)

Mr Weber, Chair of the Standing Commission, said that he was pleased that questions of trust, accountability and integrity had become a common theme of the 2019 Statutory Meetings; they had been at the core of discussions in the Standing Commission in the previous four years, which had led to the development of the Statement on Integrity of the Movement, jointly proposed by the IFRC and the ICRC.

Trust in humanitarian action had been chosen as one of the central themes of the International Conference. Trust in the actions of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was no longer a given: the assertion of sovereignty created new constraints to international humanitarian actions and could undermine efforts to reach vulnerable populations; more involvement of local authorities and communities was required; and more integrity, accountability, transparency and ethical behaviour was demanded.

The requirement for integrity and ethical behaviour was not new to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, but principles themselves were not enough. Organizations must ensure compliance with ethical standards

and fight against corruption, fraud, discrimination, abuse, harassment, exploitation and other unethical behaviours. A lot of very good work had already been done within National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC, but efforts must continue and intensify.

The Statement on the Integrity of the Movement acknowledged current efforts and underlined the commitment of all Movement components to integrity and to ethical behaviour. The Statement would provide an additional instrument on the eve of an open dialogue with States on Trust in Humanitarian Action at a time that States were being requested to support the Red Cross and Red Crescent in a collective mission.

The Statement expressed the seriousness with which all components of the Movement took integrity and ethical behaviour, and to the Fundamental Principles and basic values and to statutory, regulatory and policy frameworks. It reiterated that all components of the Movement wanted to gain and maintain the acceptance and trust of the people they served and reinforced respect for inclusion, diversity and gender balance, in line with the Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability. It committed the Movement to build on existing structures and to pool resources to provide all components with guidance, support and training.

The Statement had been developed jointly by the IFRC and the ICRC, with input from the Standing Commission. Unfortunately, there had been limited time for National Societies to provide input, but the contributions they had made had been reflected in the Statement. All components of the Movement were requested to engage in the development of a plan “to consult on, implement and monitor an enhanced approach to integrity across the Movement” so that progress could be reported to the Council of Delegates in 2021.

Ms Rhodes (Australian Red Cross) warmly welcomed the focus on integrity and accountability in the Statutory Meetings. The conversation on compliance and integrity concerned more than policies and procedures: it was about trust in the mandate, operations and emblems of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. Trust took years to build, seconds to break and forever to repair. The General Assembly of the IFRC had taken important steps forward on integrity and the Movement Statement on Integrity was the next crucial element in establishing how all of the components of the Movement could strive to meet the best possible integrity standards.

Ms Kuang (Australian Red Cross) said that the most important element of the Statement was the final paragraph, which focused on consulting on implementing and monitoring an enhanced approach to integrity across the Movement and in particular on developing a vision of how to improve a culture in which integrity was embedded in all institutional practices and individual behaviours. The Australian Red Cross strongly encouraged that the implementation process should include an action-focused dialogue, which involved listening to those who struggled most to meet integrity-related requirements, building a system that could provide ongoing support, and nurturing a culture of learning and continuous improvement.

Mr Al Razwan (Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, speaking on behalf of the National Societies of the South Asia region from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka), welcomed the focus on integrity. The “Manila Call for Action in a Fast-Changing World” adopted at the 10th Asia Pacific Regional Conference in November 2018, had established the clear target that 100 percent of National Societies should have in place policies on integrity and the prevention of fraud and corruption and sexual exploitation and abuse. All National Societies were committed to the target and recognized that strong leadership would be necessary in order to implement the policies. They also recognized that integrity was linked to the topics of protection, gender and inclusion, as well as community engagement and accountability. Integrity was a prerequisite at institutional level as well as in guiding behaviours and mechanisms. Investment was needed to scale up capacities and skills. It was strongly recommended that guidelines were developed to measure trust as an institutional asset.

Dr Abbas (Iraqi Red Crescent Society) expressed strong support for the Statement on Integrity and in particular the emphasis placed on the accountability of the Red Cross and Red Crescent towards the communities in which it worked, which would allow the voices of those they served to be heard and preserve the dignity of beneficiaries through their inclusion in decision making. Further information should be included in the Statement on the resources to be deployed in the assistance provided to communities, which made clear how money would be allocated and spent. He looked forward to the progress report at the Council of Delegates in 2021 on the development of the plan to consult on, implement and monitor an enhanced approach to integrity across the Movement.

Mr Tofinga (Kiribati Red Cross Society, speaking on behalf of 14 Pacific National Societies attending the meeting), welcomed the Statement on Integrity and the inclusion of all components in a “One Movement” approach which recognized that upholding integrity was the responsibility of all. The National Societies of the Pacific sub-region were committed to reinforcing trust through upholding individual and collective integrity and

they had taken a number of steps to that end, through the 'Presidents' Network' that supported collaboration in governance, creating a target for all Pacific National Societies to comply with the IFRC Compliance and Mediation Committee's (CMC) Dashboard criteria. A constitutional advisory committee in the Pacific, comprised of constitutional and local experts, had been established to provide peer support on constitutional compliance. Five National Societies had complied with a new guidance document on statutory compliance while others had already made progress towards compliance. The sub-region had struggled to achieve compliance with respect to external audits but 67 per cent of National Societies were currently up to date. The aspiration of the Pacific 'Presidents' Network' was that 100 per cent of National Societies would be up to date with their audited financial statements by the end of 2020. Transparent reporting would be key to progress and the IFRC was called upon to make reporting on the CMC Dashboard more transparent in future. The ICRC and the IFRC were requested to report more transparently on a set of common standards that would be developed collectively by their boards. The ICRC and the IFRC were also requested to work together, including through their own decentralized structures, to build the governance capacity of National Societies, to enable them to uphold integrity and build local expertise. National Societies must be supported locally to address their own issues of integrity, including through risk management training packages and plans. The Pacific National Societies would be pleased to share their experience of success in being open and transparent with each other and in developing local expertise through effective use of their peer network.

Mr Valastro (Italian Red Cross) welcomed the Statement on Integrity. The ethical behaviour of each component of the Movement, both at the individual and the institutional level, affected the entire Movement. Breaches of integrity undermined trust and credibility in the communities they served and undermined the principles of humanitarian action. Strong cooperation was required to address integrity issues, with pooling of resources and experiences to produce capacities and mechanisms for the early detection and effective management of risks. Integrity included respect for and inclusion of diversity and gender balance, with accountability and transparency and attention given to partnerships. The Italian Red Cross had contributed to programmes on integrity protection in strategic planning in the Americas in recent years. The programmes were intended to strengthen National Society leadership, develop internal controls and accountability systems as well as sustainable development plans, supporting the revision of statutes and codes of conduct. The Italian Red Cross placed special emphasis on prevention, with a broad and crosscutting National Society development approach that would create an enabling environment in which the potential of the National Society could be fully expressed and in which misconduct would be discredited. The Italian Red Cross renewed its commitment to cooperating on integrity within the Movement.

Mr Gyimah-Akwafo (Ghana Red Cross Society), whilst welcoming and supporting the Statement on Integrity, wished to emphasize the related importance of resource mobilisation and sustainability. Current members of the Movement must demonstrate integrity, accountability and trust as an example to the young people who would take over after them.

Mr Kari (Finnish Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Icelandic Red Cross, the Swedish Red Cross and the Norwegian Red Cross), expressed full support for the Statement on Integrity, which laid out ambitious goals and principles to which all should be able to adhere. In order to be a reliable humanitarian actor and a partner in the humanitarian field, the Movement must express its commitment to ethical behaviour and to the integrity of its components. Special attention should be paid to accountability and to transparency of operations, to funding and to the results of their work. Components of the Movement should openly communicate their successes, their failures and their challenges. The commitments should also be backed up with concrete actions. He looked forward to the detailed plan on how an enhanced approach to integrity would be implemented and monitored across the Movement. The implementation of the plan would require strong leadership on the part of the IFRC and National Societies; he hoped that the CMC would be given a role in the preparation and monitoring of the implementation plan.

Mr Sy (IFRC) said that the IFRC supported and embraced the full scope of the Statement on Integrity, which included ethics, transparency and delivering results through policies, in behaviours and in practice. The Red Cross and Red Crescent must deliver on integrity not only for others but for its own sake: in the work place and in the way it treated its partners and colleagues, in the way it treated women and in the way it included people with disabilities. Integrity should also be present in the way it managed the resources that were entrusted to it. The IFRC had strengthened its internal functions, such as audit and investigation, as well as its culture of zero-tolerance of fraud and corruption. The IFRC General Assembly had just adopted a strengthened Integrity Policy and amended the IFRC Constitution in order to strengthen the Compliance and Mediation Committee (CMC). Vigilance would be required in order to preserve the gains that had been made, working to maintain an environment that supported the right behaviours and taking the right decisions.

Mr Carbonnier (ICRC) said that all humanitarian organizations were coming under mounting scrutiny, and integrity had become ever more critical to build and maintain trust. The ICRC welcomed the Statement on Integrity, to which it had contributed during the drafting process, and was committed to contributing to its effective implementation. It was particularly pleasing that the Statement welcomed the collective commitment of the Movement to further pool resources “to provide all components with effective support, training, education, and guidance in strengthening integrity, accountability and rules, processes and mechanisms”. It would be necessary to strengthen National Societies’ statutory legal base and to share standards, know-how and experience in managing integrity issues. The ICRC was committed to work with Movement partners to design and implement a plan that would enhance the Movement-wide approach to integrity and on which a report would be provided to the Council of Delegates in 2021. The ICRC had invested significantly in order to establish solid integrity and compliance frameworks and it was committed to ensuring that ICRC partnerships, including within the Movement, reflected a firm commitment to integrity and ethical standards. The ICRC had also started to work with Partner National Societies to strengthen Host National Societies’ capacities, including in financial management. The ICRC welcomed the Statement and was committed to its implementation.

Dr Chabbou (Tunisian Red Crescent) said that integrity was at the heart of the Movement, yet it was difficult to achieve. The Movement was “committed to ensuring the protection of whistle-blowers” and in a world of mass media it must be prepared to react promptly when in the media spotlight and to demonstrate the application of ethical standards in line with the Statement on Integrity.

Mr Traoré (Red Cross Society of Guinea) said that the Statement on Integrity would underpin humanitarian action, which was based on trust, accountability and transparency. He appealed to all members of the Movement to commit to the Statement in practice since it would only be possible to mobilise all partners through trust.

Ms Touqan (Jordan National Red Crescent Society) said the Jordan Red Crescent had made it obligatory for all staff and volunteers to take an online course on integrity and fraud and the National Society had conducted a workshop on fraud, corruption and integrity. It had also amended its statutes and policies to enable work with partners to be conducted with integrity, transparency and accountability. The Jordan Red Crescent supported the Statement on Integrity.

Dr Bwito (Rwandan Red Cross) said that transparency and accountability were crucial to fulfilling the mission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. The Movement was responsible for a very large pool of staff and volunteers who were responsible for carrying out activities and for integrity on the ground. In order to apply integrity effectively, National Societies would require strengthening of their capacities, including through the training of staff and volunteers.

Mr Esfandiari (Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran) welcomed the focus on integrity and accountability. The Iranian Red Crescent fully supported the Statement on Integrity and was committed to linking the Statement with its own policies and strategies in order to protect trust at the national and international level. By applying integrity and accountability, National Societies would do better and achieve their objectives in accordance with the Fundamental Principles.

Dr Emam (Egyptian Red Crescent Society) welcomed the Movement Statement on Integrity; the Egyptian Red Crescent was following the steps outlined in the Statement in order to ensure that integrity was embedded within the National Society and in its cooperation with partners. The steps had comprised institutional development, auditing on different levels, and working on financial stability with a framework of accountability and fulfilment of due diligence requirements. The National Society ensured that staff and volunteers and partners in the community complied with integrity standards.

Mr Fayia (Sierra Leone Red Cross Society) said that the Sierra Leone Red Cross had developed an Integrity Pact, which all volunteers were required to sign, in order to ensure that all of its humanitarian work was carried out with integrity. The National Society had implemented a policy to combat fraud and corruption and a further policy on whistleblowing. Stronger internal controls had also been put in place. The Sierra Leone Red Cross fully supported the Statement on Integrity.

The draft Statement on Integrity of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, contained in document CD/19/4DR, was adopted. (Resolution 2, CD/19/R2)

Mr Weber, Chair, Standing Commission, said that he appreciated the comments made. Speaking as the former Chair of the IFRC Compliance and Mediation Committee, it was heartening to hear the robust support for the Statement on Integrity. The comments made on the areas in which reinforcement was needed had been noted.

He hoped that a robust report on the implementation plan would be presented to the Council of Delegates in 2021.

Item 5: Movement approach to strengthening National Society statutory and constitutional base and complementary frameworks

(documents CD/19/5 and CD/19/5DR)

Ms Aït-Mohamed Parent (Chairperson, Joint ICRC/IFRC Commission for National Society Statutes) introducing the draft resolution CD/19/5DR, recalled that the mandate of the Joint Statutes Commission was to support and advise National Societies in strengthening their legal and statutory base; and to contribute to the process of recognition by the ICRC and admission by IFRC of candidate National Societies. The draft resolution highlighted that strengthening statutory and legal base instruments contributed to the ability of National Societies to carry out their activities in accordance with the Fundamental Principles. Indeed, the Joint Statutes Commission had been created to assist National Societies to achieve that aim almost 50 years previously.

The present guidelines for National Societies on strengthening their statutory and constitutional base instruments and complementary frameworks had been developed following a consultation process over a period of two years by a core group composed of National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC. They had been adopted by the IFRC Governing Board in October 2018 and were currently presented to the Council of Delegates for adoption. Special thanks were due to the Danish Red Cross, which had chaired the Group, and to the National Societies that had participated in its deliberations, as well as to those that had contributed to the consultations and to funding the process.

The guidance was a new tool that would provide the opportunity for National Societies to revise and strengthen their statutory and constitutional base instruments, regulations and policies within a five-year period. Some 40 National Societies had already begun to revise their statutes on the basis of the new guidelines. The tool placed emphasis on the rights and status of volunteers and on preserving the integrity of National Societies. There was also a more flexible approach to different operational realities and national contexts. National Societies were invited to share examples of their statutory and constitutional base instruments, as well as examples of relevant policies and good practices. The new guidance was intended to reflect modern trends in the humanitarian field, with the focus on the increased accountability of humanitarian actors towards beneficiaries, the wider public and donors, in particular in the new Chapter 6 entitled “Compliance, Integrity and Dispute Resolution”, which contained a series of recommendations on mechanisms for prevention and management of integrity issues.

The Joint Commission was committed to strengthening the capacities and commitments of the Movement by ensuring that the Movement provided more support to National Societies through, for instance, providing expertise on the ground; and by performing a monitoring, oversight and guidance role. The Joint Commission encouraged National Societies to confirm their pledges during the International Conference concerning their commitment to revise their national statutes and to retain a copy of the guidance document for daily use as an organizational development tool.

Mr Bak-Jensen (Danish Red Cross, speaking on behalf of the members of the core group: the National Societies of Argentina, Burundi, Cook Islands, Denmark, Haiti, Mongolia, Palestine, Spain, Turkmenistan and Uganda), which had led the review of the guidance document on National Society statutes, recommended the adoption of the guidance. The National Society members of the core group were from different parts of the world, acted in different humanitarian contexts and faced different external requirements, but they shared the Fundamental Principles and their joint commitment to the statutory, regulatory and policy frameworks adopted in the Movement and in the IFRC. The guidance had been developed to assist all National Societies in making informed choices when updating their statutes. The statutes should be up-to-date, compatible with national, legal and operational contexts and comply with the Fundamental Principles and the key policy decisions of the IFRC and the Movement. The document was intended to be user-friendly and accessible from a leadership perspective, with illustrations and examples from National Societies. Having strong and sound statutes would not solve every problem, but it was a good start in terms of safeguarding the Fundamental Principles, providing an element of stability and predictability, supporting productive and transparent working relations, helping to protect integrity, and serving as a confidence-building measure towards all stakeholders. The Guidance Document was already reflected in other documents, such as the IFRC Integrity Policy, the CMC Dashboard and the Movement Statement on Integrity. The statutory revision process was more than a desktop exercise: it was a process that should be led by National Societies and involve discussion of National Society perspectives and consultation with all stakeholders. National Societies were encouraged to engage based on the new Guidance Document.

Mr Mirzayev (Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan) said that the draft resolution welcomed the Guidance Document, which set new standards to which National Societies must adhere. National Societies must be supported in reviewing and strengthening their statutory base and complementary frameworks. The existing statutes of the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan had already been revised after consultation with the IFRC, the ICRC and the Joint Commission. Some of the amendments in the Guidance Document had already been reflected in the statutes of the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan.

Mr Diallo (IFRC), said that the 2018 Guidelines and the complementary frameworks were highly relevant to National Societies and the IFRC had fully supported strengthening them. The IFRC congratulated National Societies for the progress made thus far and encouraged them to continue to review their statutory base and to adopt the guidelines. The IFRC would support and facilitate the work of National Societies. He thanked the core group for its work in elaborating the guidelines, which had been taken into account in the recent revision of IFRC documents, such as “policy on the protection of the integrity of National Societies and organs of the IFRC” and the “Red Cross Red Crescent integrity framework”. The Volunteer Charter, adopted at the 21st session of the IFRC General Assembly and attached to the draft resolution CD/19/5DR, was an important document that formalized and operationalized the responsibility of National Societies to their volunteers and set out their rights, including the right to protection, to be heard, to be recognized for their contribution, and the right to be insured. In order to make concrete achievements, the Red Cross and Red Crescent needed a clear legal base and frameworks.

Mr Mehra (Canadian Red Cross) said that he supported the draft resolution and the ongoing commitment to improving the regulatory base of National Societies. He recalled the National Society Development Compact, which highlighted that National Societies were responsible for their own development and that National Society leaders were responsible for ensuring that their National Societies were fit for purpose and able to identify priorities for their own development. With the National Society Development Compact in mind, he proposed to amend operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution by removing the words “and at their request” from the second subparagraph and inserting the words “at the request of National Societies” after “regions and field representations” in the introductory part of the paragraph: in that way, the words would apply to the whole paragraph.

Dr Ruiz Rodas (Salvadorean Red Cross Society) recalled that the Salvadorean Red Cross had successfully revised and adopted its own legal statutes following consultation and support from the IFRC. The statutes incorporated key elements for its development, such as on youth and integrity. A strong and transparent statutory base, developed in consultation with the Movement, was the best foundation for National Societies.

Mr Hori (Japanese Red Cross Society) welcomed the Guidance Document for National Society statutes. He commended in particular the inclusion of flexible and innovative approaches that respected different legal traditions and the wide variety of existing organizational models in National Societies, while at the same time adapting to contemporary challenges such as strengthening compliance and securing integrity. He highlighted the Movement Volunteer Charter, which had become an integral part of the legal base of the Red Cross Red Crescent and praised the able leadership of the Standing Commission. The Volunteer Charter, adopted in 2017 at the IFRC General Assembly, was a much-needed document that reflected the realities for millions of volunteers who were working in conflict zones and the many who had lost their lives in the course of duty. It was the hope of the Japanese Red Cross Society that the Volunteer Charter would be recognized beyond the Movement, in the same way as the Fundamental Principles.

Mr Valastro (Italian Red Cross) said that the Italian Red cross had welcomed the adoption of the Volunteer Charter at the 21st session of the IFRC General Assembly and the proposal to include it in the present Council of Delegates draft resolution on strengthening National Society statutory and constitutional base. There was a need to promote, protect and recognize volunteers and community actors and to be clear about their roles and engaging volunteers required a duty of care, supporting them and providing proper training, the right information and equipment, and security management, including safety nets and insurance, as well as psychological support. Recognizing that volunteers were vulnerable in different ways was essential to ensure their protection and they should be recognized beyond their position as givers. In order to achieve cross-organizational dialogue, a knowledge sharing and cooperative approach were essential.

Mr Kende (Nigerian Red Cross Society) thanked the Joint Statutes Commission, the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies for their assistance in helping to review and develop the Nigerian Red Cross Society statutes and financial guidelines.

Mr Baialinov (Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan, speaking also on behalf of the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan), expressed support for the draft resolution and endorsed the remarks made on behalf of the Italian Red Cross and the Japanese Red Cross Society. The revised guidelines would make an important contribution

to the development of well-functioning National Societies and the Volunteer Charter would help to improve the management of volunteers, including by providing insurance and focusing on security. He called on the IFRC and the ICRC to invest more in National Society development, education and training programmes and called on all National Societies to pay special attention to the Volunteer Charter.

Ms Deroin de Gaillande (Vanuatu Red Cross Society, speaking on behalf of the Pacific National Societies of Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu), applauded the work carried out on the revision to the Guidance for National Society Statutes and supported the draft resolution. A sound legal framework and statutory base was a precondition for a strong National Society and for upholding the integrity standards of the Movement. She further applauded the inclusion of best practices, which would allow National Societies reviewing their statutory and constitutional base to make informed choices that were compatible with their own legal, operational and cultural context. Pacific National Societies were making great progress in fulfilling their commitment to review their statutes in accordance with the new guidance document within five years. Five Pacific National Societies had revised their constitutions and others had already started the process under the leadership of the 'Presidents' Network' and a regional constitutional advisory committee comprised of governance experts and professional volunteers. Capacity building of National Society constitutional expertise was essential in order to meet the ambitious targets set and to build a global network of local expertise that the Movement could draw on and be inspired by. She called on other regions to take similar initiatives in order to commit to constitutional amendments within the given timeframe and to ensure that the integrity of the Movement was upheld. She also called for a review of the Joint Statutes Commission's operational modalities to be more aligned with IFRC National Society development support in order that appropriate and tailored support could be provided: the review could be conducted in conjunction with the review of the mandate of the IFRC Compliance and Mediation Committee. She would welcome consultation with the Pacific constitutional advisory committee to discuss further with the Joint Statutes Commission and IFRC National Society development team's guidance on how similar modalities could be accomplished in other regions.

Mr Gouaye (Central African Red Cross Society), referring to the some 12,000 volunteers in the Central African Red Cross Society and commending the work of the Joint Statutes Commission, said that the guidance and Volunteer Charter would serve to strengthen the rights and status of volunteers and contribute to strengthening of National Society governance. The Movement had lost a number of staff and many National Society volunteers had lost their lives in the events that had affected the Central African Republic between 2013 and 2017. Using the guidance as a base, the Central African Red Cross Society had already begun to revise its statutes, incorporating youth members in its governing board and giving the right to vote to local branch representatives.

Ms Benhabyles (Algerian Red Crescent Society) said that thanks to the experience of the 20,000 volunteers in the Algerian Red Crescent Society, the National Society had been chosen to preside a national committee for the promotion of civil society and to create a national volunteer charter. By scrupulously respecting its statutes, the National Society had been able to strengthen its ranks with volunteers of all ages. With integrity and transparency at the heart of its work, the National Society had been able to engage with national and international partners, such as the World Food Programme and UNHCR, and to build its capacities.

Mr Lobar (South Sudan Red Cross) said that he welcomed the adoption of the Volunteer Charter, which would promote and strengthen the work of volunteers across the globe, as well as in fragile environments such as in South Sudan. He also supported the adoption of the guidance document that would assist National Societies in aligning their statutes. The revision of the statutes of the South Sudan Red Cross had begun in 2018, in consultation with all key stakeholders in the units, the branches and staff at headquarters. The constitutional amendments had been shared with stakeholders and included provisions on gender, integrity, youth participation, and people with disabilities. The first and second drafts had been shared with the Joint Statutes Commission and the IFRC and the comments and amendments had been incorporated in the new statutes. The constitution of the National Society was currently in compliance with the new guidance. The South Sudan Red Cross strongly supported the adoption of the draft resolution.

Dr Avgerinos (Hellenic Red Cross) said that accountability and integrity remained top priorities for the Hellenic Red Cross. The National Society had successfully revised its constitutional base as part of its integrity status. The Hellenic Red Cross was committed to strengthening the community engagement and accountability that had developed during the migration crisis. Volunteer insurance and a code of conduct and were crucial for accountability and integrity.

Mr Merha (Canadian Red Cross Society) intervened to clarify that the phrase "and at their request" could be deleted from the second subparagraph as it had been already moved to the introductory paragraph.



Resolution 3, as amended, entitled “Movement approach to strengthening National Society statutory and constitutional base and complementary frameworks such as the Volunteer Charter”, which included the Guidance for National Society Statutes, 2018, contained in document CD/19/5DR, was adopted. (Resolution 3, CD/19/R3)

Item 8: Enhancing transparency, gender balance and rotation in the election and composition of the Standing Commission
(document CD/17/8DR)

Mr Chetty (Standing Commission) introduced the draft resolution on enhancing transparency, gender balance and rotation in the election and composition of the Standing Commission contained in document CD/17/8DR, which included guidelines for candidates for election. The guidelines proposed an in-depth review of the profiles of candidates, which had been in use since 1995. Since the beginning of its mandate in 2016, the Standing Commission had studied ways to enhance inclusiveness, transparency, diversity and fairness of the election of the members of the Standing Commission, which took place every four years at the International Conference. The matter had been energised by the adoption of Resolution 12 by the Council of Delegates in 2017, which called for the components of the Movement and the Standing Commission to “take concrete measures to address the question of gender equality and equal opportunities at all levels of their own leadership”. The Standing Commission had been responsive to the call and had reviewed its own election processes. The statutory recommendation to ensure balanced geographical distribution was an important aspect of the Standing Commission’s work, but it had also undertaken a broader review of the existing statutory and policy framework within the Movement and of the evolution of electoral standards and practices. Key issues had emerged, such as achieving equitable gender balance in its composition, ensuring the personal qualities and integrity of candidates, aligning its rules with current election standards regarding transparency of nominations, and the limit on the number of terms served. The Standing Commission had approved proposals targeted at two levels: those to be immediately achieved through administrative arrangements for the nomination process for the 2019 election, as well as policy changes to be submitted to the Council of Delegates in the form of the proposed resolution and guidelines for candidates. The draft resolution included strong commitments from the Movement components concerned, including an earlier submission of nominations 60 days before the opening of the International Conference and a maximum of two four-year terms for elected and *ex officio* members. The draft resolution also urged members of the International Conference to take into account the principle of geographical distribution, as well as equitable gender balance, with at least two women and two men being chosen as candidates, during the election of the five members of the Standing Commission at the 33rd International Conference. In addition, some further considerations were included in the draft resolution, which would potentially have a direct impact on equitable gender balance in the Standing Commission: the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of the Movement, essentially drafted in 1986, included provisions unduly marked by the masculine gender and therefore the draft resolution proposed that “the Statutes and Rules of Procedure shall be considered as gender neutral” and that, unless the contrary intention appeared, words indicating masculine or feminine were not limited to the indicated gender. The draft resolution also encouraged all members of the Movement to ensure equitable gender representation in their delegations when attending the Council of Delegates and the International Conference. The guidelines included more sensitive and comprehensive provisions on duties concerning the integrity and ethical behaviour of all candidates and elected members, in accordance with current standards and ambitions.

Mr Rocca (IFRC) expressed support for the draft resolution, which sought to express gender balance within the composition of the Standing Commission. Empowering women in leadership was important to ensure effective and inclusive governance in the Movement. Women were also a vital component of the volunteer base and it was therefore fundamental that they were represented equally and that their voice was heard. It was vital that opportunities for women were found within the governance structure of the Movement. As an *ex-officio* representative of the IFRC in the Standing Commission, he had strongly advocated that the terms of the draft resolution should be included in the Statutes of the Movement as a constitutional requirement. After a lively discussion, the IFRC General Assembly had just adopted amendments to the Constitution of the IFRC in the same vein. Nevertheless, the draft resolution before the Council of Delegates, as it stood, was a step in the right direction, since it encouraged delegations to choose at least two women and two men among the five Standing Commission candidates. He looked forward to the adoption of the draft resolution and hoped very much that it would be taken into account by delegations in the elections for the Standing Commission that would be held at the International Conference.

Mr Carbonnier (ICRC) said that, from the outset, the ICRC had actively participated in the discussions to prepare proposals on strengthening transparency and rotation in the elections of the Standing Commission members

and ensuring gender balance in its composition. The ICRC welcomed the adoption of the commitments, together with the new guidelines for candidates contained in the draft resolution. As announced at previous sessions of the Standing Commission, the ICRC had made the commitment that it would abide by the principle of equitable gender representation in the composition of the Standing Commission regarding the two *ex officio* ICRC members. Mr. Carbonnier thanked Mr. Balthasar Staehelin, ICRC Deputy Director General, for his decision to step down from the Standing Commission and welcomed Ms. Katrin Wiegmann, Head of the Division for Cooperation and Coordination within the Movement, as new member in the forthcoming Standing Commission together with ICRC President. The ICRC welcomed the recommendations and practical measures introduced through the resolution, which would ensure greater transparency, protection and equitable gender balance in the Standing Commission.

Mr Kettaneh (Lebanese Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society), welcomed the reference in the draft resolution to taking into account personal qualities, fair geographical distribution and gender equality at all levels of leadership. It was also important to establish that all persons had fair access to positions based on experience and competence and that equal access should be granted to all. Nevertheless, care should be taken that application of the new rules did not limit access to positions by competent candidates and more flexible wording could be introduced in that regard. He was in agreement that candidates should serve a maximum of two terms in order to make way for new candidates. With those comments, he expressed agreement with the draft resolution.

Ms Wahlström (Swedish Red Cross) welcomed the efforts of the Standing Commission to follow up on Resolution 12 of the 2017 Council of Delegates, which represented an important step forward. She called on National Societies to put forward the very best female and male candidates in order to improve the quality of all candidates and to ensure that the membership of the Standing Commission was representative of the Movement. She thanked ICRC for walking the talks on the issue and helping the Standing Commission in moving forwards in its efforts towards gender equality.

Mr Esfandiari (Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran) expressed support for the draft resolution. He called upon Members of the Movement to improve gender balance in the Standing Commission and welcomed the decision of the ICRC to ensure that one of its *ex officio* delegates to the Standing Commission would be a woman. He expected that a similar practice would be followed by the IFRC.

Ms Koursoumba (Cyprus Red Cross Society) said that it was very important that women were present in decision making in all components of the Movement. Gender equality and equal opportunities must be in place at all levels of leadership, with representation of women from diverse backgrounds in management positions and in governing boards. Of course, women candidates would be knowledgeable and competent, since women were no less competent than men. It was to be hoped that gender balance would be introduced across the Movement: of the current members of the CMC, only three were women. She supported the remarks of the President of the IFRC.

The resolution entitled “Enhancing transparency, gender balance and rotation in the election and composition of the Standing Commission” (CD/19/8DR) was adopted. (Resolution 4, CD/19/R4)

Addressing needs and vulnerabilities

Item 9: International Red cross and Red Crescent Movement Policy on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs

(documents CD/19/9 and CD/19/9DR)

Mr Somer (Danish Red Cross) introduced the resolution by recalling experience driving a minivan in 2015 with 20 Syrian refugees housed by the Danish Red Cross. He had realised that a four-year old Syrian girl sitting beside him had never known a home before, since she had been on the move her whole life, being born into a world of turmoil in Syria. The girl was hurt, but her wounds were not visible: they were those of a detached, distressed and deprived childhood. For the girl from Syria and for countless others, he was honoured to present the first ever Movement-wide policy addressing mental health and psychosocial needs, which had been developed by National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC.

The Movement had long worked in the area of mental health on a worldwide scale, and almost all National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC provided basic psychosocial support. Many were also offering more specialized services for people with mental health concerns. More than 90 per cent were providing mental health and

psychosocial support to emergency affected populations. Support was also provided to marginalized groups, such as homeless people and persons with addictions. Since 2018, more than 42,000 staff and volunteers had been trained in psychological first aid, and 6 out of 10 National Societies were planning to expand their work in mental health and psychosocial support.

With the new policy, the Movement would be able to speed ahead. Currently, there were large and growing gaps between needs and the care provided. Mental health problems often developed at an early age, and suicide was the second leading cause of death amongst young people, prompting the need for both prevention and treatment for children and young people. At the 33rd International Conference it was hoped to adopt a strong resolution together with States, which would help to advance that work through strong partnerships, capacity building and investments in local response. The new policy before the Council of Delegates would write a new chapter in the history of the Movement, with a promise to heal both visible and invisible wounds, to fight the stigma of mental health and to close the gap between needs and response.

Ms Osorio (ICRC) said that the ICRC was very proud to have worked alongside National Societies and the IFRC to develop the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. Ten years previously, there had been eight ICRC programmes providing mental health and psychosocial support while currently, there were some 130 ICRC programmes worldwide, many of which had been built and implemented with National Societies. That exponential growth in programmes was in response to the immense suffering of millions of people who were affected by conflict and violence. It was also because the ICRC recognized that mental health was not an afterthought, but it was lifesaving – and there was ‘no health without mental health’. She acknowledged the work of volunteers and staff who were themselves the victims of conflicts and emergencies and who, in helping those affected in their communities, were exposed to sorrow twice over. More must be done to support them. She also acknowledged the mental health workers and psychologists who had made mental health and psychosocial support a humanitarian priority for the Movement, building culturally diverse and appropriate approaches to provide meaningful care. By adopting the policy, the Movement would be committing to strengthening its collective capacity, acting as one powerful workforce to address psychosocial and mental health needs.

Mr Capobianco (IFRC) said that mental health conditions were often invisible and silent, yet they were among the leading causes of ill health, disability and mortality worldwide. Nearly two-thirds of people with known mental health issues and psychosocial needs never sought help due to a lack of access and lack of treatment and due to the stigma surrounding the issue. Early access to affordable, accessible and quality mental health care was a matter of life and death. The IFRC was very pleased to see that, after an extensive consultation process, the policy presented for adoption recognized the variety of complementary activities carried out by National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC in different contexts and in accordance with their mandates: in natural disasters, in conflicts, in socially excluded communities and in migration settings. He commended National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support for their work on the policy. The IFRC would support National Societies around four objectives: training 14 million volunteers and staff in psychological first aid; including psychological support interventions in all IFRC support and emergency operations; prioritizing the mental health of volunteers; and supporting National Societies in their advocacy roles to raise the needs of people in need of psychosocial support. Through investment in those priorities, the IFRC hoped that the invisible would become visible and that the silent pain of millions of people would be heard and responded to.

Dr Carvajal de Álvarez (Colombian Red Cross Society) recognized the major work that had been carried out in drafting the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. At the statutory meetings in 2017, her National Society had shared its experience in providing psychosocial support to those suffering in armed conflict and had called on the Movement to draw up a policy on the issue. Providing mental health support should be a crosscutting theme in all programmes since it was essential to address mental health in all types of situations, including armed conflict and migration. It was also important to care for the mental health of National Society volunteers and staff who were affected by their humanitarian work, with permanently available psychosocial programmes and debriefing sessions. The Colombian Red Cross Society supported the policy.

Dr Kinik (IFRC), emphasized the importance of the draft resolution on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs, given that two-thirds of people who needed mental health care and psychosocial support had no access to care and treatment. Every year, 800,000 people died due to suicide and millions attempted it. The Movement policy provided a uniform and current approach to mental health and psychosocial needs in different contexts and it reflected the work carried out by National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC in developmental, humanitarian and emergency settings and in prevention, preparedness, response and long-

term recovery. It was particularly important to note the first policy statement on ensuring impartial access to mental health and psychosocial support and prioritizing prevention and early response. The IFRC committed to include mental health and psychological support in all emergency assessments and subsequent plans of action, ensuring early detections and interventions with children to prevent mental conditions from developing and accompanying them across the life course. The policy had recognized and focused on caring for staff and volunteers, a duty of care on which the IFRC had been working with National Societies as part of its core development mandate. The IFRC was committed to support National Societies in operationalizing the policy, which was linked to the related topic of restoring family links.

Mr Dewar (British Red Cross) said that the British Red Cross welcomed the policy, which built on Resolution 7 of the 2017 Council of Delegates on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. He wished to propose an amendment to operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, which referred to the guarantee of “a minimum mental health and psychosocial support response” without defining it. The second part of paragraph 2 would read: “calls on all National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC to guarantee a “basic level” of psychosocial support response as contained within the Movement’s mental health and psychosocial support framework; develop their capacity to provide services at other levels of the framework; and assess, refer and advocate in relation to the full spectrum of mental health and psychosocial support within the framework.”

Ms Chatoor (Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society, speaking on behalf of the National Societies of Belize, Grenada and Guyana), said that the National Societies of the Caribbean wished to express their full support for the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs in times of armed conflict, natural disasters and other emergencies. The Caribbean had been spared the consequences of armed conflict, but it was overwhelmed every year in the rainy season by catastrophic floods, strong winds and tidal surges, while in 2019, the harmful effects of hurricane Dorian had devastated the Bahamas. It had become the norm for staff and volunteers in the Caribbean to be called out to assist those affected and therefore National Societies had instituted programmes to ensure that all volunteers and staff were provided with mental health and psychosocial support. The Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Health had mental health practitioners who worked closely with volunteers and the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society had a doctor assigned by the Ministry of Health to its governing council and its executive committee, so that it was assured of close collaboration on all health issues. The complementary strategies in the policy would enable National Societies to fulfil their roles as auxiliary to the public authorities and it would therefore be appropriate for National Societies to strengthen their codes of conduct so that all would function on the same level and ensure that the mandate “do no harm” was realized. As small National Societies, those in the Caribbean would welcome additional human and financial resources to build on what it had been possible for them to operationalize. In the future, Caribbean National Societies expected to devote more energy to health, wellness and first aid programmes, including psychosocial first aid, which would be further developed through the adoption of best practices and training. Caribbean National Societies looked forward to the adoption of local and national mental health and psychosocial support policies and regulations.

Ms Ibraimova (Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan) said that volunteers and staff in Kyrgyzstan faced difficulties on a daily basis in emergency situations such as earthquakes, floods and mudslides, in which those affected lost family members and their homes. The crash of a cargo plane on a village in 2017 had caused many casualties among local residents and the Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan had helped to identify the victims. With respect to restoring family links, psychological support was provided to returning migrants and to victims of human trafficking and to young women in situations of vulnerability. It was the duty of every National Society to take care of their staff and volunteers and to provide timely psychological support. Her National Society would continue to develop mental health support for beneficiaries and for volunteers and staff in order to defend human rights and dignity and thereby fulfil part of the auxiliary role in relation to the State.

Dr Mohammed (Kenya Red Cross Society) said that psychological and social impacts of emergencies had an immense long-term effect on the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of staff and volunteers within the Movement, as well as on the communities affected by crises. It was also true that many of those affected by mental health conditions were not able to access the care and treatment that they needed.

The Kenya Red Cross Society had been working to mainstream psychosocial support as a key element of all interventions for staff, volunteers and the communities they served. Basic and focal psychosocial support was deployed as a package in all preparedness, response and recovery teams. It was compulsory for all staff and volunteers to receive psychosocial and psychological support for more protracted and traumatic crises. The Kenya Red Cross also provided staff, volunteers and the public with telephone-based toll-free 24-hour counselling by both internal and external counsellors. The revised policy on addressing mental health and



psychosocial needs captured the needs of staff, volunteers and communities. In future, she would propose an addition to the policy on vicarious trauma, which was the cumulative mental strain on those working with survivors of traumatic life events. The presence of vicarious traumatization had been noted in many of those who provided psychosocial support and who had close contact with people who had experienced traumatic events. Caregivers were at an even higher risk if they had experienced trauma in their own background and if they extended themselves beyond the boundaries of good self-care. The Kenya Red Cross appreciated the Movement's commitment to address mental health and psychosocial needs and supported the adoption of the policy.

Mr Kristinsson (Icelandic Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Danish Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross), strongly endorsed the Policy on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs. The five National Societies on behalf of which he spoke had been meeting mental health and psychosocial support needs since their inception and they continued to be critical areas of importance. The policy document would serve as a key reference point, guiding the members of the Movement as they continued to refine and augment implementation of evidence-informed mental health care and psychosocial support services. It also served as a reference point in assessing mental health and psychosocial needs. The policy clearly showed a path forward and demonstrated the Movement's ambitions to do better in addressing enormous needs, reaching the 80 percent of people with mental health conditions who did not have any form of affordable mental health care and those in crisis situations. Ensuring the early and sustained reach of quality services would require new and innovative ways of working, demanding an appropriate workforce and volunteers with access to quality supervision and support. New ways of allocating resources and new partnerships would also be required. The policy laid out a clear path forwards in terms of harmonized, integrated and contextually appropriate Movement responses to mental health and psychosocial needs.

Mr Valastro (Italian Red Cross) said that the Italian Red Cross deeply valued and agreed with the draft resolution. He highlighted the need for stronger prevention as a means to ameliorate mental health at community level and, specifically, the role that mental health and psychological support policies could play in building positive and proactive healthy habits among the general population and with health-related topics such as cardiovascular health. There was also a need for mental health and psychological support among the elderly, since depression was recognized as worsening cognitive impairment in that population group. The disruption in traditional social relationships and unprecedented urbanization were leading to isolation and depression in the elderly. There was a need to support substance users and those with other addictions. Mental health and psychological support could also be used to help children and adolescents to fight bullying, assisting both victims and their attackers.

Dr Radovanovic (The Red Cross of Serbia) considered the draft resolution to be important since mental health disorders were among the leading causes of global health problems. It was the duty of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to ensure that its activities in psychological first aid and psychosocial support built the resilience of individuals and communities and helped them to overcome hardships. The presence of the Movement in almost every community around the world gave it the power to contribute to well-being and to the preservation of mental health. When responding to emergencies, staff and volunteers not only saved lives, but also improved mental health through building the resilience of individuals, families and communities. Another important aspect of the resolution was the emphasis on providing services to helpers as well as to affected communities, thereby building the knowledge and skills of volunteers and staff. The policy would enable National Societies to standardize activities, make it easier to share experiences and to scale up good practice. By focusing more on preventive measures, the Movement would contribute to preserving and improving mental health and to improving its complementary and supporting role in addressing the psychosocial needs and mental health of people everywhere.

Ms Koon Wai You (Samoa Red Cross Society speaking on behalf of the Pacific National Societies of Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu), fully supported the policy which called for a strengthened commitment to meeting the mental and psychosocial needs of affected populations, as well as staff and volunteers. The provision of mental health and psychosocial support was a core element of building individual and community resilience through strengthening coping mechanisms; it was vital in preserving and restoring the resilience and well-being of those affected and in facilitating their active involvement in the recovery process while respecting their cultural needs. More should be done to invest in building the skills of young people to give them the capacity to support each other's mental health, improve their resilience and build their decision-making skills. There had been an exponential rise in the need for psychosocial support in the Pacific region to enhance social cohesion and assist disaster-affected people in the face of frequent extreme weather

and health events. All National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC should commit to ensuring that relevant staff and volunteers received psychosocial support training with first aid training.

Dr Yorulmaz (Turkish Red Crescent Society) welcomed the draft resolution on the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs and emphasized the need to support people traumatized by the effects of man-made and natural disasters. Building up capacity for psychosocial first aid should be one of the most important elements of work in that field so that first responders could respond to trauma without delay. Such an approach, grounded in the skills of volunteers at community level, would enhance the effectiveness of psychosocial support by providing the means to reach victims in the early phases and before situations deteriorated. He strongly recommended investment in capacities at community level as the lynchpin for addressing psychosocial and mental health needs.

Ms Curry (The Bahamas Red Cross Society) said that the Bahamas had just recovered from a natural disaster in which it had been necessary to rapidly increase the National Society's mental health and psychosocial support unit due to the volume of persons needing assistance. Mental health and psychosocial support were crucial during times of disaster when people had lost their life's possessions and wondered how they would move beyond the disaster mentally. The draft resolution would add resources and assistance to National Societies and the proposed policy laid out a clear path to dealing with mental health and psychosocial support needs. In the Bahamas, the National Society worked with a national association for psychosocial support and with the Ministry of Health on training and the provision of assistance to those in need. The Bahamas Red Cross Society commended and approved the draft resolution.

Dr Al Khatib (Palestine Red Crescent Society) said that the Palestine Red Crescent Society provided assistance to a population that had suffered psychological and physical trauma during years of embargo. Between 12 and 17 November 2019, the National Society had assisted 360 injured people and their families. The Palestine Red Crescent Society benefited from 250 volunteers specializing in mental health and psychosocial support; a psychosocial support programme had been developed and first aid training included psychosocial support, in particular for children and victims of armed conflict. The National Society had established a centre to provide mental health and psychosocial support and other centres in the region gave support to volunteers and staff. The Palestine Red Crescent Society supported the resolution, and reaffirmed the need to increase the resources available to strengthen National Society capacity. He called on the IFRC and the ICRC to support National Society staff and volunteer training programmes in which experiences could be shared, with a focus on areas such as discrimination, trauma, equity and respect. He expressed support for the amendment by the British Red Cross.

Ms Jaoude (Lebanese Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society and the Jordan National Red Crescent Society), said that every National Society should offer mental health and psychosocial support, including to its staff and volunteers. She supported the remarks of the Swedish Red Cross and the Danish Red Cross and called for the resolution to be implemented as soon as possible. Many National Societies would require the support of the IFRC in order to improve their capacity to provide mental health and psychosocial support, in particular during social conflict and natural disasters.

Mr Carbonnier (ICRC) echoed the powerful words of previous speakers and emphasized that the need for mental health and psychosocial support might be less visible than the needs related to physical injuries, yet daily interactions with children, women and men living in armed conflicts showed that they were no less urgent, nor less life-threatening. Acknowledging the collective and consultative process undertaken to develop the policy, he was proud of an achievement that showed the significant strides that the Movement had taken to address mental health and psychosocial needs which were particularly acute among the most vulnerable in crisis situations. Protecting and promoting the mental health of staff and volunteers, as enshrined in the draft resolution, was a priority deserving attention. The ICRC welcomed the Movement Policy on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs and was ready to support the amendment to the draft resolution proposed by the British Red Cross.

Dr Chabbou (Tunisian Red Crescent Society) said that the draft resolution was fundamental and perhaps even a little late in being brought to the table since many National Societies had already begun to work on mental health and psychosocial needs. With respect to the second preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, he would prefer the words: "the Movement's volunteers and staff is often affected in the course of their work" to be amended to read: "the Movement's volunteers and staff may be affected in the course of their work", since the resolution should remain evidence based. Reference could be made to the fact that volunteers and staff worked under pressure and in stressful situations. In the third preambular paragraph, a reference to "addictive



practices” could perhaps be added to the reference to “substance use” and “the harmful use of substances” and mention made concerning the situations of vulnerability that often led to addiction.

Dr Emam (Egyptian Red Crescent Society) said that, as many speakers had mentioned, it was important to take care of the mental health and psychosocial needs of Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers, especially those working in situations of crisis and emergencies. National Societies must also take into account the health insurance cover and other expenses related to mental health and psychosocial support for volunteers and staff that would allow them to continue their work.

Mr Lobor (South Sudan Red Cross) said that mental health and psychosocial support needs were on the rise as a result of armed conflict, natural disaster and other emergencies and should be considered a priority. One quarter of the global population was affected by mental issues, but the mental health situation in South Sudan was much worse, after 20 years of war and conflict. The situation had been exacerbated by other emergencies such as floods, economic stress and communal violence, coupled with a lack of skilled personnel in the field of mental health and lack of access to proper health care. The population of South Sudan, and in particular, internally displaced persons, women, youth and persons with disabilities, had been seriously traumatised and needed support. The South Sudan Red Cross had begun to integrate psychosocial support into all programmes, with its different partners, in order to address issues of mental health within the population and it was supporting volunteers with whom it worked in communities. The South Sudan Red Cross supported the draft resolution.

Dr Bwito (Rwandan Red Cross) said that there was limited access to mental health professionals in Rwanda and a lack of basic knowledge on mental health. The lack of mental health services and the stigma of sufferers contributed to a large gap between needs and support. Through their volunteers, National Societies had the capacity and the opportunity to bring assistance to those suffering from mental health illnesses and other psychosocial problems, who were often isolated from mainstream health services. Community-based interventions seemed to be the most effective for those with psychosocial needs. Mental health and psychosocial support must be integrated into National Society programmes so that interventions were adapted to the local cultural context. The Rwandan Red Cross supported the draft resolution.

Ms Picado Díaz (Nicaraguan Red Cross) commended the draft resolution, which reaffirmed the commitment to help those in need and which included support for volunteers working in the field. The Nicaraguan Red Cross had provided psychological support services for some 15 years and it had established a mental health and psychosocial support centre to provide services in a holistic manner, fulfilling the humanitarian mandate to be close to those in need. Within the Nicaraguan Red Cross, 65 percent of staff and volunteers had been trained in the provision of psychosocial support and in specialized psychiatric interventions. The draft resolution must bring progress in the field of mental health and emphasize the need to deal with mental as well as physical health in disaster situations.

Mr Conde (Red Cross Society of Guinea) reaffirmed the support of his National Society for the draft resolution on mental health needs and psychosocial support, which had been a long-neglected humanitarian issue. Mental health and psychosocial support services were an essential part of assistance in emergency situations and were important for affected communities and volunteers. Those exposed to extreme stress, such as refugees, survivors of disasters and epidemics, and migrants, were most in need of such help. The exposure to such stress would grow in the coming years, leading to an increase in social problems, especially in Africa. The Red Cross Society of Guinea had partnered with National Societies to provide psychosocial support services to migrants and people living with HIV/AIDS in Guinea. Quality services could only be provided if capacities were strengthened through training programmes for volunteers working in the field. It was hoped that the proposed policy would promote leadership and a framework for policies and interventions in the field.

Ms Fowler (Canadian Red Cross Society) welcomed the draft resolution, as amended, and recognized the commitment of communities and components of the Movement to prioritize the issue of mental health and psychosocial needs. As a member of the Movement Project on Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Consequences of Armed Conflicts, Natural Disasters and Other Emergencies (MOMENT), the Canadian Red Cross acknowledged the good work and collaboration of the group. The Canadian Red Cross would continue to work closely with Movement partners to ensure implementation of the resolution, and to enhance coordination, preparedness and response aligned to growing the Movement’s evidence base at all levels.

Ms Marques Motta (Brazilian Red Cross) said that the policy was very important to the Brazilian Red Cross and would help it to build a stronger National Society when responding to disasters, health emergencies and migration and in providing support to staff and volunteers. National Societies would need technical support, including in the provision of training in order to deliver the policy. The Brazilian Red Cross supported the draft resolution.

Ms Kumasheva (Kazakh Red Crescent) expressed support for the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. The policy would assist the Kazakh Red Crescent in facing new challenges such as the reintegration of mothers and children returning from conflict zones and the response to internal and external migration and to suicides among young people. Mental health challenges were increasing and the components of the Movement would need to extend their partnerships and become more agile in their response. The National Society of Tajikistan would be grateful to receive help in training volunteers to provide psychosocial support.

Ms Mirova (Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan) expressed full support for the policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs. The policy was particularly relevant to her National Society in providing psychosocial support to migrant workers working outside Tajikistan and in supporting people living with HIV/AIDS and those facing other epidemiological challenges. The assistance of Movement partners in providing training to volunteers would be particularly appreciated.

Ms Osorio (ICRC) thanked participants for their comments. The language with respect to preambular paragraph 2 had been agreed in 2017 and would therefore remain unchanged but a reference to “addictive behaviours” as well as substance abuse had been added to preambular paragraph 3.

The Chair said that, given the positive response from delegates, he would take it that the amendment to operative paragraph 2 proposed by the British Red Cross, would be accepted.

Resolution 5, as amended, entitled “International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs”, contained in document CD/19/9DR, was adopted. (Resolution 5, CD/19/R5)

The meeting rose at 1:15 pm



Second plenary meeting

2:35 pm

3.5.2 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION (*continued*)

Addressing needs and vulnerabilities

Item 10: Restoring Family Links: Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2020–2025

(documents CD/19/10 and CD/19/10DR)

Ms Anselmo (ICRC) commenced the introduction to the proposed resolution and explained that restoring family contacts was a need that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has worked to address for over a century, and it was one of the first requests expressed by people affected by humanitarian crises. All could relate to the suffering caused by the uncertainty of not knowing the fate and whereabouts of a loved one. Separation caused vulnerability and it was widely acknowledged that people remained more resilient if connected with loved ones. The draft resolution contained in document CD/19/10DR referred to the one humanitarian activity that truly functioned as a global network: in an age of digitalization, and with the increasing movement of people across the world and when humanitarian crises were rarely contained within national borders, the family links network was more relevant than ever.

In order to leverage the power of its network, the Red Cross and Red Crescent must strengthen its collaboration, harmonize its practices and solidify its foundations. Safe and secure ways must be found to connect with affected populations and to protect their personal data. The new RFL Strategy, which aimed to achieve those ends, had been developed through a highly participative and consultative process. The active involvement of the RFL Leadership Platform, which had been established at the 2017 Council of Delegates, had also been instrumental in providing strategic support and recognition of the importance of the endeavour.

Dr Mohammed (Kenya Red Cross Society, speaking as a member of the RFL Leadership Platform), said that the purpose of the draft resolution was the adoption of the new Restoring Family Links Strategy for the Movement. Substantive discussions had been held on the collective vision of future restoring family links services which had been defined as: placing stronger emphasis on collective efforts to protect family unity, prevent family separation and maintain family links; ensuring that services were accessible to all those in need; collectively increasing capacity to provide answers to families who were living in anxiety about the fate and whereabouts of their loved ones; and being conscious of the importance of personal interactions of staff and volunteers with relatives searching for loved ones, reinforcing the support and making sure that it was understood by all stakeholders. She encouraged participants to visit the display on Restoring Family Links in the humanitarian village.

Mr Chapagain (IFRC), said that discussions in the RFL Leadership Platform had been driven by two essential themes: how to connect over one hundred years of cherished history with the opportunities available through modern digital technologies, a field in which young people were active, while keeping people at the centre of the strategy and providing them with comfort and support. At the same time, there was a focus on how to keep families together and prevent them from becoming separated. The IFRC had incorporated elements of the Restoring Family Links Strategy into its new Disaster Management Policy and its Global Migration Strategy. The bulk of RFL services were provided by the membership on the ground.

H.E. Ms Fernandes Hanjan Costa Soares (Timor-Leste Red Cross Society) expressed full support for the Restoring Family Links Strategy. Family reunification programmes in situations of armed conflict and natural disaster were a unique facet of Red Cross and Red Crescent activity that had been appreciated by the people of Timor-Leste. The policy of integrating RFL into a multidisciplinary response to families, including psychosocial support, socioeconomic assistance and legal and administrative assistance, required long-term commitment on the part of all stakeholders, including political support, since government support for people's safety was crucial to humanitarian assistance.

Mr Senoussi (Red Cross of Chad) expressed support for the new Restoring Family Links Strategy; the importance of restoring family links had been experienced in conflict situations in Chad where the National Society had worked with the support of the ICRC. The subject of RFL was wide-ranging and included psychosocial support for family members suffering separation.

Mr Mirzayev (Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan) said that his National Society had experience of restoring family links, a topic on which it worked closely with the ICRC. He noted the important and successful role played by the ICRC in active collaboration with government bodies. Over one million people had been displaced as a result of the conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh and relatives were seeking answers concerning the location of over 4,500 people. It had been possible for the National Society to connect people not only by letter and telephone but also by video link. He suggested that some information should be added to the preamble of the draft resolution and to the Strategy itself concerning the issue of hostages and illegal imprisonment.

Mr Al Razwan (Bangladesh Red Crescent Society) welcomed the draft resolution and the new RFL Strategy. Historically, people had become separated as a result of armed conflict, but natural and man-made disasters and other situations of violence were creating RFL needs in many contexts. The proposed RFL Strategy included relevant, emerging and fast-changing issues, such as internal displacement, migration, climate and environment, and the digital revolution, which needed better and wider collaboration among all the actors involved. From its experience in implementing the RFL Strategy 2008–2018, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society had learned that leadership commitment, high turnover of staff and volunteers and other organizational matters had a strong influence on how the RFL Strategy was delivered on the ground. Hence, it was important to integrate the measures outlined in the strategy in wider organizational plans at all levels in order to address the issues that affected implementation. There would also be a need for better collaboration on resource mobilization.

Better collaboration, both within the Movement and with non-Movement partners, and a focus on digital communication could transform RFL actions. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society requested the ICRC, the IFRC, the RFL Leadership Platform and the RFL Strategy Implementation Group to enhance collaboration and coordination within and outside of the Movement and to build the capacities of National Societies to implement and monitor the RFL Strategy 2020–2025.

Ms Khorrambagheri (Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran) expressed full support for the draft resolution on restoring family links, as the issue of missing people had become part of the daily work of National Societies. With the help of the ICRC, the Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran made RFL services accessible to all documented and undocumented refugees and migrants in Iran and provided training to NGOs and local actors. The National Society had integrated RFL into emergency response teams as part of its rescue and relief services.

Dr Traoré (Mali Red Cross) underscored the importance of restoring family links and the provision of information to anxious families seeking loved ones in the aftermath of armed conflicts and natural disasters. In Mali, armed conflicts, intercommunity conflicts, terrorist attacks, banditry, and migration, were all causes of family separation, which had caused the sudden internal displacement of entire families, some of whom were to be found in refugee camps in neighbouring countries. The ICRC helped the Mali Red Cross to restore family links for those living in refugee camps, for those detained as a result of the conflict and for minors who had been drawn into armed groups. Restoring family links was an effective way to end the suffering of separated families. The Mali Red Cross had participated fully in the RFL Strategy Implementation Group and encouraged all to adopt the new Strategy, emphasizing in particular the need to strengthen the capacity of volunteers.

Mr El Haddad (Lebanese Red Cross) emphasized the connection between restoring family links and the protection of personal data and the need to respect cultural differences when assisting those receiving RFL services. The new RFL Strategy would guide National Societies in assisting minors traveling without adults, the elderly living alone and those suffering from chronic illnesses, people in captivity, women and small children, especially those who did not have diplomatic protection. He expressed support for the draft resolution.

Mr Ärnliöv (Swedish Red Cross), speaking also on behalf of the Danish Red Cross, the Finnish Red Cross, and the Icelandic Red Cross, said that family members often spared no effort or expense in trying to find their missing relatives or in trying to navigate complex family reunion policies. The new RFL Strategy would boost the prospects of National Societies responding to the needs of affected families and would enable them to strengthen a protection-oriented approach to family reunification. He welcomed adoption of the draft resolution and encouraged all components of the Movement to confirm their commitment to sustaining and building the Family Links Network and to recognize RFL as a core activity of all National Societies.

Dr De la Fuente Díaz (Bolivian Red Cross) drew attention to the problems of migration and natural disasters caused by climate change in Bolivia. Migrants came from vulnerable populations who suffered from abuse as they travelled along migration routes and the numbers who became separated from their families were increasing each year, causing immense anguish to loved ones. The new Strategy for the Movement on Restoring Family Links would enable National Societies to work on prevention, to restore family links and to manage



solutions. Improvements were needed, including the adoption of the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection. The Bolivian Red Cross had contributed to the development of the new Strategy, the implementation of which would help to improve coordination within the Movement.

Mr Saner (Turkish Red Crescent Society) welcomed the new Strategy and endorsed the draft resolution. He emphasized the need for a more structured framework in which sensitive cases could be addressed with a clear-cut methodology. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was experiencing many challenges in different contexts regarding data protection. It was necessary that States should refrain from requesting personal data from Movement components and maintain a humanitarian space for RFL services. Implementation of the RFL Strategy would require strong Movement components; the ICRC and the IFRC were requested to help National Societies to develop their capacities in the provision of RFL services.

Mr Senghore (Gambia Red Cross Society) welcomed the important work that had been accomplished by the RFL Strategy Implementation Group; its work was timely in light of the IFRC Global Strategy on Migration and the United Nations Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. In a recent capsizing of a boat near the coast of Mauritania, many young lives had been lost: the role of the Gambia Red Cross Society in repatriating survivors and informing relatives had been acknowledged by the International Organization for Migration. It was very important that there should be more emphasis on data protection and data management by National Societies at the local level and that they should receive assistance from the ICRC and the IFRC in that regard. More broadly, there should be more focus on strengthening and sustaining National Society capacities.

Mr Sonko (Senegalese Red Cross Society) recognized that restoring family links had been a core activity of the Movement since its inception. The Senegalese Red Cross Society supported the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 and the adoption of the draft resolution. However, while the development of digital technology had enabled the collection of personal data, it also carried risks with respect to the regulation of data privacy. He recommended that there should be discussions with governments prior to the International Conference to ensure that National Societies could continue to protect data.

Ms Park (The Republic of Korea National Red Cross) highlighted the crucial role played by the Red Cross and Red Crescent in restoring and maintaining family links across borders and in situations of armed conflict. She drew attention the separation of families in the Korean Peninsula, where more than 130,000 families were separated between the North and the South. In order to alleviate the pain of the separated families, the Republic of Korean National Red Cross worked to provide face-to-face exchanges, correspondence and video letters as well as a consolation event for separated families and psychosocial support. The work of the National Society could be replicated in situations of disasters and armed conflict. The ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies and governments should support RFL programmes.

Ms Llovet Alcalde (Cuban Red Cross), speaking on behalf of the 47,000 volunteers of the Cuban Red Cross, said that migration had existed since the origins of humanity and it had become more complex. Vulnerable migrants were forced to travel along dangerous and unstable routes, generating an increase in separated families and disappeared persons. The Cuban Red Cross had contributed to the drafting of the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 through regional consultation meetings and had helped to prepare information for the RFL Network. Expressing support for the draft resolution, she highlighted the role played by National Societies in preventing family separation, in restoring and maintaining any links and in managing any requests for searches. The Strategy highlighted the progress still to be made with regard to the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection and the need for families to be able to trust the network to which they were providing personal data. The Cuban Red Cross supported adoption of the draft resolution.

Dr Leroux de Ramírez (Dominican Red Cross) said that the Dominican Republic was a country of origin, transit and destination for migrants. Migration was complex, with many migrants losing their lives in taking dangerous migration routes. The Dominican Red Cross provided information and guidance to migrants and provided support, including RFL services, to the families of migrants seeking news of their loved ones. RFL services included the transmission of data, a subject that involved regulatory and legal frameworks, standards and data protection. The Dominican Red Cross supported the new Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 and drew attention to its focus on Movement coordination.

Mr Kende (Nigerian Red Cross Society) affirmed support for the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 and for the draft resolution, noting that there were some two million people missing in Nigeria, in particular as a result of the insurgency in the north east of the country. With the support from ICRC we had managed to reach almost one million. There were also refugees from Cameroon in southern Nigeria. Restoring Family

Links had therefore become a critical aspect of the work of the Nigerian Red Cross Society and almost one million people had been contacted thanks to the help of the ICRC. Work had been done with the help of the Italian Red Cross on mitigation in difficult situations.

Dr Schön (German Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Austrian Red Cross, the Norwegian Red Cross and the Swiss Red Cross), thanked all those that had contributed to the Family Links Network. Restoring Family Links services acknowledged and supported the family; not knowing the fate of loved ones caused families around the world to live in the anguish of uncertainty. The four National Societies on behalf of whom he spoke strongly supported the adoption of the new RFL Strategy and were dedicated to building and operating within a strong Family Links Network. While welcoming the achievements since 2008, he underlined that further comprehensive action regarding resource mobilization would benefit joint tasks. The Restoring Family Links Strategy enhanced the ambition of further improving the ability of the Family Links Network to assist individuals separated from their loved ones as a result of armed conflict, violence, disaster, migration or other situations requiring humanitarian action. Restoring Family Links services were central to the identity of the Movement.

Mr Villarroel (IFRC), said that the IFRC joined the ICRC and National Societies in expressing deep concern for the suffering endured by those who had lost contact with loved ones as a consequence of armed conflicts, disasters and other emergencies, as well as in the context of migration and internal displacement.

Recent changes in the external environment, notably the growing phenomenon of migration, the emphasis across the humanitarian sector of accountability to affected people, as well as the digital revolution, demanded that Restoring Family Links services should adapt in order to remain relevant in response to growing demand. National Societies had a crucial role as components of the international network for tracing and reuniting families and carried out a substantial part of RFL activities through the work of their volunteers.

On the role of the Central Tracing Agency, the IFRC encouraged close coordination with National Societies and the IFRC on services undertaken that were outside armed conflict, in full respect of the respective mandates. Every revision of the mandate of the Agency required the involvement of all Movement components.

The IFRC supported and welcomed the Council of Delegates draft resolution and the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025, especially its focus on prevention of family separation, increasing the accessibility of the service, and supporting families of missing persons. The IFRC was committed to promoting the Strategy and to implementing it through its own strategies, policies, and plans, and to allocating the necessary resources to carry them out. The IFRC would ensure that its prevention, preparedness and response work included measures to prevent family separation, as well as facilitating access to RFL services. It would work together with National Societies to promote their integration in their respective country's disaster preparedness plans and disaster risk management laws.

In the context of migration and displacement, the IFRC had adopted its first Global Migration Strategy in 2017, which included actions to restore family contacts and reduce family separation. Through the Global Migration Strategy, the IFRC had committed to work with the ICRC to enhance the strategic integration of RFL in National Societies' organizational development, operational response and strategic plans.

Mr Soumaili (Comoros Red Crescent) expressed support for the draft resolution and the Strategy on Restoring Family Links. Comoros was suffering the full effects of migration and many lives had been lost by those seeking to reach the islands. With the ICRC, the National Society had trained staff and volunteers to assist those seeking family members. He appealed to the ICRC to return to Comoros to continue to provide RFL training. He thanked National Societies and the IFRC for their assistance in disaster management and in providing psychosocial support.

Ms Yu (Red Cross Society of China) said that the Red Cross Society of China supported the draft resolution. Restoring Family Links embodied the fundamental humanitarian principles of the Movement and it was an area in which the Red Cross and Red Crescent could play an essential role. RFL was used to help those fleeing armed conflicts and natural disasters and emergencies as well as those separated by other factors, such as social development: in rural areas in China, children were left behind while their parents went to work in the cities. The need for RFL was relevant even in developed areas. She recommended that RFL should be integrated into National Societies' emergency response systems and capacity building as it was in China.

Dr Al-Hadid (Jordan Red Crescent, speaking on behalf of the National Society members of the Restoring Family Links Leadership Platform, which comprised 14 National Society Leaders, the IFRC and the ICRC), said that as a member of the RFL Strategy Implementation Group, the Jordan Red Crescent had also helped to shape the substance of the new Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 and fully supported its adoption.

The Movement had made remarkable progress over the previous ten years in implementing dimensions of the previous RFL Strategy 2008–2018 and the Network was clearly stronger. However, there were many challenging areas in restoring family links with strategic implications. The profoundly humanitarian aspect of the RFL service was uncontested, as was the expertise of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in delivering the service worldwide. The new Strategy would help the Red Cross and Red Crescent to reinforce its leadership role in RFL. Since its establishment in 2017, the RFL Leadership Platform had proved to be the right forum to engage in critical issues, explore ways to strengthen partnerships within the Movement, and change the perception that RFL was solely an ICRC service by fully integrating RFL into National Societies' strategic and operational plans in view of providing a multidisciplinary service. However, it required better ICRC and IFRC coordination of providing support to National Societies.

The RFL Leadership Platform had been the driving force in preparing the draft resolution that would be proposed to the International Conference and it had developed concrete, evidence-based guidance on how to shape the service together with the people served by the Red Cross and Red Crescent. The purpose of the RFL Leadership Platform had also been to explore new partnerships with humanitarian, academic, technology and private sectors with the specific purpose of helping families to maintain and restore contact with loved ones and clarify the fate of missing family members. The RFL Leadership Platform would review and, if necessary, adjust the Strategy and it would report back to the Council of Delegates in 2023 on what had been achieved. He drew attention to the proposal in the draft resolution to create a Movement RFL Medal for outstanding services in the field of RFL. He urged all to support the Strategy and to engage in negotiations for a successful resolution on RFL at the International Conference.

Mr González (Red Cross Society of Panama, speaking also on behalf of the National Societies of Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan and the United States of America), expressed concern for the vast numbers of missing family members and underlined the need for the Red Cross and Red Crescent to come together to restore family links. The adoption of the new RFL Strategy would assist National Societies in responding to situations where there were forced disappearances; victims of armed conflict, banditry and internal displacement; continental migration; and major natural disasters and environmental emergencies. The Strategy placed a focus on strengthening the capacities of National Societies and on the collection and analysis of data within innovative frameworks to manage new technologies, and especially the adoption of new security measures for data protection. Collective and collaborative action, as described in the Strategy, would be important in providing assistance to migrant workers and in helping family members to identify the bodies of their loved ones. Movement tools, such as a database of cases, a website of family links and an extranet for the promotion and handling of all RFL services was essential, as well as the training of staff and the introduction of a code of conduct on handling personal data. The National Societies on behalf of which he spoke endorsed the draft resolution and the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025.

Mr Combe (French Red Cross) said that there was a vital need for families to learn the fate of their loved ones. Each year, thousands of families were separated as a consequence of wars, natural disasters and humanitarian crises. Henry Dunant had understood the needs and suffering of families seeking to restore family links and a message of hope and daily action for those families had been at the heart of the Movement since its inception. The Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025, to which the French Red Cross had contributed, had the ambition of redoubling those efforts. The French Red Cross was particularly proud to carry the mission to those who needed it most and to present the Strategy to the Council of Delegates.

It would be necessary for each link in the chain of the Family Links Network to mobilize and increase its operational capacity, particularly along the routes of exile and migration. The worldwide Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must be relevant and operational in order to cover the needs of all affected persons. The Movement must act to prevent separation, carry out research in the field, and accompany family reunification. The right to family life and the principle of the family unit must be at the heart of its concerns. The components of the Movement must adapt, by mobilizing additional resources and adapting to the technological challenges of the future. An example of a new tool was the website 'Trace the Face'. Finally, humanitarian diplomacy must be developed to ensure that governments recognized their responsibilities with respect to restoring family links and to protecting the humanitarian space and the confidentiality of data management. The Red Cross and Red Crescent must be the voice of those waiting for news of family members and bring their suffering to the attention of governments. The French Red Cross supported the draft resolution.

Prof Kamel (Egyptian Red Crescent Society) praised the efforts that had led to the establishment of the new Strategy on restoring family links. She drew attention to the successful collaboration between the Egyptian Red Crescent Society and the Libyan Red Crescent, with the support of the ICRC, which had allowed the repatriation

of 12 children who had lost their parents during the conflict in Libya. Humanitarian diplomacy with the official authorities and maintaining confidentiality had been essential in that case and had demonstrated the importance of the auxiliary role of the National Society. The Egyptian Red Crescent Society was also providing psychosocial support and health services to the orphans repatriated from Libya. The National Society looked forward to the implementation of the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025.

Ms Marques Motta (Brazilian Red Cross) said that it was very important that the draft resolution should be adopted in order for the Movement to continue its work on RFL. The work of the Brazilian Red Cross depended on data processing under a code of conduct that respected national legislation. The new Restoring Family Links Strategy, with its focus on psychosocial support for families seeking loved ones and the provision of multidisciplinary services, would enable the Red Cross and Red Crescent to provide a rapid response, engage with new technologies and ensure data protection for beneficiaries.

Mr Lobor (South Sudan Red Cross) said that conflicts caused the displacement of people but, crucially, they also affected infrastructure, including telecommunications and mobile networks, thereby making it difficult for people who had been displaced to connect with their families. In South Sudan, war had caused the internal displacement of two million people, with a further two million refugees from South Sudan having been displaced to neighbouring countries. Some 300,000 refugees from Sudan had sought refuge in South Sudan. The implementation of the Strategy on Restoring Family Links would be key in helping to connect such a large number of displaced and separated families. The trauma and stress experienced by those who had been displaced was high. He was grateful to the ICRC and the international community for helping to build the capacity of the volunteers and staff of the South Sudan Red Cross and for providing logistical support and equipment that had helped to reconnect the South Sudanese population and refugees living both within and outside the borders of the country. The introduction of the Restoring Family Links Strategy 2020–2025 was timely and it would help National Societies to alleviate the suffering caused by conflicts and migration. He called on all to strongly support the draft resolution.

The Chair said that he hoped that participants would continue to be strong, unified and engaged in discussing the challenging issues surrounding restoring family links with States in the coming days. He noted the request to stress some points further in the draft resolution but, in the light of the overwhelming support received, he called on delegates to accept the draft as presented.

The resolution contained in document CD/19/10DR, entitled Restoring Family Links: Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2020–2025, was adopted. (Resolution 6, CD/19/R6)

Ms Gadiant, Vice-Chair of the Council of Delegates, oversaw the discussion on the following item:

Item 11: Strengthening implementation of the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement: Ten years on
(documents CD/19/11 and CD/19/11DR)

Mr Stillhart (ICRC), introducing the item, recalled that the Movement had adopted its first policy on internal displacement at the 2009 Council of Delegates in Nairobi, providing a clear focus and practical guidance for the Movement's response to internal displacement in line with the Fundamental Principles. At the start of 2019, some 41.3 million people were internally displaced: the highest number on record. Conflict and violence had caused 10.8 million new internal displacements in 2018 and natural disasters had triggered a further 17.2 million new displacements.

The voices of internally displaced people remained largely unheard and the response to their needs inadequate. Many lived in precarious situations, unable to rebuild their lives and make progress towards durable solutions. Internally displaced people were found in remote rural areas and living in camps where they were dependent on humanitarian aid, while growing numbers of people were displaced in urban centres where they often received no assistance. The Council of Delegates was called upon to renew its focus on the critical humanitarian issue of internal displacement, to take stock of the significant achievements made in responding to the internally displaced and to acknowledge that more must be done to prevent displacement and to protect those in need.

The draft resolution under consideration had been built on the premise that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement must strengthen its humanitarian response. The resolution reaffirmed the Movement's commitment to improving protection and assistance for internally displaced people and requested all of the components of the Movement to step up efforts in three critical areas: preventing the conditions leading to displacement; improving responses to needs created by urban internal displacement; and supporting durable solutions

based on people's wishes and priorities. The resolution recommended several measures to improve Red Cross and Red Crescent responses in those areas, including meaningful participation of internally displaced people and communities affected by displacement in the design of responses, dedicating more resources to strengthening the capacity of National Societies to respond to internal displacement, stepping up efforts to promote development of relevant domestic laws and policies and the creation of a Movement Reference Group on Internal Displacement to foster exchanges of experience and to promote implementation of the resolution. The ICRC strongly supported adoption of the resolution and looked forward to contributing to its implementation and to helping to enhance the quality and cohesion of the Movement's response to internal displacement.

Mr Mirzayev (Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan) said that internal displacement was caused by man-made and natural disasters and focused and current approaches would be needed to resolve them. As a result of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, over one million people had been internally displaced in Azerbaijan or were refugees. The Government of Azerbaijan had taken action to improve the living conditions of affected persons, including through a law that protected refugees and the internally displaced. He requested that the eighth preambular paragraph beginning "stressing the importance of respect for international humanitarian law" should be amended to make reference to "emphasizing the necessity of taking effective measures to address the causes of internal displacement and preventing any actions that prolonged the displacement period and that aggravated the humanitarian situation of IDPs, as well as providing them with the right to voluntary, safe and dignified return to their homes and places of habitual residence". He paid tribute to the IFRC President who had recently taken action with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in order to repatriate an 11-year old boy and to the leadership of the Turkish Red Crescent which had helped to repatriate refugees.

Ms Bilous (Ukrainian Red Cross Society) said that internally displaced people were often forgotten in the discussion on forced displacement and the impact on internal displacement was often severe at the level of the individual and society. In the protracted crisis in Ukraine, for instance, it had been crucial to pay attention to the social and economic situation of IDPs, who had suffered trauma and separation from their families. The economic situation meant that employment opportunities for internally displaced people were limited and conflicts further paralysed economic activity. A growing number of IDPs in Ukraine expressed the wish to remain in their new place of residence as integration improved, while some planned to return to their original location once the conflicts had subsided. The current crisis of internally displaced people in Ukraine was the largest in Europe since the Balkans conflict. The Movement had adapted to the needs of beneficiaries over time, recognizing that many internally displaced persons had already integrated into new communities. The Ukrainian Red Cross Society supported the resolution and asked for more attention to be paid to resource generation.

Mr Zoungrana (Burkinabe Red Cross Society) recalled that, in February 2019, four Burkinabe Red Cross Society staff members on a mission to assist internally displaced persons had been the victims of a serious security incident; efforts were still under way to secure the release of the fourth person who had been held captive by a radical armed group. The three staff members who had been released were even more motivated to pursue the humanitarian action of the Movement in assisting internally displaced persons. The security situation had deteriorated, and the number of internally displaced people currently exceeded 500,000, thereby giving rise to the need for even more effective humanitarian assistance. For that reason, the Burkinabe Red Cross Society supported the draft resolution, which aimed to strengthen implementation of the Movement policy on Internal Displacement and encouraged all participants to adopt it. The National Society expressed sincere gratitude for the support it had received from the Movement in providing assistance to internally displaced people in a difficult security context.

Mr Rocca (IFRC), said that, at the end of 2018, some 17.2 million people had been displaced as a result of disasters, most of which were the result of weather-related events. Disasters had triggered 61 per cent of internal displacement globally. In 2018, the IFRC had undertaken a review of IFRC and National Society engagement on internal displacement as a result of disasters and crises and in the context of climate change. The main findings and conclusions of the review, which were contained in the report *Strengthening IFRC Responses to Internal Displacement in Disasters: Challenges and Opportunities* were: the main interventions of National Societies were focused on response with emphasis on prevention of the conditions of displacement and preparedness in line with climate change adaptation and resilience; and more understanding of the drivers of internal displacement and the possibility for durable solutions. National Societies were ideally placed to understand the localized complexity of displacement and engage in humanitarian dialogue with relevant authorities. Significant opportunities existed for National Societies to strengthen their capacities on internal displacement,

with support from all components of the Movement. The Red Cross and Red Crescent could play an essential role to integrate support to IDPs, and their rights, into broader risk management laws and policies.

The IFRC had informed the drafting of the resolution “Strengthening implementation of the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement: Ten years on” to which the IFRC would make a series of strategic commitments to improve the understanding of internal displacement as a risk triggered by disaster or climate change which could be reduced or prevented. It would support the review of preparedness and contingency plans by National Societies through an internal displacement lens, for better anticipation of internal displacement scenarios, considering the broader needs for host communities and others impacted by displacement. To deploy displacement advisers in particularly complex internal displacement situations would better inform IFRC operational and strategic directions.

The resolution emphasized the importance of tackling internal displacement in the urban contexts in which an increasing number of people were being displaced. The IFRC and National Societies had many positive examples of programmes, including cash, livelihood support, to address the needs of IDPs in urban contexts. IDPs could fall into the category of the most vulnerable, and the Red Cross and Red Crescent had a duty to protect and to understand their needs as well as those of the host community. Ensuring the participation of IDPs and host communities in active engagement and meaningful consultation in the planning and implementation of responses and durable solutions would be key to achieving positive results. The IFRC strongly welcomed and supported the resolution and believed that it would guide the IFRC and National Societies to scale up initiatives to address internal displacement, in line with national and international frameworks, based on the respective mandates and in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.

Ms Bader (Lebanese Red Cross) called on the components of the Movement to provide more humanitarian aid to IDPs, especially to the large majority who lived outside of camps. Humanitarian aid should also focus on the challenges posed by urban displacement. The draft resolution underlined the different needs of IDPs, in terms of the services required and the need to respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The Lebanese Red Cross supported the resolution and emphasized the need for the voluntary return of IDPs to their homes while preserving their dignity as well as having regard to the needs of the host community.

Mr Valastro (Italian Red Cross) said that the Italian Red Cross supported the draft resolution entitled “Strengthening implementation of the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement: Ten years on”. The Italian Red Cross particularly wished to endorse the request for the components of the Movement to “integrate both the short- and longer-term needs of urban IDPs outside camps and those of their host communities into their analysis and responses, including by combining structural interventions at the level of urban services and domestic legal and policy frameworks with tailored responses to help IDPs rebuild their lives”; as well as for the components of the Movement to “help prevent the conditions leading to displacement and, where not possible, to ensure people’s safety, dignity and physical and psychological integrity throughout their displacement, keeping in mind” the different vulnerabilities of internally displaced people. Lastly, the Italian Red Cross agreed with the recommendation to strengthen “National Society capacity to assess and respond to IDP protection needs by implementing the “minimum protection approach”, as described within the “Protection within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement” paying specific attention to the prevention of family separation during displacement in line with the Movement’s RFL Strategy 2020–2025”.

Dr Yorulmaz (Turkish Red Crescent Society) welcomed and strongly supported the draft resolution. The approach to support the needs of the host communities along with those of IDPs was of paramount importance in ensuring cohesion and inclusion in consideration of the limited resources available and the overstretched capacities in the places where IDPs settled. The approach for a constructive impact on relations between IDPs and host communities should also be supported. Protection was a central component of humanitarian assistance to IDPs that should be applied to all persons in all circumstances. Displacement was a phenomenon that could occur as a result of any event and National Societies should prepare in ordinary times by improving their own capacities in preparation for times of crisis. There should be a minimum standardized protection approach in operations. The Movement should promote durable solutions, such as local interventions and the voluntary return of IDPs to their places of origin when conditions were appropriate.

Dr Abbas (Iraqi Red Crescent Society) endorsed the draft resolution and emphasized the importance of taking into account long-term internal displacement and the needs of displaced persons, including protection so that they could become part of host societies or undertake a safe voluntary return.

The Vice-Chair inquired whether there were any objections to the addition of a new paragraph in the draft resolution in accordance with the proposal by the Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan and, hearing none, took it that the amendment was accepted.

The draft resolution, as amended, entitled “Strengthening implementation of the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement: Ten years on” contained in document CD/19/11DR, was adopted. (Resolution 7, CD/19/R7)

Mr Maurer, Chair of the Council of Delegates, oversaw the following discussion:

Item 12: Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity
(document CD/19/12DR)

Mr Rocca (IFRC), read out the “Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity” contained in document CD/19/12DR. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement was a neutral humanitarian organization that did not encourage or discourage migration. The Movement recognized that the management of migration posed significant challenges for States, however it was increasingly concerned for the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable migrants, refugees and other persons in need of international protection. All migrants had human rights and must be protected from torture and ill-treatment and must have access to justice and essential services. International law also required special protection for refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons and gaps in implementation of protection could have life-threatening consequences.

In 2017, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement had made a “Call for Action on the Humanitarian Needs of Vulnerable Migrants”, drawing attention to the steps States should take to protect migrants from harm, calling on them to use migration-related detention as a measure of last resort and to commit to ending the detention of children and family separation for immigration-related reasons. In 2011, States Parties to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 represented at the 31st International Conference were requested to ensure that relevant laws were in place to enable National Societies to enjoy safe access to all migrants, irrespective of their legal status. States were called on to support National Societies in carrying out their humanitarian mandate and to ensure that assistance of a strictly humanitarian and impartial character was never considered unlawful. The Red Cross and Red Crescent stood ready to support States in implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement. As auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, National Societies were committed to supporting States to ensure that the humanitarian needs of migrants and of vulnerable persons in host communities were met. The Red Cross and Red Crescent sought to foster collaboration with States in a climate of mutual trust, with positive solutions and frank and constructive dialogue.

The IFRC and the ICRC proposed that the 2019 Council of Delegates should endorse the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity. The Statement was necessary in light of the continuing challenges in the protection of vulnerable migrants and displaced persons, the narrowing of the humanitarian space and the increasing barriers to access resulting from States’ policies. Migration and displacement were not new to the Movement; the Red Cross and Red Crescent had committed to providing humanitarian assistance and protection to migrants and displaced persons, irrespective of their legal status. However, migrants continued to face risks to their safety and wellbeing and every day brought news of those who had drowned at sea.

Humanitarian access was failing to be addressed by some States and in some cases becoming increasingly restricted. The Movement had observed a rise in anti-immigration sentiment in many countries and mounting pressure not to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants. In some States, to talk about the dignity of migrants or saving their lives was considered to be a political issue but it was not a political issue to save lives. As the former president of the Italian Red Cross, Mr Barra, had said: “we must never be silent when the dignity of a human being is threatened”. The Red Cross and Red Crescent was always on the side of the most vulnerable and that was not a breach of neutrality or impartiality. Everything possible must be done to enter into dialogue and engage with States but since preparations for the International Conference had met with vetoes from some, the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity had been drafted for presentation at the International Conference. Many National Societies had written asking for presentation of a resolution, but the proposed Statement appeared to be a good basis on which to engage in dialogue. The IFRC restated its commitment to help those escaping from violence, misery and other causes of migration.

Ms Mohamed (Maldivian Red Crescent, speaking also on behalf of National Societies in South Asia from: Afghanistan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; India; Nepal; Pakistan; and Sri Lanka), expressed gratitude to those involved in drafting the Movement Statement. There was unprecedented global attention on migration and increased recognition of the humanitarian needs and of the risks faced by migrants.

With reference to the humanitarian needs of many people on the move for work and livelihoods, often called labour migrant workers, and their families, South Asia had been exposed to population movement due to the combined drivers of protracted conflicts and crises, extreme events and disasters, rural impoverishment and

socio-economic inequalities. Climate-induced displacement was also increasing due to the accelerated pace of climate change. Whether in a crisis situation or in peace time, migrants had unique vulnerabilities and needs, such as access to essential services and social inclusion. Understanding the strong impact of migration in South Asia, National Societies in the sub-region had been actively engaged in building capacity in responding to the needs of migrants and those affected by migration, networking with other National Societies and collaborating beyond the South Asia sub-region, including in the Asia Pacific Migration Network. The Maldivian Red Crescent and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society had recently organized a Humanitarian Dialogue on Migration with the support of the IFRC and the Italian Red Cross.

In response to the Movement Statement, she underlined that, in addressing the humanitarian consequences of displacement in protracted crises, National Societies were exposed to the risks of having to discontinue activities due to decreasing resources. It was necessary to act together with a common voice and use the power of the network to reach the highest level of decision makers in their respective countries in order to influence support for affected communities. In its work and that of its partners, the Red Cross and Red Crescent needed to take into account the sensitivities of the contexts in which they operated in order to avoid unnecessary pressures and improve the quality of services. Taking the opportunity of the International Conference, National Societies called on States to recognize and respect the position of National Societies in relation to migration, based on the seven Fundamental Principles and with an understanding of the capacities of National Societies to coordinate and cooperate with States to address the humanitarian needs of migrants and those affected by migration.

It was recognized that life-saving approaches should also be combined with strengthening the livelihoods and overall resilience of affected populations, including displaced and host communities. Human trafficking and gender-based violence were underlined as critical risks within any migratory or displacement journey and addressing those risks required better trained volunteers and staff, as well as established mechanisms to coordinate with public authorities and affected communities. There was a growing trend towards disaster-related migration and displacement in the context of climate change and a consequent need for greater advocacy for the adoption and enforcement of legal frameworks and effective measures in preparedness strategies that protected and empowered communities at risk. The National Societies of South Asia supported the target that at least 75 per cent of National Societies should integrate the needs of migrants, refugees and displaced people in their strategic planning processes.

Ms Van Schaik (Netherlands Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the National Societies of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Canada, Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uganda, Zambia), recalled that Strategy 2030, adopted at the General Assembly, highlighted migration and displacement as one of the five global challenges facing the Red Cross and the Red Crescent in the next decade. The challenge impacted humanitarian aid and humanitarian diplomacy on behalf of the most vulnerable. A fundamental component of humanitarian diplomacy in the field of migration was to remind States of their obligations under international law in order to prevent the suffering of vulnerable migrants. It was increasingly concerning that there was a hardening in laws, policies and attitudes in many countries that was having grave consequences for the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable migrants, refugees and others in need of international protection. The Movement must stop the race to the bottom in policy and in law and open honest dialogue about migration as a humanitarian issue and about the obligations of States. The management of migration by many States was increasingly interpreted in the containment and security domain and not in the humanitarian domain. The Movement must provide a strong response and keep advocating for guaranteed access of migrants to essential services, irrespective of their legal status. The statement was a bold and universal appeal on behalf of some of the most vulnerable people in the world: "let us work together, reaffirming our common humanity to help all those in need": the work in that area must be an example of strong Movement collaboration. She requested that the ICRC and the IFRC should combine the work of the Movement with National Societies in order to provide human dignity to all.

Mr Valastro (Italian Red Cross) said that, while welcoming the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity, the Italian Red Cross advocated for the adoption of a future resolution on meeting migrants' needs as a crucial priority for the Movement. The needs of migrants were a humanitarian imperative at times of crisis and also in everyday life. The Movement could not let people feel alone and unsafe because they could not find protection for their rights or dignity as human beings. Vulnerable migrants and irregular migrants were constantly exposed to danger and it was the role of the Movement to mitigate the danger in every situation, as part of its mandate and in dialogue with Governments.

Mr Zoungrana (Burkinabe Red Cross Society) welcomed the commitment of the Movement to humanity and to protecting human dignity in the face of migration, which occurred on a daily basis. He thanked Movement

partners who had provided help for the psychosocial and health needs of migrants in Burkina Faso and indicated the full support of his National Society for the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity.

Ms Chatoor (Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society) expressed support for the Movement Statement. The challenges of migration were new to Trinidad and Tobago but, as a member of the Movement, it must show its support to the most vulnerable within the limited capacity of its National Society. Migration posed challenges, but the Red Cross and Red Crescent could not run away from its obligations under international law. Many partners and States supported the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees and the Movement must build on the contents of those two instruments by embracing its Fundamental Principles, with Humanity being the most important when dealing with vulnerable migrants.

Dr Carvajal De Alvarez (Colombian Red Cross Society) expressed support for the Movement Statement. The global migration framework and the regional commitments on migration enabled National Societies to respond powerfully to migration. The Colombian Red Cross Society had assisted 1.2 million people over the previous two years, carrying out activities in many cities to support integration in partnership with the Government and other actors. The National Society had provided emergency and health services, but it needed further resources in order to devise a longer-term strategy that comprised social and economic inclusion.

Dr Nguyen (Vietnam Red Cross Society, speaking on behalf of the 11 National Societies of South-East Asia from: Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; Indonesia; Laos; Malaysia; Myanmar; Philippines; Singapore; Thailand; Timor-Leste and Viet Nam), expressed support for the Movement Statement. In South-East Asia, millions of people were on the move for different reasons, including finding work and finding better opportunities. Migrant workers faced humanitarian challenges and other dangers, including those in irregular situations or who were undocumented and who could not access basic services such as health care, education, shelter and housing. The Red Cross and Red Crescent provided such services to both regular and irregular migrants, especially in emergency situations. More must be done to reduce the vulnerability of migrants and to improve their fate.

The National Societies of South-East Asia had taken ever-greater measures to respond to humanitarian concerns relating to labour migration, including working alongside National Societies in Europe and the Middle East. National Societies had different capabilities and needed to strengthen their capacities in order to respond to those in vulnerable situations. The region had taken a number of initiatives to assist migrant workers and their families, including through restoring family links and providing advice for those living with HIV/AIDS. The National Societies of South-East Asia were ready to work with other National Societies to ensure that all migrants could have dignified, safe and healthy lives.

Mr Condé (Red Cross Society of Guinea) thanked those involved in drafting the resolution, which addressed the problem of restoring dignity to migrants. Migration was currently causing trans-border crises that had never been seen before. National Societies could incorporate the draft resolution into their own strategic plans and trans-border programmes. Migration did not affect one country or one National Society but required the cooperation of many to assist those involved: in that regard, the Red Cross Society of Guinea thanked the Danish Red Cross and the Italian Red Cross for their support. While endorsing the draft resolution, he proposed to add a new paragraph: “encourages the creation of national and cross-border coordination platforms for information sharing to strengthen collaboration” as that would assist National Societies in having a sustainable and effective impact.

Dr Tastanova (Kazakh Red Crescent, speaking also on behalf of the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan), expressed full support for the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity, which served as a reminder that the challenge of migration could not be solved by any one State or National Society but would require a joint effort by all stakeholders. Migration was a diverse issue with diverse economic, social and political causes and it required advocacy at a global level in international forums and with respective Governments.

Mr Bedoya Araúz (Red Cross Society of Panama) said that the Red Cross Society of Panama was becoming increasingly concerned about the number of families that had been separated as a result of migration. It was important to work with neighbouring countries and other continents where people were taking dangerous migratory routes. Despite the introduction of policies and rules on migration, people who migrated were not necessarily any more secure and more effective measures were necessary to support vulnerable people at the start of the migratory trail. The ability of National Societies to respond within legal frameworks and with action in the field must be improved and undertaken in full compliance with their auxiliary role. The Red Cross Society of Panama fully supported the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity.

Ms Penz (German Red Cross) said that migration was one of the biggest challenges faced by the Red Cross and Red Crescent. The Movement had been active and effective in improving its capacity to support migrants and

to reduce vulnerability and trust had been built in the Red Cross and Red Crescent both among the people they served and in the auxiliary role of National Societies. The Red Cross and Red Crescent had responded in emergency situations and with the mobilization of volunteers. New tools have been used and new fields of engagement, such as community sponsorship programmes, were being explored. Cooperation within the Movement in the field of migration was stronger than ever before: she thanked the IFRC and the ICRC for their commitment and National Societies for working together with the German Red Cross to support migrants worldwide. Migration was, by its very nature, a cross-border issue that could only be solved by working together, however, migration was a challenging field in which the need for humanitarian services changed constantly: vulnerabilities and resources changed every year and programmes and services must be adaptable as a consequence.

The experience of the components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement made them better able to provide services to migrants than many other actors. Part of the Movement's efforts must include continuing dialogue with States with an understanding of both the Fundamental Principles and the mandate of the Movement as well as the fostering of mutual trust in order to preserve the humanitarian space and access to vulnerable migrants. The Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity was a valuable tool that would enable dialogue to continue in the international sphere. States must be reminded of their existing responsibilities and commitments and the Red Cross and Red Crescent must reaffirm its commitment to support States to ensure that the humanitarian needs were met in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement.

Ms Brown (British Red Cross) said that the British Red Cross supported the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity. Like many previous speakers, the British Red Cross was concerned about the immense suffering experienced by people on the move and believed that the Red Cross and Red Crescent should respond to all vulnerabilities, regardless of status. The British Red Cross was the largest single service provider to refugees and asylum seekers in the United Kingdom. Combining its experience at home with that of colleagues across the Movement gave the National Society the opportunity to understand challenges across full migratory routes and to contribute to a collective response. Large-scale movements of migrants and refugees presented challenges for policy makers, but safe and dignified solutions were possible if the Red Cross and Red Crescent worked collectively with States such as through the two Global Compacts. Work to ensure that the Global Compacts were strong and effective tools that would lead to meaningful change was a priority for the British Red Cross. The National Society also recognized the contributions of refugees and migrants as well as the importance of including them in policy discussions.

Ms Koursoumba (Cyprus Red Cross Society) welcomed and fully supported the draft resolution on "Adopting a Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity". Migration was an issue of great importance to the Movement, but its management posed a significant challenge for State authorities and for National Societies in affected countries. Cyprus was strongly affected by the increasing migratory flows in its region and the National Society carried out a number of programmes as an auxiliary to its Government to ensure respect for the human rights and dignity of migrants arriving in the country. The Cyprus Red Cross Society was the first responder for newly arrived migrants, providing humanitarian assistance, RFL information and psychological support. The National Society also provided programmes for asylum seekers as well as for migrants awaiting deportation. The Cyprus Red Cross Society was one of seven European Union National Societies that had implemented the ESIRAS EU-funded project for the employability and social integration of refugees and asylum seekers, which had been successfully coordinated by the Spanish Red Cross. Grateful thanks were given to sister National Societies that had supported the Cyprus Red Cross Society. The National Society had carried out its mandate in collaboration with the State authorities in a climate of mutual trust and within a frank and constructive dialogue. She called upon the Movement to support National Societies that were disproportionately affected by migratory flows.

Dr Chabbou (Tunisian Red Crescent) said that the draft resolution expressed support for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, with the aim of protecting human dignity. The Tunisian Red Crescent had been protecting migrants and refugees, with the ICRC, since the 1950s. There was an increasing number of associations and actors within States proposing services to migrants that were not complementary to those provided by the National Societies and indeed that interfered with those supplied by the Red Cross and Red Crescent in what could be termed unfair competition. The humanitarian field was not exclusive to the Red Cross and Red Crescent, but components of the Movement should be able to carry out their role fully and they should not be supplanted by actors who did not subscribe to the same Fundamental Principles, and who might not have the best interests of migrants at heart. It was important that migrants should benefit from the full range of services offered by the Red Cross and Red Crescent and that



they should be protected by its humanitarian values. It was the duty of the Movement to draw the attention of States and of the United Nations to activities that fell short of providing appropriate assistance to migrants.

H.E. Mr Bebars (Egyptian Red Crescent Society) welcomed the Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity. The Egyptian Red Crescent had adopted a migration policy that dealt with the humanitarian considerations of the most vulnerable migrants through different projects, such as access to health and social services; restoring family links; support for migrants' rights and dignity; and promoting integration and social exchange between migrants and host communities. The Egyptian Red Crescent Society was providing health and social services to migrants coming to Egypt from the Middle East and Africa and it was committed to continuing cooperation with its Movement partners.

Ms Garcia Roca (Peruvian Red Cross) said that there were unprecedented numbers of migrants in Peru, including one million migrants from Venezuela. Migrants were forced to leave their countries because of situations of hunger and violence and without knowing whether they would be welcomed in host countries. The IFRC and sister National Societies were supporting the Peruvian Red Cross in providing assistance to migrants, but further action was needed in communicating with Governments in order to ensure that laws were in place to protect migrants. Coordination with other humanitarian actors in the field could also prove beneficial. The Peruvian Red Cross also required help to provide for the long-term needs of migrants, to improve their lives and to respond to the xenophobia caused by the significant increase in the numbers of people travelling from other countries.

The Chair drew attention to the amendment proposed by the Red Cross Society of Guinea to add an additional paragraph 3: "encourages the creation of national and cross-border coordination platforms for information sharing to strengthen collaboration".

A representative of the **Australian Red Cross**, while approving the amendment, requested that a reference be made to "best practice in the protection of personal information and data protection" as follows: "encourages the creation of national and cross-border coordination platforms for information sharing to strengthen collaboration in line with best practice and international standards in the protection of personal information and data protection as outlined in the resolution on Restoring Family Links".

The draft resolution, as amended, contained in document CD/19/12DR entitled "Adopting a Movement Statement on Migrants and our Common Humanity" was adopted. (Resolution 8, CD/19/R8)

Ms Gadiant, Vice Chair of the Council of Delegates, oversaw the following discussion:

Item 7: Movement coordination and cooperation

7.1 Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures

The Vice-Chair outlined that the global humanitarian and development environment was experiencing rapid change and the power of coordination and collaboration among member National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC was needed more than ever. In order for the Movement to maintain a competitive edge, to be the preferred partner to States and to leverage its own networks and capacities, more internal cohesion was required.

The first sub-item concerned the Movement's normative framework: the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures. The Seville Agreement, which governed the coordination of the international activities of the Movement's components, had been adopted in 1997. The Supplementary Measures had been adopted in 2005, to clarify and improve the implementation of the Seville Agreement. This item provided an update on a process that IFRC and ICRC, respectively decided upon in relation to the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures and was for information only.

Mr Rocca (IFRC) said that the latest discussion of the IFRC Governing Board on the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures had resulted in a unanimous Board decision to undertake a review. The Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures represented a regulatory framework on how the Movement was to work together in major international operations. Since the adoption of the Seville Agreement some 22 years previously, the humanitarian landscape had changed significantly. The Agreement primarily regulated the role of the ICRC and the IFRC and did not concentrate on the role of National Societies. It could be argued that the role of National Societies was governed by the Supplementary Measures however, since they were supplementary, they were not part of the general framework. At the World Humanitarian Summit, the ICRC and the IFRC had jointly and strongly advocated for the localization agenda, which was primarily driven by National Societies.

In 1997, the localization agenda had not been part of the discussions or part of the wider humanitarian landscape. On that basis alone, a revision of the Seville Agreement would be justified without questioning the statutory mandates of each of the Movement's components. The external environment continued to increase in complexity and, more frequently, Red Cross and Red Crescent activities took place in countries where there were conflict and non-conflict areas, crises were more protracted and many more actors were involved in the humanitarian response, including the private sector, the military, faith-based organizations and the media. Most importantly, National Societies had become stronger and were ready to take a more central role in responding to disasters and crises. Through their volunteers, National Societies were the local actors *par excellence*. In many complex crises, they were the only ones able to gain access to - and the trust of - their local communities. Other changes included increasingly complex interactions among all Movement components, external demands for effective coordination, calls for transparency and accountability, and the need to avoid duplication and competition to ensure that the Movement remained a key player in an increasingly competitive environment.

How could discussions take place in the Statutory Meetings on the theme of trust without considering how the Movement components could work better together from a strategic perspective in order to optimize delivery at the forefront? How could the Movement speak with one collective voice instead of with fragmented voices? For the people they served, for the public, for the media and for donors, there was only one Red Cross and Red Crescent. Some years previously, the Movement had begun discussions on Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) which had resulted in a resolution adopted at the 2015 Council of Delegates, which tasked the Movement with increasing coordination and collaboration in large-scale disasters, collecting feedback on the implementation of the regulatory framework, while at the same time taking a pragmatic approach to implementation that was specific to the country context. There had been considerable progress in the SMCC process and it would continue to improve. However, serious and underlying challenges remained and the issue of roles and responsibilities was not addressed in the SMCC: it was a strategic issue that sat within the Seville Agreement.

There needed to be an honest discussion and clarifications made in several areas of the Seville Agreement, such as the use of outdated language, confusing roles and responsibilities, access issues, resource mobilization, communication and representation. The concepts of Lead Role and Lead Agency also needed to be reviewed to reflect evolving country contexts and the increasing capacities of National Societies. The National Societies needed to be at the core of any agreement: in too many situations in the past, millions of Swiss francs had been invested in a country but the National Society had been left weaker at the end of the operation than before it had begun. In international appeals, both the IFRC and the ICRC should work hand-in-hand with National Societies. The ICRC and the IFRC must listen to the ideas of National Societies and to their analyses on needs. There was a shared responsibility to strengthen National Societies before and during operations. IFRC Governing Board members had unanimously decided to appoint an advisory group to review the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures. The advisory group would submit its findings to the Governing Board at the end of 2020 for a decision on whether to request the Council of Delegates to undertake a review of the instruments. Following the results of the review, the IFRC would request the Standing Commission to offer its good services to facilitate dialogue between the IFRC and the ICRC. The opportunity to revise the Seville Agreement could lead to a modern, future-ready road map that would enable the components of the Movement to work together more effectively.

Mr Carbonnier (ICRC) said that all were acutely aware of the many structural and external challenges faced by the Movement. Many of the challenges were recognized in the IFRC Strategy 2030 as well as in the current institutional strategy for the ICRC. Overcoming the challenges required the best possible cooperation, coordination and complementarity between all components of the Movement, based on trust. Achieving that aim required looking at what held the Movement back both operationally and in terms of its policy framework. It would also require deep cultural change and a mindset shift as many in the Movement had already expressed. The ICRC took note of the IFRC Governing Board's decision to appoint an internal advisory group to review the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures in 2020. The ICRC trusted that the initiative would build on the field-based and operational evidence as well as problem analysis. Given its broader Movement dimension, the ICRC would be very happy to contribute to the analysis as and when appropriate, and to join eventual discussions on possible next steps. At the same time, the ICRC was willing to engage with National Societies and the IFRC in a collaborative process that was open to all with the aim of giving new impetus to pragmatic, constructive and inclusive discussions – a process that built on and learned from good operational practices and actual challenges. The process would aim to compliment and not to duplicate the IFRC's review. It would give an idea of the issues that were

holding back the Movement and include a discussion on the Movement's normative framework in light of its implementation - but not limited to that. It was hoped that, out of the discussions, practical solutions and innovative ideas would emerge on how to move ahead. It would help to build a Movement that was fit for facing the challenges of the future in a very fast changing world. Much hard work had already been done in the past on strengthening Movement coordination and cooperation and the SMCC process had given rise to constructive dialogue and pragmatic approaches to operational efficiency and impact, with National Societies at the centre. Valuable lessons could be learned from the practical experiences that had already taken place as well as from the renewed dialogue between the governing bodies of the IFRC and the ICRC. The two bodies would be able to compare notes and take stock of complementary processes, as soon as relevant and appropriate. Key findings could then be discussed at the Standing Commission later in 2020 and the matter could be brought to the Council of Delegates in 2021, as suggested by the President of the IFRC.

Dr Al-Hadid (Jordan National Red Crescent Society) supported the statement by the President of the IFRC. The Seville Agreement had been respected by the Jordan National Red Crescent Society since it had been signed in 1997, but circumstances had changed, operating methods were changing and the Movement was facing new challenges. As he had remarked at the Council of Delegates in 2005, the Seville Agreement was perceived by National Societies as an agreement between the two Geneva-based institutions and it did not recognize the prominent role and sovereignty of National Societies. He hoped that the advisory group would not propose a second set of Supplementary Measures, but rather that it would re-open the Seville Agreement and try to readjust it. It was important to face problems in the Movement and, where there was disagreement, there was a need to listen to and discuss the views of National Societies.

Mr Rafalowski (Magen David Adom in Israel) said that Magen David Adom in Israel had been involved in an SMCC project as part of contingency planning for a major earthquake and it had been grateful for the support it had received from the ICRC, the IFRC and Partner National Societies. Preparing for a major earthquake and meeting the huge humanitarian needs in the prevailing political and security environment was more complicated than had originally been anticipated. The exercise had shown that the organizational structures in the Movement did not facilitate humanitarian assistance in some cases: it was not easy for the ICRC and the IFRC to work with one response as they were individual organizations and further alignment of procedures, such as logistics procedures, or the templates and tools used, would be necessary. Although they had different mandates, it would be easier for the National Society concerned if both organizations could operate with the same template on the ground.

Mr Mader (Swiss Red Cross) said that the Seville Agreement had worked well in the past and it still gave the lines for broader cooperation within the Movement. Rules and regulations were needed on the one hand, while on the other hand, there was a need to build trust and to work closely together, discussing each case and intervention within the Movement and with all of the actors. Contrary to the views of some, the Swiss Red Cross believed that the best-placed actor was usually the National Society, in keeping with the localization agenda to which previous speakers had referred. The Swiss Red Cross did not believe that there was a need to review the Seville Agreement: in case the review went ahead, it should be on the basis of a common and collaborative process between the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies.

Mr Al Enizi (Kuwait Red Crescent Society) expressed full agreement with the remarks made on behalf of the Jordan Red Crescent. The Kuwait Red Crescent Society believed that the National Society should take the lead on the ground, in situations of armed conflict and in natural disasters. The views of National Societies should be taken into account when the Seville Agreement was reviewed.

Mr Mirzayev (Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan) said that some progress had been made in recent years in strengthening Movement cooperation and coordination, nevertheless more emphasis should be placed on the domestic setting when assembling efforts and resources in a national context, whether during armed conflict or natural disasters. National resources were often limited and while tribute should be paid to the work of volunteers, they often needed more active support and more investment in their capacity in order to improve outcomes. Regional and country offices played a valuable role in supporting National Societies, but their work could be improved through enhanced cooperation. Any review of the Seville Agreement should take place in a joint effort and with the proper engagement of all of the components of the Movement. The Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan was ready to contribute to the further development of any mechanisms that focused on strengthening coordination and cooperation within the Movement.

Mr Yao (Red Cross Society of China) said that, in order to cope with ever-changing vulnerabilities and in order to meet ever-increasing humanitarian needs, all components of the Movement would need to act

in a unified, coordinated manner. Since the adoption of the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures in 1997 and 2005, and the adoption of the resolution on Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation in 2017, the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies had continued to make progress in coordination and cooperation. Adopting a resolution on Movement coordination and cooperation was necessary, but it was only one side of the coin: any theory or policy needed to be tested through a large amount of bottom up practices. Each country had its own conditions and the components of the Movement needed to continuously cooperate and complement each other when responding to a particular situation. The IFRC and the ICRC representative offices in China supported each other in order to develop their respective strengths and cooperate smoothly; they had also established a tripartite regular consultation mechanism with the Red Cross Society of China at leadership, management and working levels, through which they had continuously deepened mutual understanding, integrated resources and drawn upon each other's strengths in order to achieve positive results. All of the work carried out through cooperation in China had been welcomed and recognized by the beneficiaries and the relevant sectors. The IFRC and the ICRC had made positive progress in strengthening coordination at the headquarters level, which was a top-down approach. As a National Society, the Red Cross Society of China would continue to maintain close cooperation with the representative offices of the ICRC and the IFRC in China and explore and practice through a bottom up approach and make efforts for the Movement to achieve coordination and more influential humanitarian contributions.

Mr Kettaneh (Lebanese Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society), agreed that it was appropriate to review the Seville Agreement, which had been approved 22 years previously. The review should be constructive in supporting and strengthening the Movement and it should examine the role of the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies so that they fulfilled their roles in a coordinated and cooperative way. National Societies should be accepted in the field and cooperation should be strengthened in order to enable them to play their role. The Lebanese Red Cross worked continuously with the IFRC, the ICRC and the 21 National Societies present in Lebanon. Capacities must be strengthened, and the components of the Movement must learn from their experiences in order to build a constructive and shared vision and to act in a complementary rather than a competitive way.

Mr Villarroel (Venezuelan Red Cross) said that the Seville Agreement was a document that set standards to improve relations between the components of the Movement and, in particular, between the IFRC and the ICRC. The Agreement was intended to improve the quality of the humanitarian framework and the preamble highlighted the importance of the spirit of cooperation based on mutual trust. However, National Societies had not uniformly benefited from the Agreement and they had sometimes found that their place in humanitarian operations was not acknowledged either by the ICRC or by the IFRC. National Societies had become stronger since the adoption of the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures, but the ICRC and the IFRC had gradually abandoned the implementation of a cooperation policy which had been so important for all of the Movement. It was saddening to respond to humanitarian crises while at the same time finding that there was an institutional crisis in which there had been a failure to respect the role of the National Society and in which there had been competition against the National Society, which in some cases had compromised the physical integrity of the National Society's volunteers. No effective measures had been taken to address specific situations. In some situations in Venezuela, the principles of Impartiality and Humanity had been violated and almost all of the rules and standards of the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures had been ignored. The Venezuelan Red Cross was committed to promoting space for dialogue and cooperation within the terms of the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures in order to improve implementation, follow up and monitoring. The Movement had the capacity to resolve problems through dialogue and it had the capacity to evaluate the state of play and the way that the Agreement was implemented. It would be possible to learn from the forthcoming review. He requested that all National Societies, the ICRC and the IFRC should treat the review as an opportunity for improvement.

Mr González (Red Cross Society of Panama) expressed commitment to dealing with the differences that existed between the components of the Movement with regard to humanitarian tasks. The Movement must combine its strengths to work in a united way. It was heartening to see the warmth expressed between the Presidents of the ICRC and the IFRC at the outset of the Council of Delegates since it indicated that the work of all of the components of the Movement would be strengthened in order to assist the most vulnerable. The IFRC had a regional office in Panama and the ICRC also had a presence in the country. Based on mutual respect and on the roles to be played in specific areas, the relationship nurtured through joint meetings and with a clear road map would strengthen the development of the Red Cross Society of

Panama and its ability to carry out its auxiliary role. The Red Cross Society of Panama had advocated for a review of the Agreement so that the Movement could work collectively in a coherent manner, as set out in the draft resolution.

Ms Wahlström (Swedish Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Danish Red Cross), welcomed the inclusion of the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures on the agenda as the issue was critical to the Movement. The degree of unity in all of the discussions that had taken place thus far was impressive and it was hoped that the review of the Seville Agreement would be conducted in the same spirit. Many important decisions had already been adopted at the IFRC General Assembly that were significant for the future of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and that were the foundation stones for an effective, trusted, localized, united, independent and neutral humanitarian actor. However, how the Movement would make better use of its combined capacity and build it was one of the most important building blocks and it would provide a new vision. If the Movement did not tackle the matter, it would continue to underperform in spite of its great capacity. The Seville Agreement was a child of its time but there had been changes in the environments in which they operated, both in terms of the nature of crises and, above all, in the nature of the National Societies. National Societies were different and many of them were much stronger and had different relationships with their Governments than in the past. A review should examine what the Seville Agreement should look like in the 21st century when components of the Movement had confidence in each other and were able to make binding commitments to important humanitarian outcomes. Progress had already been made in the SMCC process in which wisdom and practical efforts had shown that operational models could be developed. All should be encouraged to undertake the challenge of a joint review process and not two parallel processes. The components of the Movement should demonstrate that they had trust in each other and find simple solutions to how they operated, make full use of their strengths and minimize weaknesses. It was hoped that the Presidents of the Standing Commission, the ICRC and the IFRC would lead the process together, making full use of the insights and experience of National Societies in a review that was rational, transparent, impartial and efficient.

Hon. Croufer (Belgian Red Cross) said that his National Society always welcomed proposals to improve the collective effectiveness of the Movement. It would be essential for the two review processes undertaken by the IFRC and the ICRC to be coordinated. The reviews must be more inclusive since National Societies were key to them and must be closely consulted. There was one sole aim for the processes and that was to improve operational coordination within the Movement. And the sole aim of coordination was to save lives: an aim that required the use of all available capacities and the most relevant expertise wherever it was to be found in the Movement. National Societies must inform their national authorities as to the progress of the review process since their humanitarian mandate was received from their States and they had a duty to keep States informed as to their working methods.

Ms Bilous (Ukrainian Red Cross Society) said that, for many years, the Movement had recognized that it needed greater coordination and cooperation in order to succeed in improving service delivery while reducing costs. Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation was essentially about strengthening the spirit of the relationship within one family. Only better relationships between the components of the Movement would generate better performance from local to national level. The power of the Movement and its effectiveness lay in the way it would inspire, persuade and earn the confidence of stakeholders by showing a unified Movement approach. The Ukrainian Red Crescent supported the resolution and the proposal to improve communication and collaboration. The Movement collaborated well in Ukraine. All must be focused on how to improve dialogue within the Movement, consolidating Movement influence within the humanitarian sphere and effectively coordinating work through communication that was frequent, timely, accurate and problem-solving, supported by relationships of shared goals, shared knowledge and mutual respect.

Mr Senghore (Gambia Red Cross Society) welcomed the review process, which was aimed at ensuring effectiveness and efficiency in the work of the Movement. The Gambia Red Cross Society looked forward to an outcome that would further emphasize the complementarity rules in delivering humanitarian services. Above all, it was important to strengthen National Societies and to empower them. There were situations in which National Societies had become weaker as a result of Red Cross and Red Crescent operations. He sought clarification concerning the wording in paragraph 1f. of the draft resolution set out in document CD/19/7.2DR which read: "better integration of National Societies at both the strategic and operational level is vital, as is securing stronger investment from all Movement components" since he believed that National Societies formed part of the Movement components.

The Vice-Chair said that the question concerning the draft resolution set out in document CD/19/7.2DR would be dealt with under agenda item 7.2 since it concerned SMCC.

Ms Folgar Bonilla (Guatemalan Red Cross) said that she understood that the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures gave a lead role to National Societies with the ICRC and the IFRC having separate mandates. She was unsure that certain activities carried out by the ICRC in Venezuela fell within its mandate; she did not want similar activities to occur in Guatemala. For the time being, all should respect the terms of the Seville Agreement and respect the National Societies until the review had taken place.

Mr Gouaye (Central African Red Cross Society) said that the question of the Seville Agreement and its Supplementary Measures would determine the future of the Movement and the solution could be found in two remarks made by the President of the IFRC and the Vice-President of the ICRC. The President of the IFRC had underlined the central role of National Societies and all of the National Society representatives that had spoken had agreed with that view. The Vice-President of the ICRC had spoken of the need for a mind shift. It was indeed necessary for a change in mindset and National Societies must be placed at the centre of all action by the Movement. He had no complaint to make with respect to the Central African Red Cross Society since there was good cooperation between the ICRC, the IFRC and the National Society in Central African Republic. The Central African Red Cross Society had made clear to the ICRC and the IFRC that it was the National Society that took the central role in carrying out activities to support the most vulnerable with strategic assistance from the IFRC and the ICRC.

Mr Apeland (Norwegian Red Cross) lent his National Society's voice to those who had advocated for one inclusive statutory review process, the outcomes of which would be presented at the Council of Delegates in 2021. For the process to be truly inclusive it must not be solely for the Geneva-based institutions but it must include the voices, the concerns and the insights of National Societies. There must be consideration not only of the normative framework but also an honest discussion on how to establish a truly collaborative culture within the Movement. No individual component had responsibility for the complexity of the structure of the Movement but everyone had responsibility for making the most of the imperfect structure that the Movement had inherited. He encouraged the IFRC and the ICRC to establish one inclusive process in preparation for the statutory meetings of 2021.

Ms Slatyer (Australian Red Cross) said that the present discussions went to the heart of how the Red Cross and Red Crescent delivered greater humanitarian impact. The Australian Red Cross respected that both the ICRC and the IFRC needed time to reflect on the discussions but requested that President Rocca and President Maurer should lead the Red Cross and Red Crescent in one inclusive review process. The process could perhaps be facilitated by the incoming Secretary General of the IFRC and the new Director-General of the ICRC, working with a genuinely representative group of National Society Secretaries-General and accountable to the governance of both the IFRC and the ICRC. The process would need to be legitimate, representative, amplify the voice and experience of National Societies, and, most of all, it would need to be constructive. The Movement was stronger together: she requested that all should move forward in order to best serve those in need and to find courageous solutions.

Mr Löövi (Finnish Red Cross, speaking also on behalf of the Icelandic Red Cross), said that the discussions on the SMCC and the Seville Agreement were moving in the right direction. The role of the Movement was to support people and its success thus far had been due to good, well-structured coordination, which could guarantee that aid to people was efficient and well-targeted. In the same spirit as the Swedish Red Cross, the Norwegian Red Cross and Icelandic Red Cross were supportive of inclusive discussion on how to develop working mechanisms so that the Movement was even more effective in its support to people. Emphasis should be on the National Society role as a national coordinator and interlocutor between the public authorities in a given country and the role and responsibility of the IFRC and the ICRC in the provision of international coordination and support.

Mr Kende (Nigerian Red Cross Society) believed that the review of the Seville Agreement and the Supplementary Measures was intended to strengthen collaboration and cooperation within the Movement, to avoid internal competition and duplication of resources and energy, and to enhance the trust and confidence of beneficiaries and benefactors. The Nigerian Red Cross Society supported the views expressed by the National Societies of China, Norway and Sweden.

Dr Mondlhane (Mozambique Red Cross Society) said that the Mozambique Red Cross Society received ongoing support from the National Societies of Belgium, Germany and Spain. Following Cyclone Idai, some 30 National Societies had arrived in Mozambique, but the experience had been positive since clear guidelines

had been set for coordination of the operation. New technology had been used, including data collected by drones in flooded areas that were inaccessible. The National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC had engaged in teamwork and information was provided to the Government as the key player and the sole entity authorised to broadcast the data. As a result of the cyclone, a country delegation had been established by the IFRC. The ICRC had carried out activities in Mozambique since 2017, but following Cyclones Idai and Kenneth, the ICRC had operated as a Movement partner and he appealed to the ICRC to maintain its presence, as the country was still volatile. The National Society had benefited from the support it had received and it becomes more visible.

Mr Combe (French Red Cross) said that it was heartening to see that all shared the same analysis of the problem and the same willingness to progress. The French Red Cross agreed with previous speakers that the Movement should and could improve cooperation and make greater efforts to establish cooperation that was more agile, more inclusive and that did not leave anyone out. The sole purpose of any reflection must be to improve effectiveness on the ground and to seek the views of the staff and volunteers working in the field who understood the needs of the most vulnerable. It was the needs of the most vulnerable that should, in the first place, guide the action of the Movement rather than the mandates of each institution. Only when that reflection had taken place, could the Movement begin to evaluate its cooperation more generally. Although the French Red Cross did not favour the review of the Seville Agreement and Supplementary Measures, it would nevertheless participate in the review in order to make known its experience, vision and proposals in an approach that was inclusive and well ordered. However, the review would only have a successful outcome if the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies worked together and not in parallel processes, which would only lead to opposition and frustration. Differences should be set aside; they should be cultivated and used to enrich the Movement. The Red Cross and Red Crescent must show the international community the true nature of its spirit and origins and keep in mind the beneficiaries to whom it must provide exemplary and efficient help.

The Vice-Chair said that there was no proposed resolution on the agenda item. She thanked the President of the IFRC and the Vice-President of the ICRC for their statements and National Societies for their commitment to the common cause of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. All of the input from delegates would be considered in the process and brought forward to the Council of Delegates in 2021.

Mr. Maurer, Chair of the Council of Delegates oversaw the following discussion:

7.2 Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC 2.0) (documents CD/19/7.2 and CD/19/7.2DR)

The Chair said that the Council of Delegates had worked on Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation since 2013. The issue had been followed intently by those within the Movement, by donors and the wider international community.

Mr Chapagain, (IFRC) commenced the introduction on the draft resolution on Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation and explained that it had been prepared after extensive consultation with National Societies. He recalled a quote he had read: “if you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together”. The SMCC had been a process that aimed to go far; in the past, there had sometimes been pressure to go fast and to go alone, thereby putting pressure on coordination and on the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. There had been progress since 2013 and, in the previous two years, a focus on changing the mindset of colleagues by strengthening cooperation tools; investing heavily in interoperability of the system, such as in logistics and security; in short deployments. Sincere attempts had been made to coordinate resource mobilization, with some mixed results, which had been shared in the independent evaluation. There had been interesting experiences and collaboration in Mozambique, Democratic Republic of Congo, the Bahamas, South Sudan, Pakistan, Bolivia and Chile. There had been successful operations with coordination with the components of the Movement working well together. There had been challenges since the systems were very different and there was still some work to be done on mind set issues. A lot of emphasis had been placed on the two components of the Movement: the ICRC and the IFRC; but the membership as a whole needed to work more closely together.

Mr Staehelin (ICRC) continued the introductory remarks and explained that while listening to contributions during the debate on the Seville Agreement, it had not always been clear whether delegates were raising questions about the *implementation* of the normative framework or whether they were questioning the framework itself. It would be necessary to get to the bottom of that issue before moving forward. The process of SMCC had been viewed from the operational level, looking at what was holding back operations on the ground, since what was needed was actions and deeds. He agreed with Mr Chapagain that changings

mindsets was an issue: experience in Ukraine had shown that teams could come together and find pragmatic solutions rather than being paralysed by the Movement politics. He hoped that the Movement could move forward in that spirit. The issue of scale would be examined in the next part of the journey; including the ability to do more and to push each other to do more while looking at the challenges. The next speaker, Ms Harfield, would speak on behalf of a joint team of National Societies, IFRC and ICRC colleagues, which illustrated the value of joint effort and how the Movement could move forward together.

Ms Harfield (IFRC), illustrating her remarks with slides, said that the Movement worked better together when it coordinated its work in an inclusive and predictable way: that approach had been called SMCC 2.0, as set out in the draft resolution. Aiming for efficient and complimentary service provision to maximize the potential of the Movement and to optimize collective response capabilities, the draft resolution presented several priority areas which had been grouped in concentric circles. In the outer circle the priority reflected the need to change mindsets and build capacities to respond to emergencies. There were several discrete work streams under the heading, including SMCC training: tools to foster greater awareness of SMCC and its benefits and to build a mindset among staff and volunteers that was open and responsive to Movement coordination. The approach included the deployment of trained Movement Coordination Officers in the first days after an emergency occurred. It was also important to better understand and utilize the capacities of different Movement components to contribute to a response. It was proposed to have a work stream that promoted complimentary domestic and international responses that reinforced the capacity of the National Society in the affected country and strengthened its operational impact and long-term sustainability. The second foundational element involved reinforcing the positioning of the Movement in the humanitarian environment: one proposed work stream tackled complementarity by considering how to optimize the usage of the Movement's respective functions and the responsibilities conferred by States or by the Movement itself. It also encompassed proposed work to increase funding for the Movement's operations through smart collection of data, building coherent communications and presenting well-coordinated appeals.

The middle circle, on alignment of systems, concerned work on the interoperability of systems and procedures in the areas of logistics, security and surge systems and transferring those benefits to build contacts for greater humanitarian impact. Areas where greater systems alignment would be beneficial would also be considered. The Movement must also enhance its collective ability to be first domestic and international responders to emergencies and to timely and adequately scale the Movement's response, thereby reinforcing the ambition of the Movement as a key global responder.

Mr Adamson (British Red Cross) said that the present agenda item related to the previous item on the Seville Agreement and the context in which all components of the Movement worked better together. The British Red Cross welcomed SMCC 2.0 and celebrated the practical progress that had been made. Movement collaboration was one of the greatest opportunities, one of the greatest challenges and one of the greatest obligations. It was a challenge because collaboration came at a cost that the Movement was not always willing to pay in terms of profile, time, levels of autonomy and levels of financial control. Different components of the Movement did not always enter the collaboration space on an equal footing. The priorities of institutional donors placed some components of the Movement in a powerful position compared to others. Economic strength placed some National Societies in powerful positions relative to others. Collaboration would require that those holding the power, and the associated diplomatic and operational space, had the courage and the humility to share it when it was for a greater good. It would also require those without the power to earn the trust to hold the resources raised by others. Humanitarian crises were bigger than any one component of the Movement but, as the largest humanitarian network in the world, if all worked toward a truly collaborative approach. It was the responsibility of all to ensure that processes such as SMCC were more than just words, but also practical action. Like earlier speakers, he believed that the consultation processes announced by the IFRC and the ICRC concerning the Seville Agreement should, at the very least, be connected and learnt from during 2020 so that the two processes had become connected by the end of 2020. The British Red Cross hoped that, during 2020, SMCC 2.0 would provide a platform for Movement-wide collaborative efforts to respond to the greatest humanitarian threats of the time. The British Red Cross committed itself to that imperative.

Ms Khorrambagheri (Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran) welcomed and fully supported the SMCC process. However, despite efforts made by the whole Movement, more dialogue and further measures would be required, especially on the ground, in order to achieve more success. Therefore, as set out in the resolution, it was vital that the Steering Group should monitor the process. It would also be important for the Steering Group to share their best practice with all components of the Movement in order to facilitate and encourage the components to follow the SMCC in line with their duties and responsibilities.

Mr Lobar (South Sudan Red Cross) said that South Sudan was one of the countries in which the process of SMCC had been tried and it had been found to be enriching. For the SMCC process to succeed, the leaders of the institutions that were on the ground (the Host National Society, the IFRC and the ICRC) must have a positive mindset to provide the necessary leadership to move forward. There must also be willingness among all the parties involved to cooperate and collaborate for a common purpose in the interests of the beneficiaries. The Host National Society must ensure that all of its branches, units, volunteers and governance were brought on board to support the SMCC process. SMCC must also enable the actors on the ground to maximize the limited available resources for the communities that they served.

The purpose of SMCC was for the Movement to be able to speak with one voice, particularly in fragile environments. It would also help the Movement to increase its footprint, enriching as many beneficiaries as possible. SMCC benefited not only the Host National Society but of the entire Movement. Based on its own experience, the South Sudan Red Cross urged National Societies to adopt the draft resolution.

Mr Senghore (Gambia Red Cross Society), responding to a question from the Chair on whether he would take the floor on a query he had expressed earlier regarding the resolution, said that he would only need a clarification and that he could follow up with the drafting team after the meeting.

The draft resolution contained in document CD/19/7.2DR entitled “Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC 2.0)” was adopted. (Resolution 9, CD/19/R9)

Other topics for decision

Item 13: Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements, dated 28 November 2005, between the Palestine Red Crescent Society and Magen David Adom in Israel

(document CD/19/13DR)

Mr Tickner (Independent Monitor of the MoU between Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society), introduced his report (document CD/19/13), which he believed was a balanced and reflective document. He held the passionate conviction that despite the very challenging political and external environment, the MoU could be fully implemented by the parties in the coming years. That outcome would be a great achievement for the National Societies and would allow them both to move forward in maximizing the engagement of each of them in the Movement. There was much collaborative humanitarian work to undertake in the region and failure to resolve the geographic scope issues was, as the report made clear, impeding the Movement’s capacity to collaborate in adequately preparing for a potential earthquake which was one of the major natural disaster threats to the region. The resolution on the outstanding MoU was fundamentally about honouring the principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the terms of the MoU, which had been freely entered into by the National Societies in order to lay the ground for their joint admission to the Movement, and witnessed by the relevant Government representatives.

As was his responsibility, he had factually reported that in relation to the geographic scope provisions, there had as yet been no concrete action to implement the MoU. Sadly, the region had witnessed countless similar moments of disappointment. However, he truly believed that the humanitarian objective could prevail and that the Fundamental Principles of the Movement could be respected. At the 32nd International Conference in 2015, the State of Israel had been called upon to continue to support the MDA to ensure the full implementation of its commitments under the MoU. In furtherance of that call, made by components of the Movement and States Parties, he had engaged in ongoing dialogue with the Israeli Government representatives and urged them to give the support to MDA which had been sought by the International Conference.

To its credit, following an intensive internal Government process, authorities in Israel had written an important letter of commitment in September 2017. The Movement was entitled to place the great reliance on the letter by the Government of Israel to the effect that Israeli ambulances operating on the West Bank and in territory considered to be within the geographic scope of the Palestine Red Crescent Society, would no longer bear the logo of the MDA. A time frame had been given for implementation of that commitment. The MDA had sought a clear commitment from its Government to progress with the necessary steps to implement the geographical scope provisions. The MDA had given him their word that, if the direction was issued by their authorities, then they would fully implement the necessary changes in line with past commitments. The request by the MDA for a Government direction had been strongly supported by the IFRC and the ICRC and by himself as the Independent Monitor. He had reminded the parties in his report of the full set of requirements (as set out at the bottom

of page 5 and top of page 6 of the English version) of the requirements if the geographical scope provisions were to be fully implemented. He wished to highlight the need of the parties to fulfil their commitments towards meeting together to address the current operational and future humanitarian challenges. His views were articulated clearly in the report. He appealed to the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies to fully and intensively engage with both National Societies in order to maximize the opportunities for participation of both within the International Movement and for their support for the MoU at a critical time. He urged all not to give up on what had been a difficult and, at times, intractable issue.

Prof. Kamel (Egyptian Red Crescent Society) said that, as Secretary General of the Egyptian Red Crescent Society, she had had the honour to chair a working group of National Society representatives to review the report by the Independent Monitor and the draft resolution before the Council. Representatives had been appointed to the working group from: the American Red Cross; Argentine Red Cross; British Red Cross; Canadian Red Cross Society; Finnish Red Cross; German Red Cross; Indonesian Red Cross Society; Iraqi Red Crescent Society; Kenya Red Cross Society; Kuwait Red Crescent Society; Philippine Red Cross; Swedish Red Cross; Turkish Red Crescent Society; and the Uruguayan Red Cross. The Secretary General of the Arab Red Crescent and Red Cross Organization had also joined the group. She thanked Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society for having demonstrated the necessary degree of compromise to reach a consensus. The working group had invited MDA and the Palestine Red Crescent Society to present their perspective and the group had also heard from Mr Tickner, the Independent Monitor, as well as from the Swiss Ambassador and Commissioner of the 33rd International Conference, and from the recent envoy of the Standing Commission representatives to Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Ramallah. The purpose had been to hear the views of all. She extended sincere thanks to the National Society representatives of the working group for their contribution and wisdom and the sub-groups that had drafted the final texts of the draft resolution. She had attended most of the drafting over a period of two days and she could confirm the impartiality and the objectivity with which the work had been conducted. Members of the working group had accompanied her in the dialogue held with the two National Societies for which she had been grateful. She signalled her appreciation for the support that had been provided by the ICRC and the IFRC. The draft resolution proposed that there should be continued support for the monitoring process and that ways should be found to achieve constructive results.

The draft resolution entitled “Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements, dated 28 November 2005, between the Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society” was adopted. (Resolution 10, CD/19/R10)

The Chair thanked all those involved in the drafting of the resolution and inquired whether any delegates wished to speak after its adoption.

Dr Al Khatib (Palestine Red Crescent Society) thanked the Independent Monitor, the ICRC and the IFRC as well as the drafting committee headed by Prof. Kamel. It was a fact of daily life, living under occupation, that both the population and the National Society were not free: working under such conditions, the National Society was not free to act.

The resolution contained a strong message that would protect the Fundamental Principles of the Movement. The Fundamental Principles had no limitations of time or place and they were not conditional on the acceptance or refusal of States: on the contrary, all States and National Societies should respect them. He was glad that the resolution involved the Movement as a whole: efforts should be exerted to ensure that it was implemented rather than looking for excuses for non-implementation.

He wished to address his colleagues in Magen David Adom in Israel and to point out that, through the resolution, the Movement was placing a lot of trust in them. The resolution also placed responsibility on their shoulders. The Memorandum of Understanding was only one and-a-half pages long, yet each resolution was some three and-a-half pages. And once the resolution was implemented, there would be one sentence: “the Memorandum of Understanding is implemented”. The final paragraph of the resolution expressed “strong desire to see full implementation achieved and validated well in advance of the 2021 Council of Delegates as an important symbol of hope and success”. To the end of that sentence, he would add “tolerance”. He wished the Movement to work hard, after 14 years of promises, to make the sentiment expressed in the resolution come true.

Mr Mehra (Canadian Red Cross Society, speaking on behalf of the National Societies of Canada, Spain, Denmark, Switzerland, Iceland, Maldives, Finland, Barbados, Bahamas, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, St Lucia, Surinam, Trinidad and Tobago, Germany, Argentina, Kenya, Belgium, Turkey and France), commended the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and Magen David Adom in Israel (MDA) for reaching an acceptable and fair agreement. The National Societies on behalf of which he spoke also thanked the working group that had supported those

efforts: reaching an agreement within the current political and humanitarian landscape was a challenge. They wished to pay their respect to the staff and volunteers of the PRCS and MDA for the life-saving work they continued to provide on a daily basis with great risks: they truly embodied humanity at its best. The respective teams of the two National Societies had worked side-by-side to save lives. There was a recognition that much needed to be done, including by the diplomatic community and States, and not only by National Societies. There was a need for the expertise and wisdom of both the PRCS and MDA both in relation to the MoU and many other issues faced by the Movement. The National Societies on behalf of which he spoke offered their support in helping to ensure the strong and meaningful engagement of both National Societies.

3.5.3 FOLLOW-UP AND PROGRESS REPORTS

The Chair said that the Council of Delegates was requested to note a number of follow-up reports.

Item 16: Report on Resolution 2 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Movement-wide Principles for Resource Mobilization” (*document CD/19/16*)

Mr Apeland (Norwegian Red Cross), providing an update on the Virtual Fundraising Hub initiative, said that, in 2017, the Council of Delegates had adopted the Movement-wide Principles for Resource Mobilization because the Red Crescent and Red Crescent was lagging behind other humanitarian actors in fundraising. The resolution had been adopted after extensive consultations between National Society leaders, the IFRC and the ICRC and it included some key deliverables: to develop a virtual fundraising hub; to coordinate fundraising initiatives, sharing best practices and supporting staff within the Movement; to create a fund to provide seed financing to support growth and development in fundraising in National Societies; and to improve the Movement’s access to and analysis of strong fundraising data.

It had been his privilege to chair the Steering Committee of the Movement-wide Principles for Resource Mobilization since 2017 with the support of two vice-chairs from the ICRC and IFRC as well as a dynamic group of steering committee members. Significant progress had been made by the steering committee: the Virtual Fundraising Hub had been established and the Hub’s Programme Manager had been hired in June 2019; the first contribution to the fundraising investment fund had been made, pilot projects were already under way and the fund was expected to be fully operational in 2020. The number of National Societies participating in the data collection exercise had more than doubled, allowing a better understanding of the Movement’s global position and its position in national markets where some of its opportunities lay. A digital fundraising platform was being procured that would enable National Societies to seek online donations and facilitate global online campaigns.

The review of the Federation-Wide Resource Mobilisation Strategy, which had taken place at the IFRC General Assembly, was a different process. The future of the success of the Virtual Fundraising Hub would be achieved when all components of the Movement acted together: all were needed to contribute data, resources, expertise and fundraising.

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/16.

Item 19: Report on Resolution 4 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Working Towards the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons: 2018–2021 action plan” (*document CD/19/19*)

Ms Adachi (Japanese Red Cross Society) recalled her first visit to Hiroshima as part of a Youth Action Forum on nuclear weapons. Having seen the results of the tragedy in Hiroshima, the sense that it should never be allowed to happen again had become profound. She had heard that the rivers around the atomic dome had been filled with dead bodies. The river was much bigger than she had imagined and that had filled her with horror. She encouraged all to go to Hiroshima to see the evidence of suffering and destruction caused by nuclear weapons. She had been impressed by the work done by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on nuclear weapons: all must stand together to achieve a world free from nuclear weapons and nuclear testing.

She wished to present an appeal for humanity and requested that it should be supported by the Movement:

“Nuclear weapons – An appeal for humanity: Seventy-four years after the world witnessed the suffering caused by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, thousands of nuclear weapons, which have more power to destroy everything compared to the previous bombs, are still in existence, many ready to be launched within minutes. We, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, are deeply concerned at the threat nuclear weapons pose to humanity.

In 1945, our Movement witnessed the destruction caused by nuclear weapons. We saw these weapons burn down two cities, instantly killing tens of thousands of people. We have listened to the horrific testimony of the survivors, the *hibakusha*.

Since then, we have learned that even a limited future nuclear war would have catastrophic and long-lasting consequences. We know that any use of nuclear weapons would cause massive challenges for humanitarian assistance, and that sufficient assistance capacities do not exist.

Nuclear weapons are not compatible with the very fabric of humanity. They would make our efforts to prevent and reduce suffering impossible. The clear evidence of the indiscriminate and catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons makes it extremely doubtful that their use could ever comply with international humanitarian law.

The Geneva Conventions were adopted 70 years ago to protect people from the impact of war. Yet the continued existence of nuclear weapons makes the ongoing conflicts more dangerous and increases the risk of a global catastrophe from which there would be no protection. Weapons that risk catastrophic consequences cannot, in the long run, be presented as instruments of security.

We call on all States and national leaders to ensure that nuclear weapons are never again used and, without delay to:

1. sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
2. join and fully implement the NPT, and other treaties with similar objectives
3. take immediate action to reduce the risk of nuclear weapons' use
4. use the 2020 NPT Review Conference as a critical opportunity to make progress towards all of these goals.

The NPT's entry into force 50 years ago put States under a legal obligation to move towards a world without nuclear weapons. It is high time to fulfil this vital promise to youth and future generations and bring the era of nuclear weapons to an end.

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/19.

Item 15: Report on Resolution 12 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Reinforcing Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities in the Leadership and Work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”

(document CD/19/15)

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/15.

Item 17: Report on Resolution 6 of the 2017 Council of Delegates “Education: Related Humanitarian Needs”

(document CD/19/17)

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/17.

Item 18: Report on “Strengthening Civil-Military Relations (CMR) in Disaster Management following up to Resolution 7 of the 2005 Council of Delegates”

(document CD/19/18)

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/18.

Item 20: Report on Resolution 7 of the 2013 Council of Delegates “Weapons and

International Humanitarian Law”

(document CD/19/20)

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/20.

Item 21: Report on Resolution 4 of the 2015 Council of Delegates “Strategic Framework on Disability Inclusion by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”

(document CD/19/21)

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/21.

Item 22: Report on the Empress Shôken Fund by the Joint ICRC/IFRC Commission

(document CD/19/22)

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/22.

Item 23: Report on the work of the Standing Commission (including reporting on the Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement)

(document CD/19/23)

The Council of Delegates noted the report contained in document CD/19/23.

3.5.3 ITEM FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION *(resumed)*

Other topics for decision

Item 14: 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

Adoption of the agenda of the 33rd International Conference

(document CD/19/14.a)

The Chair drew attention to the role of the Council of Delegates in adopting the agenda of the International Conference and nominating the officers of the Conference. The proposed agenda for the International Conference was contained in CD/19/14.a.

The Council of Delegates adopted the document prepared by the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for adoption by the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Resolution 11, CD/19/R11).

Proposal of officers for the 33rd International Conference *(document CD/19/14.b)*

The Council of Delegates approved the proposal to fill the posts of officers at the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. (Resolution 12, CD/19/R12)

3.5.4 CLOSING OF THE COUNCIL

The Chair said that there had been an unprecedented number of interventions at the Council of Delegates, which had led to substantive debate and substantive decisions. He thanked all participants for their contributions and declared the Council of Delegates closed.

The meeting closed at 7:55 pm

3.6 LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

AGENDA

- Provisional agenda and programme of the 2019 Council of Delegates (CD/19/3)

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Statement on Integrity of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

- Draft statement (CD/19/4DR)

Movement approach to strengthening National Society statutory and constitutional base and complementary frameworks such as the Volunteer Charter

- Draft resolution (CD/19/5DR)
- Background document to resolution and progress report to the Joint ICRC/International Federation Commission for National Societies Statutes (CD/19/5)

Movement-wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability

- Draft resolution (CD/19/6DR)
- Background report (CD/19/6)

Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC 2.0)

- Draft resolution (CD/19/7.2DR)
- Progress report (CD/19/7.2)

Enhancing transparency, gender balance and rotation in the election and composition of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent: Adoption of the Guidelines for Candidates

- Draft resolution (CD/19/8DR)

International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs

- Draft resolution (CD/19/9DR)
- Background document (CD/19/9)

Restoring Family Links: Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2020-2025

- Draft resolution adopting the Strategy 2020-2025 (CD/19/10DR)
- Background document (CD/19/10)

Strengthening implementation of the Movement Policy on Internal Displacement: Ten years on

- Draft resolution (CD/19/11DR)
- Background document (CD/19/11)

Adopting a Movement Statement on Migrants and our common humanity

- Draft resolution (CD/19/12DR)

Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements dated 28 November 2005 between Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society

- Draft resolution (CD/19/13DR)

33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

- Provisional agenda and programme of the 33rd International Conference (CD/19/14.aDR)
- Draft resolution on the proposal of officers of the 33rd International Conference (CD/19/14.bDR)

FOLLOW-UP AND PROGRESS REPORTS

- Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements dated 28 November 2005 between Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (CD/19/13 – 33IC/19/9.5)
- Progress report on “Reinforcing gender equality and equal opportunities in the leadership and work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement” (CD/19/15)
- Movement-wide Principles for Resource Mobilization (Resolution 2 of the 2017 Council of Delegates) (CD/19/16)
- Progress report on the “Implementation of 2017 Council of Delegates Resolution 6 “Education: related humanitarian needs” (CD/19/17)
- Strengthening Civil–Military Relations in Disaster Management (Resolution 7 of the 2005 Council of Delegates) (CD/19/18)
- Working towards the elimination of nuclear weapons: 2018-2021 action plan (CD/19/19)
- Weapons and International Humanitarian Law (CD/19/20)
- Progress report on the “Strategic Framework on Disability Inclusion by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent” (CD/19/21)
- Report on the Joint Commission of the Empress Shôken Fund (CD/19/22)
- Report on the work of the Standing Commission (2018-2019) (CD/19/23)

4

33RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT

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4.1 CONVOCAATION

**To the Members of the
33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
Geneva, Switzerland, 9 – 12 December 2019**

REGISTERED

Geneva, 7 June 2019

Sir, Madam,

As co-organizers of the 33rd International Conference, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are pleased to send this notice of convocation.

The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has determined the place and date of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, which will be **held in Geneva from 9 to 12 December 2019**. We look forward to welcoming you to the International Conference, the opening ceremony for which will take place as follows:

**Monday 9 December 2019
at 17:00 at the International Conference Centre of Geneva (CICG)
Rue de Varembe 15 – 1211 Geneva**

“Act today, shape tomorrow” was selected as the slogan of the 33rd International Conference and reflects the need to take action today to address the key humanitarian concerns that the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement is facing – in order to provide for a better tomorrow.

Enclosed with this convocation is the provisional agenda and programme of the Conference, prepared by the Standing Commission. In addition, there is the call for nominations and nomination form for the Standing Commission, as well as practical details with instructions for registering your participation in the Conference.

This convocation is addressed to all members of the Conference, who, pursuant to Article 9 of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, are:

- the duly recognized National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies;
- the International Committee of the Red Cross;

- the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies;
- the States Parties to the Geneva Conventions.

Rule 6.2 of the Rules of Procedure requires that all observations, amendments or additions to the provisional agenda be received by the Standing Commission no later than 60 days before the opening of the Conference (9 October 2019). We would appreciate, however, receiving all comments by 30 August.

Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure requires that any document submitted by a member of the Conference for inclusion as an official working document must be received by the Standing Commission no later than 90 days before the opening of the Conference (9 September 2019).

The official working documents for the various agenda items of the Conference, including draft resolutions, will be shared 45 days before the opening of the Conference (25 October 2019).

The co-organizers and the Standing Commission welcome Ambassador Didier Pfirter as Commissioner of the Conference and thank the Swiss Confederation for its support in the preparations for the Conference.

Please accept, Sir, Madam, the assurance of our highest consideration.

Francesco Rocca

President

International Federation of Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies

Peter Maurer

President

International Committee
of the Red Cross

4.2 AGENDA AND PROGRAMME

4.2.1 AGENDA AND PROGRAMME

See 1.2.1 above

(page 109)

4.2.2 PROGRAMME OF SIDE EVENTS

Monday 9 December 2019

- Protection together: a comprehensive Movement approach
- Mass casualty incident: community capacity
- Civil-Military Relations Between National Societies and Military Bodies
- Encouraging National Emblem Legislation and Protection
- Increasing resilience to prevent weapon contamination through behavioural change

Tuesday 10 December 2019

- Searching for missing persons: technological opportunities and challenges
- Military IHL Manuals in the 21st Century
- Protecting Health Care: translative normative frameworks into practical solutions: studies on protection practice of State armed forces & gunshot wound reporting by medical professionals
- Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons
- Localization in Action
- High Level Climate Science-Humanitarian Dialogue: scaling-up collaborative action toward climate resilience and addressing the humanitarian impacts of climate change
- Protection of water in armed conflicts
- Families belong together
- The Role of Regional Mechanisms and Forum in Promoting Respect for IHL
- What does it take to be “climate-smart”?
- Good Offices and respect for International Humanitarian Law
- RCRC Approach to Education

Wednesday 11 December 2019

- Strengthening respect for IHL and its implementation: the success of national IHL committees
- Persons with disabilities in humanitarian action: advantages of local partnerships
- Combating Trafficking in Persons in the Context of Armed Conflict
- Predictable financing in changing climate
- Humanitarian cash: giving dignity to people in crisis
- Reimagining Volunteering

- Making the most of National Societies' contributions to sustainable development – opportunities and challenges
- IHL – A Long Conversation
- Help the helpers
- Stepping up our joint efforts to end sexual and gender-based violence
- Protecting Civilians in Urban Warfare
- Locally Led disaster management– the Pacific Way

Thursday 12 December 2019

- Media Workers and Armed Conflict
- Promoting safe and regular migration
- Launching the first RCRC Research Consortium RC3
- Investing in National Society development: how new partnerships and approaches can help the Movement build a global network of strong and sustainable local actors
- Non-State Armed Groups and International Humanitarian Law: Some Reflections on Their Practice and Interpretations
- Regulation, Ethics and Accountability in Data Partnerships for Humanitarian Aid
- GLOW Red: Making women's leadership a reality

4.3 CONFERENCE OFFICIALS

4.3.1 CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFERENCE

Chair of the Conference

Ms Natia Loladze (Georgia Red Cross Society)

Vice-Chair of the Conference

H.E. Ms Athaliah Molokomme (Botswana)

Political Advisor of the Conference

Ms Moamena Kamel

(Egyptian Red Crescent Society)

Rapporteur of the Conference

Mr Bas van Rossum (The Netherlands Red Cross)

Secretary-General of the Conference

H.E. Mr Didier Pfirter (Switzerland)

Assistants Secretaries-General of the Conference

Ms Kate Halff (ICRC)

Mr Frank Mohrhauer (IFRC)

4.3.2 CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE CONFERENCE'S SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Drafting Committee

H.E. Ms Maria Socorro Flores (Mexico)

Commission: International Humanitarian Law

H.E. Ms Carole Lanteri (Monaco)

Commission: Shifting Vulnerabilities

Ms Delia Chatoor

(Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society)

H.E. Ms Nazhat Shameem Khan (Fiji)

Commission: Trust in Humanitarian Action

Mr Georges Kettaneh (Lebanese Red Cross)

4.3.3 BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE

Ms Natia Loladze

Chair of the Conference

H.E. Ms Athaliah Molokomme

Vice-Chair of the Conference

Ms Moamena Kamel

Political Advisor of the Conference

H.E. Ms Maria Socorro Flores

Chair of the Drafting Committee

Mr Bas van Rossum

Rapporteur of the Conference

H.E. Ms Carole Lanteri

Chair of Commission "International Humanitarian Law"

Ms Delia Chatoor

Chair of Commission "Shifting Vulnerabilities"

H.E. Ms Nazhat Shameem Khan

Chair of Commission "Shifting Vulnerabilities"

Mr Georges Kettaneh

Chair of Commission "Trust in Humanitarian Action"

H.E. Mr Didier Pfirter

Secretary-General of the Conference

Mr Francesco Rocca

President of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Mr Peter Maurer

President of the International Committee of the Red Cross

4.4 OPENING CEREMONY AND OPENING PLENARY

Monday, 9 December 2019

(5 p.m.)

Ms Dalal Halima, Master of Ceremony

(Original English)

Monsieur le President, Ministers, Your Royal Highnesses, Your Excellencies representing governments, colleagues from National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, ladies and gentlemen, I wish you a very warm welcome to Geneva and to the opening ceremony of the 33rd International Conference.

My name is Dalal Altaji. I am from Palestine. I was born in Lebanon but, like all Palestinians, had to move to Egypt until 1995 when I went back to Palestine.

So, salam aleikum, bienvenue et bonsoir.

Ms Iuliana Tudor, Master of Ceremony

(Original English)

Good evening and welcome.

Buenas tardes y bienvenidos.

My name is Iuliana Tudor. I am a Romanian journalist with public television and also the Ambassador of the Romanian Red Cross.

It is a great honour for Dalal and I to be your masters of ceremony this evening, and we warmly welcome you to the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Tonight, we take an important step forward together to shine a spotlight on some of the most pressing humanitarian challenges of our time – from the climate crisis and health emergencies to international humanitarian law and trust. We must work hard to find solutions to support people affected by conflict and crises around the world.

Ahead of us this evening is a programme packed with purpose that we hope will inspire and inform our discussions and decisions, where we must see words become deeds.

Our message is simple: Act today, shape tomorrow.

Ms Dalal Halima, Master of Ceremony

(Original English)

Indeed, over the next three days, urgent and relevant issues will be discussed and decided on. To tell us more about the aim and vision of this Conference, I would like to now welcome on stage Mr George Weber, Chair of the Standing Commission. He will preside over the Conference until the Chair of the Conference is elected.

Mr Weber, the floor is yours.

4.4.1 WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR GEORGE WEBER, CHAIR OF THE STANDING COMMISSION

(Original English)

Thank you very much, Dalal, Iuliana, thank you very much.

Mr Federal Councillor of Switzerland, Your Royal Highnesses, Ministers, Excellencies, Leaders and Colleagues of the National Societies from all over the world, of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, esteemed members of the International Conference, distinguished observers, guests and members of the media. Salam aleikum, buenas tardes, bonsoir, good evening.

Under Rule 15.2 in the Rules of Procedure of the Movement, as Chair of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, I have the duty to open the first plenary meeting of the Conference. It is therefore my pleasure to warmly welcome all the delegations that are members of the International Conference, observers from other organizations and guests. Many of us in the Red Cross and Red Crescent family have already been in meetings here for the last five days, so we are especially pleased to open our space now to the State representatives and additional observers and guests who are joining us for the next 3 days of deliberations. You will make our meetings far richer and the decisions we take more impactful for the people we serve.

I would like to express a special word of thanks to our host country, Switzerland, represented here today by Federal Councillor Dr Ignacio Cassis, who is in charge of foreign affairs. We are deeply grateful to you personally, Sir, and to the Swiss government for the generous support we have received for the organization of this Conference. A very many thanks for that.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 33rd International Conference is taking place 155 years after this humanitarian city of Geneva hosted the first ever International Conference in 1864, thanks to the impetus of five of its citizens, who founded the International Committee of the Red Cross.

This year, 2019, shares two historical milestones for humanitarian action: it is the 100th anniversary of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. While the IFRC broadened the wartime experience of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to tackle peacetime crises, the Geneva Conventions have protected untold numbers from the devastation, suffering and consequences of armed conflict.

It is this august forum, the International Conference, that has facilitated the creation and development of the norms framing today's humanitarian action. Together, the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the State Parties to the Geneva Conventions have refused to let the fate of their fellow human beings, fade into indifference.

I would like to add one more thought about the unique nature of the International Conference. Unlike other international meetings, this forum will not be adopting its own agenda, because we, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, already adopted it yesterday. Rest assured, we will not surprise you with a new agenda, since it has not changed since we sent it out in October, having consulted all of you, as members of the Conference, throughout the year. Our long tradition of Conferences has created an accepted practice of an agenda proposed by the Movement through the first-hand experience of our humanitarian workers seeking to support people caught up in humanitarian crises.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we meet under the banner "Act today, shape tomorrow". As we share the next few days together, I would like us to be mindful of how we call on the past, present and future to shape our work. May we draw upon our solution-focused history to inform our deliberations today, and may we take decisions through resolutions that ensure positive, long-term consequences for the people we serve.

To help us all to reach the goal, the Standing Commission, which is tasked to prepare the Conference, decided to create an event that promotes interaction, networking and learning. Humanitarian problems can be understood in many ways, and solutions are not always obvious. Each one of us in this room brings to the Conference rich cultural and intellectual traditions. Each one of us listens, understands and learns differently. Through the mixture of the informal spaces – the Red Talks, some forty booths in the Humanitarian Village, the spotlight sessions, the Humanitarian Trail, the networking space, the pledging station – and the formal plenary sessions, Commissions and Drafting Committee, we have sought to enrich our understanding of what people in humanitarian crises endure and how we all can improve their plight in the most intelligent and

effective ways possible. There are many opportunities while you are here to explore, exchange, see, hear and take a variety of initiatives, so I invite each one of you to contribute your voice, your smile of encouragement or your exchange of a business card to inspire continued action long after this meeting is concluded.

I would now like to touch on three concepts that have come up frequently as we try to make sense of the multi-polar world we live in today, which particularly impact on our humanitarian work, namely: localization, digital transformation and trust.

I believe we are all gathered here because we find value in meeting globally, as it allows us to put our individual problems in perspective and to see how others are dealing with them in order to improve humanitarian outcomes. However, at the end of the day, when we implement the policies we agree on, we have to adapt them to our particular environment, budget, legal and social structures. This Conference is proposing two measures in the localization agenda to achieve that goal. One, that we localize international humanitarian law by encouraging all States to adopt measures that integrate IHL in their country's legal structures in order to better protect their own citizens should they be caught up in an armed conflict. Two, the Conference similarly calls upon governments to adopt climate-smart laws to prepare their countries to respond promptly should a natural disaster strike. By localizing these important humanitarian norms in national frameworks, it can help to create a bulwark to stop the erosion of international commitments, while strengthening crucial safety nets for people affected by natural and man-made disasters.

The second concept, digital transformation, affects us daily as we wonder at the ease with which we literally have a whole world at our fingertips in our smartphones, just as we worry that they make it easy for our children to innocently open up their lives to the world at large. While Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers are living proof that physical proximity is irreplaceable in bringing comfort to others, they are now also using smartphones to reach out more quickly to isolated communities to provide information on diseases or safety, gather data for needs assessments, facilitate cash transfers or help to link families together. We are asking this Conference to responsibly apply the many benefits of the digital revolution by protecting personal data the Movement uses for strictly humanitarian purposes.

Trust – the last and arguably the most important concept I would like to see addressed – is fundamental to all human relations. Trust is equally a cornerstone of the proper functioning for relationships between individuals and institutions. Trust is a singular feature of the relationship that links us together in this forum and gives us the confidence that what we will decide together here will produce the most impactful solutions. State representatives have entrusted the Movement to speak on behalf of voices that would otherwise be inaudible. To deserve that trust, the Movement recommitted itself yesterday, at the Council of Delegates, to working with transparency, integrity, accountability and gender equity. The Movement also trusts States to build stronger safeguards that will preserve impartial and neutral humanitarian action. We look forward to a robust debate on trust, so that we all can walk our humanitarian talk.

Ladies and gentlemen, together, in the days ahead, may we draw from our shared humanity to agree on some far-reaching solutions, in the hope that our collective action today shapes a more humane tomorrow. In other words, let's be true to the Conference, to act today, shape tomorrow.

[Applause]

Thank you, and now I have the great pleasure and honour to call on stage and to give the floor to our host, Dr Ignazio Cassis, one of the seven the Federal Councillors forming the collective Head of State of Switzerland, who is responsible for Foreign Affairs.

4.4.2 ADDRESS BY MR IGNAZIO CASSIS, FEDERAL COUNCILLOR, HEAD OF THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF SWITZERLAND

(Original français)

Your Highnesses, Ministers, Mr George Weber, Chair of the Standing Commission, Mr Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Mr Francesco Rocca, President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Your Excellencies, representatives of governments and National Societies, signore e signori, meinen Damen und Herren, ladies and gentlemen.

I would first of all like to pay tribute to the tremendous work you do. I have the highest admiration for the more than 17 million volunteers who are the lifeblood of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Your network is global and at the same time deeply grounded in local realities. It is built on solid principles, and its positive impact extends around the globe. I am a doctor and have often had the chance to see Red Cross volunteers at work, both volunteers from the Red Cross in Tessin, which is the canton I come from, and Swiss Red Cross volunteers, who I am very happy to see here this evening in Geneva.

In hospitals, hundreds of people quietly perform an invaluable service, whether at the bedside of chronically ill patients or in medical emergencies, supporting health-care personnel. These are people who live by and put into practice the principle of humanity.

On my travels as Minister of Foreign Affairs, I have come across many, many Movement representatives on the frontline everywhere: from the Near East to the Far East, in the Americas, in Africa and in the Pacific.

The writer Grégoire Lacroix said: “True generosity is more about spending time than money”. That is why I want to say thank you here to all the representatives of the Movement. Thank you for your time and thank you for your generosity which reverberates around the world.

This year, we celebrated 100 years of modern multilateralism here in Geneva where the League of Nations was founded after the Treaty of Versailles, but the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is even older than most international organizations.

Henry Dunant, in his book *A Memory of Solferino*, published in 1862, laid the foundations for the humanitarian movement. He tells us, and I quote: “For the first week after the battle, wounded men, of whom the doctors said ... ‘There is no more to be done,’ received hardly any care, and were simply left to die.” He also remarks, and again I quote: “There is no more grieving at the multiple scenes of this fearful and solemn tragedy. There is indifference as one passes even before the most frightfully disfigured corpses.” We never want to relive anything like that again. Today, more than ever, the Movement must, in its unique way, contribute to preserving the dignity and rights of all people.

Ladies and gentlemen, strengthening and ensuring respect for international humanitarian law is an essential part of Switzerland’s foreign policy. It was at the invitation of the Swiss Federal Council – that is what our government is called – that the Diplomatic Conference that led to the adoption of the original Geneva Convention was held 150 years ago. This Convention marked the start of the special relationship that exists between Switzerland and the Movement; the similarities between the Swiss flag and the Red Cross flag are clear evidence of this.

This year we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. These Conventions and the Additional Protocols of 1977 and 2005, of which Switzerland is the depositary State, form the backbone of international humanitarian law.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of Switzerland, to encourage States that have not already done so to ratify the Additional Protocols, accept the jurisdiction of the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission and establish national committees on international humanitarian law.

The universally ratified Geneva Conventions constitute one of the major achievements of multilateralism. Every day, they save lives and contribute to reducing suffering in armed conflicts. They are a powerful instrument for peace. However, violations of international humanitarian law continue to occur and lead to unacceptable humanitarian consequences.

The importance of the Geneva Conventions and humanitarian principles must therefore be constantly reaffirmed. Even more importantly, they must be implemented. Let’s not delay in establishing dialogue among us, facing the challenges ahead together and finding common practical solutions.

These three days give us all – members of the Movement and participating States – a unique chance to work together. In this regard, the draft resolution on international humanitarian law presented by the organizers provides a real opportunity to further the national implementation of this body of law.

We encourage States to produce voluntary reports on progress in implementing international humanitarian law. I personally decided that Switzerland will publish its first voluntary report on implementation next year. We also advocate for the holding of voluntary and informal talks among States at the expert level.

Allow me to say a few words now about the intergovernmental process to strengthen compliance with international humanitarian law initiated by Switzerland and the ICRC following the 32nd International



Conference. Discussions focused mainly on the possibility of establishing a formal dialogue among States on international humanitarian law. When it became clear, at the end of last year, that it would not be possible to reach a consensus on this in the current multilateral environment, the process was brought to a close, as indicated in the factual report submitted to this Conference.

In spite of the lack of consensus, the work had an important impact. All the States reaffirmed that humanitarian law remains the appropriate framework for governing the conduct of the parties to an armed conflict.

Ladies and gentlemen, technological advances open up new possibilities for us. If used wisely, they enable us to do more and better in assisting victims of conflicts and disasters.

For example, every year, hundreds of thousands of people go missing. It is hard to imagine the suffering their loved ones endure, their shattered hopes. I recently visited the Missing Persons Committee in Cyprus. Thanks to the work carried out jointly by Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot experts, it has been possible to identify 939 missing persons. Their remains were returned to their loved ones so that they could give them a decent burial. However, the fate of thousands of other women, men and children remains unknown, and this is a problem that affects not only Cyprus, but also the Balkans, Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea and many other places.

Digitalization increases the chances of locating missing persons. An example is Trace the Face – Southern Africa, an ICRC initiative which helps families find their missing loved ones via an internet platform.

However, all new technology has risks attached. Data collected from the people involved is highly sensitive. When taking advantage of the enormous potential offered by new technologies, we must therefore also take steps to minimize the risks they entail. The 33rd International Conference provides us with a chance to establish the necessary standards, especially through the draft resolution on Restoring Family Links, privacy and personal data protection.

Switzerland also wishes to set out its position on new technologies. I have therefore commissioned a group of experts to produce a Foreign Policy Vision 2028 for Switzerland. New technologies have now become an integral part of our foreign policy, including here in international Geneva.

There has also been discussion of innovative approaches, particularly the concept of science diplomacy, which entails leveraging the interaction between science and diplomacy. Scientific language makes it possible to bypass ideologies and defuse politically explosive situations, and science diplomacy can achieve greater leverage than traditional soft power. The GESDA foundation – the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator – has been created for this purpose. I am confident that this new actor in international Geneva will contribute to the debate on international challenges posed by new technologies, including in the humanitarian field. Examples that come to mind are the use of drones for the planning and management of refugee camps and food security.

Ladies and gentlemen, today Geneva's emblematic Jet d'Eau fountain is lit up red, sending out a powerful message: Switzerland and the Canton and City of Geneva are celebrating with us the opening of this 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

In the words of Henry Dunant: "Only the people mad enough to think that they can change the world actually succeed in doing so." With his vision, his actions and his perseverance, Dunant left his mark on his times; he transformed them. Let's show that we too have that touch of madness and be always innovative, courageous and determined in the Movement and beyond.

Thank you for your attention and your presence here in Geneva and in Switzerland!

Mr George Weber, Chair of the Standing Commission

(Original English)

Thank you very much, Dr Cassis. We very much appreciate those inspiring words of support to the international community for international humanitarian law and its ideals, and to this international conference.

Once again, the organizers and participants here are most grateful for the generous support of the Swiss Government for the organization of this Conference. Many thanks once again.

Before continuing with this Opening Ceremony, I would like us to have a moment to play tribute to the memory of so many volunteers and staff of the Red Cross and Red Crescent family, who, since our last Conference in Geneva in December 2015, lost their lives in the line of duty, as a consequence of accidents and violence. No doubt you remember that our 2015 Conference passed two Resolutions, one on Healthcare and Danger, and the

other on the Safety and Security of Humanitarian Volunteers. We cannot stress enough the vital importance of these two commitments.

Between 2015 and 2017, our Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement deplored the loss of nearly 80 volunteers and staff, to whom we paid tribute during our previous Council of Delegates, two years ago. But we do not forget them.

The last two years have been, again, markedly tragic, with more than 20 Red Cross and Red Crescent workers who died in the service of humanity and the ideals of our Movement. On behalf of all of us, I want to express my deep sadness, my sympathy and my solidarity to the families and communities of the Red Cross and Red Crescent struck by these painful losses. And our thoughts are also with those who have been injured, who have gone missing, under such difficult circumstance.

In memory of our colleagues and friends who lost their lives in the service of the Red Cross and Red Crescent over the past two years, I ask that we all rise and observe a moment of silence.

[MOMENT OF SILENCE AND VIDEO TRIBUTE TO RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WHO LOST THEIR LIFE IN THE LINE OF DUTY]

Thank you very much, please be seated.

We are now going to move on to a tradition that we hold very dear in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, is the reading of our Fundamental Principles, and they will be done in a little more creative way today.

[ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE]

4.4.3 READING OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

(Original French)

Humanity	Voluntary service
Impartiality	Unity
Neutrality	Universality
Independence	

[ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE BY SWISS BAND DIE REGIERUNG (THE GOVERNMENT)]

Ms Iuliana Tudor, Master of Ceremony

(Original English)

Thank you very much.

You have had the pleasure of seeing on stage an artistic performance created especially for the International Conference by Antigél, a Geneva-based festival.

At the Joint Opening Ceremony of the IFRC General Assembly and the Council of Delegates that took place a few days ago, Antigél reminded us of the story of the founding father of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Henry Davison, through a poem based on his writings. His powerful messages are still very much with us today.

They inspire us again today with their music and a performance that serves as a reminder of what lies at the core of the work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The script on the seven Fundamental Principles was written by playwright Fabrice Melquiot, and the music was played by the Swiss band Die Regierung (The Government), a stereotype-breaking group of artists. Through their music, we celebrate diversity, inclusion, joy and humanity.

Dalal, what did you think of that?

Ms Dalal Halima, Master of Ceremony

(Original English)

Although I could not actually see the performance, I was deeply touched and moved by the words and sounds that I heard. It reminds me why I joined the Movement, why we are all here today and how important this cause is to all of us.

To understand the reason why we are here and why we are inspired, committed and strong, I invite my co-MC, Iuliana, to tell her story about the Red Cross and Red Crescent. Iuliana.

Ms Iuliana Tudor, Master of Ceremony

(Original English)

Thank you, Dalal, thank you so much.

Romania. The year is 2012. Winter. Days when the weather report took on a new relevance. Days when the whole of Europe was covered by heavy snowfall. Days when the heaters in my house gained their own personality. White everywhere! I had experienced one or two winters, but I didn't think that snow could paralyse entire cities, that it could freeze a community.

It was then, when I saw the helplessness sculpted on people's faces – and I am referring here to older people – that I saw that they understood that they could only survive by helping each other.

In breaking news, the outcomes of the cold season are announced, not in degrees Celsius or Fahrenheit but in the number of deaths! Hundreds of people dead in Europe, a large number of them in Romania. But the images can never fully reflect the reality as I saw it in the field.

On 16 February 2012, I travel with the Romanian Red Cross team to completely isolated villages that nobody has reached in weeks and where the houses are completely covered in snow. A hard day is expected. The first stop is in a village with 7,800 inhabitants. Who should we help first? There is no one on the road. We are fighting an immensity of white. The cold is freezing even our thoughts. The fear of being snowed in there freezes me. I look up and see a wall of snow, a few metres high, right in front of me. It takes my breath away.

We set foot on the snow and I realize that, under my steps, are the roofs of houses and that in order to reach the people isolated inside, we must dig tunnels through the snow. As we advance through the tunnel and approach the people trapped in their own homes, we hear their desperate cries for help. The moment we get to them, the power of humanity is once again revealed to me. A 78-year-old woman, alone, with tears and despair in her eyes, claws her way towards us and thanks Heaven that somebody found her.

We take to the road again. There is darkness all around. We walk the narrow streets with a flashlight. We are confronted with the desperation of people hanging onto the bags. These people have no water to drink. A woman yells at me, tearing at her clothes, telling me that she has not bathed in three weeks, her kids are starving and she is afraid that the animals in the stables are dying of cold and hunger.

Darkness falls. It is getting colder, and it is impossible for us to advance in the snow. Our quest will resume on the second day. I promise myself that I will never forget these moments. I do not want to forget them, and I must not forget them! Because the memory of disasters, calamities and wars is maybe what gives power to humanity. For me, the white nightmare experienced in 2012 was the most powerful lesson in humanity.

And I know now that if I want to change the world, I have to start with myself. And if we all do the same, we could make a better world for us all to live in together.

So, act today, shape tomorrow!

Thank you so much. Dalal, I invite you to share your story with us too.

Ms Dalal Halima, Master of Ceremony

(Original Arabic)

Thanks, Iuliana. I will share my story, but in Arabic.

My story could be summed up in just a few words: out of my obstacles I made my successes. My name is Dalal, and I have been visually impaired since birth. I was born in Lebanon, but I lost my family, and I don't know where they are, or who they are. I was found amid the wreckage of some houses, and I was turned over to the Palestine Red Crescent Society, which had, and continues to have, the lead role in caring for me. I lived in Lebanon under the care of the Palestine Red Crescent Society, which was headed by the late Dr. Fathi Arafat. During that period, I became acquainted with an Australian lady who volunteered with the Palestine Red Crescent Society known as Dr. Jean Calder. She has been like a mother to me ever since then. In 1984, I fled to Egypt in fear of the war in Lebanon, and I lived in Egypt for eleven years. Bear in mind that there was an obstacle in the way of my going to Egypt. You know that if you are undocumented, you don't exist. If you don't have something to prove your existence, then you don't exist. We didn't have a birth certificate or any other document proving that we existed in the world. But given the role [sic], or despite the bitter conflict, in cooperation with the International Red Cross and various other institutions, the Palestine Red Crescent Society worked for a whole year to help us get a paper that would enable us to move from Lebanon to Egypt. So I went to Egypt, and the first challenge was the teaching style. The teaching style for the blind in Lebanon is different from the teaching style in Egypt. And the challenge was ... Of course, schools had been closed in Lebanon for two years, so I'd missed two years. I had finished the first grade, and then I missed two years. Consequently, I had to repeat the second grade. But the challenge was that the style of writing in Egypt was different from the style of writing in Lebanon. My teachers told me that if I couldn't finish during the summer, if I wasn't able to learn the way they write, then they would put me back in the first grade. But I shouldered the responsibility and learnt to write the Egyptian way, and then I went on to enter the second grade. That was the first challenge, and the first obstacle. I finished secondary school in 1995, after the Oslo Accords, and then I returned home. I went back to the Gaza Strip, but then the greatest challenge commenced for me. I was the first blind student to enter the English Department of Azhar University's Gaza Strip Branch. This was at a time when there was still no talk of integration, and people weren't aware of issues relating to disabilities. The idea was that blind students would study either Islamic Law or Arabic Language. Even the officials in the department and the university would keep on telling me throughout the course of those four years, "It's too difficult for you to do English. You should go into Islamic Law or transfer to Arabic." But I defied them. I found it very difficult to take notes during lectures. I also found it very difficult to write during examinations. The university didn't provide me with a scribe, and they wouldn't allow a volunteer to write things down for me. This made things very, very difficult for me. But I kept on pushing forward defiantly. I wanted to finish what I had started. I had to finish. So, thanks be to God, I graduated in 1999 from the English Department at the Faculty of Arts of Azhar University, and I got a job as a translator with the Palestine Red Crescent Society. But did my ambition stop there? No. I wanted to go even further to complete my education. I applied for a scholarship, and in 2003 I got a scholarship to complete my master's degree at the University of Edinburgh in Britain, only this time in a field far removed from the English Language. I studied in the Department of Humanities and Sociology. You should be aware that I was also the first blind student to be admitted to this department at the University of Edinburgh. After finishing my master's degree, I came back home and worked at the University College of Ability Development of the Palestine Red Crescent Society, where I was Head of the Continuing Education Department, and a lecturer. And I continue to work for this Society. My message to all is: Don't look at my disability. Look at my potential. My path hasn't been strewn with rose petals, but I have picked myself up from among the thorns and overcome the obstacles. This demonstrates the power of humanity, and the power of human beings. As I conclude this story of mine, I would like to offer a salute to the spirit of the late Dr. Fathi Arafat, former head of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. I also want to express my tremendous respect, gratitude and appreciation to a nurturing father-figure, Younis Al-Khatib, who always supports me, and who will go on supporting me tomorrow and on into the future. I thank you all for listening, and I hope my story and my message have touched you. I am happy to be here among you today.

Ms Iuliana Tudor, Master of Ceremony

(Original English)

Thank you, Dalal. That is a very powerful story. I am sure that all of us are inspired by it. Thank you so much for being here with me and all of us. I was very honoured to share this with you.

And now, dear guests, we say goodbye to you and thank you for your attention.

4.4.4 ELECTION OF THE CONFERENCE OFFICERS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CONFERENCE SUBSIDIARY BODIES (COMMISSIONS AND DRAFTING COMMITTEE)

Mr George Weber, Chair of the Standing Commission

(Original English)

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Now it is my duty to move us on to the agenda, and agenda item number 3, dealing with the election of the conference officers and establishment of the Conference's subsidiary bodies.

Pursuant to Rule 15, paragraph 3, of the Movement's Rules of Procedure, the first plenary starts with the election of the Chair and the Vice-Chair of this Conference, the Chair of the Drafting Committee, the Secretary General, Assistant Secretaries General and other officers proposed by the Council of Delegates.

The list of officers will be shown on the screen.

On the screen you have the proposed Chair of the Conference, who is Ms Natia Loladze, the President of the Georgia Red Cross Society.

The Chair of the Drafting Committee is proposed. Her Excellency Ms Maria Socorro Flores, the Ambassador of Mexico, will be Chair of the Drafting Committee.

The Secretary General of the Conference will be His Excellency Mr Didier Pfirter, the Commissioner of the 33rd International Conference, who has been seconded to the Movement for this meeting.

The Rapporteur of the Conference will be Mr Bas van Rossum from the Netherlands Red Cross.

The Vice-Chair of the Conference will be Her Excellency Ms Athaliah Molokomme, the Ambassador of Botswana.

And the Political Adviser to the Conference will be Ms Moamena Kamel from the Egyptian Red Crescent Society.

In terms of the Chairs and Rapporteurs for the three Commissions and the Assistant Secretaries General, I will not read their names. You can see them on the slide.

The officers that are called to form the Bureau of the Conference would include the Conference Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary General and the Chairs of the Commissions and the Drafting Committee, who will be joined by the Presidents of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as well as myself as Chair of the Standing Commission. The Conference also endorses the establishment of the conference subsidiary bodies that will be chaired by the above-mentioned officers.

Can we elect these persons by acclamation? **[Applause]**

Thank you very much. I understand that we consider these persons elected as officers of this 33rd Conference and that the Commissions and Drafting Committee are established.

It is now my great pleasure to invite Ms Natia Loladze, President of the Georgia Red Cross Society, to take over the chairmanship of this Conference, and I would also invite the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretaries General to come and take your places here on the podium. I wish Ms Loladze and her team much success in leading the deliberations of the Conference.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference, President, Georgia Red Cross Society

(Original English)

Dear Federal Counsellor, Royal Highnesses, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Red Cross and Red Crescent colleagues and friends. I am honoured to be elected Chair of the 33rd International Conference. I am humbled by the trust you have placed in me to carry out the serious work associated with the chairperson's responsibilities.

It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you today, especially this year as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. In the words of one of our founders, Henry Davison: "The importance of developing strong, effective Red Cross organizations in our respective countries is obvious to all of us".

When I think about the moment that connected my life with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and I dedicated all my efforts and abilities to humanitarian action, I remember the day when, as a child during the war in Georgia, I was impressed and inspired by the work of Red Cross volunteers providing help to people in need. The Red Cross workers brought so much more than food and shelter – they brought hope. I stand before you today with the strong belief that here together we can make people's lives in crises better, just as I saw the volunteers doing in Georgia.

When I recall that day that connected my life with the Movement and inspired me, as a young girl, to make a life-long commitment to the Red Cross, I think about all that is possible. I strongly believe that, together, we will continue to make an incredible and lasting difference to the lives of families and children that experience crisis.

Although the Red Cross and Red Crescent still helps children and their families in war-torn countries, delivers much-needed food and responds to global epidemics and pandemics, we are very fast entering a new era that is bringing new challenges. Climate change is no longer a problem for the future, it is already happening and having major humanitarian consequences right now.

Our 14 million Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers work tirelessly to show people that during times of great need and distress, they are not alone. We find a way to help people in need, to bring clean drinking water to families, to create shelters for communities and to help people rebuild their lives so they can become self-reliant once again. Our volunteers work tirelessly to restore people's hope. Please join me in a round of applause for the volunteers and all the hard work they do every day. **[Applause]**

New challenges often require new ideas. The Movement, government bodies and key stakeholders will have an opportunity at this Conference to work together to identify the most urgent humanitarian needs of today and of the future. I am confident that together, with our vast knowledge and many, many years of experience in some of the most troubled parts of the world, we will have great ideas and the drive to resolve some of the most urgent humanitarian issues. Our power is in our unity.

The Conference is, at its heart, about the Movement's partnership with governments, and we need to do more to strengthen the auxiliary role and capacities of our National Societies and invest in their humanitarian leadership to make them the partner of choice in all humanitarian settings because strong National Societies also make governments stronger.

“Act today, shape tomorrow”, the overarching slogan of the 33rd International Conference, and international humanitarian law are the central pillar of the International Conference.

This year marks another anniversary: the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which provide for the humane treatment of wounded and captured members of the armed forces and medical personnel and the protection of civilians.

Even though international humanitarian law is not systematically respected, it still saves lives because it permits organizations like the Red Cross and Red Crescent to deliver the aid people in war zones require most.

We must improve the way we address mental health and the psychosocial condition of people in need, which is not always visible. While 20% of people affected by humanitarian crises live with some sort of mental health condition, only 2% have access to any support. We have to find ways to close this gap and take mental health out of the shadows.

With increasing numbers of people on the move, we need strong cooperation domestically between State and public authorities, aid agencies, local governments and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and internationally when people are forced to cross borders.

Although we are well versed in providing aid, our primary focus should be on prevention, rather than on response. Whenever and wherever we can, we invest in disaster-risk reduction so that when disasters strike, they cause fewer casualties. Where we cannot prevent displacement, we must ensure the safety, dignity and physical and psychological integrity of every person.

Along with the National Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross also plays a crucial role in Restoring Family Links, including reuniting families. The issue of missing persons and family separation has severe psychological impacts on families, friends and the community at large. Separation is one of the most damaging and long-lasting humanitarian tragedies.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has a unique competency and demonstrated capacity in Restoring Family Links. In the Red Cross and Red Crescent, we pride ourselves on harnessing the power



of humanity. This power manifests itself every day through the strength of our millions of volunteers on the ground, who so selflessly make a difference, helping others, delivering a parcel or blanket and providing care and attention. Among these volunteers throughout the world, working tirelessly in their own communities, there are as many women as men. Harnessing the full power of humanity requires us to recognize these women as much as the men. We must acknowledge the efforts and abilities of the many women who are leaders in their communities and recognize their potential to lead our organization, not only at the local level but also at the highest levels, in all positions. It is time for us to ensure that we harness the full power of humanity, in all its diversity, because being truly inclusive makes us even more relevant, more respectful of dignity and, ultimately, better humanitarians.

When we add the commitment of a global and local humanitarian network of millions of volunteers to the Movement's Fundamental Principles, in which our statutory, regulatory and policy frameworks are grounded, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement becomes unstoppable.

That is why trust in humanitarian action is on the agenda of the 33rd International Conference. Gaining and maintaining the acceptance and trust of all communities, authorities and aid agencies at the international, national and local level is a priority for the Movement. It is also a priority for us to develop partnerships with key stakeholders, the public and groups at every level because it is the most effective way to be effective – it is the best way to help the people with the greatest needs.

Dear friends,

It is in this spirit of aid and true partnership that we ask you to kindly open your arms and your hearts to your friends, to your neighbours and to your family, to encourage volunteers to keep volunteering and to urge new people to volunteer so that we may unify and stay strong while pursuing our global objective – the power of humanity!

Dear friends,

In preparation for this Conference, children from one hundred Swiss schools wrote messages to us all. One of them is simple and powerful: "I wish for the world to be healed".

Think of the hope and trust that this child and children all over the world are placing in every single one of us during this International Conference. Think of your own children.

Let us just put the politics aside and heal the world together.

Thank you very much.

Following my opening remarks, I am delighted to invite the President of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to give his welcome address. Mr Rocca, you have the floor.

4.4.5 KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MR FRANCESCO ROCCA, PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

(Original English)

Your Excellencies, representatives of States Parties to the Geneva Conventions, Red Cross and Red Crescent colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

It is a pleasure and a great honour for me to open this 33rd International Conference, together with ICRC President Peter Maurer and Standing Commission Chair George Weber. I am very glad to see so many delegations present here in Geneva to discuss the important humanitarian issues defining our times.

This meeting represents a unique platform. It is the only space – worldwide – where States sit together with humanitarians to jointly commit to resolutions that should make an impactful difference in the lives, livelihoods and ways of life of people.

In a world where safe and enabling spaces to find common grounds are shrinking, while the situation of millions and millions of vulnerable people is worsening, multilateralism is facing serious challenges or, some would say, failing, when it comes to finding common ground to improve the situation for millions and millions

of vulnerable people. Our discussions and decisions here are of utmost importance in **making the** difference for those in need.

Today, we are facing an unprecedented number of humanitarian crises. The climate crisis, migration, pandemic outbreaks and protracted conflicts are some examples of the challenges that make the humanitarian action carried out by the Red Cross and Red Crescent and civil society at large vital, often life-changing and life-saving.

As humanitarians, we are optimistic by nature, and I think we have to be. Through our almost 14 million volunteers, we are always there on the side of people in need. But we are modest to recognize that our actions do not match the magnitude and severity of the needs, and for every person we support, we see the millions more that need our help.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent is struggling to raise the funds needed, and we are struggling with protracted crises lasting for years, often decades, in very fragile settings, which puts great pressure on the humanitarian system.

We also are struggling with the worrying trend towards the criminalization of humanitarian aid and the more than occasional use of our aid as a political tool. We do our best, and we try to be innovative and identify ways to support our operations within the limitations we face.

Some days ago, the IFRC General Assembly adopted Strategy 2030 which will guide our Red Cross and Red Crescent Network into the next decade. It is a strategy of hope and a strategy of transformation and change. With this approach, we acknowledge that the world is changing and that we need to adapt to avoid unnecessary suffering. Climate change is listed as one of our top humanitarian challenges, along with crises and disasters, health, migration and identity, and values, power and inclusion. I am very proud that we have jointly agreed on the challenges we must tackle to remain relevant.

A hundred and sixty years ago, our founder, Henry Dunant, had a vision that is still relevant: strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies that contribute to strong and well-prepared local communities.

This was the start of the localization agenda “trend”, 160 years ago now. And thanks to our volunteers and their dedication over a century and a half, we continue have access to local communities, we continue to have their trust and we have their respect.

Indeed, they are giving back to us the same respect, trust, care and support we have for them. Standing here today, I want to make a strong call for you to support – in any way possible – the work of our volunteers. I ask you to follow the localization agenda and to support local actors, such as our National Societies. I ask you to work with us to guarantee our volunteers and staff are safe, and unhindered access in every emergency situation is given, and I beg you, to avoid any criminalization of humanitarian aid.

Allow me also, here at this forum, to welcome two new National Societies – those of the Marshall Islands and Bhutan – to the Red Cross and Red Crescent family. With every new National Society comes a promise and many volunteers who do their best to make a difference for humanity.

We are always saying that the Red Cross and Red Crescent is the “largest humanitarian network in the world”, and this is true – 192 National Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) make up the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. I would like to make a small change here: we are the largest humanitarian network for the world. And this is not a minor detail; we need to switch the focus away from ourselves and turn towards the people we serve.

Trust is the key word of the 33rd International Conference. To build trust, we need to be present in the communities we serve. Our greatest strength is our volunteers who come from the communities they serve. Our volunteers speak the same language, understand the unique cultural norms and are present before, during and after every crisis, shock and hazard. In fact, they often help prevent these shocks and hazards from becoming a disaster.

We humanitarians do our best to alleviate human suffering, but we cannot do this in isolation. We need governments to work with us to solve the problems and barriers that prevent us from carrying out our work. We need governments that are convinced that the challenges we face, such as the consequences of climate change, poverty, conflict and migration, are common challenges and must be addressed as a matter of priority by all of us.

Most of the challenges we face can only be solved by political will, and we need you governments to be bold and brave, for example, by recognizing that the climate crisis is real and that it is affecting millions and millions of people all over the world. And if you have still some doubts, please use these days, take some moments, here we have our colleagues coming from the Pacific Islands. Take a moment to talk with them, ask them about their fears, what they are living in their communities, listen to their stories. For them [climate change] it is a reality, it is not fake news.

We need you onboard on this. This meeting is a unique occasion that we need to use to have a dialogue. We are here, I want to say in a sincere manner, we are here not to please you, we are here to be honest with you. And this is why I encourage this dialogue with our colleagues.

How can we speak about trust and shifting vulnerabilities when we have countries here that are simply risking disappearing into the ocean? We need political measures in place to protect our planet. There is no time to waste; and let me here quote the former United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon – “We have no Plan B as there is no Planet B”.

We are neutral. We do not take sides, but we do take a stand. Faced with these challenges we take a stand for the protection and respect the dignity of each human being.

When people die in the Mediterranean Sea or on any other migration route, we must be worried, and for humanity, should be concerned about it. Migration must not be a divisive topic. While we are gathered here, people are dying at sea or in the desert, or a minor is dying in a jail alone. I would not be surprised if, at the end of this opening session, we received news of another shipwreck, pushing the already staggering death toll even higher. We cannot accept these tragedies.

As I have repeatedly said, one of the worst legacies of our times will be the criminalization of humanitarian aid, and together with the use of migrants as a political tool, and this is unacceptable. Our message is crystal clear: saving lives is never a crime, it is not a political act, and for us, no human being is illegal.

The International Conference is a platform for enhancing the dialogue on our common challenges. Our coming together is the expression of the role of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as ‘auxiliaries’ to governments in the humanitarian field. Both States and the Red Cross and Red Crescent benefit greatly from this ‘auxiliary role’ – and the people who need our support even more so.

Let me finish by speaking about our volunteers. As I mentioned earlier, the localization agenda is a humanitarian trend that we created. It builds on the idea of our founder, Henry Dunant, and we have embodied it ever since.

Since the World Humanitarian Summit, there has been a call for better accountability towards affected people to improve the quality and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. Recent research demonstrates that we should leverage our competitive advantage to ensure that programmes and operations are always informed by local perspective and knowledge. Community engagement and accountability must be at the centre of everything we do.

We, as the Red Cross and Red Crescent, can only work if we have the trust of local communities and when National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have a trustful relationship with their governments.

This conference is more important than ever! It gives us a unique opportunity for a much-needed frank, honest and respectful dialogue within the safe space of our Fundamental Principles. This time, we will discuss fewer resolutions and instead enhance our dialogue. Let us make good use of this opportunity for productive discussions, keeping in mind our common goal, which is “to save lives, alleviate suffering and reach more vulnerable people”.

I have one prayer to all the participants, in less than 48 hours we will vote for the next Standing Commission. We spent the recent days in the IFRC General Assembly and indeed the Council of Delegates, talking about gender parity, and we know that there are three women that are running for this position. So, help us in having not less than two women in the next Standing Commission.

We already started, but let us put another important milestone during this conference. I wish us all a fruitful dialogue and hope that we all take our decisions home with the firm intention of implementing them. Let us work for the good, let us start now with the dialogue to shape the future that we want.

Thank you very much.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference, President, Georgia Red Cross Society

(Original English)

Thank you, President Rocca, for this inspiring speech.

I now have the pleasure to invite the President of the International Committee of Red Cross, as well as Chair of the Council of Delegates, to address the Conference and to present the main outcomes from our Council which took place yesterday.

4.4.6 KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MR PETER MAURER, PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (INCLUDING THE OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL OF DELEGATES OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT)

(Original English)

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, colleagues and friends,

Welcome to the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, a unique platform for our [Movement](#) and the High Contracting Parties to the [Geneva Conventions](#) to come together and shape the future of humanitarian action.

I'm not alone in offering you this warm welcome – delegates have received messages from the school children of Geneva, who thank the Red Cross and Red Crescent for their work around the globe, others talk about their dreams for a world without poverty, disease, hunger, war and disaster. They call on us to 'heal the world'.

When you are eight years old, the opportunities to help the world seem endless. But as the years pass, ambitions are curtailed. During this Conference, I encourage you to reflect on these words of encouragement and aspiration, not out of naivety, but to focus on people in crisis who are at the heart of our discussions – to imagine what is possible, to go beyond politics and to focus on the practical steps we can take.

At Sunday's Council of Delegates, the Movement advanced on some priority issues that substantively influence the Movement's focus for the coming years:

We committed to bolster trust and integrity and to strengthen our accountability to affected communities. Specifically, the Movement adopted a clear Statement on Integrity; Movement-wide commitments on Community Engagement and Accountability; and a resolution to build transparency and promote gender balance in the Standing Commission.

We took some important decisions on addressing particular vulnerabilities, in the areas of mental health and psychosocial support, family links, migration and internal displacement.

And we also examined better ways to collaborate as a Movement, including a renewed commitment to a revitalized process aimed at Strengthening Movement Cooperation and Coordination and a lively discussion on how to adapt structures and processes to better reflect the roles each one of us can and should play in a Movement fit for the future.

I am also pleased to inform you that the Council of Delegates found consensus charting a course forward for the Movement's accompaniment and monitoring of the implementation of the MoU between Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society. We will invite the Conference to endorse this path forward on Thursday.

Let me be very frank with representatives of States: what was important to note in yesterday's Council of Delegates was not the progress on this or that issue – rather it was the atmosphere of concern, where genuine frontline experience from all parts of the Movement came to surface:

- The inhumane effects of some of the migration policies we deal with;
- The toxic atmospheres in societies and the deep impact of crisis and conflicts on the mental health of populations and helpers;

- The infringements on neutral and impartial humanitarian spaces;
- The flouting of IHL by States and other actors in contemporary battlefields;
- The weaponization of humanitarian data in the context of combat operations, counter terrorism and public order policies of governments.

I list these not as accusations, but as areas of genuine concerns, which have to be brought to the table in an open discussion with the aim to renew the special relationship between States and the Movement.

This international conference is unique: its origins are built on the premise that in times of disaster, violence and conflict, in contexts of underdevelopment and other global challenges, when despair and devastation are greatest, people's lives could be saved and suffering alleviated precisely through the special relationship between States and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The special relationship is built out of necessity – in times of crisis, neither States nor civil societies are sufficiently equipped to deal with these issues on their own, but rather need each other.

Therefore, from the very inception of the Movement, we had to deliver on a vision: built on durable relationships of trust, on principled humanitarian action, and on a humanitarian space protected from political intervention.

This special relationship has been enormously effective – at the moment of each of the world's major crises, the Movement has been on the ground. Working with States, we have sought to mitigate against the impact of war and violence, we have brought a humanitarian voice to political debates, and we have mobilized civil society through a huge network of engaged volunteers.

This year, the centenary of the Federation and the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions are symbols of the durability of our unique contract. Congratulations to the Federation and thanks to all States for their continued engagement and support.

While recognising both the enormous impact and potential of this special relationship, this cooperation has not always been appreciated at its right value, fostered, nor integrated in political decision-making.

Today, I make a call for renewed efforts from all of us, to re-energize our relationship in the face of the complex humanitarian crises of today.

I am concerned about the fading political support – and funding – for neutral, independent and impartial humanitarian work. Humanitarian work is increasingly used for political purposes, access is denied to certain groups in need and international legal obligations are shirked.

Likewise, I self-critically acknowledge that the privileged situation of the Movement in certain contexts and countries, has not always translated into services at scale and speed expected by States and societies when emergencies strike.

When our special relationship is weakened, the effect is always the same – less aid and protection for people in need and the creation of dangerous precedents that reduce neutral, impartial and independent action.

The enormous and complex crises of the world demand our best response. The women, men and children who face a daily struggle to survive deserve our best response.

From protracted and urbanized conflicts, climate shocks, pandemics, displacement and migration, threats to humanitarian space, unrestrained weapons flow, violence, crime, inequality, corruption and failing governance... the list seems unlimited.

Already huge numbers of people are affected. Conflict, violence and disaster will be a key trend in many societies and in international relations in the years to come. And we expect these crises will grow only more complex, with climate change, more numerous armed groups, overlapping forms of violence.

In the absence of political solutions, wars are protracted, some lasting decades. More people are affected, for longer periods, sometimes even for generations.

Urban battles feature prominently, causing large-scale destruction. Explosive weapons with wide areas effects are used in densely populated areas causing unacceptable harm to civilians and their cities.

As wars destroy whole systems critical for civilian survival, as people are displaced for 1, 2, 10 or 20 years, new needs are created. In these 'long-term' emergencies, beyond the basics of food and shelter, people also need electricity, water, health-systems. What we think of as 'emergency needs' is shifting. And so must our response.

Vitaly, we must engage with communities affected to understand - on their terms - what they need, what will best set them on a path not of dependence, but of self-reliance.

Too often aid, and humanitarian assistance first, has become the inhibitor rather than the promoter of autonomy; we need to change course and build pathways to independent, responsible and self-determined lives.

We must respond to the invisible needs – the mental health and psychosocial needs of people who are survivors of deep trauma. Entire communities and individuals are suffering in silence, overwhelmed by stigma and lack of appropriate support.

This hidden pain demands our attention as much as physical needs, and I was encouraged by the overwhelming support of the Council of Delegations to advance on this issue. I was equally encouraged to see the support for the suffering of families of missing people who appeal to the Movement for help.

We must also be alive to both the benefits and risks of digital transformation. Rapidly developing technologies are forging new frontlines in cyberspace, as well as creating new ways to fight, for example autonomous weapon systems and other remote means of warfare. It is critical that humanity is preserved in these new frontiers, and that humans remain in control of decisions to use force.

Digital tools are also transforming even the oldest humanitarian services. The Restoring Family Links programme is rooted in the experience of two world wars and conflicts around the world and has been reuniting families for 150 years. The combined power of the Movement's grassroots and global networks, with the strong support of States, makes this possible.

Today we are focusing on increasing digital accessibility and leveraging new technologies to improve the search, another ambition clearly stated in the Movement Strategy on Restoring Family Links adopted at the Council of Delegates.

It is critical that people who are often in very vulnerable situations need to be able to trust how their personal data are being used.

Indeed, in all that we do, great trust is placed in our hands.

Trust is our license to operate: it means we can cross the frontlines and reach affected communities, it means we can act as a neutral intermediary to broker aid deliveries, it means faith that donor funds will be wisely used, and it means that we must ensure the integrity of our institutions.

It also means that we remain accountable to the communities we work in. This is not lip service, but requires a true engagement with people affected by crisis, listening to their needs, expecting to be challenged.

Our workforce must also reflect the diversity of the populations we serve. Diversity and inclusion are imperatives of our world today. They are not optional 'nice to haves'. In particular it is vital that inclusive practices extend to leadership positions, and that commitments on women's leadership are not just made, but delivered – and quickly.

Of enormous concern to many in the Movement is the instrumentalization and politicization of humanitarian work. We are seeing more and more States tightening the noose around the space for neutral, impartial and independent action.

Humanitarians are denied access to civilians and detainees; the safety of humanitarian workers is not guaranteed; and the delivery of aid is restricted under the pretext of artificial bureaucratic obstacles, sanctions and other restrictive measures.

We see that although States hold legitimate security concerns, counter terrorism measures can also restrict humanitarian action. While steps have been taken in international fora towards practical solutions, it remains important to renew the common understanding between States and the Movement on how to operate in such difficult contexts.

Importantly, in this 70th anniversary year of the 1949 Geneva Conventions we are called on to champion the protective power of international humanitarian law.

The Geneva Conventions represent one of the greatest achievements of inter-State cooperation: they are among the very few international treaties that have been universally ratified, not least because they reflect universal values of ethical behaviour and human dignity.



Throughout this milestone year we have seen States make strong affirmations and actions to respect and ensure respect of IHL.

We've seen parties to conflict taken measures in many instances to ensure IHL is respected in their military operations – such as cancelling or suspending attacks because the expected incidental civilian harm is deemed to be excessive. And we've seen States leveraging their support to conflict parties to encourage respect of IHL.

Despite the numerous positive efforts, outrageous violations still continue. It is clear that we must do more to ensure respect for these laws. When the integrity of the Law is violated, we are all violated.

The ICRC observes that in many of today's military operations –either because of outright and deliberate violations, or because of expedient interpretation of the law – the protection of civilians is under threat. In conflicts where there is a disregard for the rules, the consequences are devastating not only for individuals and families, but also communities and the stability of entire regions.

It is a dangerous road to take: if States interpret the fundamental rules of IHL with expedient elasticity or question norms that have long been accepted, they risk setting alarming legal precedents and enabling future actors to inflict harm beyond what is militarily necessary or tolerable to humanity.

There is no doubt that the modern battlefield is complex. The report on the Challenges of contemporary armed conflicts produced for this conference raises critical issues around the protection of civilians, urban warfare, new technologies, the rise of non-state armed groups, the relationship between climate change, conflict and the natural environment. We hear the concern of States and their militaries that practices of adversaries force more diligent interpretations of the law. What we see and fear though is how this undermines – and we are sawing the very branch of the tree on which we are all sitting.

The Challenges Report also outlines the case for ensuring the protections of the law extended to often overlooked groups of people – people with disabilities, internally displaced people.

And that protections are based on people's diverse needs and capacities. Younger people experience war differently from older people; women from men; people with disabilities and people without disabilities.

Experience tells us that when it comes to violations of IHL, it is not only the knowledge of the law that counts, but the translation of that knowledge into behaviour.

As the trend towards allied and partnered warfare only increases, it has become urgent for States to look at how they can influence their partners to ensure civilians are better protected.

In the face of these new challenges, the ICRC is working with States on the application of IHL in contemporary battlefields and we appreciate the ongoing constructive and open dialogue with many States on these important issues.

During this conference – and having closed the process on strengthening IHL last March – the ICRC's focus is on practical implementation of IHL in the field, and in domestic systems. We also call on states and National Societies to agree on the resolution on bringing IHL home, and to adopt all measures to fully implement IHL.

I will conclude by offering you words of encouragement for this conference.

If we are to 'heal the world' as is asked of us by the youngest generation, it will be done through our combined efforts – through a re-energised relationship of States working with the components of the Movement.

This is our opportunity to take pragmatic steps forward, this is our opportunity for a greater impact.

As we search for solutions, we must always keep the people who seek our aid and protection at the heart of our discussions and of all our actions.

4.4.7 ORGANISATION OF WORK: DRAFTING COMMITTEE, COMMISSIONS, PLENARIES, PLEDGES AND PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING THE MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMISSION

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much, President Maurer.

Ladies and gentlemen, before I take you through the conference programme, let me use this opportunity, as Chair of the 33rd International Conference, to ask you to all join me in welcoming the Marshall Islands Red Cross Society and the Bhutan Red Cross Society, recognized within the Movement. We wish them the very best in our family! **[Applause]**

I will now take you through the conference programme and zoom in on its structure over the coming three days. You will hopefully have noticed that the process building up to the Conference, determining its design and substance, has been consultative and inclusive. Our co-organisers, under the direction of the Standing Commission, have made significant efforts to ensure consultation at every stage with both States and the National Societies. The result is a programme constructed around three main themes – international humanitarian law and protecting people in armed conflict, shifting vulnerabilities and trust in humanitarian action – which reflect long-term trends that impact both on humanitarian needs and on our ability to respond to these needs today and in the future. We look forward to these coming days, during which we will think, explore and share learnings and practices together to better understand these trends and their impacts and work out how best to respond to them, building on our strengths and complementarities.

We, as the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, are committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities can participate in all Red Cross and Red Crescent activities, including in our highest decision-making bodies. This year's International Conference is inclusive and accessible to persons with different forms of disability. You will notice adaptations at the venues, such as ramps for people with mobility limitations, and adaptations in communications, such as the audio descriptions of images for blind people participating in the Humanitarian Trail.

Every day you will find QR codes posted at the entrance to this room. These will take you to a website providing captioning for all plenaries in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. This is a method which provides accessible communication to deaf and hard of hearing persons. And you can see we have sign language interpretation here on the stage. With these adaptations, we aim to improve accessibility and increase awareness about inclusion of persons with disabilities.

I am also going to say a few words now about the pledges. They are a very important instrument as they enable National Societies, States Party to the Geneva Conventions and observers to commit to specific actions connected with the Conference's main themes. I would therefore encourage all the delegations to propose one or more pledges or to join an open pledge. You can submit your pledges via the conference platform on the conference website or in writing at the pledging stand on the ground floor.

I would now be grateful if the Secretary General could take us through some of the procedural matters. Thank you, Secretary General.

H.E. Mr Didier Pfirter, Secretary General of the Conference

(Original Arabic)

Ladies and gentlemen, peace be upon you, and thank you, Madame Chair. As a speech was given the first time around, I just want to thank you all for honoring me with the position of Secretary General of this conference. In my capacity as a diplomat with broad experience in the area of multilateral cooperation within the United Nations organization, it is a pleasure and an honor to work for the second time in my area of specialization on behalf of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

(Original Spanish)

While the United Nations system has set itself the important task of resolving the problems of humanity and eradicating the causes, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement takes a much more

modest approach, concerning itself only with the consequences of the failings of humanity and the victims. Although it is sometimes very difficult to remain within these limits, the Movement's achievements speak for themselves, and I think that it is precisely because of this modesty that it has been able to do incredible things and make an enormous contribution to building a world that is much better than it would be without this wonderful Movement.

(Original French)

Returning now to my duties as Secretary General, could I please have your attention while I say a few words about the basic structure of this Conference. The Chair has already told us about the three thematic sections which will be discussed by the Commissions in plenary sessions and spotlight sessions over the next three days. I should mention here that, in these Commissions, there will be no general statement for the official record of the Conference. The organizers also discourage prepared statements in the spotlight sessions, with a view to fostering lively, free-flowing discussions. For the most part, there will be parallel sessions going on at the same time as the thematic Commissions, including a general debate in a format called Voices from the Conference. Under the leadership of the Chair or Vice-Chair, formal official statements will be delivered and captured verbatim in the official record of the Conference. At this point, I would like to remind you that, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles and the Statutes of the Movement, delegations must not make statements or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature. Finally, the Drafting Committee is the third body that will be sitting in parallel sessions for most of the next three days, with the aim of drafting the texts of the resolutions to be submitted to the Conference so that they can be adopted by consensus, as is the tradition of the Movement.

(Original English)

Unlike at this opening meeting, delegations shall have a maximum of two official seats at all plenary meetings from 10 December to 12 December.

Please allow me to also ask you to refrain from distributing anything, be it documents, pamphlets, cookies or other gifts, in the conference rooms. If you would like to distribute any communications to fellow delegates, please use the pigeonholes and hand over the respective documents at the information desk at the entrance to the Conference Centre.

Finally, I would like to mention a few things regarding the election of the new Standing Commission of the Movement. This election will take place on Wednesday evening, 11 December, at 6 pm. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, which stipulate a statutory deadline of 48 hours before the election, the list of candidates is now formally closed and can be consulted on the conference website. A total of ten candidates – three women and seven men – will participate in this election. You can meet the candidates tomorrow evening at an informal event between 6.30 pm and 7.30 pm in Rooms 1 and 2 of the Conference Centre. I will return tomorrow morning to the more technical details of this election but would like to mention a few fundamental aspects now.

Firstly, each delegation can vote for up to five candidates.

Secondly, the Council of Delegates of the Movement is unanimously urging delegations to bear in mind the gender balance in the Commission, in addition to the statutory principle of fair geographical distribution, by voting for at least two women and two men.

And finally, the heads of delegation or their representatives, duly authorized through a proxy form, are requested to collect both their envelope and voting card at the registration desk in order to be able to take part in the Standing Commission election and any other votes held during this Conference.

Thank you very much.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you, Secretary General.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We have now concluded the procedural part of this session. If you still have any questions, please do not forget that you can consult the RCRC19 app which can be downloaded for free on your telephones. It includes the detailed programme, the background documents, a map of the Conference Centre and a number of other

features. Alternatively, please consult the rcrcconference.org website or feel free to approach our Secretary General or either of his two Assistants, who will be happy to answer all of your questions.

The objectives of this Conference are high. We are gathered here today to address not only the challenges and opportunities we are facing, but also, and more importantly, the commitment necessary to provide principled humanitarian action. We, the participants at this 33rd International Conference, have been called upon to represent many of the communities not attending the Conference and therefore to lay the foundations for the next four years and formulate the pledges that will guide our work. I look forward to starting a very stimulating and constructive exchange of ideas tomorrow. I trust that all of you will bring about further inspiration and provide insights into how to foster the necessary change. I certainly will.

I invite you all to join the cocktail reception hosted by the Swiss authorities on the ground floor and first floor of this building. I declare this meeting adjourned. Thank you very much and enjoy your evening.



4.5 OPENING PLENARY

“ACT TODAY, SHAPE TOMORROW”

Tuesday, 10 December 2019

(9 am)

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the second plenary of the Conference. I am delighted to introduce the themes of our 33rd International Conference.

We are coming together under the overarching banner “Act today, shape tomorrow”. This is because we want to unpack together the main long-term trends that impact humanitarian needs and our collective ability to respond to them. The Movement and governments are already working and responding to these rapid and broad-ranging changes to our reality. Yet we understand that the decisions and actions we take today will have a major impact on our ability to remain relevant and continue to address needs in the future.

This 33rd International Conference is the opportunity to reflect on, think about and explore together how to best collaborate across humanitarian organizations, governments and relevant stakeholders to make sure we continue to meet people’s humanitarian needs. We are currently in the second plenary of the Conference. There will be two more plenaries of this nature, one on Wednesday evening for the election of the Standing Commission and then a closing plenary on Thursday afternoon, where we shall, among other things, adopt the resolutions of the Conference.

During the rest of the Conference, we shall, for the most part, have three different groups sitting in parallel sessions.

Firstly, the more formal Voices from the Conference, where delegations deliver official statements on the record, will start this afternoon at 2.30 pm and last until 10 am on Thursday, 12th December. The Voices from the Conference will be held in Rooms 5 and 6 on the third floor of the Conference Centre. Delegations wishing to speak must register. They can do this online, as per the instructions provided on the website, if they have not yet done so. Please kindly hand a written version of your statement to a volunteer in the Voices from the Conference room in order to facilitate the work of the interpreters.

As you know, this is an official plenary of the Conference, and the statements delivered during this session will be captured verbatim in the official record of the Conference. I take this opportunity to remind everyone that all statements at this Conference must be in strict compliance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement and, according to Article 11, paragraph 4, of the Statutes of the Movement, “No delegate or delegation shall engage in political, racial, religious or ideological controversy” in the interests of a harmonious, non-politicized Conference.

Secondly, the Drafting Committee will strive to finalize the texts of the draft resolutions for adoption at the closing plenary meeting on Thursday afternoon. The Drafting Committee will meet from 2.30 pm today until 12 pm on 12th December in Rooms 3 and 4, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Flores.

We have innovated quite a bit for each Commission. Whilst the negotiation of the resolutions is most important, our ambition is for decisions by the Commissions to also contribute to the overall outcome of the Conference in a significant way.

We start with the “Setting the stage” plenary, followed by the spotlight session, which zooms in on specific topics associated with the Commission’s theme, and close with the plenary bringing together the issues covered in the spotlight sessions. The spotlight sessions are interactive. Details are available on the conference website and on the mobile app RCRC19. After each session, you will have an opportunity to provide feedback on your impressions through the survey section of the RCRC19 app.

On day 1, right after this plenary, we will focus on the theme of International humanitarian law (IHL): Protecting people in armed conflict.

The capacity of IHL to protect the victims of today's complex armed conflicts has been questioned by some, and significant challenges lie ahead. Created for the worst of times, IHL preserves the core of our common humanity, and respecting IHL prevents human suffering that would otherwise be felt not only for years but possibly decades after conflicts have ended.

On day 2, tomorrow, we will focus on the theme of Shifting vulnerabilities.

The changes of the 21st century are complex and inter-related. Fast-moving shifts in technology, climate, population movements, demography and urbanization are shaping the world we live in. This Commission aims to highlight the interconnectedness and cross-cutting nature of new and emerging vulnerabilities, exploring how these global shifts will impact the lives of affected people and discussing how we – as a global community – can step up our efforts and work better together to prevent, prepare for and respond to their needs.

On day 3, which is Thursday, we will focus on the theme of Trust in humanitarian action.

Trust is the foundation of humanitarian action. Access, support and respect for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's mission depends on the trust of the people and communities we serve and that of relevant authorities and the general public. This Commission will explore how the components of the Movement can work together with States to maintain and strengthen trust in principled humanitarian action. It will provide a platform for an open and honest discussion about the respective responsibilities of Movement actors and how to achieve a balance between mitigating the risks that are inherent in humanitarian action and the need to share residual risks.

In the Voices from the Conference, the Drafting Committee and the plenary sessions of the thematic Commissions, delegations shall take their name plates as they go in and are requested to vacate any additional seats. In the spotlight sessions, there will be no name plates and no assigned seats. In this regard, I should also mention that seating in some spotlight sessions may be quite limited as there are not enough large meeting rooms.

Lastly, I would like to invite you to the Humanitarian Village. It is a lovely interactive, multimedia exhibition space inside the Conference Centre, which will bring a hands-on, experimental and participatory element to the Conference. You will be able to explore, test new ideas, share knowledge and experience and reach a deeper understanding of humanitarian issues and potential solutions.

There is an exhibition on the safety and security of volunteers, which is a sober reminder of the dangers Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers on the frontline face. What is particularly emotional is the exhibition of T-shirts which represent Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers that died doing their duty. Please visit that exhibition and consider signing the pledge ensuring the safety and well-being of Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers because we cannot fail them. Their selfless dedication is the power of humanity.

Ambassador Pfirter, you now have the floor.

H.E. Mr Didier Pfirter, Secretary General of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I have the pleasure to announce a further resolution "Act today, shape tomorrow", which has already been approved by the Standing Commission at its meeting on 8 December. It largely deals with the follow-up to the decisions of the 32nd International Conference and the Council of Delegates held last Sunday. It has been published on the website and sent to the Drafting Committee.

Let me now give you some more information on the only vote that will definitely take place, namely the election of the Standing Commission.

This election of five members of the Standing Commission, the five elected members, will take place on Wednesday, 11 December at 6 pm. This evening at 6.30 pm, the candidates will be introducing themselves at an informal event in Room 2.

In accordance with Article 10, paragraph 4, of the Statutes of the Movement, the members of the International Conference are invited to take into account the personal qualities of the candidates and the principle of fair geographical distribution when electing the members of the Standing Commission. Furthermore, the Council of Delegates, in the resolution it adopted two days ago, urges all members of the International Conference "to take into account in the elections of the Standing Commission, including at the 33rd International Conference, the principle of equitable gender balance, notably by choosing at least two women and two men among the candidates".

Every delegation will be able to select up to five candidates. In the first ballot, the five candidates who obtain an absolute majority and the largest number of votes will be declared elected. If a second ballot is necessary in order to fill the remaining seats, a relative majority will be sufficient to be elected.

The vote will take place electronically. To vote, you will need a voting card and your username and password, which you will find in a sealed envelope. The heads of delegation will need to collect these two items at the registration desk. Please note that no voting card or sealed envelope will be distributed in the plenary room during the vote, and it is therefore very important that delegates collect their voting credentials in good time before the voting commences on 11 December.

If the head of delegation cannot pick up his or her election credentials or will not be present for the vote, he or she may designate another person from the delegation by completing a proxy form. Proxy forms are available in your pigeonholes, in the election guide, on the conference website and at the registration desk and must be completed by the head of delegation and returned to the registration desk.

This afternoon, you will find in your pigeonholes an election guide with full instructions on the voting procedures. This guide also contains the nomination form and curriculum vitae of each candidate.

On the day of the election itself, 11 December, which is tomorrow, I would ask you to arrive on time for the plenary in Rooms 1 and 2, at 6 pm. We will first carry out an electronic roll call to determine the absolute majority necessary for the first ballot, before the voting begins.

Thank you very much.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much.

I now have the immense pleasure to invite Mr Elhadj As Sy, Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and Mr Yves Daccord, Director-General of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), to the stage.

It is certainly no secret that these two gentlemen have been leading the international components of the Movement over these past years in a highly effective way, and both of you are now preparing to hand over to a new generation. We look forward to hearing your expectations for the Movement's humanitarian work, based on your longstanding leadership experience.

After your insights, I will have a conversation with some of the youth representatives.

Mr Elhadj As Sy, Secretary General, IFRC

(Original French)

“Oh, time stop your flight for this moment is so beautiful,” cried the philosopher. Time, flowing on its relentless course, continues to sweep this moment away and draws us into the stream of constant change. This is why we say that the world changes. There is nothing new in that; it is perhaps the pace of change we are seeing today that is unprecedented. In the face of this, should we remain passive victims of change or should we become agents of change? And if it is the latter, what should we do and how?

Mr Yves Daccord, Director-General, ICRC

(Original French)

As and I have a request to make of you. We ask you, wherever you come from, whatever your expectations are, whoever you represent here today, to be curious. We want you to be curious and to perhaps prime your mind to think about what the people and communities we seek to help are saying to us, about what they expect of us and how their needs are changing. Over these three days, we are going to reflect on what we might call traditional vulnerabilities, those relating to health and other physical needs, which we are already very familiar with. We are also going to reflect on vulnerability issues relating to mental health – our psychologies, their psychologies – and on vulnerabilities that might arise in connection with the digital revolution. As, this is a question we need to ask ourselves. It is clear that the means we use to communicate and connect with each other today generate capability but they also generate misunderstandings. We will need to talk to each other

about trust, but unless we are curious we will get nowhere and achieve nothing. This is perhaps the most important thing for us today: being curious together and asking the right questions together.

Mr Elhadj As Sy, Secretary General, IFRC

(Original French)

We are, in fact, challenged every day. The question is whether we understand these challenges, whether we understand what we are being asked? Are we aware of the realities we face today? As you say, many of these challenges tend to be framed in the past. Today, with everything that is happening in the world, both the challenges and the vulnerabilities become globalized. The geographic boundaries within which our activities have so far been configured might no longer respond to today's realities, not to mention tomorrow's. If, then, we are going to shape our own destiny, the question we must ask ourselves is what we must do today to have the future we want tomorrow? Our own future.

Mr Yves Daccord, Director-General, ICRC

(Original French)

Each of us here today, whether representing governments, National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies, the International Federation or the ICRC, must not only pose the question of vulnerabilities around the world but also those at home. Today, there is no such thing as a society without vulnerabilities. We look at urban centres, the suburbs; we must ask ourselves where vulnerability arises, what the challenge is and what we want, if anything, when we see today the challenges associated with climate, hunger, political issues and the politicization of humanitarian aid and the challenges we face in creating the common grammar we need. An example that comes to mind is international humanitarian law. What we want is for you, or rather us, to do what needs to be done here together, at this Conference, harnessing this extraordinary capacity. We must take advantage of the fact that we are all here together, representing different interests but with a common goal, which is to find solutions for today and for the future.

Mr Elhadj As Sy, Secretary General, IFRC

(Original French)

The sheer scale and complexity of the problems we face today induces humility in us, and this humility moves us, making us realize that none of us could solve these issues on our own. "Together" is therefore the operative word. Together, the rich and the poor all together...

Mr Yves Daccord, Director-General, ICRC

(Original French)

Men and women, all together.

Mr Elhadj As Sy, Secretary General, IFRC

(Original French)

National Societies, wherever they are from, all together.

Mr Yves Daccord, Director-General, ICRC

(Original French)

The healthy and the sick or people with problems, all together.

Mr Elhadj As Sy, Secretary General, IFRC

(Original French)

And maybe most importantly here this morning, this generation, our generation, together with the next, which will be here for the next 30 or 60 years.



Mr Yves Daccord, Director-General, ICRC

(Original French)

Thank you and good luck to us all. Let's be courageous! Thank you!

Mr Elhadj As Sy, Secretary General, IFRC

(Original French)

Thank you!

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much, As and Yves. It is always a pleasure to hear your thoughts and insights.

Before we continue, I would like to inform you that we have a record number of National Societies, 187, and 162 States and 73 observers present at our Conference today.

Now, our next speakers are three youth representatives, and they are here today to share their experiences and perspectives with us.

We have youth representatives Silvia Gelvez from the Colombian Red Cross, June Munyongani from the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society and Veronica Demaria from the Red Cross of Monaco.

So, I will start with you, June. How did the Red Cross enter your life and what are your thoughts on it. What is your experience? How does the Red Cross change young people?

Mr June Munyongani, Youth Representative, Zimbabwe Red Cross Society

(Original English)

Thank you so much, Madam Chair.

I would say I am a testimony of the Youth Engagement Strategy, which talks of youth as volunteers, youth as leaders and youth as members of vulnerable communities.

So, how did the Red Cross enter my life? It was in my childhood. I am an orphan, and the Red Cross in Zimbabwe was running an Orphans and Vulnerable Children Programme, which supported me in my education and through psychosocial support activities. And with time, when I was in high school, I said to myself, "I need to reciprocate what the Red Cross has done for me" and I started to be an active volunteer with my National Society. One of the moments which I recall very well was during the 2008 cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe, when I was one of the volunteers responding through awareness raising on cholera issues.

Then, through capacity building and attending a number of workshops and training courses on leadership, I discovered that I was actually a leader. I went through the process of being a member of a vulnerable community, then becoming an active volunteer and now I am a proud leader within the Movement. Recently, I was elected as the Africa Youth Network Chairperson.

So, in connection with the theme of this Conference, I would say the National Society acted on that particular day to make me the leader I am today.

And I would say that whatever I am now doing as a young leader within the Movement, I am acting today to shape the trajectory of young people in Africa and beyond tomorrow.

Thank you.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you, June.

You have a great opportunity to address all the National Societies and tell them about the importance of the Youth Engagement Strategy – because this is what you are speaking of – and about the importance of

inviting youth leaders to sit with us and engage and making sure they are participating in decision making with us.

Silvia, so what was your path to becoming a Red Cross youth leader?

Ms Silvia Gelvez, Youth Representative, Colombian Red Cross

(Original English)

Well, I think it started from the first moment I got to know the Red Cross. It was ten years ago, what I call the dark time in my life, because it was when I lost my father and my head was reeling with questions: "What is the meaning of life? Why am I here? Why do we die? What is our purpose in life?" Then I went to the Red Cross because I wanted to learn first aid. I was like the babysitter in my family, always taking care of my siblings and my cousins, so I decided to take the course in case something happened to them.

On the first day, the instructor played a video of the IFRC in the room. I had spent many, many months with thoughts spinning in my head, just wondering what the meaning of life is, and after I watched that video, my mind suddenly stopped because I saw many people around the world helping and trying to make the world a better place. At that moment, I decided I wanted to join the Red Cross, and I changed from the first aid training course to the volunteering course.

I am here today as a leader because the Red Cross not only gave me the perfect grounding to help people and to find meaning in my life, but also because it gave me all the tools, such as training and opportunities, to do more, not just going to communities, but having an impact through their decision-making processes, and also because I understood that my voice, even though I was so young, was taken into consideration in all the spaces I found in the Red Cross.

I also had an experience on the Youth Delegates Exchange Programme, where I met June. It was an exchange programme which we went on together with the Norwegian Red Cross, and it also reconstructed my mind. I was born in a village in Colombia and grew up in a very violent environment. I was very used to hearing the sound of gunfire all the time and always living in fear. For me, violence was something that was natural, even though I was trying to help in the Red Cross. But when I was in Norway doing this exchange programme, I got to know a completely different culture, a culture of peace, which gave me the tools to become a youth leader, and I became the Youth President of my National Society.

The exchange programme also gave me tools for leadership that I applied in a Building Communities for Peace programme at my National Society, working together with former guerrilla fighters and with communities and youth volunteers.

I think such spaces are very important for us, as young people, so that we know that we are being closely involved in our decision-making processes.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you.

It is important that you and the youth representatives from different National Societies are involved in these kinds of exchanges and networking. As I understand it, you and June have already met before, and it is no coincidence you are here together. We have been hearing from youth representatives throughout our statutory meetings, and it is good to have you here today.

Veronica, what do you think about young people and how you are involved in intergenerational dialogue in our Movement?

Ms Veronica Demaria, Youth Representative, Red Cross of Monaco

(Original English)

Within my National Society, I participate in the Social Services Department, helping elderly people in retirement homes. What we do is we organize weekly activities and visits to help them feel good, keep them company and make them feel cherished. And through our constant help and devotion, we can make them feel better.

All I had at the beginning was truly this wish to make them feel good. I thought it was going to be a one-way relationship: I would go with my team, visit them and spend time with them, and they would feel good and that was it. It was quite astonishing and surprising to find that it was not a one-way exchange at all. It was so much more than just old people in retirement homes. I learned so much from them. I learned about compassion, about humanity. I definitely learned about humanity; it was so surprising.

And talking about humanity, did you know that the founder of our Movement and first Nobel Peace Prize winner, Henry Dunant, spent the last days of his life alone, isolated and depressed in a retirement home? And his last words were, “Where has humanity gone?” What is more dehumanizing than just leaving people alone when they need us most?

As a youth volunteer, I am the only young person in the Social Services Department involved in supporting the elderly. This made me wonder why it is that we leave people alone in the last days of their lives when they most need us? Why is it that young people, and others as well, tend to neglect the elderly?

Is it out of fear? I too was a bit afraid at the beginning. I was so insecure, I thought, “Maybe I won’t be able to do it, maybe I am not good enough, maybe we will have communication issues.” But I fought that fear; I thought, “I have to be better than this.” One day, that person in need, all alone, might be me, that might be someone I love. So I pushed ahead, and here I am. That is it.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you, you guys are doing amazing things.

I must say that when I watch young volunteers at social centres, at day centres for elderly people, I notice that they learn from each other, and they empower each other. So, it is not only them that need us; we need them as well. That is very important – how much you learn from them. And this engagement and how active you are is very important.

Please tell us, then, what are your thoughts, how can we strengthen and engage youth more? What do we need to do?

Mr June Munyongani, Youth Representative, Zimbabwe Red Cross Society

(Original English)

I would say to my fellow young people, actually we have to challenge Movement leaders and young people alike, to make humanitarian values and principles a way of life. And to the Conference and our Movement leaders, I would quote President Franklin Roosevelt when he said, “We cannot build a future for our young people, but we can always build our youth for the future”. So, act today and shape tomorrow.

Ms Silvia Gelvez, Youth Representative, Colombian Red Cross

(Original English)

I think it is very important to bring youth voices and youth perspectives into every single decision-making process in the National Societies and globally as well. The three of us are sitting here as a result of the decisions that people took many years ago. I bet many of you are also here as a result of many decisions that were taken before. For me, the most important thing is that youth is represented here and our voices are always taken into consideration.

Ms Veronica Demaria, Youth Representative, Red Cross of Monaco

(Original English)

I wish more young people and others could join this wonderful department, Social Services, because sometimes we travel far from home to other countries and even other continents to give our help and services with our National Societies, and we tend to forget about the people who need us back home.

And can you just imagine for a few seconds what a wonderful world this would be if nobody, whether old or young, neighbours or strangers, ever had to feel alone and isolated again.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much.

So, tell us what we need to do better? What are you inheriting from us? Because you are the future, and you are the future leaders. Well, you already are leaders, and you will inherit the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. What do you expect from us, Silvia?

Ms Silvia Gelvez, Youth Representative, Colombian Red Cross

(Original English)

I always answer that by first saying thank you, because I know that all of you have put a lot of effort into giving us the Red Cross we dream of – your time, your efforts and your patience as well.

The most important thing for me now is that I know we are not just inheriting the Red Cross; we are also part of the process of building the Red Cross, and we are going to inherit it for new generations.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much.

So, we have to make sure that everyone is involved in decision making and that we have youth representatives and hear their voices. We are happy to hear you at our Conference and wish you all the best. It is very inspiring to hear all of your stories and have you here today.

Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Didier Pfirter, Secretary General of the Conference

(Original English)

So, we have come to the end of this second Plenary Session of the Conference.

I can announce that the IHL Commission will start in this room, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Lanteri from Monaco, at 10 am sharp. So, those of you who are participating in that Commission, please stay here.

This afternoon, at 2.30 pm, the Voices from the Conference session will start in Rooms 5 and 6. The list of speakers has been posted on the website, and printed copies are available at the entrance to the conference room and at the entrance to Rooms 5 and 6.

The Drafting Committee will be in Rooms 3 and 4, just behind here, also starting at 2.30 this afternoon.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you, Secretary General.

I now close this plenary session and hand over to Ambassador Lanteri to chair the Commission on IHL.

Thank you very much.



4.6 FOR THE RECORD: VOICES FROM THE CONFERENCE

Tuesday, 10 December 2019

(2.30 pm)

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Good afternoon. Welcome to the Voices from the Conference.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, before we start, may I remind you that no delegations will be allowed to engage in political, racial, religious or ideological controversy, as stated in Article 11, paragraph 4, of the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. I will give the floor in the order delegations have registered. Given that there are more than 400 delegations at this Conference, we expect a high number of speakers in this Voices for the Conference session. I have therefore shortened the time of intervention, using the rights given to me as the Chair in Rule 18.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Each speaker will speak for only three minutes. The exceptions are statements delivered on behalf of a group of States or National Societies, or at a ministerial level; they shall have five minutes. If that is the case, kindly say so before delivering the statement, time will be allocated accordingly. I will make sure that time is assigned exactly as promised. Please do not exceed the allocated time and put me in a difficult position to cut your statements..

The first statement on the list is the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, Her Highness Tunku Intan Safinaz, please.

H.H. Dato' Seri DiRaja Tan Sri Tunku Puteri Intan Safinaz Binti Almarhum Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, Tunku Temenggong Kedah, National Chair,
Malaysian Red Crescent Society

(Original English)

Madam Chair; His Excellency Dato' Dr Ahmad Faisal Muhammad, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations, and other international organizations in Geneva; Dr. Hishamuddin Mohd Hashim, Deputy Secretary General (Strategic), Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Malaysia; Madam Siti Nur Hajar Binti Abu Bakar, Principal Assistant Secretary, Policy and Strategic Planning Division, Ministry of Defence, Malaysia; Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to start by congratulating the organizers for convening this 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. In doing so, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the volunteers involved in ensuring the success of this conference. It is only with the support and dedication of all our volunteers that the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement stands as strong as it is today.

At this opportune moment, Malaysian Red Crescent conveys its gratitude to Mr Elhadj As Sy, the outgoing Secretary General of the IFRC, for all the excellent commitment he has given to the Movement. We wish him well for all his future endeavours, and he is indeed a leader which we all should aspire to be. We would like to congratulate Mr Jagan Chapagain for being appointed as the incoming Secretary General and look forward to working with him very closely with the advancement of the humanitarian cause both in Malaysia and beyond.

Accordingly, we, the Malaysian Red Crescent, would also like to congratulate Dr Jemilah Mahmood, the Under Secretary General for Partnerships, IFRC, for being the recipient of the 2019 ASEAN Award for her contribution to humanitarian aid and disaster management in ASEAN.

We are honoured to receive the Volunteering Development Award for 2019 for 'Volunteer management in emergencies and fragile environments', and our youth representative, Ms Michelle Chew Shi Jie, on being elected to the Youth Commission, which in itself a landmark historical moment not only for us, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, but for the Movement collectively.

At this juncture, I would like to convey our condolence to the families of the victims of New Zealand's White Island volcano eruption that took place yesterday, and commended the New Zealand Red Cross for their immediate response to the tragedy.

In reference to the IFRC's integrity control framework, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society strongly supports the IFRC's Strategy 2030 to strengthen the framework of control, governance and the implementation of the 'integrity implementation toolkit'. It will further enhance the element of trust in our Movement. We strive to deliver humanitarian action to the vulnerable, keeping our space free of fraud, corruption, with a strong adherence to integrity, as expected by our stakeholders.

The Malaysian Red Crescent is currently reviewing our Constitution. In doing so, we would like to express our sincere thanks to the ICRC, IFRC and the Joint Statute Commission for their technical support in ensuring the efficacy of the outcome. In reference to that, we will be reviewing the Malaysian Red Crescent Society (Incorporation) Act, and in assuring sustainable trust in the organization, a new Code of Conduct for the Board members and elected officials within the National Society has already been approved and will be enforced in 2021.

Of recent development, the National Disaster Management Agency of Malaysia, as the country's coordinator in time of disaster, and Malaysian Red Crescent Society is an integral part of the country's Disaster Management system, observing the legal, disaster preparedness and response mechanisms. In relation to the scope of the Red Ready project supported by the IFRC and US Aid, volunteers and staff are given policy development training, disaster response team training at headquarters and branch levels, and we are structuring our volunteer management system taking into new account the availability of digitalization facilities, and new IT platforms.

As the newly appointed National Chair the Malaysian Red Crescent, I would like to congratulate the Movement for incorporating the concept of gender balance and inclusivity within the Movement. The work does not end with the passing of resolutions, but rather the real work starts after the passing of the resolution, and we will continue to commit to these principles.

Ladies and gentlemen, I look forward to the passing of the proposed resolution on "Women and leadership in the humanitarian action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement". Indeed, it is only right that women are recognized as agents for risk reduction and first responders in humanitarian crisis including armed conflicts, internal strife and natural disasters.

Ladies and gentlemen, as a member of the Asia Pacific network, we are implementing the Manila Call for Action for 2018 in its entirety, within the framework of the One Billion Coalition platform.

Thank you, lastly, we are building our International Humanitarian Field School supported by the IFRC and with the objective of enhancing disaster preparedness not only for our members but also for local players, with training facilities benefiting those in the region. This is our concrete commitment to the concept of "Act today, shape tomorrow". Thank you, Madam Chair.

Dr Hishamuddin bin Mohd Hashim, Deputy Secretary General (Strategic), Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Malaysia

(Original English)

Madam Chair; Your Highness Princess Intan Safinaz binti Alharhum Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, National Chair of the Malaysian Red Crescent Society; Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

Allow me to begin by extending Malaysia's appreciation to the Movement for convening the 33rd International Conference. The Conference is timely, as we mark the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions this year. Now more than ever, we are witnessing an increasing number of protracted conflicts, growing complexity in humanitarian operations and fiercer attacks on multilateralism. In this context, the theme of "Act today, shape tomorrow" is indeed fitting.

Malaysia acknowledges the contribution the Movement has made in Malaysia and at the regional level. We welcome the first ASEAN-ICRC Joint Platform, held in Jakarta in April 2019, followed by the second Joint Platform hosted in Bangkok last month. In August, the Government was pleased to host the visit of the IFRC Secretary General Elhadj As Sy. Malaysia also welcomes the Movement's support in promoting knowledge of IHL, both among Malaysian peacekeepers, as well as through educational and outreach programmes.



Malaysia has continued to contribute to humanitarian efforts worldwide. To illustrate, Malaysia provides logistical support by housing one of six United Nations Humanitarian Response Depots. Malaysia has channelled various forms of assistance to the Rohingyas, Palestine, Yemen, The Bahamas, Iraq, as well as several African countries. For example, in December 2017, the Government established a field hospital on Cox's Bazar, which continues to provide much needed health services to Rohingya in the camps there.

Malaysia also welcomes the Conference's acknowledgement of the important role of women in humanitarian efforts. Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister, the first woman to hold the position, leads the National Disaster Management Agency and heads the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, which serves as a focal point for the Malaysian Red Crescent Society (MRCS). Her Highness Princess Intan Safinaz Binti Alharhum Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, is the first woman to serve as the National Chair of the MRCS. While in November this year, the IFRC's Undersecretary General Tan Sri Dr Jemilah Mahmood became Malaysia's first recipient of the ASEAN Prize for her humanitarian efforts.

As we constructively engage in this Conference, Malaysia believes that international cooperation and coordination in humanitarian efforts is essential. It remains imperative that all stakeholders promote the building of trust, the sharing of experiences and expertise, all to ensure that no one, especially vulnerable groups, is left behind. Thank you, Madam Chair.

H.E. Mr Ali Khalfan Al-Mansouri, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar in Geneva

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair, Your Excellencies, esteemed guests,

May the peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you.

I would like first to thank all those who have contributed to the organization and preparation of this highly important Conference. We hope that the efforts to prevent and mitigate human suffering around the world bear fruit, that human beings are protected and respected, and that all people cooperate to build lasting peace. This year, we are celebrating two major events: the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which laid down the modern standards of international law for humanitarian treatment in war, and the centenary of the foundation of International Federal of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), which has deployed extraordinary efforts for the promotion of humanitarian values, disaster response and preparedness and the achievement of social integration and peace. Despite the significant role of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols in mitigating the horrors of war and protecting those affected by armed conflicts, there are still numerous obstacles and challenges hindering the full commitment to the provisions of these Conventions. This is especially true given the spread of long-lasting wars and conflicts and the use of new warfare technologies. The State of Qatar, as a party to the four Geneva Conventions, strongly believes in the need to abide by international humanitarian law. We reiterate that this law and its established mechanisms are still the most adequate framework for regulating the behaviour of parties to armed conflicts and protecting affected populations. The State of Qatar has taken great strides towards promoting international humanitarian law in relevant national institutions. These efforts include the establishment of the National Committee for the implementation of International Humanitarian Law in 2012, which has played a substantive role in spreading awareness on the topic through seminars and training sessions on international humanitarian law, as well as through its work with various partners to ensure compliance with and implementation of international humanitarian law at the national, regional and international levels. The State of Qatar has also been keen on contributing to global efforts to respond to humanitarian crises across the globe, based on its commitment and legal, ethical and humanitarian responsibility to mitigate the suffering of all affected populations. To promote and develop cooperation with relevant international organizations, the State of Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding and a partnership with the IFRC in April 2019, to strengthen cooperation between the two parties to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In September 2019, a joint declaration of intent was also signed with the Red Cross to share experiences and knowledge in common areas of interest and cooperate more closely to support affected populations. In conclusion, we look forward to engaging in fruitful deliberations during this Conference. We hope that it will achieve its aim of improving the lives of those affected by armed conflicts, disasters and other hardships. Thank you.

Ms Satu Santala, Director General, Department for Development Policy, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

(Original English)

Madam Chair, ladies and gentlemen,

Finland aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union and its member States.

This Conference is a unique humanitarian forum and a strong display of the power of humanity. Finland highly values the role of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, including all its members, volunteers and staff, in protecting human life and health, and alleviating human suffering in challenging and complex humanitarian situations. The lifesaving and life-changing assistance that the Movement provides all over the world every day carries on the torch lit by Henry Dunant.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. The Conventions are not merely a historical success, but they are very much needed even today. All states have the obligation to respect and ensure respect for IHL in all circumstances. It is of utmost importance that the compliance with international humanitarian law is strengthened. This has been affirmed by the Council of the European Union in the Council Conclusions on Humanitarian Assistance and international humanitarian law, adopted last month under the Finnish Presidency of the Council. In these conclusions, the European Union also underlines the importance of addressing the needs of persons in vulnerable situations, and the need to pay attention to the potential adverse impact of counter-terrorism measures on humanitarian action.

Madam Chair, Finland remains strongly committed to the promotion of and adherence to humanitarian law, safeguarding humanitarian space and the protection of civilians. We would like to draw particular attention to the specific needs and active participation of women and girls, as well as to the inclusion of persons with disabilities. These themes will be further explored tomorrow in our side-event on Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, together with the Finnish Red Cross, Australia, IDA, ICRC and IFRC.

We are extremely concerned over the lack of respect for IHL and violations against humanitarian actors. The international community must act to protect humanitarian workers and their access. We must also ensure that our actions, such as restrictive or counter-terrorism measures, do not hinder or prevent humanitarian activities. Humanitarian action that saves lives must never be regarded as criminal, even when conducted in areas controlled by terrorist groups.

Finally, the natural environment is frequently a silent casualty of armed conflict. Armed conflicts may have dramatic consequences for the natural environment and threaten the wellbeing, health or even survival of civilians. I am happy to note that Finland has supported activities in this area, such as the report of the United Nations Environment Program to analyse the range of international laws that protect the environment during armed conflict. Finland has also submitted a national pledge in order to promote the dissemination of IHL rules applicable to the protection of the natural environment, and we have also submitted a national pledge on climate smart disaster laws, acknowledging that a well-functioning disaster risk management system requires a strong legal basis at the domestic level. Thank you.

Mr Markus Mader, Secretary General, Swiss Red Cross

(Original English)

Dear delegates, dear representatives of Governments and National Societies of Red Cross and Red Crescent, dear all,

The Swiss Red Cross would like to stress three themes: Mental Health, Restoring Family Links and Migration.

The Swiss Red Cross highly appreciates the resolution on mental health and psychosocial needs. There are many unmet psychological needs for persons affected by conflict, natural disasters and other emergencies, and people on the move. So mental health and psychological wellbeing are critical to the survival, recovery and daily functioning of people and communities. The resolution will serve as a strong basis for a common approach, not only in situations of emergency, but also in third countries where people seek protection from war or torture.

Based on this resolution, the Swiss Red Cross will continue its efforts to tackle mental health and psychological needs in Switzerland and abroad, and this in particular with its outpatient clinic, in Switzerland, for victims



of torture and war, as well as in the field of mental health. We look forward to sharing our expertise and supporting others in developing their capacities in the field of psychological needs.

Enshrined in the Geneva Conventions, Restoring Family Links (RFL) is one of the oldest services of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Cooperation and harmonization of practices among a wide range of actors across multiple countries, regions and continents is crucial. With this aim, the Movement adopted its new RFL Strategy 2020-2025 and we call upon all States to welcome and support the Strategy.

The RFL resolution addresses a very delicate aspect of Restoring Family Links services: this is data protection. Tracing, restoring and maintaining family links is based on the processing of personal data. As we all know, the exponential growth of digital technology bears enormous potential but risks alike. Beneficiaries must be able to trust and entrust the Movement. The protection of their personal data and privacy is paramount.

The Swiss Red Cross urges all States to adopt the resolution and to respect the collection, processing and cross-border sharing of data by the Movement for exclusively humanitarian purposes, like RFL services. Further, we call upon all States to welcome the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection as framework for the processing of personal data in the Movement.

The Swiss Red Cross is thankful for the good collaboration with the authorities of Switzerland and our joint pledge “Dead migrants and information to their Families”.

The fact that migration is not part of the official agenda of the International Conference is not due to progress on the ground but rather a reflection of the increased tensions and politicization of migration. The Swiss Red Cross makes reference to the ‘Declaration on migration and our common humanity’ of the Council of Delegates and reiterates its call made four years ago: with the growing plight of vulnerable migrants, it is indispensable that the Movement and the States continue to work on the implementation of agreed upon policies and frameworks like the resolution 3 of the 31st International Conference in 2011 and the Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees respectively, as well as international laws. The States must increase their efforts to ensure the safety of all migrants and their access to relevant services as well as to protect their dignity, both, on their territory and along international borders. The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement stands ready to support the States in fulfilling these humanitarian obligations. Thank you very much.

Mr Evgeny Zagaynov, Director of Legal Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Russian Federation

(Original Russian)

Madam Chair, Conference participants,

Allow me to express my gratitude to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for organizing this leading forum for international humanitarian cooperation.

The legal means of mitigating the intensity and consequences of armed conflicts and establishing the conditions for a reconciliation of the parties, are as relevant in the current situation as they have ever been.

Our delegation looks forward to a substantive, useful exchange of views which might carry the work of the Red Cross Movement forward over the next four years. We hope that the allocation of Russian Federation resources to the provision of interpretation and translation into the Russian language during the Conference will help a number of National Societies to participate fully in discussions and make a contribution to them. We attach importance to the wider use of the Russian language within the Red Cross Movement.

We also attach great significance to follow-up activities to disseminate knowledge about international humanitarian law. An international conference took place in November last year, under the aegis of the ICRC and the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS, and with the support of the Government of the Russian Federation, to mark the jubilee of the Saint Petersburg Declaration of 1864 Renouncing the Use, in Time of War, of Explosive Projectiles Under 400 Grammes Weight. The traditional international conference on IHL, the “Martens Readings”, was held in Saint Petersburg in May this year. The “SWIRMO-19 workshop on international rules governing military operations was jointly hosted with the ICRC in Moscow in October. The main purpose of the workshop is to promote the implementation of IHL in the action of national armed forces. 140 delegates from 70 countries attended the workshop. Since last year, we have started to make regular annual voluntary contributions in support of the humanitarian activities of the ICRC.

Our country was one of the most active in drafting the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols thereto. Today, Russia is a party to all these documents and has acceded to all the other fundamental international agreements on IHL. The task of ensuring compliance with IHL rules still lies primarily with States. We continue to implement IHL rules in national legislation. The obligation of members of the Russian armed forces, above all of commanding officers, to know and comply with IHL when carrying out their military duty, is enshrined in the Manual on legal work in the armed forces of the Russian Federation, revised in 2015. The Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols are directly applicable. Training in IHL is given to all categories of personnel of the Russian army.

In 1949, a resolution was adopted at the Geneva Conference which spoke of the need to endeavour to ensure that governments “may never have to apply the Geneva Conventions for the Protection of War Victims”. These words are still valid today, when the main task is to pull together to make sure that situations where it is necessary to apply the provisions of IHL essentially do not arise. Thank you.

Mr Alan H. Kessel, Assistant Deputy Minister Legal Affairs and Legal Advisers,
Department of Global Affairs, Canada

(Original French and English)

Madam Chair, 2019 has been an important year for the international community, one in which we marked the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions and the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Security Council’s protection of civilian’s agenda.

Here at the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, we have another opportunity to address pressing issues of vital importance for people affected by armed conflict.

At a time when the rules-based international order is under threat, it is more crucial than ever to highlight the importance of fulfilling obligations under international humanitarian law (IHL) and to step up efforts to promote respect for this body of law. While more rigorous implementation of IHL it may not resolve conflicts, it can reduce the most devastating impacts of armed conflict on civilians and their communities. After all, the issue is not with the law itself, but rather gaps in compliance with the law. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is uniquely placed to help promote IHL compliance, and you can count on Canada’s continued support.

Canada is a stalwart defender and promoter of IHL. Under Canada’s 2018 G7 Presidency, foreign ministers committed to using their support to State and when relevant non-State parties to armed conflicts to encourage effective implementation of IHL by their partners. At the centre of our efforts is the protection of people in armed conflict. As co-chair with Switzerland of a Geneva-based informal group on UN Security Council Resolution 2286 on attacks on medical missions, we see the need to move from awareness to action to better protect humanitarian and medical personnel. Yesterday you may have heard that Canada, together with the Netherlands, will be supporting The Gambia in its action before the International Court of Justice with respect to Myanmar.

Together we must also work to advance gender responsive approaches to the protection of civilians. This requires humanitarian action in response to diverse needs and priorities and the increased insecurity that vulnerable populations can often face during armed conflict.

En 2020, nous devons continuer de trouver des occasions permettant de dialoguer sur la mise en œuvre du droit international humanitaire avec les collectivités locales. Thank you, Madam Chair.

H.E. Mr Cristóbal González-Aller Jurado, Ambassador, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Spain in Geneva

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chair. Spain wishes to add its voice to the thanks expressed for the excellent work done by the Standing Commission, the ICRC, the IFRC and the community of National Societies and States present here.

Four years on, we meet again to continue promoting and applying the values and principles of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), facing new challenges: the abundance, hybrid nature and legal complexity of the armed conflicts other than of an international character; the new technologies applied to war; and the ever insufficient protection of the civilian population and humanitarian personnel in conflict situations.

Spain again reiterates in this forum her unshakeable commitment to IHL and her support to the work of everyone here, supporting the effective application of the resolutions we are called to approve and delivering on a series of promises which we believe will help us all to progress towards an ever more human and just world.

Along with the promises formulated by the European Union, our country will focus its work on a set of priorities, identified in conjunction with the Spanish Red Cross, based on a study of the level of compliance with the rules and commitments under IHL which we have made, taking as crosscutting approaches the gender perspective, age and diversity, and protection of people in the most vulnerable situations. Spain will continue to promote better application of the principles and rules of IHL in its civil and military administration.

We will continue to make our banner combating impunity for crimes, promoting the universal application of the Rome Statute and supporting the work of the International Criminal Court.

We celebrate the new strategy of the ICRC for the protection of the medical mission, with which we will collaborate for a more effective application of Resolution 2286 of the UN Security Council for proper collection of data on attacks on hospitals and health personnel, to facilitate the work of independent research mechanisms. In this regard, we are also committed to the work of the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission.

We will pay particular attention to persons in the most vulnerable situations. To child victims of conflicts, working to facilitate the reintegration of child soldiers and promoting the preservation of the fundamental right to education. We will continue to advocate for the universal application of the Safe Schools Declaration, as reflected in the celebration of the 3rd International Conference in Palma de Mallorca.

In conclusion, Madam Chair, we will do all this by developing a National Humanitarian Diplomacy Strategy, on which we are working, with the support of all the Spanish ministries, to ensure that the sensitivity and importance of the humanitarian dimension are taken into account. Thank you very much.

Dr Javier Senent García, President, Spanish Red Cross

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chair. On behalf of the Spanish Red Cross, I would like to express our gratitude for the efforts of the Standing Commission, the ICRC, the IFRC, and send greetings to the National Societies and Governments participating in this important Conference.

The phrase chosen as the title of this International Conference “Act today, shape tomorrow” requires us to continue to work to improve the lives of those affected by armed conflicts, disasters and other emergencies. The components of our International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, together with the States Parties to the Geneva Conventions must analyse the problems that are affecting and will affect people and communities, and also the vulnerabilities that they face in their daily lives.

Through the work of the Commissions, the Conference resolutions and the promises that we make individually and collectively, we are committed to protecting people in armed conflicts, as their vulnerabilities change and to inspiring confidence in humanitarian action.

The commemoration this year of the 70th anniversary of the approval of the 1949 Geneva Conventions brings us to reaffirm our commitment to international humanitarian law, despite the challenges presented by the current armed conflicts, and to work to teach and disseminate it, and effectively, reducing spaces of impunity for those who violate these humanitarian rules.

I would like to underline the importance that the International Conference attaches on this occasion to other issues related to situations of vulnerability experienced by many people and which are the daily task of our National Society, such as psychosocial support, restoration of family contacts, or the problems deriving from climate change, which exacerbate vulnerability and increase the insecurity of people already exposed to disaster risks, urbanization and poverty.

I am proud that we are co-sponsoring the resolution on women and leadership. The participation of women in the adoption of decisions is essential to ensure that they satisfy the humanitarian needs of the community and that they have the representation which they deserve. From the experience of the Spanish Red Cross, I can say that this is one of the daily tasks of transformation that we must keep on doing in our National Societies and which, with perseverance, persistence and tenacity, will be achieved.

Lastly, with respect to women’s participation, and before the election of members of the Standing Commission, I would like to stress the important role that the Commission plays as the organ of the International Movement

mandated by the International Conference, and with the authority to promote harmony in our work and coordination between the components of the Movement, and promote the application of the resolutions of the International Conference. Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Ken Okaniwa, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Japan in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair. At the outset, we would like to express our deep respect to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

At Tokyo International Conference on African Development 7 (TICAD 7) in August, Japan announced actions to build a resilient and sustainable society in Africa to achieve human security and the SDGs. Japan also expressed its intention to provide humanitarian assistance and support for self-reliance both to displaced people and host communities based on the humanitarian-development nexus. We look forward to working with the Movement in these areas.

70 years after the adoption of the Geneva Conventions, the promotion and implementation of IHL continues to be an urgent and important challenge. On 4 December, Dr Tetsu Nakamura, a Japanese humanitarian worker who promoted health and agriculture in Afghanistan, was killed in a terrorist attack. We strongly condemn such attacks against medical and humanitarian personnel. In addition, the emergence of new technologies such as cyber warfare and autonomous weapons systems is reshaping conflicts. Japan pledges to continue its efforts to promote IHL under these circumstances.

Japan highly commends the Movement's Restoring Family Links Project. We will actively engage in the discussion on protection of personal data, a matter of debate among States concerned, in cooperation with the Movement.

On health, Japan attaches priority to the promotion of UHC. We were able to rally leaders to commit to UHC at the G20 Osaka Summit and TICAD 7. In this context, Japan appreciates the Movement's emphasis on tackling infectious disease and mental health. We will continue to work with the Movement to promote improvements in the health sector.

The need for supporting those displaced and affected by natural disasters has increased tremendously in recent years. Japan launched 'Phase 2 of the Sendai Cooperation Initiative' in June. To promote resilience of the whole society against natural disasters, we will provide support to at least five million people over four years from 2019. We will continue to work our important partners, the Japanese Red Cross Society and the Movement.

Japan was the first Asian country to accede to the Geneva Conventions. Japanese Red Cross Society was one of the five founding members of the League of Red Cross Societies, the origin of the IFRC. Based on our longstanding participation, Japan pledges to continue to work together with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to address the current unprecedented humanitarian crisis. Thank you.

Ms Nata Varazashvili, Legal Advisor, Department of Public International Law, Ministry of Justice of Georgia

(Original English)

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, first of all, let me extend my sincere gratitude to the organizers of this conference for granting us opportunity to meet and discuss the important topics that are related to the implementation of IHL. The representation of the delegates assembled today reaffirms the importance and common understanding of experience-sharing, engaging discussion for the efficient implementation of IHL.

Promotion of an effective implementation of the international humanitarian law remains one of the main priorities of the Government of Georgia. In order to address this issue, on October 31, 2011, the National Inter-Agency Commission for the implementation of international humanitarian law was established. It is chaired by the Minister of Justice of Georgia and is composed of representatives from different state agencies, non-governmental organizations and academia. The Commission is a permanent advisory body of the Government of Georgia, which is set up to implement, ensure, promote respect of International Humanitarian Law and coordinate the work of different government agencies in this field. It elaborates initiatives, recommendations and legal amendments to the national legislation in order to ensure that the obligations set out in international humanitarian law are adequately reflected in domestic law.

It needs to be noted that, after the establishment, the national IHL Commission has worked in different directions. In terms of legislation, in 2017 the national IHL Commission drafted a new bill, “on the Use and Protection of the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Crystal Emblems and Names,” which was later adopted by the Parliament. The new law promotes respect towards the use of protected emblems in the country.

In order to ensure the compatibility of the Georgian legislation with the obligations derived from the international humanitarian law, upon the request of the Government the ICRC has conducted an IHL compatibility study. A more specific study, which deals with the issue of missing persons, is underway.

Dear colleagues, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that as a consequence of the ‘90s and 2008 armed conflicts, overall, over 2,300 people are reported as unaccounted for. The assistance of the ICRC regarding the missing persons during armed conflicts is of vital importance to Georgia and we are extremely grateful to them for their role and assistance in this matter. It needs to be noted that the bilateral coordination mechanism was established in 2010 and, since that, positive results have been achieved in terms of clarifying the fate and whereabouts of the missing people.

The Government of Georgia acknowledges the responsibility to have a comprehensive approach to the issue of missing people. For this aim recently an inter-agency commission was established. The role of the commission is to search for the dead on the Georgian territory, to organize the relocation of the bodies, to build up relationships with the representatives of international organizations, with general public and family members of the missing, and to create a mechanism in order to support the family members of the missing. Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Michael Braad, Under Secretary for Legal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark

(Original English)

Madam Chair. International humanitarian law has never been more important than today. We find ourselves in a world with many conflicts, human suffering and emerging new threats. The main challenge to humanitarian law today is not a shortage of rules. Rather, it is a lack of implementation and a lack of compliance. We need to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law. This should be our common and basic starting point for our work at this Conference.

In May this year, Denmark published an English version of the Danish Military Manual from 2016. The manual provides a detailed legal framework for Danish military personnel deployed in international operations. The English translation enables Denmark to cooperate closely with international partners, and earlier today we hosted a side-event on ‘Military IHL Manuals in the 21st Century’ with cross-regional participation. The side-event was an opportunity to highlight States’ experiences and insights into disseminating humanitarian law within their military structures.

The Danish Government also attaches high importance to improving Mental Health and Psychosocial Support services. Action is already underway through our partners. Denmark supports a range of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support interventions as well as the Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Collaborative of Save the Children. Both centres, based in Copenhagen, work to improve the standards of service in humanitarian action and provide important information and resources for raising awareness of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support.

Finally, the Danish Government has a very close and constructive cooperation with the Danish Red Cross. The Danish National IHL Committee was established back in 1982 and it serves as an important vehicle for cooperation. Denmark attaches great importance to the efforts of Danish Red Cross as a frontrunner on the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support agenda, as well as their work on implementing and disseminating IHL in order to pass on the critical importance of IHL from generation to generation.

At this International Conference, we are pleased to make several national, EU and Nordic pledges, including joint pledges with the Danish Red Cross. This underscores the Danish Government’s strong and unwavering commitment to our cooperation with Danish Red Cross to alleviate human suffering. And it honours our obligations in accordance with international law, and in particular IHL. I thank you.

Ms Judith Carvajal de Álvarez, President, Colombian Red Cross Society

(Original Spanish)

In Colombia, thousands of people are continuously on the move and in many cases members of the same family, including children, lose contact with each other. Some are never found. The internal armed conflict that

has marked our country has been prolonged and complex. Armed violence, migration, and natural disasters and catastrophes have resulted in hundreds of thousands of people still separated from their loved ones, die and disappear each year.

Day after day, the lists of people who are separated from their families and have no news, and the challenges of providing a response where there are many actors of the Movement, who operate the network of family links and transfer data, not only within the Movement, but also with other actors, keep on growing. While the development of digital technology has allowed the Movement to collect large amounts of personal data more rapidly and simply in its humanitarian action, it also represents a major challenge with respect to the risks that it could involve and thus, the importance of observing and developing adequate data protection rules in the regulatory environment with regard to data protection legislation and rules.

In the framework of the Inter-American International Conference in May 2019 in Buenos Aires, the Colombian Red Cross had the opportunity to promote the resolutions on restoring family links (RFL).

Also as a member of the RFL Strategy Implementation Group and member of the *RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection Application Group*, the Colombian Red Cross, as ambassador for RFL services, put two items on the agenda of the South America RFL Regional Platform:

(1) First, the construction of the new Movement RFL Strategy; and (2) Second, compliance with the *RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection and has involved 10 Southern Cone National Societies which form part of this network*.

Recognizing that RFL is among the origins and the *raison d'être* of the Movement, and the National Societies play a crucial role in this sphere, the Colombian Red Cross welcomes the new Movement strategy, Strategy 2020-2025 and supports the adoption of the resolution on RFL and personal data protection which demonstrates our capacity to constantly renew ourselves, adapting to the changing environment to better serve communities and continue to be relevant. Thank you very much.

Mr Akram Harahsheh, Counselor, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Geneva

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair, ladies and gentlemen.

May the peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you.

Allow me, first, on behalf of my country's delegation, to express my deep gratitude to the IFRC, the ICRC and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for their exceptional efforts and their pioneering humanitarian role, which is highly appreciated by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Madam Chair, our 33rd Conference is currently being held amid extraordinary global circumstances. Millions of people have been forced to migrate and to seek refuge due to armed conflicts, which has resulted in the largest wave of refugees since the Second World War. The effects of climate change have also reached the four corners of the world and are threatening livelihoods in numerous regions. The tragedies endured by the victims of armed conflict and occupation grow deeper with each passing day. Considering this reality, we call upon the esteemed parties to the Geneva Conventions, on their 70th anniversary, to respect the provisions of these international instruments that ensure the protection of victims against any harm. We call upon them to translate the noble objectives of these instruments into reality, by preserving people's lives, dignity and future. Our Conference coincides with the Human Rights Day, which comes as a testament to the close connection between these two major themes in our world today. The ideal way to face these unprecedented challenges is through joint action. We must benefit from the broad representation in our Conference to renew our commitment to international humanitarian law and to safeguard international security and stability. In this regard, we reiterate the need for parties to armed conflicts to commit to the principle of the applicability of the principles and rules of international humanitarian law, both customary and treaty law, and fulfil their obligations as stipulated in the Geneva Conventions. We also call upon the international community to intervene to ensure the protection of civilians and put an end to the violations of international humanitarian law.

Madam Chair, my country believes in the crucial role played by the Red Cross and the Red Crescent, and it is committed to facilitate their work in the region. Jordan is party to several international humanitarian law conventions and contributes to peacekeeping forces in all continents of the world. It has set an example in upholding noble values, magnanimity and sacrifice. During the past 30 years, Jordan has hosted a population four times its capacity, which has taken a heavy toll on its resources and infrastructure. The slogan of our

Conference is of exceptional importance, and it stems from the focus on the role of the youth and the preservation of their future. In this regard, I must note that UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security was adopted at the initiative of Jordan.

Madam Chair, allow me to conclude by saying that our Conference's agenda is rich in substance and broad-based, reflecting the challenges and opportunities facing our world today. We remain hopeful that we will be able to overcome difficulties through dialogue and positive engagement with the topics on the agenda and that, through discussion, we will be able to reach a consensus on the proposed draft resolutions. I would like to wish you every success in this Conference. Thank you.

Mr Stephen Mathias, Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations

(Original English)

Madam Chairman, distinguished delegates, I am pleased to be able to participate in this International Conference and to represent the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs. The United Nations Office of Legal Affairs is the central legal service of the United Nations and provides legal advice to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the departments and offices of the United Nations Secretariat, and United Nations organs on a variety of issues, including international humanitarian law.

As the work of the United Nations is often related to armed conflicts taking place in various parts of the world, our Office is frequently called upon to advise on IHL issues. I can say, in this respect, that IHL plays a crucial role in the work of the United Nations. In the early years of the Organization, the role of the United Nations in IHL issues was not entirely clear, and there was even hesitation to become involved in such issues. However, there is no doubt that today the United Nations is an indispensable player in ensuring respect for IHL.

There are a number of ways in which the United Nations has contributed in this respect. First, the United Nations has provided a forum for States to discuss a variety of IHL issues, including a forum to negotiate IHL-related treaties. It is recalled in this regard that multilateral treaties such as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, its Protocols I through III, and, more recently, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Arms Trade Treaty were negotiated and concluded at United Nations conferences convened by the General Assembly. More recently, the General Assembly has established an open-ended working group and a group of governmental experts to discuss how international law, including IHL, applies to the use of information and communications technologies by States.

Secondly, the United Nations has played a crucial role in ensuring respect for IHL. For example, the Security Council has: established international criminal tribunals to prosecute war crimes, as well as the crime of genocide and crimes against humanity; authorized the establishment of commissions of inquiry to investigate alleged violations of IHL; authorized humanitarian agencies to carry out cross-border humanitarian assistance; and mandated peacekeeping operations to protect civilians, particularly in the context of ongoing armed conflicts.

Third, the United Nations Secretariat has put in place measures that would ensure that United Nations peacekeeping operations respect IHL rules when they are bound by them. I recall, in this regard, that the Secretary-General's Bulletin on the Observance by United Nations forces of IHL was issued in 1999.

Finally, the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs has developed a close relationship with the ICRC, including by holding an annual meeting to discuss current IHL issues. We appreciate the open and frank dialogue we have had to date, and we look forward to further cooperation with the ICRC. Thank you.

H.E. Dr Helmut Tichy, Director General for Legal Affairs, Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and International Affairs of the Republic of Austria

(Original English)

Madam Chair, let me start by thanking the staff of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for their dedication and their indispensable work in often very dangerous environments. Austria supports the Movement and its principles and aligns itself with the statement that will be delivered on behalf of the European Union.

Serious violations of IHL have, in the last years, increased in number as well as in nature. In the light of this experience, it is today more necessary than ever to stress the obligation of all states and all parties to armed

conflicts to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law in all circumstances. As a means for that purpose, we have to continue our efforts to improve IHL compliance mechanisms. We continue to believe that a regular and focused space for dialogue on IHL compliance, preferably on an annual basis, is necessary. This could be achieved by intersessional meetings between the Red Cross and Red Crescent Conferences, but also by ad hoc meetings devoted to specific aspects of IHL compliance. We are open to all suggestions that promote constructive discussions and avoid unnecessary paperwork.

An important element of strengthening IHL compliance is the professional, independent and impartial enquiry of facts. We encourage States to recognise the competence of the International Humanitarian Fact Finding Commission based on Additional Protocol I, and we regret that one state has recently denounced it. But even beyond the formal mandate of the Commission, States and international organizations, in particular UN organs should make a pragmatic use of the expertise of the Commission and its members and avail themselves of it when dealing with IHL issues. We believe that the cooperation with the Commission for the purpose of fact finding in Ukraine by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe during the Austrian OSCE chairmanship in 2017 was a good example for that pragmatic approach.

As highlighted in this year's Challenges Report prepared by the ICRC, one of the most pressing challenges confronting IHL today is the global trend to urbanization of armed conflicts. In urban areas, civilians are particularly vulnerable to the consequences of armed conflict. Austria contributed to addressing this phenomenon by hosting the Vienna Conference on Protecting Civilians in Urban Warfare with a particular focus on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas on 1st and 2nd of October of this year, in which more than 500 delegates from 133 States, relevant international organizations, academia and civil society participated. Austria welcomes the Joint Appeal on the use of explosive weapons in cities, recently issued by the UN Secretary-General and the President of the ICRC. We shall actively contribute to the ongoing development of a political declaration on EWIPA facilitated by Ireland.

Since the last Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted in 2017, which so far has been signed by 80 States and ratified by 34 States. This Treaty builds on the recognition that, due to the indiscriminate humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, any such use would be contrary to IHL. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapon is an indispensable legal step towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

We welcome that the ICRC emphasises, in the Challenges Report, the consequences of climate change on people affected by armed conflict and the disastrous effects of direct attacks or the use of certain means or methods of warfare on the environment. We welcome the cooperation between the ICRC and the International law commission in the elaboration of the ILC draft Principles on the protection of the environment in relation to armed conflicts.

Madam Chair, Austria hopes that this Conference will give the necessary impetus for an improvement of respect for IHL and the global humanitarian situation in general and provide humanitarian actors with a safer environment. I thank you.

H.E. Ms Silvia Elena Alfaro Espinosa, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Peru in Geneva

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chair. Peru is gratified to participate in the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, a forum which gathers together the components of the Movement to discuss the challenges which face humanitarian action and international humanitarian law (IHL).

I welcome the presence in Geneva of the Peruvian Red Cross.

In celebrating the 70th anniversary of the approval of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, Peru is proud that they are fully in force and reaffirms its commitments to respect, implement and develop IHL

We further wish to underline the subjects addressed in the six resolutions and three central themes of this Conference. We are confident that the debates and resolutions will guide the actions of the components of the Movement in the coming years and will contribute to the achievement of its objectives.

We are pleased to propose, together with Ecuador, an open pledge to promote and strengthen the work of national international humanitarian law commissions, and exchange of information between them. We urge States to sign this pledge in order to act together today and shape a better tomorrow.

I wish to highlight Peru's efforts to fulfil the promises formulated at the 32nd International Conference in 2015. On the promotion of IHL, it provided training for the Armed Forces, officials of the judiciary, the Public Prosecutor's Office and the National Police in Peru. In relation to the situation of missing persons and their family members, we have passed laws such as the Act on tracing of persons who disappeared during the period of political violence, from 1980 to 2000; we created the Department for the Tracing of Missing persons in the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights; and we established the National Plan for Tracing of Missing persons.

We welcome the sessions of this Conference devoted to urban warfare and new technologies. In this respect, Peru wishes to express its concern at the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA), which causes serious and indiscriminate harm to civilians and the services essential to their survival. In addition, we reiterate the need for meaningful human control of the use of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS), in accordance with international humanitarian law.

Peru recognizes the valuable work of the International Movement in Peru, which has contributed to the elaboration of important legal instruments, such as the Act on Missing persons which I mentioned earlier.

Peru reiterates its confidence in the humanitarian action of the International Movement, which provides support in looking after migrants who arrive in Peru via our northern border, through the "Restoring Family Links" project. It also cooperates in improving the situation of vulnerable groups in the Apurimac, Ene and Mantaro River Valleys, providing water chlorination systems and response in cases of natural disasters.

Peru is confident that the 33rd International Conference will achieve the proposed objectives, in a framework of sincere and constructive dialogue. Thank you very much.

Mr Pearson Tapiwa Chigiji, Minister-Counselor, Deputy Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zimbabwe in Geneva

(Statement on behalf of the Africa Group)

(Original English)

Madam Chair, Zimbabwe has the honour to speak on behalf of the Africa Group. Let me, on behalf of the Africa Group, start by congratulating you, and other officers of the Conference, for having been selected to preside over this session. The Africa Group has confidence in you and looks forward to a successful conference under your leadership.

The International Conference is taking place in a year that is special to Africa. It is special in the sense that our leaders on the continent declared 2019 as the year of refugees, returnees, and internally displaced persons. It was declared so, to mark the 50th anniversary of the OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problem in Africa and the 10th anniversary of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.

Madam Chair, it is therefore befitting, as we come to the end of the anniversaries, that we are gathered here as one big family to exchange views on a number of issues, chief among them being the modalities of strengthening protection and assistance to internally displaced persons, especially the victims of armed conflicts. Admittedly, these are persons of concern, not only to member States, but also to all components of the Movement. To this end, the Africa Group appreciates the work of the various components of the Movement. The Africa Group looks forward to engaging the components of the Movement, and indeed other member States, on important topics in the humanitarian discourse ranging from the climate-smart disaster laws and policies to responses to epidemics and pandemics.

Since the last International Conference, the Africa Group has been actively engaged with other member States and stakeholders within the realm of the intergovernmental process led by Switzerland and the ICRC on possible ways of strengthening respect for international humanitarian law. Regrettably, it was not possible to reach consensus on the proposed three mechanisms, which included the establishment of a forum for a dialogue among States on international humanitarian law and regional forums. However, even in the absence of consensus, a number of valuable suggestions were flagged on how to increase compliance with international humanitarian law. From experiences, the Africa Group is convinced that regional forums are useful and do complement international platforms which deal with matters within the competencies of the components of the Movement. Some of the suggestions are likely to be reflected upon in the discussions within the Commission and during the consideration of the draft resolution on a Road map for better national implementation of international humanitarian law in the Drafting Committee.

Finally, Madam Chair, the Africa Group calls upon the rest of the international community, indeed all of us, to promote the respect for and compliance with international humanitarian law in all situations. The Africa Group would like to reassure you of its cooperation and of its readiness to dialogue constructively with all components of the Movement, and with other member States and regional constituencies. Madam Chair, I thank you.

H.E. Dr Ahmed Ihab Gamaleldin, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Human Rights, Humanitarian and Social Affairs, Egypt

(Original Arabic)

Thank you very much for giving me the floor. I would like to begin by confirming Egypt's endorsement of all the statements made by the geopolitical groups to which we belong.

It is a pleasure for me to be participating in this important Conference as head of the Egyptian delegation and to convey to you the warmest greetings of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and His Excellency's best wishes for the success of this Conference.

Egypt is looking forward to exchanging expertise and best national practices for the strengthening of respect for international humanitarian law and the promotion of its principles in this prestigious global humanitarian forum the holding of which during this present year coincides with the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949. It is therefore the most appropriate time for me to reaffirm Egypt's resolute commitment to the principles and provisions of international humanitarian law. Accordingly, Egypt welcomes the fact that a draft resolution on "better national implementation of international humanitarian law" is being brought before this International Conference and confirms its willingness to continue its positive participation in the consultation process that began several months ago with a view to finalizing, in a consensual and balanced form, that and all the other draft resolutions brought before the International Conference.

Today I will update you on the latest endeavours that my Government has made to strengthen respect for international humanitarian law, that branch of international law to which an outstanding contribution has been made by numerous illustrious Egyptian jurists belonging to a country that helped to establish the principles of international humanitarian law many decades ago and embraced the idea of creating a national mechanism to strengthen respect for that law. In 1999, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the four Geneva Conventions, Egypt organized an Arab regional conference in Cairo which recommended the establishment of national IHL committees. In 2000, we established our National Committee, chaired by the Minister of Justice, in collaboration with all the ministries and agencies concerned, as well as the Egyptian Red Crescent and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Our National Committee on International Humanitarian Law has recently engaged in numerous activities. By way of example, to disseminate the principles of international humanitarian law, we organize training courses for officers of the armed forces, the police and diplomats in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross. We have hosted conferences such as the meeting of Arab national IHL committees in September 2018 which adopted a regional plan of action for the implementation of international humanitarian law in the Arab World. We have also held symposiums such as the two-day workshop organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross and Al Azhar University in Cairo in November 2019 on "the protection of human dignity in Islamic jurisprudence and international humanitarian law", which demonstrated the high degree of congruity between the principles of international humanitarian law and the rules of the Islamic Shari'a applicable in time of war.

This national mechanism also promoted closer cooperation and exchanges of expertise and visits with its counterpart Arab committees and commissions.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Egypt believes in the importance of more in-depth positive dialogue and ongoing fruitful collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross, the custodian of international humanitarian law, and its partner the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). The Minister of Foreign Affairs met with the Secretary General of the IFRC in Cairo in January 2019 and we have also received a number of high-ranking officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross. We confirmed our full backing for the International Committee and the International Federation, as well as our Government's eagerness to support the activities of the Egyptian Red Crescent Society in, inter alia, promotion of awareness of the Movement's Principles. The Egyptian Red Crescent and the International Committee of the Red Cross have signed a four-year agreement on partnership in joint humanitarian operations.

Dialogue with the International Committee of the Red Cross has become increasingly important in today's troubled world and in our unstable region which, most unfortunately, is witnessing armed conflicts and gross violations of international humanitarian law and individual attempts are even being made to bestow legitimacy on policies and practices that breach the rules and legal obligations laid down in the four Geneva Conventions.

Hence, the report issued by the International Committee of the Red Cross on "international humanitarian law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts" emphasized the need to continue regarding that law as applicable in today's world since it ensures a minimum degree of humanity in time of war. In fact, there is also a dire need to remind all the parties of their duty to respect, and ensure respect for, their obligations under international humanitarian law, particularly in regard to the prohibition of targeting civilians and civilian objects. I would also like to highlight the report's reference to the increasing threat of terrorism and I fully agree that it is legitimate and necessary for States to take counterterrorism measures to ensure their security since acts of terrorism negate the basic principle of humanity and go against the principles underlying international humanitarian law. I wish to confirm Egypt's desire to ensure that counterterrorism measures taken by States do not infringe international human rights law and international humanitarian law - where applicable - and also to ensure that civilians in need of humanitarian assistance are not harmed by such measures.

Egypt stresses the need for concerted endeavours by the international community to tackle the root causes of armed conflicts and humanitarian crises resulting from disasters and internal displacements. Egypt made every endeavour to this end during its presidency of the African Union in 2019 which coincided with the declaration of the Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa. In this connection, Egypt emphasizes the importance of the topics addressed by the draft resolutions brought before the International Conference this year, including those relating to disaster risk reduction and the Movement's contribution to efforts to tackle epidemics in regard to which it highlighted the need for early preparedness, preventive measures and the building of resilience among local communities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finally, in keeping with Egypt's ongoing desire to participate effectively in this distinguished humanitarian forum, I have pleasure in announcing the following voluntary pledges by Egypt:

1. Promotion of awareness of the principles of international humanitarian law, especially among youth.
2. Organization of training courses up to 2023 with a view to strengthening respect for international humanitarian law.
3. Continued implementation of the regional plan of action for the application of international humanitarian law in the Arab World during the period 2018-2020.
4. Translation into Arabic, through the Cairo International Centre for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding, of training materials on topics relating to the full protection of civilians.
5. Promulgation of legislation to protect the emblems and symbols specified in the four Geneva Conventions and the Protocols Additional thereto.
6. Signature by Egypt's National Committee on International Humanitarian Law of memorandums of understanding for collaboration with its counterparts in the Arab States.

We undertake to implement some of these pledges jointly with our National Society, the Egyptian Red Crescent, as a token of the special ongoing partnership between the Egyptian authorities and that time-honoured non-governmental body which is playing a prominent role in humanitarian action in and outside Egypt.

In conclusion, I emphasize the importance of continued respect for the principle of consensus not only in regard to the draft resolutions but also in all our deliberations with a view to achievement of our lofty common goal, namely the strengthening of respect for international humanitarian law, dissemination of its principles and application of its provisions in all countries of the world.

Thank you.

Mr Eberhard Desch, Federal Dissemination Officer, German Red Cross

(Original English)

Madam Chair. On behalf of the German Red Cross, I would like to say some words on the draft resolution 'Bringing international humanitarian law home: A road map for better national implementation of international

humanitarian law'. This resolution rightly focuses on measures that States and National Societies can take domestically to enhance the implementation and application of humanitarian law. Whereas a 'road map' is provided, the draft resolution allows and encourages members of the Conference to tailor these measures to their specific contexts and needs in order to have a maximum impact.

The German Red Cross supports the inclusion of the ten measures into the operative paragraphs 1 to 10 of the resolution and considers them helpful for States and the components of the Movement to identify actions which may be undertaken to implement and apply humanitarian law more effectively. In particular, the German Red Cross welcomes the recognition given to National IHL Committees which have played a crucial, yet occasionally underappreciated, role in advising and assisting authorities to implement and apply humanitarian law. The German National Committee is not only a central forum for reflections and discussions about humanitarian law implementation within Germany, it developed close and constructive relations with other National Committees and benefited from these considerably. As the exchanges on the working modalities and areas of priorities of these committees have been mutually inspiring and rewarding, we welcome the explicit call for strengthening of the cooperation between National Committees within the draft resolution.

The German Red Cross thus strongly encourages the members of the International Conference to join it in endorsing the draft resolution. Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Walter Stevens, Ambassador, Head of Delegation, Permanent Delegation of European Union in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States. We welcome the 33rd International Conference as a unique platform for substantial discussion on international humanitarian law and the challenges faced by the humanitarian action, and the EU and its member States remain committed to continue the discussion on respect for and implementation and further strengthening of IHL and the humanitarian principles, in close cooperation with the National Societies. We particularly acknowledge the important role of the ICRC as a guardian and promoter of international humanitarian law and express our appreciation for the Movement, strong commitment and dedication in providing assistance to those in need, often in very challenging operational contexts.

70 years after the adoption of the Geneva Conventions, the European Union reaffirms its strong support, respect for and promotion of international humanitarian law, which remains crucial to achieving the best protection for those affected by armed conflicts. We are seriously concerned about the widespread lack of compliance with international humanitarian law during many armed conflicts, particularly by deliberate breaches of IHL. This disregard of the rules of armed conflicts poses a critical challenge to the protection of civilians and vital civilian infrastructure such as schools and hospitals that have been targeted, in particular when explosive weapons are used indiscriminately in populated areas.

So we, as the European Union, remain strongly committed to the fight against impunity for atrocity crimes, and underline the important and complementary role of the International Criminal Court in case a State is unable or unwilling to carry out genuine investigation or prosecution of alleged perpetrators of the most serious international crimes. Those crimes are quite often committed in connection with armed conflict. We also appreciate very much the crucial contribution of other accountability mechanisms, such as IIIM, in documenting serious breaches of IHL and in ensuring accountability.

The EU and its member States urge for international respect for international humanitarian law and remain committed to strengthening the implementation and dissemination of IHL, and we will continue to implement a broad range of actions to ensure better compliance with international humanitarian law, including measures aimed at enhancing the safety of humanitarian workers and volunteers, as well as medical personnel. We strongly support initiatives to collect and analyse data on attacks against medical personnel in hospitals in order to better address and prevent such attacks. In compliance with the international humanitarian law and in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2286 on the Protection of Health Care in Armed Conflict, the EU and its member States will also seek ways to enhance their support in implementation and respect for the legal framework regulating humanitarian work, especially to enhance the protection of humanitarian and medical personnel, both staff and volunteers.

Domestic implementation of relevant international instruments plays a central role in fulfilling obligations under IHL, and we at the European Union and its member States have pledged to work together for the further participation in principled IHL and other relevant international legal instruments to explore ways of better

using existing mechanisms and procedures at domestic level, such as the National IHL Committees, to promote ratification and implementation of the IHL instruments. We therefore fully support the draft resolution on Bringing IHL home.

Equally, we wish to draw attention to an increasingly complex landscape that humanitarian actors operate in. Important tools of foreign and security policy, sanctions, counterterrorism measures, should be designed and implemented fully, taking into account obligations on the international law, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law, and international humanitarian law, as well as the humanitarian principles. These tools should include safeguards for principled humanitarian action to avert unintended consequences.

Technological innovation is leading to new means and methods of warfare, and further consideration should be paid to their potential impact in terms of emergence of new challenges with regard to implementation of IHL and protection of civilians.

The EU remains committed to promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and to fulfil a full and effective implementation of the badging platform, and the programme of action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and the outcomes of their Review Conferences, and remain committed to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. And in this context, also having in mind that the EU reaffirms its commitment to the protection, promotion and fulfilment of the rights of every individual to have full control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality and sexual and reproductive health, free of discrimination, coercion and violence.

The EU and its member States also remain committed to ensure the needs of the most vulnerable persons are appropriately addressed in all humanitarian settings. Protection of women and girls, boys and men, and those that are most at risk, due for example disabilities, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity and religions, are for our priority. We are enhancing efforts to address and eliminate sexual and gender-based violence in situations of armed conflicts, particularly women and girls, and children. Women and leadership in humanitarian and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Society is a very welcome resolution in that regard.

Mental health is an essential dimension of health and wellbeing. Addressing mental health and physical needs is also critical, as it helps empower individuals and build resilient societies. We therefore welcome also the draft resolution on Addressing mental health, in particular the psychosocial needs of people affected by armed conflict. Bearing in mind the profound negative impact of the separation of families due to armed conflict, disasters and other emergencies, we welcome also the draft resolution on Restoring Family Links while respecting privacy, including as it relates to personal data protection.

The negative effects of climate change lead also to increasing humanitarian needs. We call for better management of increasing risks derived from climate change by looking further into investment possibilities for preparedness, early action and disaster risk reduction. Thank you very much.

Ms Susana Vaz Patto, Director Legal Affairs Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Portugal

(Original English)

Madam Chair, my delegation shares the views expressed in the statement just delivered by the European Union but would like to highlight some elements in its national capacity.

When military operations are planned to avoid collateral damage to a school or to an hospital, IHL is at play. When local populations under military control are treated humanely by the occupying power, IHL is at play. When a prisoner of war is permitted to have a letter delivered by the ICRC to his or her family, IHL is at play. Such stories of success never make headlines, but mediatisation of IHL violations must not make us forget that those successful stories exist and that they are the result of compliance with international humanitarian law.

Madam Chair, 70 years after their adoption, the Geneva Conventions are the backbone of today's international humanitarian law. They are the most ratified treaties in the world, although their implementation by parties to armed conflict fails to be as universal as their acceptance. The most pressing problems in the implementation of the Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols relate to both old and new challenges, from State capacity to train their armed forces on IHL matters, to new means and methods of warfare, and new actors in armed conflicts. Portugal is deeply concerned by the tendencies underlined in the latest ICRC report on Challenges of contemporary armed conflict. We condemn all forms of violence against civilians and welcome efforts for better coordination among humanitarian actors and other relevant stakeholders.

Indeed, a universal effort for the promotion and protection of international humanitarian law demands the commitment of each and every member of this Movement. We welcome the call for a national ownership in the effective implementation of IHL, as contained in the resolution entitled Bringing IHL home, currently discussed at this Conference. Portugal and the Portuguese Red Cross will adopt the pledge aiming at establishing a National Committee on IHL to foster national coordination and a better implementation.

Madam Chair, my delegation is pleased to announce today that Portugal has decided to significantly raise its voluntary contribution to cover several ongoing humanitarian crises before the end of this year. This is a sign of Portugal profound trust in humanitarian action and its support for the mandate and assistance on protection of the International Committee, as provided for by the Geneva Conventions. I thank you, Madam Chair.

H.E. Ms Adriana del Rosario Mendoza Agudelo, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Colombia in Geneva

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chair. I wish to congratulate you and all the conference officers on your election to preside over the work of this Conference, which we are confident will achieve the proposed objectives and deliver concrete results.

Colombia attaches great importance to international humanitarian law (IHL) as an instrument to protect civilians and as an action framework for the work of the military. We therefore regard it as highly positive that one of the themes of the Conference is strengthening the implementation of IHL at national level through, among other things, the sharing of good practices. In this context, I wish to highlight the efforts being made by Colombia in the active implementation of IHL on the ground, through military guidelines and manuals of operational law, among which The Armed Forces Operations Manual deserves special mention; it contains a strong IHL component and is considered one of the most complete of its kind.

My country is also deploying considerable efforts to promote IHL. Every year, the Government, in partnership with the ICRC, organizes a course on IHL aimed at Colombian public officials to strengthen their skills and foster a more profound and positive impact on their action on the ground.

In addition, every four months, the 450,000 men in the Colombian Military Forces participate in training and retraining activities in which special emphasis is placed on human rights and IHL. Under the “learn by doing” approach, instruction in both fields is strengthened, thanks to a strategy designed with the participation of the United Nations and the ICRC.

Another of the themes contained in the principal pillar of this Conference also demands our attention. In terms of the evolution of vulnerabilities, we will discuss access to essential services in the context of psychosocial needs and the function of volunteers in community health services.

Likewise, of particular importance to my country is the part that we will dedicate to migration and internal displacement, considering the enormous complexity resulting from our position as the recipient of the largest number of Venezuelan migrants in the world.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express here a few words of recognition for the work done by the National Society of the Colombian Red Cross, which has contributed to alleviating and preventing suffering with a high degree of solidarity and a vocation of service.

In addition we highlight the joint work of States and the various parties that make up the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which demonstrates that collaborative work between the various actors promotes encouraging and effective results in favour of the highest aspirations of the human spirit. Thank you very much.

Dr Christophe Eick, Legal Adviser, Director-General for Legal Affairs, Federal Foreign Office of Germany

(Original English)

Madam Chair. At this International Conference we come together under the objective to, “Act today, shape tomorrow.” Today’s armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies require us to adapt to new challenges. The Conference provides a unique forum to address these challenges, as it brings together the right people and the right institutions: the entire Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as well as the State Parties of the Geneva Conventions.

Together, we need to reinforce our commitment to international humanitarian law and principled humanitarian action and adapt in face of new technological developments and challenges, in order to continue providing for the basic needs of the most vulnerable.

Germany is the second largest bilateral donor for humanitarian assistance. But some problems cannot be solved with money alone. The humanitarian space is shrinking all over the world. Therefore, Germany, together with France, with the support of the ICRC and UN OCHA, drafted the 'Humanitarian call for action', which aims at strengthening respect for international humanitarian law and principled humanitarian action.

Joining this 'Call for Action' means to take practical measures. One example is to spread knowledge on international humanitarian law. Just as the German armed forces already do whenever they carry out training missions abroad, such as in Mali. Furthermore, the Call aims at safeguarding humanitarian space vis-à-vis counter-terrorism regulations and sanctions. We want to clarify the relationship between the relevant legal regimes and international humanitarian law in order to prevent 'overcompliance' and the criminalization of principled humanitarian assistance.

A further example is to support those who negotiate humanitarian access on the ground. Their success saves human lives. In November we hosted a conference with the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation in Berlin to strengthen the capabilities of humanitarian organizations to negotiate on the frontlines.

The Call for Action is part of the Alliance for Multilateralism. 43 States have already endorsed the Call for Action, and we will strive to increase this number because the principles it promotes are universal.

Only when we work together can we react appropriately to current challenges. Therefore, we consider the International Conference to be a unique forum to work together, addressing today's challenges, strengthening IHL and protecting the humanitarian space. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

H.E. Ms Nassima Baghli, Ambassador, Permanent Delegation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the title of this 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, "Act today, shape tomorrow", is very topical and appropriate. It reflects the idea that the international humanitarian law is always in jeopardy and needs to be constantly upheld and adapted to be able to respond to future challenges. We need indeed to be prepared to a world in constant evolution generating new threats, new forms of conflicts and new ways of conducting those conflicts.

The documents put at our disposal for this Conference are very well documented and thought-provoking. They give a clear picture of what is unfolding before our eyes in terms of shapes of conflicts and their multiple impacts.

Conflicts today are generating a lot of casualties among the civilian populations. Increasingly fighting is taking place in urban areas and lead to large displacements of populations, whether inside and outside countries. The multiplication of actors involved in conflicts are also making things more complex.

In the face of this situation, there is a need to recommit to IHL principles. The Geneva Conventions that we are celebrating the 70th anniversary are more valid than ever. IHL has been built on the ruins of many wars and constitutes a moral compass that reminds us of our common humanity. There is also a need to be responsive to new challenges and situations. For example, the disruption of education and mental health are issues which should deserve great attention. It is true that the more belligerents respect the IHL, the more chances we have to minimize the damages and rebuild more quickly States and societies.

The principles guiding IHL are totally in line with Islamic values. Sacredness of the human life, compassion, the distinction between civilians and military, are part of those principles, as well as restraint in war. The values founding the IHL are universal and thus transcends legal traditions, civilizations and religions.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation is guided by those same principles in its peace efforts. The OIC is involved in many places and is doing its best to mend the ties between communities through notably the involvement of religious leaders. On the issue of education, OIC offers grants to some students to pursue their studies in OIC member States.

The OIC is very much committed to the IHL and has organized seminars on this topic with the collaboration of the ICRC. I thank you very much.

Mr Pertti Torstila, President, Finnish Red Cross

(Original English)

Madam Chair, we are today facing great humanitarian challenges globally. Climate change, and continuing complex conflicts, and migration, displacements, political polarization, and growing gaps in health, welfare and economical possibilities, both between and inside countries, touch us as a part of our respective communities and as individuals.

We, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, must do our utmost to help those in need to our best ability. But whatever the challenge, the Movement can only give its help if the States provide humanitarian space and access for it. It is the responsibility of the States to ensure and protect that space. Paradoxically, while the needs are bigger, humanitarian space is under threat. The politicization of aid, neutrality of humanitarian work, reduced protection of humanitarian workers, are all issues that States can directly impact. Without that support, humanitarian work is at risk. With climate change increasing and complexifying the needs, we will be looking at a world of unmet demand.

In order to have that necessary access, we need trust – trust between States, trust between States and humanitarian organizations, and trust between humanitarian organizations and affected communities.

As a Movement, we have the responsibility to earn that trust. Our guiding principle is humanity – helping those in need. And not only by doing the right thing, but by doing it efficiently and transparently. This must be at the core of how we operate in order to survive the decades to come. We must ensure we help people in need the way they want to be helped, prioritizing the most vulnerable by taking into account such things as age, gender or disability. And we must act together – not just on paper and in resolutions, in action.

For the States, once more we ask you to remember and respect our principles. Helping others requires resources and funds, but funds must not be used as a tool to advance political goals, but to improve the lives of those who suffer.

When we help separated family members to find each other, it is not to advance this or that migration policy, but because families belong together. When we provide medical help to a child wounded in an armed conflict, it is not to take sides in that particular conflict, but because that is why our Movement has been founded for.

We are here gathered in Geneva to have discussions on issues affecting lives of the most vulnerable people, and we urge the Conference participants to make these discussions constructive, using this unique opportunity to build better cooperation and trust as a basis for our important work. Thank you.

Mr Erki Kodar, Undersecretary for Legal and Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia

(Original English)

Madam Chair, I have the honour to speak on behalf of Estonia. First let me state that we align ourselves with the statement made by the European Union.

Estonia remains committed to better implementation and strengthening of international humanitarian law (IHL) and acknowledge the important role of the ICRC and the IFRC in this field. Estonia highly values the organizations' efforts in alleviating human suffering in crises around the world.

Estonia, as an elected member of the UN Security Council for the next two years, will uphold the need to promote respect for the rules-based international order, especially for the rules and principles of IHL. Estonia will continue to support efforts to improve the protection of civilians who are the victims of IHL violations, and we will work for enabling humanitarian access to those most suffering in conflict affected areas.

While welcoming the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, we are concerned about the lack of compliance with IHL. Estonia remains committed to the fight against impunity for atrocity crimes, and we see that the International Criminal Court has an important complementary role in this, and we invite all States to cooperate with it.

Madam Chair, besides responding to the humanitarian situations, we should also place more emphasis on prevention. Since conflicts are still the main reasons for humanitarian crises, the protection and promotion of human rights is key in this regard. As we learn from the new Challenges Report, there are many new triggers for humanitarian situations. The role of climate and environmental change is becoming more and more



important, having not only a direct effect on people's lives but also acting as a multiplier of existing threats, adding another level of complexity and vulnerability in conflict-affected settings.

The role of cyber security is increasing in modern conflicts. Estonia will continue to raise awareness of responsible behaviour in cyberspace. We underline that IHL applies to cyber means in armed conflicts. In this regard, we hope to complement and work closely with the ICRC in raising awareness and affirm the applicability of IHL to cyber-operations during armed conflicts. Madam Chair, thank you for your attention.

Mr Michel Anglade, Director, Geneva Advocacy Office, Save the Children International

(Original English)

Madam Chair. I am delivering this statement on behalf of Save the Children, and I will focus my statement on children caught in conflict and children in humanitarian crises.

Madam Chair, as we mark the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, we also mark the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a key legal instrument that played a critical role in catalysing progress for children. However, as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, and the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, we can see that armed conflicts, displacement and disasters not only jeopardize the progress that have been achieved so far, but they also prevent the future prospect of progress.

And I would like to highlight a few key points and to call on all actors to first commit to make attacks on children unacceptable and to adhere to international legal frameworks, and to implement laws, policies and declarations that protect children in conflict, including the Safe Schools Declaration to protect education from attack, and the Paris principles.

We would like also to call on all actors to commit to treat children associated with armed groups primarily as victims, and we call on all actors to support the reintegration of children associated with armed groups into society through holistic, evidence-based reintegration programming.

Third, we also call on all actors to support children's access to mental health and psychological support services – through reliable, predictable multi-year funding to these services, and to have these services being integrated in all humanitarian responses – so that children can rebuild their lives and boost their resilience.

We also call on all actors to hold perpetrators to account for their violations of children's rights during armed conflicts, notably through supporting international mechanisms to prosecute such perpetrators, and to ensure that there are dedicated resources to investigate crimes committed against children in investigation mechanisms.

We also call for the development of a political declaration that includes strong, concrete commitments to protect civilians, and especially children from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

And last, we call on scaling-up investment and action to adapt to climate change and to ensure that adequate measures are taken to protect children and their futures from the threats of climate change. I would like to thank you.

H.E. Mr Zenebe Kebede Korcho, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, I would like to start by extending my delegation's appreciation for the organization of this meeting. I would also like to congratulate you and all members of the Bureau on your election. Ethiopia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Republic of Zimbabwe on behalf of the African Group.

Madam Chair, this conference is convened at a time we are witnessing an increase in irregular migration that has claimed a number of lives of mainly youth that try to cross deserts and water bodies in search of better life. The year has also seen pervasive flow of refugees and internal displacement induced by conflict and natural disasters causing severe humanitarian crisis.

Compliance with international humanitarian law both by States and non-State actors, safety of humanitarian personnel, protection of civilians, humanitarian access and coordination of humanitarian response also remains a huge challenge in addressing emergency situations. The growing demand for humanitarian assistance and the funding gap in responding to the multiple humanitarian crises in many parts of the world, in particular in Africa, is putting to test the capacity of governments and humanitarian actors,

Madam Chair, beyond the challenges, the year has also been instrumental due to the measures taken and developments observed to tackle challenges of irregular migration and displacement.

It is at the dawn of 2019 that we have adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The Compact requires our collective action to end the pervasive scourge of irregular migration. It demands innovative and human-centred migration policies that enable countries of destination make use of the workforce available in their countries of origin. It also demands countries of origin of migrants, especially African countries, to redouble their efforts at economic growth to harvest their population dividends.

This year Africa commemorated the 50th year anniversary of the African Convention on the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. In this connection, my country Ethiopia, which is currently the third largest refugee hosting country in Africa, is recognized by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights for its effort to implement the convention and host refugees. The Government of Ethiopia will reinforce its efforts not only in providing shelter to forcibly displaced populations but also to prevent the causes of displacement, mainly conflicts and natural disasters.

Finally, I would like to reaffirm the commitment of the Government of Ethiopia to continue to uphold its international humanitarian obligations and further strengthen its partnership with the Movement and its components. I wish this convention a successful deliberation. Thank you.

H. E. Mr Omar Zniber, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco in Geneva

(Original French)

Madam Chair, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the Conference this year coincides with the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. It is an ideal opportunity for us to highlight the Kingdom of Morocco's unwavering commitment to the universal rules of international humanitarian law and reaffirm its continued support to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in their efforts to keep humanitarian issues high on the international community's agenda.

Building on its humanitarian engagement and experience, the Kingdom of Morocco, which acceded to the four Geneva Conventions soon after gaining independence, has been and continues to be actively involved in different regional and international initiatives aimed at promoting IHL.

More specifically, the Kingdom of Morocco has undertaken efforts in various areas to make our country a paragon of compliance with the rules of IHL, including the incorporation of international obligations into domestic legislation and regulations and the implementation of its commitments through a number of measures, some of which I would like to mention here today at this Conference: first, the creation of the Moroccan Red Crescent, the National Committee on International Humanitarian Law and the Moroccan Ombudsman and, later, the establishment of the Equity and Reconciliation Commission and the inclusion of provisions in the Preamble and Article 23 of the 2011 Constitution to criminalize genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and all serious and systematic violations of human rights.

Another such measure is the implementation of training programmes on the rules and principles of IHL for the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces and other relevant actors. In fact, this very afternoon, my delegation has taken part in an important side event on this subject at which a senior officer from the Royal Armed Forces presented their manual on IHL.

I would also like to mention, this afternoon, that Morocco, in this same spirit of international cooperation for peace and security, has participated, in its recent history, in numerous peacekeeping operations involving over 70,000 Moroccan soldiers.

My country has also deployed many medical and surgical field hospitals in recent times. Specifically, it has set up 16 such hospitals either as part of United Nations operations or bilaterally with brotherly and friendly countries. Altogether, Morocco has provided more than 2,500,000 medical services within the framework of such operations over almost half a century of humanitarian assistance.

Before I finish, I would like to announce that my delegation is organizing an important side event at 1 pm on Thursday, 12, which is next Thursday, on implementation of the humanitarian priorities of the Global Compact for Migration. Thank you, Madam Chair.

H.E. Mr Andrius Krivas, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Republic of Lithuania in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, Lithuania aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and wishes to add the following in our national capacity.

In 2019 we mark the 70 years anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, while we also celebrate the 100th anniversary of the IFRC and of the Lithuanian National Red Cross Society. Our national celebration took place in Vilnius in October and was graciously attended by the IFRC President, Mr Francesco Rocca.

The Lithuanian Red Cross Society was established in 1919 simultaneously with most government institutions, soon after the independent Republic of Lithuania had been proclaimed. It is now the oldest and very renowned nongovernmental organization in Lithuania. We appreciate the important work carried out by its dedicated leadership and humanitarian workers.

Humanitarian agenda is very important to Lithuania both on national and international levels. We see it as an essential instrument of implementation of the Agenda 2030, and as an indispensable component in pursuing the objectives of peace and security, development, and human rights.

Today, international humanitarian challenges are increasingly complex and urgent. They require innovative solutions and new approaches based on full respect for international humanitarian law, which should lead the actions of both State and non-State parties to conflicts. With this in mind, Lithuania, among other like-minded countries, submitted an open pledge on the support for the International Humanitarian Fact Finding Commission, which encourages the use of the Commission as well as the recognition of its competence. We invite other countries to join the pledge and express their support to the Commission.

Madam Chair, timely financing is one of the key factors of success of the humanitarian action. Lithuania gradually increases its international humanitarian and development assistance, to which we also committed under Agenda 2030. As part of this commitment, we continue to support the humanitarian action carried out by the IFRC and ICRC. In May this year my Government designated 100,000 Euros for IFRC humanitarian assistance to the people in Venezuela. On top of that, I am pleased to announce that the decision was taken last week to allocate another 100,000 Euros to the ICRC humanitarian assistance activities in Ukraine.

Wishing success to this International Conference, I would like to conclude by reaffirming Lithuania's solid commitment to, and full respect for, international humanitarian law, as well as our support to the noble objectives and principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Thank you.

Ms Leda Koursoumba, First Vice-President, Cyprus Red Cross Society

(Original English)

Madam Chair, I am particularly pleased to participate in this Conference, representing the Cyprus Red Cross Society, and speak on migration and the challenges it poses.

Migration is an issue of great importance for our Movement, as it is directly related to our common humanity. A number of resolutions have been adopted on the topic, inter alia, urging governments to respect rules of international law, including human rights and humanitarian law. National Societies are expected to support states in ensuring that the humanitarian needs of migrants – as well as those of vulnerable persons in host communities – are met.

Cyprus is highly affected by the constantly increasing migratory flows in South and Eastern Mediterranean. Migration management poses a significant challenge for the authorities of the Republic of Cyprus. Within this framework, the Cyprus Red Cross Society, as auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, implements a number of programs targeted to ensure respect of the human rights of migrants arriving in our country, with particular attention to the most vulnerable groups, such as, women, children and persons with disabilities.

More precisely, we are the first responder to newly arriving migrants, providing humanitarian assistance, RFL info sessions, including a mobile application relevant to it, and psychological support. We also provide for asylum-seekers, adults and children, pharmaceuticals and psychological support and we implement an EU funded program for leisure activities. For migrants awaiting deportation, we provide psychological support and humanitarian aid.

For this work, we have the continuous and generous support of the Hordaland Branch of the Norwegian Red Cross, to whom we are grateful. We also express our thanks to the Icelandic Red Cross, the Luxembourg Red Cross and the Monaco Red Cross, for the assistance they have given us throughout the years. We are one of the seven EU National Societies that have implemented the ESIRAS EU funded project, successfully coordinated by the Spanish Red Cross, to whom we also express our appreciation and thanks.

In carrying out our mandate, Madam Chair, we work in collaboration with the state authorities in a climate of mutual trust and within a frank and constructive dialogue. Thus, we welcome the resolution on Adopting a Movement statement on migrants and our common humanity. We consider this Conference the right forum to pave the way for supporting National Societies, particularly those disproportionately affected by this humanitarian challenge. I thank you, Madam Chair.

H.E. Ms Margarida Izata, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Angola in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates, Angola aligns itself with the statement made by Zimbabwe on behalf of the African Group.

The Republic of Angola thanks and commends ICRC for the continued commitment to the promotion and application of the international humanitarian law, particularly by being present in a permanent way before, during and after a disaster, a health crisis or a conflict, acting in such a way that the humanitarian imperative continues to prevail before any other consideration.

Madam Chair, Angola, as a beneficiary of ICRC's work, has always supported its activities at national and regional level, and encouraged the International Red Cross Movement in the world to continue to act positively in order to ensure promotion and respect of the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary character, unity, and universality.

Madam Chair, finally, given the magnitude of the current drought situation in Angola, and the need for a combined response, we call on the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for their support. In the same vein, Angola, while hoping for the return to donors to the country, would like to take this opportunity to reiterate its collaboration with ICRC in keeping up with its objectives, as well as in improving the lives of needy populations everywhere, including in Africa. I thank you.

Ms Adriana Solano Laclé, Minister Counselor, Head of the Department of International Law and Humanitarian Law and Sustainable Development and Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chair. The Government of Costa Rica welcomes the International Conference, convinced that in 70 years the Geneva Conventions and their protocols remain fully in force and we must keep up our efforts to ensure complete respect for international humanitarian law, bringing humanity to our actions and safeguarding the dignity of everyone,

At a time of great geopolitical, economic, social and political change, the international community must strengthen those basic agreements which lie at its origin.

By recognizing that we are part of a single humanity, we have not only agreed the concept of the inherent dignity of every human being, but have also agreed a system which governs the conduct of the actors in times of conflict and war.

Costa Rica, a country which abolished the army 71 years ago, trusts in the power of multilateralism to jointly agree rules to defend International humanitarian law, conscious of the great challenges before us.

We are at a decisive moment in the history of humanity, a race against time to tackle the growing challenges of climate change and the speed and complexity of technological change which will require us to provide an effective response and which have repercussions for international humanitarian law.

The use of artificial intelligence and new lethal autonomous weapons, as well as the involvement of non-state actors, exacerbates the risks and the adverse effects of armed conflicts and dehumanizes them. We cannot ignore the latent threat of the use of nuclear weapons and the humanitarian imperative to bring about their elimination.

As States, we have a responsibility to respond not only to the humanitarian problems related to armed conflicts, disasters, epidemics and pandemics, but also their causes.

This Conference invites us to pause along the way and also find a place for the values of peace, dialogue, democracy, social justice and respect for human dignity as fundamental elements to

In Costa Rica, we have been consolidating a national system of measures, laws and instruments to strengthen respect for the dissemination and application of international humanitarian law in the national territory, and this year we are celebrating 15 years of the Costa Rican International Humanitarian Law Commission.

The Costa Rican Red Cross, as an active member, supports the work of the Costa Rican International Humanitarian Law Commission through the permanent exercise of its fundamental principles and the constant support of the Costa Rican Red Cross in the dissemination of international humanitarian law and as partner in the implementation of concrete prevention and protection measures has been fundamental, not only to be prepared for the build-up of conflict, but also to sustain a peaceful society.

Costa Rica trusts in the power of humanity and is committed to humanitarian action to make room for the living face of those who daily bear the brunt of conflicts, wars and disasters. Thank you very much.

Mr Oleg Kravehenkco, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus

(Original Russian)

Madam Chair,

The holding of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement coincides with the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949.

Belarus sees important symbolism in this concurrence. As a country that suffered heavily in the First and Second World Wars, we perceive the Geneva Conventions as a living reminder of the devastating consequences of any war.

It is with regret, great concern and unease that in recent years we note the extreme distrust and a constant growth of ill will between individual States, with heightened confrontational rhetoric, a rise in military spending, and escalation of conflicts.

In 1949, the delegation of Belarus took part in discussions on the text of this international instrument. And it is important for us that the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols have retained their significance as a living and effective instrument to protect people in zones of armed conflict. Belarus intends to make a voluntary contribution to the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross to prevent the trafficking of persons, a phenomenon closely related to armed conflict.

In our national anthem, we sing: “We, the Belarussians, are peaceful people”. Hence, our country strives to be a platform for dialogue in pursuit of the peaceful settlement of international conflicts. Thus we also pay tribute to the victims of the First and Second World Wars. We very much want to believe that historical memory is the best vaccine against new global war.

Belarus conscientiously fulfils its obligations under the Geneva Conventions and other instruments of international humanitarian law to which it is a party.

We support the efforts to strengthen compliance with international humanitarian law. We believe that strengthening the conference mechanisms, as well as the exchange of information and sharing of experience will help to bring the positions of States closer together and strengthen humanitarian cooperation.

At this time it is vital to avoid any actions which might undermine trust in the Movement as an impartial and non-political organization, whose principal aim is to help people.

Today, IHL faces many challenges. In this context, one of the themes of the 33rd International Conference was “Bringing IHL home”.

Belarus has long-standing, practical experience in the improvement of national legislation, disseminating knowledge among the public, increasing the qualifications of military personnel and holding scientific conferences. We have established effective cooperation between the Government, our National Red Cross Society and the ICRC, including with regard to the dissemination of knowledge, and we are ready to share our knowledge and insights.

In conclusion, I wish once again to underline the commitment of Belarus to the letter and spirit of the Geneva Conventions. On behalf of the Republic of Belarus, I would like to express the hope that our work will achieve meaningful results. I call on all participants to support the spirit of consensus in our work. Thank you for your attention.

H.E. Ms Dayana Kostadinova, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Bulgaria in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, the 33rd International Conference is a major event bringing us together at a time that marks the 70th anniversary of the landmark Geneva Conventions. We express our appreciation for the Movement's strong commitment and dedication in providing assistance to the most vulnerable, and we call for a coordinated approach in our joint actions to addressing these needs.

We fully share the view that enhancing respect for IHL is 'the single most important challenge to IHL', and we regret that it was not possible to reach a consensus within the intergovernmental process on strengthening respect for IHL. We are seriously concerned about the lack of compliance with IHL and we underline the important role of the International Criminal Court in the fight against impunity. In this regard fully aware of the importance of the IHFFC in facilitating respect for IHL, Bulgaria pledges to support its actions.

Bulgaria will continue to contribute to the efforts to strengthen compliance with IHL as adherence to it is a priority of our foreign policy. I would like to share some concrete examples of our strong engagement in this area.

At the World Humanitarian Summit, Bulgaria committed to promote and enhance respect for IHL, as well as to comply with humanitarian policies and legally binding documents related to gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights. Bulgaria also joined the Call for Humanitarian Action to effectively implement and strengthen IHL and supported the political declaration on the protection of humanitarian and medical personnel. Currently, Bulgaria develops a National Action plan on Women, Peace and Security.

Furthermore, placing respect for IHL at the top of the international agenda was one of the priorities of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU in the area of development cooperation and humanitarian aid. We take pride in the fact that the first report on the implementation of the EU guidelines on promoting compliance with IHL was finalized and approved during this period in the first half of 2018.

I would like to assure you that Bulgaria will continue to encourage debate and effective implementation of IHL at home and abroad, including through discussions on specific examples of our practice within the recently established National IHL Committee. Our common initiatives, including IHL compatibility study of the national legislation and implementation measures, aim at improving understanding of and encouraging a dialogue on IHL issues in a coordinated manner between the competent authorities, the Bulgarian Red Cross and other stakeholders.

Last, but not least, Bulgaria also welcomes the increased focus on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the humanitarian response and on their empowerment and meaningful participation in the decision-making process in all phases of humanitarian action. I thank you.

Mr Younis Al Khatib, President, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society

(Original Arabic)

Good evening. The final line of the preamble of the draft resolution on "Bringing IHL home" expresses deep concern regarding the continuous violations of international humanitarian law, which cause dire consequences. However, it does not define the nature of these widespread violations in more detail, some of which constitute serious breaches of IHL, nor does it address the dire humanitarian situation in the past few decades due to both international and non-international armed conflicts. This reality has become much grimmer in the past few years, especially given the complexities of contemporary wars. Yes, human suffering would have been higher and more tragic if it had not been for international humanitarian law, but this does not mean that we should not highlight the genuine failures in implementing IHL and ensuring respect for its principles and rules. The international community bears responsibility for these failures, including the UN Security Council, the UN General Assembly and State parties to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. We at the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are not immune to these failures, as our efforts in humanitarian relief and services have come at the expense of our primary role in ensuring the protection of victims of armed conflicts and pushing back against policies, measures and violations

that cause human suffering. What is more serious, perhaps, is the fact that some parties have adopted positions that contradict the established principles and rules of international law and the United Nations Charter and resolutions, including those of the Security Council, not to mention that these positions also constitute a blatant violation of Article 1, common to the four 1949 Geneva Conventions. The Palestinian Red Crescent, as a National Society, continues to work under extremely difficult circumstances, as it faces daily challenges which undermine the National Society's ability to deliver its humanitarian message and services. The medical missions of the Palestinian Red Crescent are also subject to numerous violations, including assaults against staff, vehicles and facilities, and denial or obstruction of access to those who need urgent medical care. Thank you.

Mr David Bernstein, Chairman, British Red Cross

(Original English)

Madam Chair, the British Red Cross is pleased to have this opportunity to deliver a formal statement for the record of the 33rd International Conference. I shall focus on two topics which reflect Conference themes. These are, first, practical ways to ensure greater respect for international humanitarian law; and second, the need to embrace digital transformation through the use of cash-based humanitarian assistance. However, running through both, and reflective of the Conference's third theme, is the importance of trust and the special National Society status and role as an auxiliary to the public authorities of its country.

Contributing to respect for IHL is a statutory function of the International Conference. At the 33rd International Conference, we are aiming to re-energise national commitment and efforts to implement IHL at the domestic level. In the UK, our National Society is working to do this through our special IHL and auxiliary roles. We are privileged to be a member of the National IHL Committee and through that mechanism, we have worked with our government to help produce the country's first voluntary report on the domestic implementation of IHL. This was a worthwhile exercise, and together with officials we have developed a toolkit which we hope other countries will find to be of practical assistance in producing their own implementation reports.

Cash assistance can provide a more efficient, effective and appropriate form of humanitarian action. Cash enables choice and, therefore, is more dignified and empowering for people affected by crisis. Cash is recognized as playing an important role in innovation in humanitarian response, using the potential of digital technology to reach affected populations with cash transfers.

The British Red Cross is committed to support the scale up of cash assistance through hosting the Cash Hub as a global resource for the Movement. The Cash Hub is a shared leadership initiative in collaboration with the IFRC, ICRC and partner National Societies. It provides practical advice and assistance and has been supported by the UK Government as part of their Grand Bargain Commitments following the World Humanitarian Summit.

In the coming four years the British Red Cross will continue to work with our government and with other Movement components to help meet existing and future humanitarian challenges in the most productive ways. Thank you.

Sir Iain Macleod KCMG, The Legal Advisor, Director-General, Legal, Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

(Original English)

Madam Chair. 70 years after the Geneva Conventions were first adopted, international humanitarian law remains the framework for regulating armed conflicts, even as the nature of conflict is changing. The UK remains steadfast in its commitment to international humanitarian law, and we are proud to promote pledges at this Conference that advocate more diligent implementation of the rules of IHL. One pledge encourages States to produce reports on domestic implementation of IHL, and another seeks to advance protection for media professionals documenting conflict.

Recent years have seen upsurges in both the number of conflicts and the severity of war. It is a matter of great concern that these conflicts are often accompanied by obstruction and denial of humanitarian protection and assistance. More conflicts, more armed groups and less humanitarian access to the people mean increased suffering. International humanitarian law and humanitarian principles have never been so important, as we at this Conference collectively attempt to reduce the impact of war on civilians.

Conflict continues to be the strongest driver of worldwide humanitarian need, causing excess suffering and mortality and undermining global stability. And the way the UK responds to humanitarian needs is changing.

The UK is prioritising the use of cash transfers, where markets are still functioning, and the UK is also championing improved needs assessments and better accountability to affected populations for the assistance they receive.

At this 33rd Conference, the United Kingdom expresses its gratitude to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for its unique contribution to alleviating the suffering of the most vulnerable around the world. The commitment of the Movement to the dissemination of International Humanitarian Law, promotion of humanitarian principles and to reminding us of our common humanity is pivotal in the collective attempts of those at this conference to resolve conflicts and to build and maintain peace around the world.

The United Kingdom Government is proud of its longstanding support for and strong working relationship with the British Red Cross. Their advice and expertise help to shape the Government's humanitarian response, whether in conflict, or during times of disaster. Whilst funding – both for core support and for bilateral humanitarian programmes – is a fundamental aspect of the joint work of the British Red Cross and the UK Government, close collaboration on certain projects is arguably of greater value. The UK has recently designed a project with the British Red Cross to assist other States and national societies to produce reports on their own domestic implementation of IHL, as the UK and some States did in 2019.

The UK remains convinced that compliance with international humanitarian law is the most effective way to protect civilians from the devastating consequences of war. IHL is an essential part of the international legal framework. It acts as a reminder that even in war we all share a common humanity.

H.E. Mr Andrew Bremberg, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the United States of America in Geneva

(Original English)

On behalf of the United States Government, I thank the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the Standing Commission for your efforts preparing for this important quadrennial conference.

The theme of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is “Act today, shape tomorrow”, but before turning to today and tomorrow, I would like to take note of the past. This year marks two very significant anniversaries for the Movement: the 100th anniversary of the founding of the IFRC and the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

The United States is proud of its role in and contributions to these historic moments. The proposal to form a federation of National Societies was put forward in 1919 by Henry Davison, of the American Red Cross, and in that same year the American Red Cross joined with the National Societies of Britain, France, Italy, and Japan to make that vision a reality – one that today has grown to 190 recognized National Societies, representing the world's largest humanitarian network and an essential piece of our collective humanitarian response, particularly when natural disasters strike.

Seven decades ago, in the horrors of World War II, fresh in the consciousness of their peoples, representatives of governments from around the world, including the United States, gathered in Geneva to clarify and further develop the international rules for war. The resulting set of new Geneva Conventions included extensive rules to govern the protection of war victims in inter-State conflicts, and also codified fundamental humanitarian protections applicable in all conflicts. Today, the 1949 Geneva Conventions remain some of the very few universally ratified international treaties. They are powerful pillars of international humanitarian law and have become synonymous with ethical behaviour toward war victims.

Our commitment to supporting the Red Cross Movement, to comply with international humanitarian law, and to the delivery of principled humanitarian assistance, continues today. The U.S. Government is the largest donor globally to the ICRC and the IFRC. We support the Movement's critical humanitarian work, grounded in the fundamental principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality. We also remain committed to fulfilling our own international humanitarian law obligations, including in our efforts to respect and to ensure respect for the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

As for shaping tomorrow: this conference presents an important opportunity to bring together States Parties to the 1949 Geneva Conventions with the members of the Red Cross Movement. We will debate and discuss, reflect, and plan. And ultimately, we are committed to supporting a successful Conference that distinctly reaffirms

our common purpose, which is to strengthen the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement that competently, compassionately, and effectively responds to the humanitarian needs and challenges ahead. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Vaqif Sadiqov, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Geneva

(Statement on behalf of the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement)

(Original English)

Madam Chair, I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement, in my capacity as the Chairman of the Geneva Chapter of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Our States wish to express their appreciation to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for their tireless efforts in making this Conference a success.

The main goals and objectives of the policy of non-alignment are based on the Bandung Principles of 1955. The scope of these principles includes respect for fundamental human rights, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, non-interference in the internal affairs of states, refraining from acts or threat of aggression, refraining from threat or use of force against territorial integrity or political independence of any country, peaceful solution of all international disputes in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, respect for justice and international obligations.

At the 18th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, held on this year in Baku, Azerbaijan, the NAM members States expressed their determination to act in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Non-Aligned Movement in the present international environment.

The 33rd International Conference is taking place in the year when we are commemorating the 70th anniversary of the landmark Geneva Conventions, which aim to limit sufferings of civilians during the armed conflicts and restore dignity to all those who are no longer party to conflict. And undoubtedly, the existing protracted and erupting new armed conflicts, brutalities committed by aggressors, resulting tragic consequences and sufferings of people affected by the conflicts, affirm the relevance of these Conventions today, along with ensuring greater need for respect and compliance with them.

The Non-Aligned Movement Member States are committed to respecting International Humanitarian Law. At the Baku Summit the Non-Aligned Movement countries stressed that due priority should continue to be given to promoting knowledge of, respect for and observance of States Parties' obligations assumed under international humanitarian law instruments, in particular those of the Geneva Conventions. The Non-Aligned Movement member States called upon all parties to international armed conflicts to redouble their efforts to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, including the principles of precautions against the effects of attacks, proportionality and distinction, by, inter alia, prohibiting the targeting of civilian populations, civilian property and certain special property during an armed conflict.

Madam Chair, the NAM countries urge States to comply fully with the provisions of international humanitarian law in order to protect and assist civilians in occupied territories, and further urge the international community and the relevant organizations within the UN system to strengthen humanitarian assistance to civilians under foreign occupation; and stress that all detainees or persons captured in connection with international armed conflicts must be treated by States humanely and with respect for their inherent dignity granted by international humanitarian law and relevant human rights instruments.

At the Baku Summit the Non-Aligned Movement countries recognized that member States have the primary responsibility to promote durable solutions for internally displaced persons in situations of armed conflicts, including their voluntary return in dignity and safety, as well as to ensure respect, protection, fulfilment, and restoration of their violated human rights.

Madam Chair, the chosen slogan of the 33rd International Conference, which is "Act today, shape tomorrow", and which stresses the utmost need of taking action today in order to provide for a better tomorrow is commendable. Taking this opportunity, the NAM member States wish to express their appreciation to IFRC and ICRC, who have been at the forefront of humanitarian response in the course of many years and who know the truth about sufferings of people in situations of armed conflicts.

The Non-Aligned Movement Member States express their readiness to continue collaborating with ICRC and IFRC in improving the lives of people affected by armed conflicts, disasters and other emergencies. Thank you

Prof. Michel Veuthey, Minister-Counselor, Permanent Delegation of the Sovereign Order of Malta in Geneva

(Original French)

Madam Chair, on behalf of the Sovereign Order of Malta, I would like to congratulate Mr Peter Maurer on his well-deserved re-election as president of the ICRC and welcome the appointment of Mr Robert Mardini as the new director-general. We also wish all the members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement every success in their very important work.

The Order of Malta has been taking part in the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent since 1868 and participated in the Diplomatic Conferences of 1906, 1929, 1949 and 1974.

Allow me to quote here: “The Conference of 1929 stated in its Final Act that it considered that the provisions laid down by the Geneva Convention governing the position of aid societies were applicable to the Knights of Malta and other similar orders in all countries.”

This declaration and others recognize the essential complementary work carried out by faith-based organizations and the historical contribution of the Order of Malta to providing assistance to the victims of conflicts, natural disasters and displacement and to protecting the most vulnerable.

Through its diplomatic relations with 109 States and its humanitarian and social activities around the world, the Sovereign Order of Malta promotes international humanitarian law and the fundamental principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality.

The Order of Malta attends and takes part in numerous international forums, such as the World Humanitarian Summit and other United Nations meetings and conferences, defending the universal values that protect human life and dignity and people’s inalienable rights.

The Order of Malta wishes to reaffirm that the fundamental tenets of all religions overlap significantly with the basic principles of international humanitarian law and could, in many cases, be used to promote the application of this body of law in most parts of the world.

Madam Chair, I thank you and wish you all a very successful conference. Thank you.

Mr Ali Nashid, President, Maldivian Red Crescent

(Statement on behalf of the Government of Maldives and the Maldivian Red Crescent)

(Original English)

Madam Chair, thank you for the leadership of the Movement to bring climate change high on the agenda of this International Conference, 2019.

We acknowledge and thank the invaluable efforts of the IFRC, ICRC and the National Societies for their work and contribution for bringing the open pledge on ‘Strengthening the resilience of communities to climate change and environmental degradation through climate-smart humanitarian action’ to fruition. It shines a light at these times of despair.

Delegates and dignitaries, I make this statement on behalf of the Maldives – the government of Maldives and the Maldivian Red Crescent. The harsh reality of global warming and the associated climate change is now at a point of crisis. The Emission Gap Report 2019 – global progress report on climate action – recently released by CINEP is alarming.

We are on the brink of missing the opportunity to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Why is this number so significant? At 1.5 degrees Celsius, over 70% of the coral reefs will be lost. The Maldives is a coralline island nation. Already our coral reefs are suffering with 1.1 degrees of warming. Survival of coral reefs means survival of our nation. Every fraction of additional warming will bring worse impacts, threatening livelihoods and our existence as a nation.

We have only a small window of opportunity to tackle this crisis. We need transformational changes. We know that solutions exist to limit the warming. We know that we can build our resilience. We not only owe it to ourselves, but to our children and our future generations. A healthy environment is our birthright.

What is needed is the will to do it. What is needed is the commitment to take urgent action, collectively, strongly and effectively. Together as a family, let this Movement be the guiding light to safeguard humanity and the planet. Thank you very much.

Mr Slawomir Majczyk, Deputy Director, Legal and Treaty Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland

(Original English)

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates, I have the honour of conveying, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Poland, our profound appreciation to the Government of Switzerland, and to the International Committee of the Red Cross and to the entire Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for their tireless efforts towards addressing humanitarian problems and emerging new challenges in nowadays armed conflicts. Poland also aligns itself with the statement which was made by the European Union and its member States.

This year we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions – the most widely accepted and universally applicable treaties in international relations. Despite the comprehensive nature of the Geneva Conventions, in the twenty-first century their effective implementation has encountered several obstacles, resulting from the increasing complexity of armed conflicts, including: development of new technologies – inter alia, high-tech weapons and artificial intelligence, use of cyberspace – and the footprint of mankind – inter alia, climate change impact, urban warfare – and activities of non-state armed groups. Despite new challenges in terms of compliance with international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions’ norms and principles remain as relevant as ever, not just a legacy to be commemorated.

We should never stop underlining the importance of respecting and ensuring respect for international humanitarian law, ensuring uninterrupted and universal access to humanitarian assistance and protection of civilians, especially groups that are particularly vulnerable to negative consequences of armed conflicts such as women, children, persons with disabilities, representatives of religious minorities or medical and humanitarian personnel. Poland reaffirms its strong support for the respect for and the promotion of international humanitarian law. We continuously pursue activities aiming at promotion of compliance with the international law norms both on the national or international level. These are the reasons for our support of the draft resolutions submitted to the Conference. Poland has always promoted strengthening of international humanitarian law and protection of civilians during its term also as an elected member of the United Nations Security Council. In result of these efforts, we led to the adoption of two important documents by the Council – resolution on protection of people with disabilities in armed conflicts and Presidential Statement on international humanitarian law. These are the reason for our support for the draft resolution submitted to the Conference.

In this regard I have also the honour to inform that this year we have published the 4th Report on the implementation and dissemination of international humanitarian law in the Republic of Poland for 2015-2018. This report contains information about activities already undertaken by Poland in the field of implementation and dissemination of international humanitarian law.

I have the honour to convey that Poland submitted, together with the Polish Red Cross, numerous pledges regarding disasters preparedness and response, volunteering, Restoring Family Links, social cohesion, dissemination of international humanitarian law, protection of Red Cross emblem, auxiliary role of the National Society, supplementing normative information on Polish legislation. Poland also submitted its governmental pledge regarding the protection of persons with disabilities in the context of armed conflicts.

Poland is also one of the submitters of numerous pledges of the European Union and its member States and of the pledge regarding support for the International Humanitarian Fact Finding Commission. We also supported pledge of Italy regarding protection of the rights of children affected by armed conflicts.

We are also proud to be one of the co-hosts of side event “Good offices and respect for international humanitarian law”, organised by International Fact Finding Commission, which will take place tonight and one of the additional host of side event “Persons with disabilities in humanitarian action: advantages of local partnership”, organised by Finland, which will take place tomorrow morning. Thank you

Mr Steven Hill, Legal Adviser and Director, Office of Legal Affairs, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

(Original English and French)

Madam Chair. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which appreciates the opportunity to participate in this Conference in an observer capacity. This is the second time that NATO is taking part in the proceedings of the Conference.

Over the past years NATO and the ICRC have developed substantial cooperation and dialogue at the political, strategic command and field levels. This has also included substantial cooperation on training. And that is why we are pleased to highlight our pledge to the Conference this year, in which NATO reaffirms its pledge to continue a substantive dialogue with the ICRC aimed at identifying areas where training and education provided by NATO on international humanitarian law may be further enhanced.

Indeed, NATO has a strong commitment to the rule of law and the organization works to ensure that its operations are planned and conducted strictly in accordance with international law, including applicable rules and principles of IHL.

The 29 members of the Alliance fully appreciate the importance for the Alliance's credibility and the legitimacy of its actions of meeting a high standard in complying with international legal rules applicable to its operations. When planning and carrying out Alliance military operations, NATO sees itself as setting a high standard for the lawful conduct of these operations. Some of the NATO policies that are referred to in NATO's pledge are relevant in this regard. These include policies in the field of human security, such as NATO's policy on the protection of civilians, NATO's policy on children in armed conflict, NATO's policy on conflict related sexual violence and policies on cultural property protection and human trafficking.

Madam Chair, on account of NATO's structure and the way it works, the NATO Allies are often obliged to apply stricter standards than those normally required under IHL. As decisions are taken by consensus, NATO embraces a maximalist approach rather than the lowest common denominator approach because the Allies have not all adopted the same international instruments.

Madam Chair, allow me to finish by reiterating what a great pleasure it has been for us to take part in this Conference. Thank you very much.

Mr Robert Markt, Executive President, Croatian Red Cross

(Original English)

Madam Chair, dear colleagues, Your Excellencies, thank you in advance for the attention on the statement of the Croatian Red Cross on the solidarity among National Societies.

Consequences of climate changes, migration and displacement and other climate or manmade crisis situations present a challenge to every National Society as well as to the State itself, but also place a burden on its resources. Crises go beyond political borders and emergencies and often do not affect only one state at a time. It is important to enhance the significance of the sub-regional cooperation and joint preparedness for emergency response as proof of solidarity among neighbouring National Societies.

Helping your neighbour is a way to show humanity, solidarity and cooperation among us humanitarian workers. Therefore, the Croatian Red Cross is very proud of the Neighbours Help First initiative of 17 National Societies, in partnership with the IFRC and the ICRC. This initiative represents a very good example of cross-border cooperation where National Societies can facilitate providing support and apply their expertise and good practices,

In most parts of the world neighbouring National Societies share cultural, historical, traditional and language linkages which, in a way, facilitate joint preparedness and response. We could all benefit from this capital because it strengthens already existing cooperation and it assists us in setting out future goals and visions.

In order to be as efficient as we could be in disaster response, we need to empower ourselves from within and the best way to do so is to help our neighbours in need, as it is done through Neighbours Help First initiative. Neighbours Help First Network is a good model because it goes beyond political divergences. This model could be replicated in any sub-region in the world as a good tool and way to help National Society after it has exhausted its own resources, before or simultaneously filing an emergency appeal and using IFRC mechanisms.

I will also take this opportunity to mention a core part in this initiative and these are the people – Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers and staff. Without their selfless contribution our Neighbours Help First system would not be able to operate; therefore, their dedicated work should not pass unnoticed.

Let us not forget the people – the Movement people, our volunteers, our staff. They could also be a people in need. So let us show solidarity towards our colleagues to whom our neighbourly help will give an extra strength to provide even better and stronger assistance to people in need.

From the level of local branches and National Society, all the way up to the Movement there should be solidarity and cooperation among us who share responsibility. Thank you, Madam Chair.

H.E. Mr Milorad Šćepanović, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Montenegro in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, ladies and gentlemen, in the year which marks the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Geneva Conventions we are still witnesses grave breaches of the international humanitarian law, together with serious and widespread humanitarian crises, with a great number of civilian casualties. The cost of war and violence, and the long-term effects on the local population are devastating. It is the States' responsibility to respect the norms of the international humanitarian law and provide and assure the protection and assistance to those in need during armed conflicts and other emergencies.

The ICRC's noble mission deserves the utmost respect of all States, and their responsible approach to facilitate the successful fulfilment of its mandate. Montenegro strongly supports the work of the ICRC and commends its efforts among all others in addressing the changing nature of war, the use cyber and hybrid warfare, and putting focus the detainees, restoration of family links, and prevention of sexual and gender based violence.

We call on all State and non-State actors to abide by the rules of international humanitarian law. States should devote additional efforts to domesticate international law and include it into policies and military and civil training. In this regard, with great pleasure, I wish to inform you that Montenegro has begun the process of establishing the National Commission on international humanitarian law, and we expect that Commission will be constituted at the beginning of next year as an advisory body to the Government.

Montenegro is facing a rapidly aging population, namely 18.3% of 60 and over years old. Most of them live in rural areas and many of them live alone without adequate support. The Strategy for Development of Systems for Social Protection of the Elderly 2018-2022 recognizes the importance of voluntarism. Today, in most rural areas, the support for the elderly is provided by the volunteers from the Red Cross.

We continuously work in increasing preparedness for disaster and the creation of a more resilient society, and to that end the Government of Montenegro adopted a Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, with an action plan for the period 2018-2023.

We are proud to inform that in 2018 we adopted our first law on International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, which establishes a system for sending humanitarian aid and formal cooperation with the Red Cross in the process of decision making. We must commend the work of our National Society for this commitment in providing assistance to asylum seekers, displaced persons, refugees and migrants.

To conclude, the Government of Montenegro and the National Society of the Red Cross, one of the oldest National Societies of the Red Cross in the world, remain jointly firmly committed to the respect of international humanitarian law and stand ready to deliver humanitarian aid to all those in need. I thank you.

Prof. Edoardo Greppi, President, International Institute of Humanitarian Law

(Original French)

Good afternoon, my name is Edoardo Greppi, I am President of the International Institute of Humanitarian Law.

Madam Chair, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, based in Sanremo (Italy) is pleased to be taking part in this important Conference.

For almost half a century, the Sanremo Institute has been contributing to the development, dissemination and implementation of international humanitarian law through its courses for military officers from around the world.

The Sanremo Round Table, held in September each year since 1970, in collaboration with the ICRC and other important partners, was instrumental in resolving deadlocks in the negotiation of the two Additional Protocols of 1977. Today, the Sanremo Round Table is recognized as one of the most important international events for debating issues relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts, humanitarian assistance in times of crisis, and refugees and migrants.

The Institute is very keen to continue and strengthen its collaboration with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and with States party to the Geneva Conventions and United Nations bodies that

share the same mission and the same humanitarian values. I wish you all every success in your work here at the Conference. Thank you.

H.E. Dr Nasir Ahmad Andisha, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Geneva

(Original English)

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, good evening.

I began by congratulating the organizers and everyone involved in putting together this landmark Conference. The Conference is historical both in form and substance. In form, because we are celebrating the centenary of establishment of the IFRC, a Movement that brought hope to the communities in desperate need, and now for a century have advocated for peace and dignity in every country around the world. The Movement will always be there to provide care and support before, during and after a crisis. We are also at the centenary of multilateralism and the International Labour Movement, as well as the 70th anniversary of the four Geneva Conventions.

On substance, the International Conference has already achieved a major part of its goals by bringing the voices of the world's most vulnerable people to the highest levels of government and international diplomacy. Over the past few days we witnessed strong and candid voices not only advocating but also laying out a clear plan for how to strengthening humanitarian principles, international humanitarian law, protection of civilians in armed conflicts, support the plight of millions of migrants and IDPs, and how to improve cooperation and coordination within the Movement and among the States.

Madam Chair, distinguished colleagues, the Government of Afghanistan as a pioneering high-contracting party of the Geneva Conventions and its protocols and is fully committed to its principles and have taken every measure to ensure respect and implementation of those noble charters of our humanity.

Afghanistan does not tolerate grave breaches of the international humanitarian law, war crimes and its perpetrators. IHL, its training and dissemination, is the main part of our military and armed forces curriculum at our national defence and security academies. Our defence and security forces are regularly trained in IHL. Workshop, seminar, training courses are organized for military personnel for better understanding different and new aspects of the warfare and their implications on observance of the IHL. Teaching IHL is also a part of the curriculum of our universities.

Madam Chair, protecting civilians is another high priority of our Government. While Afghanistan is facing a complex situation of armed conflict and is at the frontline of fighting against extremism and terrorist groups in south and central Asia, in addition, urban warfare and a predominant use of the IED is an added challenge for Afghanistan. These are serious concerns for our state. However, these pressures have not altered our resolve to protect civilians during the armed conflict, and we have a national policy on mitigation of civilian casualties, and an interagency board responsible for mitigating and preventing civilian casualties at the national security level.

The constitution of Afghanistan assured the neutrality, impartiality and independence of Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS). ARCS throughout existence and particularly in past four decades conflict has proven is the only country-wide humanitarian organization that has been providing relief and rendering services to disasters-affected population. ARCS reaches every niche and corner of the country where it can't be reached by other institutions during conflicts.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan appreciates the role of ICRC, IFRC in supporting the ARCS in Afghanistan.

We reiterated our committed to the Movement's Fundamental Principles and will continue our efforts to facilitate the work of the Movement to realizes its goals in helping the most vulnerable needs and provides them with timely humanitarian assistance without any sort or form of discrimination. Thank you.



4.7 FOR THE RECORD: VOICES FROM THE CONFERENCE

Wednesday, 11 December 2019 – Morning Session

(9 am)

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Good morning, and welcome to the session Voices from the Conference. Before we start, I would like to remind you that no delegations will be allowed to engage in political, racial, religious or ideological controversy. I will give the floor in the order delegations have registered and let me remind you that each speaker has three minutes. The exceptions are interventions on behalf of groups of States or National Societies, or speakers at the ministerial level.

The first one on the list this morning is the Government of Norway, please.

Mr Helge Andreas Seland, Director General, the Legal Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway

(Original English)

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, this year marks the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. International humanitarian law has developed into a strong body of law, with clear obligations for parties to armed conflict to protect civilians. Nevertheless, we continue to see that civilians are disproportionately affected by military operations. The impact is especially grave when armed conflicts take place in urban settings. This trend can and must be reversed. We urge all parties to conflict to respect international humanitarian law and to hold those that violate the rules to account. We also urge all parties to ensure respect for the rules by those over whom they have influence.

Respecting international humanitarian law has real and practical consequences for the conduct of military operations everywhere. What we see today, in particular in urban warfare, makes it clear that not all is done to ensure the protection of civilians that IHL requires. In particular, we need to address the use of explosive weapons with a wide-area effect in densely populated areas. We must identify concrete practical measures, based on experiences, which may effectively reduce incidental harm to civilians during military operations.

We must ensure the protection of health and education facilities during armed conflict. To this end, Norway will continue to work with the Movement on the Health Care in Danger initiative, and further develop our partnership to promote safe access to education. We are encouraged by the positive response to the Safe Schools Declaration launched in Oslo in 2015, and so far, endorsed by 101 States.

The continued silence and stigma related to sexual and gender-based violence is of overseas concern. The Conference on Ending Sexual and Gender-based Violence in Humanitarian Crises in Oslo this May sent a strong message that strengthening prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence is a humanitarian priority. We urge the Movement and states to heed this call.

Let me also underscore the crucial role of the Movement in respect of missing persons. Restoring family links and getting information about missing persons is important for legal, practical and emotional processes. Norway supports the ICRC project on The Missing, and the role of the Movement in Restoring Family Links.

Respect for privacy and protection of personal data is paramount. We look forward to adopting an important resolution on this topic.

Let me conclude by thanking all Movement staff and volunteers for their tireless effort in alleviating human suffering. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Emilio Rafael Izquierdo Miño, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Ecuador in Geneva

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chair. On behalf of the Government of Ecuador, I wish to thank the Government of Switzerland and the Organizing Committee for the preparation of this Conference.

It is a great opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of the Ecuadorian State to the principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which is the cornerstone which guides humanitarian action.

Likewise, the 70th anniversary of the historic Geneva Conventions allows us to reaffirm our full commitment to IHL, as a legal obligation to safeguard the physical safety and life of victims of armed conflicts and as a moral obligation to preserve the dignity of all persons.

The Government of Ecuador calls on the international community to keep alive the decision to promote, respect and apply IHL in full, in any circumstance and place where humanitarian crises occur.

It urges the parties involved in today's complex conflicts, whether international or non-international, to fulfil their obligation to comply with IHL, which expressly forbids attacks against the civilian population and requires them to guarantee protection of persons against the dangers derived from armed operations in relation to civilian facilities, hospitals, means of transport, ambulances and first aid materials and their distribution,

Inspired by these humanitarian principles, Ecuador reiterates its commitment to promote peace and universal disarmament, while it condemns the development of weapons of mass destruction, whether chemical, biological or nuclear. It advocates for the total elimination of such weapons.

The use of anti-personnel mines is a violation of international humanitarian law. In this regard, Ecuador and Peru continue to work together on issues of humanitarian demining and hope to complete the process by 2022. Peru is a country with which Ecuador has made an open promise of cooperation between the national commissions.

In this vein, the Humanitarian Demining Centre has been charged with the programme of assistance to victims of accidents involving anti-personnel mines and explosive devices.

Ecuador subscribed to the Charter for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action in January 2018, and is developing a comprehensive public policy to strengthen processes and actions in favour of persons with disabilities in the case of armed conflict or other emergencies, such as natural disasters or the effects of climate change.

States also have a primary responsibility to promote sustainable solutions for internal displacements in situations of armed conflict, including voluntary return in safe and decent conditions, and to guarantee respect for and protection of their human rights.

Finally, Ecuador wishes to celebrate with particular enthusiasm and optimism the 70th anniversary of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, recalling the memory of Henry Dunant, and the millions of people who have dedicated their lives to humanitarian causes, especially those who died in the service of humanity.

We also recognize that this is the opportunity to continue to promote multilateralism and renew the commitments of the international community to promote knowledge of, respect for and application of IHL, with efficient and effective humanitarian assistance and renewed confidence in humanitarian action as a fundamental element in building a world of peace and security.

All these are commitments of this campaign to heal the world. Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Amadeu Paulo Samuel Da Conceição, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mozambique in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, my delegation welcomes the holding of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. We express our profound appreciation for the humanitarian work being undertaken by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and other humanitarian organizations and heed their call for the upholding of the international humanitarian law (IHL). In this connection, Mozambique reaffirms its utmost respect for the principles of IHL.

Madam Chair. The conference affords us a unique opportunity to take stock of our collective and individual endeavours, as states parties, over the last four years, as well as design the best strategies to address the formidable challenges humanitarian activities are faced with, in light of IHL.

“Act today, shape tomorrow”, the chapeau theme of this conference, could not have been timely, for the conference takes place at a time the numbers of peoples in both protracted situations and emergencies have been increasing exponentially, on account of violent conflicts, natural disasters and other human made disasters.

It is important that we join our forces in further advocating for the strengthening of respect for IHL. Only this way can we spare the lives of innocent civilians in armed conflicts, at a time we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of Geneva Conventions of 1949.

In this vein, Mozambique supports the International Disarmament Agenda of the United Nations Secretary General. Likewise, Mozambique has embraced the joint call by the United Nations Secretary General and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross on the protection of civilians against the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects (EWIPA).

It is Mozambique’s belief that an International Political Declaration on EWIPA, as per the call by the United Nation Secretary General would contribute to preventing and responding to the consequences of urban warfare, at a time experts predict that violent conflicts, in future, will be fought in densely populated areas, with obvious human casualties and destruction of health and other important facilities, so crucial for provision of humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian consequences of the climate crisis are already a reality, as can be exemplified by the cyclones that recently hit Mozambique. Therefore, we need to design *fit for the purpose* humanitarian strategies, in view of the increase of extreme events, in both frequency and intensity, with their attendant humanitarian impacts.

Mozambique is supportive to all draft resolutions for the conference. We welcome, in special, the draft resolution on *Women and leadership in the humanitarian action of the Red Cross and Red Crescent*. Women feature prominently amongst vulnerable groups in both conflicts and natural disasters. Gender-based violence has been a matter of concern in humanitarian settings and needs to be tackled properly. So, women and leadership in humanitarian action would represent a paradigm shift in addressing challenges women face in emergencies and protracted situations.

As for the *climate-smart disaster laws and policies that leave no one behind*, in the framework of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, Mozambique has enacted the Law on Disaster Management, which is in tandem with Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction. The Law renders the actions of the National Institute for Disasters Management and the Red Cross and Red Crescent more efficient and, thus, more beneficial to the affected communities, as they seek to build resilience in coping with disasters.

Madam Chair, I would be remiss if I did not avail this opportunity to profoundly thank, once again, the Red Cross and Red Crescent for their unflinching humanitarian assistance to the victims of Idai and Kenneth Cyclones that devastated the Central and Northern parts of the country in March and April 2019 respectively.

In concluding, Madam Chair, I commend the Standing Commission and the Secretariat for the excellent preparation of the conference. Thank you, Madam Chair.

H.E. Mr Sadik Arslan, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Turkey in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, the Conference presents an opportune moment to reaffirm our common commitment to the humanitarian principles and the international humanitarian law, as this year marks the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions.

We witness a dramatic increase in global humanitarian crises, caused by conflicts, natural disasters, terrorism, climate change and disease outbreaks. These crises cause devastating results and pose great risks to the wellbeing of our nations and societies. To cope with this, we need to better calibrate our responses. Solidarity, cooperation and coordination among the components of the Movement are vital.

The surge in the number of refugees and displaced persons remind us that the effects of the humanitarian crises transcend national borders.

With a moral responsibility, Turkey is strongly engaged with all its agencies in humanitarian efforts to respond to all types of crises around the world. Today, Turkey is at the forefront of the global humanitarian efforts, with over 8 billion US dollars of assistance, and ranks first when the ratio of official humanitarian assistance to national income is taken into account. We shelter more than 4 million refugees from different nationalities, 3.6 million of them being Syrians under temporary protection.

Our assistance to humanitarian emergencies covers a wide geography, including Africa, Yemen, Palestine, Somalia, among others. In doing so, we rely upon the expertise and capacity of Turkish Red Crescent. Turkish Red Crescent, the first National Society to bear the Red Crescent name and use the emblem, has extended its support to 138 countries from its establishment to present. Only in the last 10 years, Turkish Red Crescent had disaster operations in 78 different countries in times of natural and human related disasters.

It is providing cross-border assistance including food, shelter, medical supplies to the north-eastern part of Turkey. Likewise, it hands out humanitarian aid to Afrin and Idlib in northwest Syria. Situated in a very turbulent region and faced with many security challenges, Turkey has paid utmost care in order to comply with its obligations under international humanitarian law, including those originating from Geneva Conventions.

Concluding my remarks, I would like to pay tribute to all humanitarian workers across the world. They provide lifesaving support to vulnerable people and do not hesitate to work in the most difficult terrains. Thank you

H.E. Ms. Lucy Kiruthu, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair. Kenya is delighted to join this important, august assembly. Let me begin by commending you on your able stewardship of this 33rd Conference. I assure you of Kenya's full support. Kenya aligns itself with the statements delivered by Zimbabwe and Azerbaijan, on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement respectively.

Madam Chair, this Conference is taking place at a historic time, when the world has in 2019, not only commemorated 100 years of multilateralism in Geneva, but also 70 years of the Geneva Conventions, which are the invaluable foundation of international humanitarian law. Multilateralism and humanitarianism are inextricably linked. It is in this beautiful city, the birthplace and home of humanitarian diplomacy that the four 1949 Geneva Conventions were negotiated and adopted. The Geneva Conventions remain just as relevant today as they did 70 years ago when they were adopted. With 194 States Parties having ratified the instruments, their universality is without a doubt the overarching pillar of IHL globally.

Madam Chair, ICRC and IFRC remain at the heart of humanitarianism. With their principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality, ICRC and IFRC continue to stand out as true beacons of hope, in a world characterized by armed conflict and in many distraught situations in remote parts of our world, despair. It is these values that have, over the years, won the admiration of many around the world for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. For this, Kenya salutes you.

In this regard, Kenya is proud to host the ICRC regional delegation as well as the ICRC Logistics Support Centre in Nairobi. Your presence in and operations from our Country has a significant impact across our region. We are convinced that our partnership will only strengthen as we enter the next decade.

Madam Chair, the themes of this Conference attest to the growing reality that an international dialogue on these issues is crucial. Kenya is convinced that pertinent and useful discussions will, in this regard, take place this week and provide meaningful insights for future discourse.

Respecting and implementing international humanitarian law is a foremost obligation of States. We therefore recognize the importance attached to this theme and the need to ensure compliance with IHL both at the global and national levels.

The theme of 'Shifting Vulnerabilities' presents multiple focus areas that warrant our attention. Mental health and psychosocial needs of those affected by armed conflict can no longer be ignored. The scars of armed conflict remain in the minds of the victims long after the guns have been silenced.

Similarly, increased global attention is required on the humanitarian consequences of climate change. In our region, we have seen the impacts of droughts and flooding, which in some cases have resulted in cross-border displacement, thereby increasing the number of refugees in our country. You may recall the 2011 drought in the Horn of Africa, which resulted in an influx of Somali refugees to Kenya.



Trust in humanitarian action cannot be overstated. It is the basic premise upon which humanitarians are able to carry out their work all over the world. This trust must therefore be reinforced and nurtured to ensure that millions around the world in need of humanitarian assistance are able to benefit from essential life-saving services.

Madam Chair, allow me to conclude with a quote from Martin Luther King Junior: "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" This is why we, humanitarians and others of like mind, are gathered here this week, guided by the ideals of Henry Dunant, to do much more for humanity. I thank you for your attention

Ms Amy Keegan, Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer, United for Global Mental Health

(Original English)

Madam Chair. We warmly welcome the focus of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on mental health at this year's Conference. Our research over the past year has shown that historically there has been a lack of political will and investment to prioritize mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies and non-emergencies settings. Where it has existed, it has often been short term and piecemeal. The priority should be long-term, sustainable support and funding that bridges the humanitarian / development nexus, and a coordinated approach between international players and national actors. It also means a well understood, local-context-appropriate response and a greater emphasis on nationally driven processes to ensure a sustainable mental health care system. In all these areas the Movement can and does play a key role, and we are excited for this role to continue to grow with the passing of this resolution and the commitments pledged here.

With these points in mind, we commend the Dutch Government, who hosted the 2nd Annual Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit in October. This led to 24 countries and 10 aid organizations committing to integrate and scale up mental health in humanitarian responses. We also commend the planned development of the new Minimal Intervention Service Package for mental health by WHO and UNICEF. The BluePrint Group, a network of those working in mental health, has recently launched a humanitarian subgroup, creating a space for collaboration on advocacy; it is already having success in positively influencing the global mental health agenda. In a video marking World Mental Health Day, and supporting our CSO led campaign Speak Your Mind, the ICRC and IFRC leadership, and other global leaders, commit to take greater action on mental health. All of these are important steps.

The momentum around this issue is exciting, but now the world needs sustained commitment and delivery on the ground. We need all governments to invest in mental health – integrated into UHC and their emergency preparedness, response and recovery plans. And similar commitments and support from other key stakeholders, including international agencies and civil society organisations.

Mental health is a global issue – one that knows no geographic, racial, gender, ethnic or social boundaries. Everyone has the right to enjoy good mental health and to be able to access the support they need. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has a central role in helping to achieve this. Thank you.

Ms Samantha Dickson, President, Grenada Red Cross Society

(Original English)

Madam Chair. The Grenada Red Cross Society echoes the sentiments expressed to thank IFRC Secretary General Mr Elhadj As Sy for his services over the past five years and wish him the very best in his future endeavours. We also welcome the incoming Secretary General and pledge our support for the successful achievement of the Movement's goals, as we aim to do more and to do better. The Grenada Red Cross Society further joins with its sister National Societies to welcome the National Societies of Bhutan and Marshall Islands, making our global family 192 strong.

In reflection of the three timely themes of the Conference and cognisant of the need to work closer with States in our auxiliary role, the Grenada Red Cross Society, through its work, aspires to strengthen and respect international humanitarian law. We also expect to reduce vulnerabilities and gain trust through our humanitarian actions. We are aware that, despite the challenges, there are many opportunities to support initiatives that would make a difference in the lives of those whom we serve.

We are reminded that trust takes years to build, seconds to break and a lifetime to repair. Time, a resource just like money, we do not readily have. Therefore, we treat matters of integrity seriously, noting that in the eyes

of our donors, partners and beneficiaries, we are one international Movement. We will endeavour to build and maintain trust by aligning our actions to the framework of the well-functioning National Society. We will engage our communities, attract volunteers, focus on the vulnerable, and do so guided by our seven Fundamental Principles. We aim to listen, to be adaptive and responsive, in a world where the changing dynamics require innovation in a digital space. We must not overlook our traditional services, nor forget that we are responsible for being inclusive and diverse.

Madam Chair, if National Societies are the vehicles of change, navigating on the path of IFRC Strategy 2030, to use climate-efficient resources, it then becomes necessary for smaller National Societies like ours to seek your support, the support of States and the Movement, as we strive for sustainable development. We will do our part to help transform thoughts to words, words to actions, and actions to behaviour change, and in doing so become the partner of choice.

H.E. Mr Andreano Erwin, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Indonesia in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, good morning everybody. On behalf of the Indonesian Government, I want to express our highest appreciation to the ICRC, IFRC and the Government of Switzerland for organizing this very important meeting.

The theme of this Conference, 'Power of Humanity', is not only important but also timely in our efforts to addressing today's global humanitarian situations. Current and emerging conflicts continue to present us with enormous challenges in preserving and protecting humanity.

We commend ICRC and IFRC as one of the forefront humanitarian actors, for their respective pivotal role in promoting the importance of adhering to IHL in conflict situations. Yet, we often witness the trust on humanitarian actions has been diminishing due to politicization. We, therefore, should spare no efforts to bring back the nobility of humanitarian principles and its application to the affected communities. This includes efforts for better understanding of the IHL that is not limited to the military personnel or academia, but also to a wider group, including ordinary citizens. Moreover, the IHL compatibility with other international law or norms should also be promoted.

Indonesia, in its part, is fully committed to strengthen States' and non-state actors' capacity to promote and respect the principle of IHL. The Indonesian National Standing Committee on IHL, established in 1980, continues to play a central role in building awareness and respect to the IHL among our national stakeholders.

Madam Chair, winning the heart and mind of the affected communities is key to deliver efficient and effective humanitarian assistance. Toward this end, Indonesia has organized a Regional Conference on Humanitarian Assistance in South-East Asia last August 2019. This Conference provides a platform for state and non-state actors as well as international organizations, to share their best experience and knowledge in delivering effective humanitarian assistances.

Madam Chair let me conclude by reiterating Indonesia's strong commitment to work together with the international community in strengthening cooperation to ensure the protection of civilian and humanitarian actors, as well as upholding humanity. I thank you.

H.E. Ms Eliélé Nadine Traore Bazie, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Burkina Faso in Geneva

(Original French)

Madam Chair, my delegation would first of all like to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and assure you that you have its support in performing your duties.

Madam Chair, ladies and gentlemen, Burkina Faso welcomes the holding of this 33rd International Conference, which provides an ideal opportunity to exchange views and share experiences, with the aim of strengthening the implementation of international humanitarian law.

Burkina Faso congratulates the organizers and takes this opportunity to express its gratitude to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement which strives, with unwavering determination and commitment, to address major humanitarian challenges.



Madam Chair, ladies and gentlemen, Burkina Faso has always been committed to implementing IHL and has ratified almost all IHL instruments. This commitment resulted in the creation, in 2004, of a national committee on IHL – the Interministerial Committee on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law – which is mandated to disseminate IHL and monitor its implementation.

The adoption of the IHL action plan 2019–2023 is further proof, if any were needed, of Burkina Faso's firm resolve to ensure effective IHL implementation. My country's commitment to resolving emergency humanitarian situations has translated into the establishment of an institutional mechanism for this purpose.

Institutions such as the National Emergency Response Commission and the National Refugee Commission contribute, through their operational activities, to the fulfilment of my country's humanitarian obligations.

The security challenge posed by the rise of violent extremism is currently the country's main concern. Since 2015, Burkina Faso has been the target of terrorist attacks that have led to large-scale population movements. This crisis situation has not, however, shaken the country's determination to make respect for IHL one of its priorities.

In this context, my country adopted three voluntary pledges in the run-up to the Conference. The first, concerning the dissemination of IHL, is a joint pledge with the Burkinabe Red Cross Society, and the second is on the protection of cultural property in armed conflict. The third is an open pledge on strengthening the resilience of communities affected by climate change, environmental degradation in armed conflict and other situations of violence, and protection of the environment in armed conflict. We invite other countries to join this pledge.

In this current crisis situation, my country fully appreciates the assistance provided by humanitarian actors. We would like to take the opportunity that the Conference offers us to express our gratitude and encouragement to all those men and women who, in spite of the worrying security situation, remain by our side, bringing relief to vulnerable people. Burkina Faso would like to thank, in particular, the different components of the Movement for their contribution to these efforts.

This is also an opportunity for my country to reiterate the gratitude of the Burkinabe people to all those who are providing assistance and support to help deal with the crisis.

Lastly, Burkina Faso would like to reaffirm its commitment and interest in working alongside other States and in partnership with the different components of the Movement to further the implementation of IHL. Thank you.

Ms Tathiana Elizabeth Moreno Granja, Director, Ecuadorian Red Cross

(Original Spanish)

Good morning, everyone.

Migration, as you know, is a complex subject which affects all countries. Frontiers are imaginary lines that people cross in search of a better future or to save their lives and those of their family. In this journey, thousands of migrants lose touch with their family members.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross, in this last year alone, has provided over three hundred services to migrants. People who have left their homes. We have cases, for example, of a boy we met travelling alone. Eight years old. He lost his aunt on the way. He was left alone. His mother was in hospital in Colombia and he wanted to go back. Then the Red Cross contacted his family and could help him. Like this boy, many people want to be able to get back in touch with their family members, know what happened to them, if they died on the way, where they are. It is a right that people have, to be able to know how their families are. And here the Red Cross is a link to help them enjoy this right. The Ecuadorian Red Cross, through the Restoration of Family Links Strategy Implementation Group in family networks, RFL, is a party to this Movement strategy.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross is also part of the RFL *Code of Conduct on Data Protection Group*.

It is also important to understand that restoring family links requires this international data protection, technological protection.

I do not need certain data to provide you with a service such as taking a shower, taking water. But I need this data to provide you with medical care, give you medicine, give you continuity, support you with money if you need it. And that it is why it is important that you, the decision makers, should reflect on these issues and help us, so that we can really secure this resolution on RFL and personal data protection.

Humanitarian aid is only a small component. The service is only a component. What we are giving here is a right, it is the humanitarian imperative, the obligation we have as human beings to restore their rights. A right

to information, to know how these people are, where their families are, how they can meet safely. And now, more than ever, the technological theme, how the Red Cross protects this confidentiality, this trust, this space which the Red Cross can make with its neutrality. And we cannot fail them. We need you to take ownership of this mechanisms, we need you to let achieve so much, because only when the need becomes law, does the legislation come to serve the citizens. Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Ali Mohamed Saeed Majawar, Ambassador, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Yemen in Geneva

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair, Your Excellencies, distinguished guests,

Allow me, first, on behalf of the Republic of Yemen, to thank all those who have contributed to the success of this Conference, whose outcomes will strengthen humanitarian action around the world. I would like to renew my country's support to all efforts seeking to ensure a brighter future for humanity. As the slogan of our Conference suggests, we must act today to shape tomorrow. To make that slogan a reality, we must intensify our efforts and act urgently to put an end to the health and humanitarian problems threatening the lives of many across the world, especially in countries that are witnessing wars and conflicts, including my own country, Yemen. You are undoubtedly aware of the challenging circumstances that my country is facing, the consequences of the war ignited by Houthi militias and their coup against the State, and the immense difficulties and challenges at the health and humanitarian levels. As a result of the war in my country, health conditions have deteriorated in many areas, and displaced persons have swarmed numerous regions across the country. The war has also left many injured and wounded who need intensive medical care. We at the Yemeni government, with the support of our brothers and friends in the region and international organizations, have been able to improve the circumstances of humanitarian action, however minimally. We hope to intensify and widen the scope of this action to include more humanitarian aspects and cover more regions in Yemen. In this context, I must commend the crucial role the ICRC plays and the support it lends to Yemen in many regions and health facilities across the country. I would like as well to thank the Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies in friendly nations for their humanitarian support to Yemen at many levels. Ladies and gentlemen, given the current circumstances in our country and the war that it has been forced to endure, which has led to the spread of many epidemics and diseases that still threaten large swaths of our country, including cholera, malaria and other diseases, the Yemeni government and the Yemeni Red Crescent in the interim capital of Aden are sparing no effort and investing all their capabilities to meet the basic and essential needs of affected and sick populations in many conflict areas. We hope that this meeting results in a recommendation to adopt a clear mechanism for coordination, in all emergencies, between the ICRC and international organizations active in the health and humanitarian sectors, on the one hand, and relevant and competent authorities in affected countries, on the other, to provide more support to citizens and those in need and to ensure that this support reaches the most vulnerable populations. Thank you.

H.E. Mr George Kasoulides, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission
of the Republic of Cyprus in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair. Cyprus aligns with the Statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its member States, and I would like to add a few national remarks.

70 years after the adoption of the Geneva Conventions their relevance is more pertinent than ever, in order to assist and provide humanitarian aid to those most affected by armed conflicts. As a State Party to the Geneva Conventions, and its own traumatic experiences, Cyprus fully appreciates the continued value of the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The Government of the Republic of Cyprus commends the active role of our National Society, the Cyprus Red Cross, which displays a very significant humanitarian activity both at the national and international level.

The efforts to increase compliance with international humanitarian law should persist. We are certain that the adoption of the resolution on IHL submitted at this Conference will prove fundamental in strengthening the application of humanitarian assistance. From a national perspective, I am very pleased to inform that a national IHL Committee is in the process to be established and will be fully operational in the very near future.

Cyprus fully endorses the pledges submitted on behalf of the European Union and its member States. Amongst them, the Pledge on 'Safeguarding and protecting cultural property' is an Open Pledge and we invite all of you to join it. Cyprus has a long-standing commitment in promoting the international protection of cultural heritage. Important initiatives in this field include the Resolution on 'Cultural rights and the protection of cultural heritage' by the United Nations Human Rights Council. Moreover, during the Cyprus chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe Convention on Offences Relating to Cultural Property was adopted.

Another priority for Cyprus relates to promoting women's rights and integrating the gender perspective internationally, including in relation to humanitarian action.

We are particularly concerned about the impact of climate change and the severe humanitarian challenges it provokes. The projections for the impact of climate change in the Eastern Mediterranean are particularly alarming, as they are for many parts of the world. We clearly need to address the humanitarian risks of weather-related disasters and improve our preparedness. Cyprus considers the adoption of the relevant draft resolution as significant to address some of the humanitarian vulnerabilities created by climate change.

The ever-increasing migration crisis is an issue of profound concern for our island, Cyprus, is first among EU member States regarding first time asylum applications in relation to its size and population. This poses significant challenges in terms of reception and integration capacities. However, we remain firm to our commitment to international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law in addressing it. Thank you. Madam Chair.

H.E. Ms Anna Jóhannsdóttir, Ambassador, Director General for Legal and Executive Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland

(Original English)

Madam Chair, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, let me start by congratulating you, Madame Chair, on being appointed to preside over this 33rd International Conference, a conference which provides us an opportunity to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. On this occasion, Iceland would like to commend the remarkable work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement around the world and emphasize its firm commitment to strengthening and promoting international humanitarian law.

This anniversary, however, takes place against the backdrop of multiple crises and armed conflicts, with dire humanitarian consequences. Across the world, we witness the highest levels of forcibly displaced persons and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law. The challenges of climate change further distort the situation and demand our urgent attention.

Iceland commends the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for its tireless efforts in responding to these escalating humanitarian needs. We express our deepest appreciation and gratitude to humanitarian workers and volunteers around the world for their tireless efforts in often difficult and dangerous circumstances.

Madame Chair, Iceland strongly believes that the effective implementation of International Humanitarian Law is a cornerstone in addressing humanitarian challenges. Grave violations in recent years demand that States boost their advocacy for and demand compliance with humanitarian law in all situations of armed conflict. National implementation, stronger domestic expertise and dissemination of IHL plays a central role in protecting people and the environment in conflict.

This Conference is an important moment to reaffirm our collective commitment. The Icelandic Government, jointly with the Icelandic Red Cross, has pledged to take steps towards further dissemination of IHL both nationally and internationally.

I especially want to welcome the emphasis at this Conference on the importance of women in leadership of the Movement. The Icelandic Red Cross has been in the forefront of that, and I noted this as a strong theme in the speeches of the Movement's leaders on Monday. We highly welcome the resolution presented at this conference and consider it both pertinent and timely.

Madame Chair, protecting people in armed conflict is at the core of international humanitarian law. We must ensure that affected populations enjoy basic human rights and dignity and that vulnerable and disadvantaged groups are not left behind.

We are pleased to see that considerable progress has been made in prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and response to such crimes, across the Movement since our last conference. However, such violence

continues to be widespread and limited access to sexual and reproductive health services is a concern. We can do more and better in responding to the critical needs of women and girls. Addressing this kind of violence, also against men and boys, must remain a priority.

Let me assure you that Iceland will continue to do its part. The Government and the Icelandic Red Cross have pledged to contribute additional resources, forty million kronas, just over three hundred and thirty thousand US dollars, to this effort, as well as providing experts and training for technical support.

To conclude, let me tell you that over the coming four years, the Icelandic Government will remain engaged tackling human trafficking, instigating new and stronger cooperation to enhance resilience for disaster preparedness in the Arctic region. Thank you.

Ms Kristín Hjálmtýsdóttir, Secretary General, Icelandic Red Cross Society

(Original English)

Dear friend Natia, Madam Chair, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the Icelandic Red Cross is a small National Society in one of the most peaceful states in the world. And luckily, it has been peaceful for a very long time. We have, however, been through conflict as most other nations on this planet. The last conflict took place some 800 years ago when local landowners fought fiercely over assets, honour and dead whales. We do hope, sincerely, that it was also the last conflict in our country.

That does not mean that we, as a National Society or a country, can consider international humanitarian law as a set of rules which is somehow inapplicable or has nothing to do with us as a country. Sadly, history has shown us that armed conflict is likely to be part of our history as a humankind. And a sad part if you like.

Madam Chair, history has also shown that no state, area or a group can stay in power indefinitely and that power balance will indeed change and shift at some point in time. We therefore know, and it should be of a common interest to all us, States, National Societies, and all people on this planet to ensure, to the fullest extent, full respect for international humanitarian law to protect those not taking part in armed conflict. Although those who could otherwise suffer today are often people living in faraway countries, it could be my children or grandchildren tomorrow. And when it comes to human lives and human rights in general, there is no distinction between the life of my children or other people's children or grandchildren. If we, together, cannot ensure full respect for IHL tomorrow then we are clearly taking a great risk which is built on today's thinking, power relations as they appear today in front of us and other interests who may not only become irrelevant tomorrow, but be irrelevant already today.

Our work as a Movement is not only of a high importance in times of armed conflict. Our work as National Societies and a Movement is even more important in times of peace. We must however be mindful that we must work tirelessly within our own Societies and together with our government to ensure peace will last. That we can only do, inter alia, by promoting gender equality on all levels, by addressing the needs of the most vulnerable within our context, promote inclusiveness of all people, build up resilience within communities, and last but not least build our work and approaches on principled humanitarian action, and on human rights, and remind our people how devastating war really is. If we tirelessly remind ourselves that we want to preserve our humanity, that we cannot target civilians in times of armed conflict. Neither can we allow sexual and gender-based violence, torture or executions to happen, nor targeting hospitals or schools in times of war. If we succeed in calling upon States to respect those basic, yet fundamental, rules of IHL we can indeed save humanity and save our grandchildren from being a victim of war that did not need to happen.

Let us act today and over the coming days so we can indeed shape tomorrow. Thank you.

Mr Jan de Waegemaeker, Director International Programmes, War Child

(Original English)

Madam Chair, War Child welcomes the Red Cross Movement's efforts to strengthen its response to the needs caused by the shifting vulnerabilities as a result of natural disasters, emergencies and conflict. In particular, we take note of the Movement's resolution on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs to be adopted tomorrow.

The theme of this 33rd International Conference, "Act today, shape tomorrow", provides a timely opportunity to do something about the shifting vulnerabilities caused by the emerging global mental health crisis. Figures

provided by the World Health Organisation show that one in five of the world's children and adolescents will have a mental disorder in the course of their lifetime. About half of mental disorders begin before the age of 14. 800,000 people die by suicide every year; one person dies from suicide every 40 seconds. Suicide is the second leading cause of death in individuals aged between 15 and 29. Over 80 million children in conflict zones require mental health support, but less than two out of every 100,000 people in low income countries have access to mental health workers. During emergencies, the vast structures crumble and further disintegrate. We therefore call for special attention to be given to children and adolescents when addressing mental health care and providing psychosocial support.

In light of the 2019 Amsterdam Conference Declaration on mental health and psychosocial support to people in crisis situations and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's new policy on addressing mental health and psychosocial needs, we draw attention to the following: build capacity, act early, reach out to the most vulnerable, and focus on quality.

War Child is developing and implementing a coherent system of interventions to improve psychosocial well-being of children affected by armed violence and is ready to share our expertise with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, for example in providing psychosocial first aid and recognising and referring people with severe mental issues.

Finally, Madam Chair, let me thank the Swiss Government and the Joint Organizing Committee of the ICRC and IFRC for the excellent preparation of this 33rd International Conference. Thank you for your attention.

Ms Sicel'mpilo Shange-Buthane, Director, Humanitarian Affairs, Department of International Relations of the Republic of South Africa

(Original English)

Madam Chair. "Act today, shape tomorrow." Madam Chair, today marks the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the four Geneva Conventions, which were adopted in 1949 to protect the wounded, the sick, the shipwrecked at sea, prisoners of war, and civilians in times of armed conflicts. Since their adoption, these instruments have withstood the test of time and have been fundamental cornerstones of the rules which limit the consequences of armed conflicts as they have guided the conduct of hostilities. As a result, they are part of international customary law.

The theme of this session, which reflects the need to take action today to address the key humanitarian contents in order to provide for a better tomorrow, comes at a time where armed conflicts are persistent, where IHL is continuously being undermined by the belligerents, where contemporary challenges in conduct of hostilities, such as increasing urban warfare, as well as the use of cyber warfare, are being employed. Despite those challenges, my delegation is of the view that more than ever before the Geneva Conventions and its protocols are still very much relevant. The rules contained in the Conventions have been instrumental in sparing civilian lives and civilian objects. Strengthening compliance with IHL remains the greatest challenge to this framework of international rules.

Madam Chair, as a High Contracting Party to the Geneva Conventions and its protocols, the Government of the Republic of South Africa will continue to play its part in advocating strengthened compliance with IHL in the continent. As a co-host with the ICRC of the Annual Regional Southern Africa Seminar on IHL, we will continue promoting the use of IHL regional forums where they exist, aimed to strengthen compliance with international humanitarian law.

These forums have been useful and instrumental in promoting compliance in our region. The environment of trust, openness and constructiveness aimed at genuinely assisting States to implement IHL has proved very fruitful in our region, in an atmosphere of non-politicization. Additionally, the peculiarities and characteristics of different regions makes such an approach complimentary, ideal and imperative to the work of this Conference. My delegation is still convinced that in the absence of a global monitoring and enforcement mechanism, regional forums, where they exist, can be used to fulfil such a role, and as a platform to share best practices.

We continue to contend with reports that humanitarian assistance is being politicized by some countries to meddle in other countries' internal affairs.

Finally, Madam Chair, my delegation commends the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and we welcome this Conference. Thank you.

Mr Elías Ricardo Solís González, National President, Red Cross Society of Panama

(Original Spanish)

The Panama Red Cross welcomes the holding of this International Conference. The most pressing humanitarian needs must be addressed without delay. In particular, the consequences of climate change, migrants, psychosocial care and mental health, respect for and promotion of international humanitarian law, and protection of volunteers who work to provide humanitarian assistance. The scourges which endanger the health, life and development of populations demand immediate attention.

We add our voice to the call to governments to act promptly and take measures which can diminish conditions of poverty and inequality, ensure access to health services and education, promote sustainable development and building resilient communities. Only then will we significantly reduce the conditions of vulnerability of our peoples.

I wish to recall that the United Nations General Assembly, in its Resolution 46/82, approved on 19 December 1991, stated that each State has the responsibility to take care of the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies occurring on its territory, through humanitarian assistance.

However, it must be borne very much in mind that, in our character of auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian sphere, as National Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, we contribute to this and form one of the principal partners in the support that we provide to the public authorities with a view to fulfilling the humanitarian obligations incumbent on them. We tend to the needs of vulnerable populations, building communities' capacity of resistance and recovery, and, fundamentally, we complement the humanitarian activities of States through the involvement of our volunteers

For this reason, too, I appeal to States and, in particular, the Government of Panama, to support our humanitarian action and contribute to the cost of the services which we provide in the framework of our role as auxiliary to the public authorities.

The recognition of the work of National Societies and the work of the volunteers is fundamental.

We should not lose sight of the fact that investment in volunteering has a high rate of return from an economic perspective. For this reason, we once again celebrate the holding of this Conference and invite States and National Societies to continue to contribute to the development of our communities and sending the message of hope symbolized by the Emblems of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to all parts and to all. Thank you very much.

Dr. Guillermo José González González, Minister-Director, National System for Prevention Mitigation and Disaster Relief (SINAPRED), Nicaragua

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chair, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like first of all to convey the greetings from our President, Commander Daniel Ortega and Vice-President Rosario Murillo, who fervently hope that this Conference will be a great success for the benefit of the people who most need it, the poor of the planet. I also want to thank the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for the invitation to participate in this Conference and to state that the delegation of Nicaragua echoes the statements of the Group of 77 Non-Aligned Movement (G77-NAM).

The Government of Reconciliation and National Unity has focused on the human being the most important elements of government policy, which is crystallized on specific targets in the National Development Plan. Despite being a small country with a fragile economy, enormous efforts are being made to guarantee free health and education, a risk management policy and programmes to mitigate disasters, as well as multiple programmes which facilitate the insertion of many Nicaraguans, men and women, into an increasingly competitive economy, which has allowed us to reduce poverty and, in particular, extreme poverty.

The vocation of peace of the Government and the Nicaraguan people is reflected in a continuous and systematic endeavour with broad citizen participation, to create and strengthen the conditions and mechanisms of coexistence, social harmony and inclusion, characteristic of the culture and traditions of our country, but also in accordance with international commitments and especially respect for international humanitarian law.

In Nicaragua we are working to build a sound and consistent National System for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response in which all the institutions of state are involved in harmony and complementarity. It is very important for our policy to promote leadership, organization and active participation of the whole population in protecting itself, making every effort in their constant preparation with the aim of increasing their capacity to adapt to the effects of climate change and the vicissitudes of nature, so that they can recover in emergency situations.

We wish, in conclusion, to recognize the support that we receive from the Organization, not only in moments of crisis, but also as an invaluable partner in the building of the capacities which our people need to face the challenges of development and the adverse effects of natural events.

Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Evan P. Garcia, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Philippines in Geneva

(Original English)

Ministers, excellencies, colleagues, friends, the Philippines adds its voice to fellow delegations in extending our deep appreciation for the hard work of the Joint Organizing Committee of this 33rd International Conference. We are pleased to join other governments and National Societies in taking a forward-looking approach to address the diverse concerns in humanitarian action. It is in this context that we share our experiences and views for the future of humanitarian action.

The Philippines remains committed to working with fellow States, the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies in ensuring that international humanitarian law remains relevant and practical. The Philippines' IHL Ad Hoc Committee, despite its ad hoc nature, plans and implements activities throughout each year to promote IHL across the country. As part of its commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions this year, the Philippines, in collaboration with the ICRC and the Government of Switzerland, launched a new infomercial to communicate IHL to younger generations who are entrusted with carrying the dividends of humanitarianism.

This year also marks the 10th anniversary of the Philippine Act on Crimes Against IHL and we are pleased to share that a member of the Maute-ISIS terrorist group was convicted in the court of law of violations of IHL, which underscores our effective enforcement of international humanitarian domestic law.

We also continue to implement a comprehensive rehabilitation and recovery program for Marawi City, instituting conflict sensitivity and peace-building measures in the area. While early this year another important legislation was passed, the Special Protections for Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Law (RA 11188), which at its core is related to the Philippines' IHL theme for 2019 on Protecting the Defenceless in Times of Armed Conflict.

Notwithstanding these gains, the Philippines agrees on the need to remain agile and adaptive, in light of the complex and converging issues of the world today. In line with the growing global recognition about the significance of mental health, and the recent passage of our own Mental Health Act (RA 11036), among others, we are supportive of resolutions on mental health and psychological needs of people affected by armed conflict, natural disasters and other emergencies.

In partnership with science-based institutions, we continue to leverage existing sciences and promote innovations in advancing evidence-based disaster risk reduction programs and policies in the aspects of prevention, mitigation and preparedness and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA). We also continue to strengthen our multi-hazard impact-based forecasting and early-warning systems as the basis for developing social protection programs that are also gender and rights-based.

Finally, we are pushing for the legislation of a more responsive Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) law that will provide for the creation of an institution with adequate mandate and capacity to lead and harmonize the country's DRR and resiliency efforts.

Given the intricacies of the current humanitarian landscape, the Philippines wishes to underscore that trust is the foundation of any effective humanitarian response as it paves the way for successful cooperation among governments and other stakeholders. But for trust to exist, it has to start with pre-crisis work, and this requires spending time to build relationships and to create a conducive environment for effective and principled humanitarian action. Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Osman Abufatima Adam Mohammed, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Sudan in Geneva

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

At the outset, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Switzerland and to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for the successful organization of this highly important Conference and for facilitating the participation of delegations from various countries. I would like to stress the importance of the deliberations taking place as part of the Conference, at a time when many regions around the world are facing immense challenges and conflicts. This Conference and its topics gain a great deal of significance, given that it coincides with the 70th anniversary of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which constitute a bright and significant milestone in the history of humanity. Madam Chair, the Sudanese people have launched a triumphant revolution that overthrew a long-standing regime peacefully. The only weapon of the men and women of Sudan during their months-long struggle was their steadfast belief in the inevitability of change, their longing for broader horizons and their desire to build a future that guarantees their freedom, dignity and justice. The Sudanese people are currently celebrating the first anniversary of their glorious revolution. The will of the people has finally been achieved, through the formation of a transitional government that has given top priority to building comprehensive peace across the country. Negotiations have also been launched with armed factions and are expected to result in agreements soon. The earnest determination of the transitional government to achieve peace has put an end to decades of conflict and fighting between citizens, which have left a massive number of displaced persons, refugees and victims. In light of this, Sudan would like to convey its deep gratitude to all local, regional and international humanitarian organizations, notably the Sudanese Red Crescent Society and the ICRC for their continuous humanitarian assistance throughout the long years of conflict, during which they were able to help tens of thousands of vulnerable people and victims of war. Madam Chair, my country's government has taken major steps to facilitate access to humanitarian aid and to ensure that it reaches affected populations, by announcing, in August, new rules for humanitarian action that allow the entry of humanitarian aid to all affected areas, including those that are not under the government's control. Thank you.

Ms Andrea Kristin Edlund, Vice-President, Red Cross Youth, Norwegian Red Cross

(Original English)

Madam Chair. 70 years ago, the world came together to make sure that sufferings of innocent people in the past would not be repeated in the future. The creation of the Geneva Conventions shows global cooperation in the face of threats to humanity, and millions of lives have been protected.

The humanitarian law framework of today has been developed over 150 years, and the continued support for the Conventions is proof of their resilience. Still there is a clear need to spread knowledge and awareness to keep them alive, and violations must be brought to light. We must never accept that it is intentionally politicized, disregarded or even misused as a tool to serve national political interests.

The world we live in today does not resemble the world in which the Geneva Conventions were created. Today we face new, existential threats: the re-ignited nuclear threat, the global loss of nature and the climate crisis, and they all pose a great risk to people's health, livelihoods and lives of very generations to come. These threats were not created by those who will suffer the consequences the most, today or in the future. And the burden that previous generations have placed on our shoulders sometimes feels impossible to bear.

But history has taught us that threats created by humans are also solvable by humans. We can choose to create change here to avoid future sufferings of innocent people. And when we place humanitarian needs at the heart of our priorities and when we are inspired by the leadership that led to the Geneva Conventions, we can feel hope that we can solve the existential challenges of nuclear arms, the global loss of nature and the climate crisis. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Geert Muylle, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Belgium in Geneva

(Original French)

Madam Chair, Belgium joins in the statement of the European Union and hopes that the Conference will contribute specifically to improving the lives of people affected by armed conflict, disasters or any other emergency situation.

We believe that the draft resolutions submitted to the Conference are, as they stand, well-balanced texts. They are germane to responding to current challenges and should contribute to strengthening trust in humanitarian action.

Since the 32nd International Conference, we have seen a rise in the number of people affected by increasingly protracted humanitarian crises. Today, there are 70 million people who have been forced to flee their homes because of an armed conflict or other violence. This brings me onto the subject of international humanitarian law, which plays a decisive role in protecting civilians.

IHL is one of the main themes of the Conference. When correctly applied, it is able to drastically reduce the suffering of the victims of armed conflict. It also facilitates post-conflict reconstruction, providing protection for cultural property and civil infrastructure in order to limit the damage caused to them. In addition to this physical reconstruction, IHL also provides for the building and rebuilding of the social fabric because it contains rules to preserve a minimum of humanity. That is why the implementation of IHL in peacetime is so crucial.

I wish to underline the key role played by national committees on IHL in implementing and disseminating this body of law and, in this regard, welcome the important place given to these committees in the draft resolution "Bringing IHL home".

Bringing IHL home requires continued efforts. For example, almost a third of States party to the Geneva Conventions do not currently have the necessary legislation in place to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of serious violations of IHL. Belgium has acquired significant experience in this area and would be happy to share it with other interested States.

Madam Chair, IHL remains as relevant as ever. It is not an unachievable ideal but a common language, coupled with a powerful moral force, which has a real impact on the behaviour of many actors and on the situation of all those it protects.

Thank you.

Mr Metod Spacek, Director of the International Law Department, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovak Republic

(Original English)

Madam Chair, we would like to warmly thank the organizers for hosting this important Conference. Slovakia aligns itself with the statement made earlier on behalf of the EU and its member States.

We are marking the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. We do not have lots of reasons for celebration, though. Since the last Conference in 2015 we have witnessed a continual rise of armed conflicts. Civilians continue to suffer. More than 70 million persons are nowadays displaced. Slovakia is fully aware of these negative tendencies. We do our utmost to mitigate negative consequences of armed conflicts, including by providing voluntary financial contributions on a permanent basis.

We would like to strongly appreciate the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, especially the ICRC and the National Societies, for their role to be always first, and in front, to help those who are affected by armed conflicts. 70 years after adoption of the Geneva Conventions, we firmly believe that we have today a shared responsibility to confirm, once again, their constant relevance and universal application in all circumstances. States, more than ever, have to respect and to ensure respect for the conventions and for the IHL and to cooperate in further strengthening of IHL.

But we cannot fall asleep on laurels. We have to remain vigilant. To react properly and immediately to new challenges relating to armed conflicts. Challenges such as urbanization of armed conflicts, their increasing complexity, new types of weapons and emergence of new technologies, including artificial intelligence used in armed conflicts. In this way, special attention should be paid to the most vulnerable ones harmed by armed conflicts, including women, children and persons with disabilities.

We recognize the essential complementary role of the International Criminal Court in the fight against impunity for atrocity crimes, often committed in connection with an armed conflict and in serious breach of the IHL. There could be no full respect for the IHL without fighting impunity and without ensuring accountability.

Slovakia is fully committed to the principles and rules of the IHL. We maintain that national implementation is crucial, therefore we strongly support the Resolution Bringing IHL Home, and we invite all stakeholders to do utmost for the implementation of the resolution concerned. Thank you.

Mr José Juan Castro Hernández, National President, Honduran Red Cross

(Original Spanish)

Good morning. In Honduras, we are deeply concerned by the increasing number of separated families and missing persons as a result of the various situations affecting our country.

Migration is a complex problem which we share with neighbouring countries, and with other continents where vulnerable migrants travel along routes, often in dangerous, unstable zones, and which they often travel, which make the response to humanitarian needs even more difficult.

While some migrants reach the countries of destination safely and are integrated into new communities, others face innumerable risks, such as loss of family contacts.

Every year, thousands of migrants die and disappear during the journey and leave their family behind anxiously hoping to receive an answer about what is happening to them.

Violence in our country has meant that many people have to leave their homes to look for somewhere safe to live.

Very often, family separation, lack of access to health services, abuse, exploitation and even death or disappearance form part of the reason for the journey of people who go missing.

In Honduras, we are seeing a human mobilization which goes beyond purely economic motives and can be attributed in a great many cases to factors such as family reunion, persecution and insecurity caused by drug gangs or other armed groups.

Every day we see more people migrating and moving to improve their lives, including young people, and even save their lives.

Separated families and their loved ones deserve the benefit of an effective RFL response which they can trust and which offers a full range of services, including connectivity, not forgetting collection and processing of search solutions which remain of fundamental importance, which digital technology cannot replace. It is also of huge importance for the various components of the Movement involved in the RFL response, together with the guidelines in the RFL Code of Conduct on Data Protection.

The Honduran Red Cross, in conclusion, has been contributing to the development of a new RFL strategy of the Movement for 2020-2025, and identifies itself with the proposed objectives, as well as the efforts mentioned earlier to ensure respect for the Code of Conduct on Data Protection.

We recognise the importance of these questions being address by the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in its activities on the ground. The Honduran Red Cross welcomes the Movement's new RFL strategy 2020-2025 and supports the adoption of the resolution on RFL in the framework of respect for the law. Thank you very much,

H.E. Mr A.L.A. Azeez, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair and distinguished delegates, at the very outset let me express Sri Lanka's appreciation to the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) for their outstanding humanitarian work undertaken across the world as we speak.

Madam Chair, this Conference coincides with the 70th anniversary of the codification of the most important instruments of international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions. These Conventions have in the past 70 years positively impacted hundreds of millions of persons affected by conflicts across the world. Though war will always remain an abhorrent action, the laws governing the conduct of war such as the Geneva Conventions, and the organizations such as the ICRC and IFRC, have significantly contributed to the easing of sufferings caused by armed conflicts.

It is important to understand the principles of IHL in the present context of armed conflicts, and other forms of conflict and crisis, which are more dynamic, sophisticated and multifaceted, and this is especially so because, unlike in the past, battles are now fought mostly within States and take the form of internal armed conflicts, which are made complex by the multiple parties and involve non-state actors.

Sri Lanka has benefited considerably from the work of the ICRC during the conflict and has worked in partnership with the ICRC, IFRC and the Red Cross since the end of the conflict as we move forward on the path of peace and reconciliation.

The theme of this 33rd International Conference which is “Act today, shape tomorrow” is very opportune. It reflects the necessity to set standards, practices and legislation, both in the domestic and international spheres, during times of relative peace which would ensure their respect during armed conflicts. In the Sri Lankan context, the National IHL Committee, which is led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has taken robust actions to enhance knowledge of IHL while also assisting in the enacting of legislation in building capacities on humanitarian disarmament.

Signifying an important milestone in the cooperation between the ICRC and the Government of Sri Lanka, an agreement signed in 2018, grants access to the ICRC to places of detention in the country. This goes a long way in demonstrating Sri Lanka’s commitment towards IHL and international human rights law.

We are pleased to note that in recent years Sri Lanka has not only signed onto the Ottawa and Oslo Conventions, but has taken a leadership role in the international arena in advancing these important legal instruments. Last year Sri Lanka chaired the 9th meeting in Geneva of the State Parties to the Cluster Munitions Convention and we are now taking significant actions to achieve the goal of completing demining by the end of 2020.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate Sri Lanka’s commitment to IHL and to place on record our sincere appreciation for the tireless and commendable work done by all humanitarian organizations. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Panayotis Stournaras, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Greece in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair. Excellencies, distinguished delegates, Greece aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its member States and let me add some points from a national point of view.

At the outset, I would like to thank our hosts for the excellent organization of this Conference, which is a unique forum that brings together components of the Movement and States Parties to the Geneva Conventions. I would also like to warmly congratulate Mr Peter Maurer on his re-appointment as President of the ICRC, which serves as evidence of his dedication and leadership. Let me also thank the outgoing Secretary General of the International Federation of the Red Cross, Mr As Sy, for his significant contribution to the promotion of the work of the Red Cross Movement and for IFRC response to humanitarian crises around the world.

In this hall, we are all connected and share one important goal: to reaffirm, re-discover and re-energize our humanity and the principles of the Movement; a common humanitarian approach to our fellow men and women who are in distress and in need. In this spirit, I would like to pay tribute to all the staff and volunteers of the Movement and praise their enormous work on the ground, especially in such challenging times. We salute them and we stand by them.

Among the exceptional results of the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross are the four Geneva Conventions, whose 70th anniversary we celebrate this year. They have been universally ratified, a fact that is a testament both to our common humanity and to the willingness of States to protect the most vulnerable in times of armed conflict. Although armed conflicts are mostly the result of political decisions, let us not forget that upholding international humanitarian law is an obligation under international law.

International law is the essence of a civilized world and its implementation speaks volumes to the millions who find themselves faced with extremely difficult conditions. It is the only thing that can prove the saying “homo homini lupus” (man is wolf to man) is wrong.

Ladies and gentlemen, the presence of the ICRC in Greece goes back many years. Along with the Hellenic Red Cross, they have been working tirelessly in supporting and assisting those in need, especially under current circumstances when we are facing, once again, a significant increase in mixed migratory flows arriving in Greece. Saving lives at sea and protecting the most vulnerable is a fundamental humanitarian priority, and Greece has been working steadfastly in that field since the beginning of the refugee and migrant crisis in 2015.

The Greek Government has recently announced new measures aimed at improving living conditions in reception centres, paying special attention to the particular needs of unaccompanied minors. In parallel, access to basic health services and education continues with a view to providing assistance and better perspectives for those in need.

In conclusion, Madam Chair, I would like to reiterate my country's strong commitment in continuing and strengthening the collaboration with the ICRC on the ground. Thank you for your attention

H.E. Mr Carlos Foradori, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Argentine Republic in Geneva

(Original Spanish)

Good morning, Madam Chair,

This year is the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. In taking stock, we should bear in mind that the law does not consist only of the written text, but keep a record of what happens in practice and values.

In the field of rules, the Conventions continue to be the basis of international humanitarian law (IHL) and remain in force in the face of the current challenges.

However, it is in the area of values and facts that the international community still have much to do. For example, the lack of real consensus in the framework of the intergovernmental process of "Strengthening of IHL" could indicate that even today we do not have in the field of values a clear consensus to underpin the application of IHL which, in practice, continues to be violated time and again.

This aspect is urgent, since the majority of victims of conflicts are civilians. Added to this is the impact of hostilities on the environment, in highly populated areas and movements of people, resulting in an ever more complex evolution of vulnerabilities due to the new technologies of war. There are many members of the international community who defend peace and, at the same time, are not effectively defending international humanitarian law. This means, as I see it, being guilty of the worst hypocrisy.

Thus, collaboration and partnerships between the various humanitarian actors must be strengthened to prevent and tackle disasters and humanitarian crises, highlighting the role of the International Movement in protection and humanitarian assistance.

Argentina fervently defends the principle of no indifference among States. Because we cannot be indifferent in the face of the situation of vulnerability of the civilian population, and must call on the available mechanisms contemplated in the Geneva Conventions and their protocols. An example of this is the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission. WE urge States to accept its competence.

As regards the challenges of emerging technologies, Argentina has begun a process of exchange of information on the Safe Schools Declaration, and we invite all States to express their support for this Declaration.

If we were not emphatic in our declaration, if we were not clear in this message, then we believe we would, in one way or another, be party to an international conspiracy of silence. Thank you very much.

Mr Sven Bak-Jensen, President, Danish Red Cross

(Original English)

Madam Chair. It only took two years from the publishing of Henry Dunant's visionary ideas in "A memory of Solferino" to the signing of the original Geneva Convention in 1864. This short time span seems incredible today, where the political climate is not conducive to setting new humanitarian norms. The current challenge is whether we can hold on to what we have already agreed upon.

The Danish Red Cross had hoped that this Conference would mark the anniversary of the Geneva Conventions with an agreement on an IHL compliance mechanism. We regret that State Parties could not find a way to make this happen.

This Conference takes place during difficult times. New conflicts have emerged, and protracted crises drag on. Counter-terror paradigms make it more difficult for humanitarian action to reach those in need.

The latest ICRC Challenges report addresses key contemporary issues, such as the concerns of persons living under the de facto control of non-state armed actors. The Danish Red Cross appeals to members of this Conference to help turn the tide.

To highlight some of the important decisions in front of us we can mention the following three resolutions. We strongly support the resolution on 'Restoring Family Links while respecting privacy'. This is a fundamental activity of the Movement. The resolution is critical to ensure the trust of affected people, and our ability to carry out

this exclusively humanitarian service. We support the resolution 'Bringing IHL home' as a catalyst for States to ensure integration of IHL into domestic law and military activities. We also encourage states to take up the call to share good practice that may go beyond their IHL obligations. The Danish Red Cross has promoted the resolution 'Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs'. In support of the new Movement policy, we encourage States to scale up action to respond to the psychological consequences of armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies.

We thank the Danish Government for their support of our humanitarian mission and for the good collaboration, including in the national IHL Committee. The Danish Red Cross has made the commitment to make humanity everyone's business in Denmark. It is our hope that this Conference will help to make humanity a *folkesag*, as we say in Danish, on a global scale. Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Ricardo González Arenas, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay in Geneva

(Original Spanish)

I would like to express our most sincere gratitude to the co-organizers of this Conference, which, as usual, is a forum for meeting between our governments, National Societies and other key actors in the noble cause of advancing international humanitarian law.

We extend our recognition to the Standing Commission, whose constant work offers us today a new opportunity to assert international humanitarian law as a tool which eases the fortunes of thousands of human beings trapped in the terrible dynamic of armed conflicts and which contributes more effectively to the protection of victims.

This year, we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the approval of the 1949 Geneva Conventions and this Conference is an opportune and valuable platform for us to reaffirm our commitment to IHL and to work together for its application and implementation in full.

During its membership as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, Uruguay was one of the main driving forces behind Resolution 2286 on protection of hospitals and humanitarian personnel in situations of armed conflict.

With this Resolution, we were able to bring a message of support to the doctors and health personnel who have to face multiple challenges in difficult and dangerous settings. Reality has shown us in stark clarity how senseless explosions of violence have not respected either the infrastructure nor the personnel whose vocation is none other than to save lives and ease the lot of the injured and victims.

Uruguay has been one of the principal contributors of military personnel for United Nations peacekeeping operations, and their efforts have been directed as a priority to the protection of civilians and vulnerable communities.

Uruguay will continue to speak out at international level to demand strict respect for international law as a supreme law which governs relations between States, the peaceful solution of disputes and non-use of force, defence and respect for human rights in times of peace and strict application of the rules of international humanitarian law in cases of armed conflicts.

In the face of this changing and challenging reality, we once again assert the humanitarian ideal, built on centuries of the ideas and action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and which is vital if we are not to lose the vision of one day achieving a world of peace and free of conflict. Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Salim Baddoura, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Lebanese Republic in Geneva

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair,

First, I would like to congratulate you on your election as chair of this Conference, and I commend your wise approach in managing its activities. My country's delegation fully supports the speeches of both the non-aligned group and the Arab Group before the Conference. We are gathered here today, on the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, which gains further significance given the intractable and interconnected crises facing our world. These crises are impeding the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and leaving millions of people in a state of eternal misery and vulnerable to continuous and systematic human rights abuses. The

disregard of the principles of pluralism and joint responsibility is also exacerbating these crises. Lebanon, for instance, has been facing a displacement crisis since the outbreak of the war in Syria, which is unprecedented in the history of mankind, as one-third of its population now consists of displaced persons. Although this crisis is threatening the country's very existence, international support has not been up to par. Our appeals to find a definitive solution for the crisis by ensuring a safe, dignified and gradual return of displaced persons to their homes, are still falling on deaf ears. Now, more than ever, we must stand together under the banner of our movement's unifying values and rules. Within this framework, I would like to present some of Lebanon's efforts to promote the implementation of international humanitarian law. We must first applaud the cooperation and complementarity between the Lebanese government and the Lebanese Red Cross. The Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) has been working alongside the Palestinian Red Crescent, since 1948, to provide humanitarian care and aid to Palestinian refugees, who are now forced to endure greater suffering due to the reduction in the funding of the UNRWA. Lebanon remains committed to this humanitarian and fraternal stance towards Palestinian refugees until the establishment of a Palestinian State and until Palestinians are granted the right to return. In 2015, the Lebanese Armed Forces founded the Directorate of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, with a mandate to incorporate all IHL conventions signed or ratified by the Lebanese State into military laws and regulations, as well as with the dissemination of the IHL across all LAF units and offering counselling to military units for proper application of IHL through military instructions. These efforts have resulted in full respect for IHL during the "Dawn of the Outskirts" operation against the Islamic State terrorist organization in the summer of 2017. At the international level, Lebanon strongly believes in the role and objectives of the ICRC and takes great pride in its sons and daughters working or volunteering under the emblem of the Red Cross, some of whom have sacrificed their lives, such as Hanna Lahoud, may he rest in peace, who died in the line of duty in Yemen, while others were destined to live longer and make bright contributions in the service of our movement, such as Mr Robert Mardini, of Lebanese origin, who was recently appointed as Director-General of the ICRC. Allow me to seize this opportunity to congratulate him. Finally, I hope that the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is always remembered as a landmark event that contributed significantly to the respect of IHL at the global level. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr Steve Scott, Assistant Secretary, Australian Humanitarian Coordinator, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia

(Original English)

Australia welcomes the opportunity to join governments and the components of the Movement on this occasion of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Today we face an increasingly contested international order and a rapidly changing humanitarian landscape. But we have at this Conference a clear commitment to our shared values and partnership. The commitment of the Movement is evident from the frontlines of conflict to the Pacific Islands, and we are proud to be working in partnership with you. We pay tribute to the achievements and dedication of the staff and volunteers of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Too many of you have paid the ultimate price, and we pay our respects to those lost.

This year marks 70 years since the adoption of the Geneva Conventions, the laws that seek to alleviate human suffering, even in the most inhumane circumstances. These Conventions and their Additional Protocols remain as relevant today as they have ever been before. But ensuring universal compliance with the international humanitarian law remains an abiding challenge, particularly in light of the challenging nature of conflict and the new actors on the battlefield.

This is not a reflection on the adequacy of these rules. Australia is clear that international humanitarian law is capable of confronting these challenges head on. More needs to be done to ensure universal respect for existing IHL. Australia is pleased to be joining the UK's Open Pledge on voluntary reporting on the implementation of IHL at the national level. We hope that by sharing examples of good practice we can encourage dialogue on IHL issues and ultimately improve compliance.

As the humanitarian landscape changes, so too must humanitarian actors. While humanitarian assistance saves lives, more needs to be done to address the long-term needs of people in protracted crises, with inclusion and diversity at the forefront of programming. We welcome the commitment of the Movement to accountability to affected populations. We agree the humanitarian system needs to move from treating people as passive recipients of aid to acknowledging they are central to their own recovery. Within this, there must be a clear focus on supporting local actors.

Australia is working closely with local partners across the Indo-Pacific, including National Societies in countries such as the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Myanmar and the Philippines to create more resilient communities. Local actors are always the first responders, and our partnerships need to recognize and support this capacity, not supplant it with an international response that undermines local ownership.

We welcome the Movement's increased focus on anticipation and preparedness. The 2020 Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, co-hosted by Australia and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, will also be an opportunity to share best practice and challenges in building resilience to disasters and environmental crises.

Looking ahead, Australia remains unreservedly committed to our international humanitarian law obligations and the fundamental principles which represent the cornerstone of humanitarian action. These rules and principles have served us well and must continue to do. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Abulaziz Alwasil, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Geneva

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair,

First, I would like to reiterate my support for the statements endorsed by my country. I would also like to extend our appreciation for the efforts made by the organizing committee in preparation for the Conference. We hope that this Conference bears fruit and that we reach outcomes that help to improve the situation of people affected by conflicts and disasters, in line with the slogan: Act today, shape tomorrow. Madam Chair, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reserves a great deal of importance to the promotion and respect of international humanitarian law. As part of its firm support of international instruments and conventions that set the foundation for international humanitarian law, including the four Geneva Conventions, the Kingdom has taken active steps at the national level and through the Standing IHL Committee to raise awareness on IHL and disseminate its principles across all State bodies and all segments of society. It has also sought to integrate IHL into the programmes of schools, institutes, universities, as well as military academies and institutes. The Kingdom also organized numerous conferences, seminars and training sessions on various aspects of international humanitarian law. Moreover, Saudi Arabia has established a legal team at the Ministry of Defence to ensure the promotion and respect of IHL. It has organized training sessions for members of its armed forces in cooperation with the ICRC. My country has also participated in several regional and international forums seeking to promote IHL. Madam Chair, the entire world, including our region, is facing innumerable crises and challenges that require concerted international efforts to reach political solutions, to avert these crises and conflicts and their humanitarian repercussions. In line with its commitment to humanitarian principles, the Kingdom has launched many initiatives that have helped to resolve many crises. It also continues to support the efforts of international organizations and bodies to mitigate the impact of armed conflicts and natural disasters in many areas of the world. The Kingdom's contributions this year alone amounted to nearly USD 1.2 billion. Saudi Arabia has also established the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre, Project Masam for Landmine Clearance and the Child Soldiers Rehabilitation Program in Yemen. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Ms Sian Bowen, Centre for Education and Research in Humanitarian Action (CERAH)

(Original English)

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, CERAH, the Geneva Centre for Education and Research in Humanitarian Action, is grateful for this opportunity to express its appreciation on the conference theme "Act today, shape tomorrow."

The humanitarian landscape is becoming more and more complex and dynamic; we are dealing with a series of new simultaneous issues, including urban crises, protracted displacement, attacks on humanitarians and more. We need to act effectively and immediately to address these. Building the capacities of local humanitarian actors is key to this. Often, they are the first responders to emergencies, so it is crucial they have access to the best training, knowledge, evidence and tools in order to address such crises.

For this reason, the humanitarian sector needs an inverted pyramid of knowledge approach, which means putting local humanitarians at the centre of what is developed. Indeed, at our Centre, CERAH, we shape our courses with the view that local humanitarian actors are the main beneficiaries.

CERAH has dedicated 20 years to the training of humanitarian professionals and building an educational network of key humanitarian organizations, including ICRC and MSF. With this network, and as a joint centre of the University of Geneva and Graduate Institute, CERAH has brought relevant, up to date, expertise to humanitarian professionals.

From CERAH's experience, we have observed an increasing trend in diversity of geographical, cultural, linguistic and professional profiles in the humanitarian field. In 2018 it is estimated 570,000 people worked in more than 4,500 organizations. We try to reflect this diversity in our student intake and our research projects, including our Humanitarian Encyclopaedia project, which reviews the key humanitarian concepts and language used to develop greater consistency and understanding amongst stakeholders.

Today, CERAH is playing a leading role in this new humanitarian landscape. In fact, we are adapting all of our courses and training to match the exact needs of frontline humanitarian professionals. In addition to our Geneva based courses, we are also committed to delivering our courses in affected countries, combining online and face-to-face training. CERAH believes that better understanding, skills and capacity can improve accountability, leading to better results for those affected by crises. Those working in areas prone to crises and disasters need this empowerment. With this in mind, CERAH will continue its effort, jointly with others, to shape a better tomorrow for humanity and humanitarian professionals. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Borut Mahnic, Ambassador, Head of International Law Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia

(Original English)

Madam Chair. It is my great honour to address the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, an excellent forum for substantive discussions on international humanitarian law issues and other humanitarian concerns.

Slovenia's activities will focus on the adoption of the resolutions, which we fully support, and pledges. In addition to the joint pledges submitted by the EU and its member States, Slovenia has joined the group of countries which have signed onto the pledge to support the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission.

Together with the Geneva Water Hub, the Netherlands Red Cross and UNICEF, Slovenia organized yesterday a side event dedicated to the protection of water infrastructure and water during armed conflicts.

Slovenia would like to thank the ICRC for the fifth report on IHL, focusing on the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts. The report will be an excellent springboard for interactive discussions on contemporary IHL topics, such as counterterrorism measures and IHL, enhancing respect for IHL, urbanization of armed conflicts and new technologies of warfare. With regard to counterterrorism measures, Slovenia, aware of possible negative impacts on humanitarian activities, has incorporated safeguards into its internal legislation.

Madam Chair, Slovenia devotes special attention to respect for IHL. On the 70th anniversary Of the Geneva Conventions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a set of two volumes containing the official Slovene translation of the Geneva Conventions and the three Additional Protocols as its contribution to enhancing respect for the fundamental principles and norms of IHL. On 20 November, the two books and their significance were presented to the wider public at an event in Ljubljana. I would like to thank the President of the ICRC, Mr Peter Maurer, for his preface to the publication and his recorded address prepared specifically for this occasion.

The National IHL Committees play the role of guardian of international humanitarian law, its respect, implementation and promotion, which is one of the leading topics of the Conference. Respect for international law and commitment to effective multilateralism are two central goals of Slovenia's foreign policy. Slovenia believes that at this moment in time, respect for international humanitarian law is paramount. Among causes of concern is the growing trend of attacks on humanitarian and health workers, hospitals, other health facilities, and civilians. The urbanization of armed conflicts and the new technologies of warfare have numerous ramifications for civilian populations. We need to address developments and potential use of autonomous weapons systems in a comprehensive and timely manner, as better protection of civilians must be our primary responsibility. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Dr Allan Goldberg, Former Member, Board of Governors, American Red Cross

(Original English)

Madam Chair. The American Red Cross is pleased to have the opportunity to add our voice to this important forum.

As we are hearing throughout the course of the International Conference, the need for humanitarian action is tremendous and growing in complexity. Over the past 20 years, the world has experienced armed conflicts around the globe. Many of these conflicts have pushed the boundaries of international humanitarian law. We are also seeing that conflicts are moving to cities with deeply destructive consequences. Fighting in places like Aleppo, Syria, have shown the world the horrors of urban hostilities.

Equally as devastating are the deliberate, and frequent, and systematic attacks on health care workers and facilities. This violence adds to the misery of civilians already suffering in armed conflicts, and compliance with the law continues to be a problem. Public understanding of international humanitarian law has never been more timely or important.

The American Red Cross also recognizes the critical urgency for action in response to the defining threat of climate change, and the pressing need to reach the poorest and most vulnerable who are disproportionately affected by the changes of climate. We further understand the need for attention to the mental and emotional resilience of individuals, families and communities, many of whom are on the move, living in rapidly growing urban centres, or struggling to gain access to vital services.

To rise to all of these challenges, it is imperative to cultivate trust in the global Red Cross Red Crescent network so that we can always be where we are needed. The trust of people we serve is not to be assumed, but to be earned at all times. As part of this, it is important that we are seen and known in the communities before disaster strikes. It is also critical that communities see themselves in us and that we represent the diversity of those we serve. In order to enhance our impact, it is also critical that there be equal and meaningfully involved with those whom we serve. Participation strengthens accountability to affected populations, mitigates risk of doing harm, and ensures that support is provided in a culturally appropriate manner.

Trust between authorities and Red Cross Red Crescent Movement actors is essential to carrying out our humanitarian mission. This trust allows us to be an effective partner in times of crisis. As States face increasing complexities in emergencies affecting their populations, relationships of trust also allow us to play complementary roles supporting a favourable environment for effective humanitarian action.

Finally, Madam Chair, public trust is vital to deliver our services, giving us access to communities of diverse backgrounds, mobilizing volunteers and carrying out our role as an auxiliary to our governments. It is also crucial in mobilizing donors to support our mission.

We gather here as a deeply interconnected network and as standard bearers in the humanitarian space. The stakes are no less than our ability to execute our lifesaving mission. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Frank Tressler Zamorano, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Chile in Geneva

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chair, I wish to thank the organizers of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for the work done over time to reach this meeting, which is doubtless of even greater significance in that we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, the cornerstone of international humanitarian law.

Today, the nature of conflicts has changed. Some of the threats to humanitarian principles are different from those of 70 years ago. We have climate change which affects the level and magnitude of natural disasters and the spread of diseases which did not previously exist.

Because of the pace of growing global urbanization, armed conflicts are increasingly breaking out in urban centres, with weapons mostly designed for open battlefields or else not designed to be employed in population centres which exposes the civilian population exponentially to direct and indirect harm. The situation becomes even more complicated when the involvement of non-state actors in the conflict is added. We must act more efficiently to prevent the suffering and humanitarian consequences in the civilian population in conflicts, reinforcing respect for international humanitarian law.

Emergencies also have a human face and helping those who are in need, rapidly, transparently and with respect for the principle of neutrality, are distinctive elements of the work done by the Red Cross on the ground in all latitudes.

Madam Chair, it is in this perspective that the theme “Act today, shape tomorrow” allows us to demonstrate our interest in ensuring that the Conference is the place to reaffirm commitment and respect for the principles

which govern the Movement. We believed that the proposed resolutions efficiently and consensually show an understanding of the principal challenges facing us at global level, as well as procuring greater capacities for assistance.

In addition, we consider that the way in which the Conference is organized is appropriate, making room alongside the debating of resolutions, for a more flexible instrument within the three commissions and a wide range of parallel events in which we will participate as far as possible.

We believe it is important to reassess the commitment of the parties to the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission. That is why we have joined in the open promise to strengthen the work of the Commission and we invite State who have not joined to do so.

Madam Chair, Chile comes to this Conference convinced of the full force of the values of the Movement. We must be able to adapt to the new challenges that confront us, but we must also defend the legacy of years of construction of international humanitarian law.

In this respect, we consider it a priority to reinforce the work that the Movement is doing at all levels to expand its presence throughout the world and collaborate to deliver humanitarian solutions. Thank you very much.

Mr Karim Silue, Counselor, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire in Geneva

(Original French)

Madam Chair, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I would first of all like to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. I also wish to greet all the conference participants and congratulate the components of the Movement on their work to provide assistance and relief to people affected by humanitarian situations around the world.

Madam Chair, this Conference is taking place against the backdrop of an increase in emergency situations, largely due to the recurrence and escalation of armed conflicts, growing violence and the rise in natural disasters, which have caused a great many victims and large-scale displacements of people who are vulnerable and in need.

Côte d'Ivoire is therefore pleased to be taking part in this 33rd International Conference which, like previous ones, provides an exceptional opportunity for all the components of the Movement to shine a spotlight on the humanitarian situation globally, take stock of the work carried out over the past four years and formulate innovative strategies and solutions to improve the management of humanitarian crises across the globe.

Madam Chair, the slogan of this Conference – Act today, shape tomorrow – invites us to take action now not only to alleviate the suffering of people in need, but also to prevent the crises and disasters that cause it from occurring. That is why my delegation supports all the measures and programmes aimed at strengthening the rule of law, good governance and social cohesion, *sine qua non* conditions for ensuring peace and stability in the world's nations and, consequently, for preventing forced displacement.

Côte d'Ivoire further calls for the strengthening of international cooperation and solidarity, especially in crisis situations. We must also continue our efforts to ensure compliance with the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law in general.

My delegation believes that strengthening the capacities of national actors is also necessary to improve the management of humanitarian crises.

Lastly, Côte d'Ivoire is of the view that the strengthening of the legal framework for the protection of vulnerable people constitutes an essential, or even the most important, element of the humanitarian crisis management system. We encourage States to accede to conventions on this subject, such as those relating to refugees, stateless persons and migrants.

Madam Chair, I cannot finish without paying a glowing tribute to all humanitarian actors and the courageous and commendable work they carry out all over the world, often putting their own lives in danger. In this respect, Côte d'Ivoire strongly condemns and deplores all attacks and threats against humanitarian workers. Such acts are unacceptable, and the perpetrators must be investigated, prosecuted and convicted.

Côte d'Ivoire would like to finish by reaffirming its adherence to humanitarian principles, including *non-refoulement*, solidarity, partnership and shared responsibility.

Thank you.

H.E. Mr Gian Lorenzo Cornado, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Italy in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, Italy aligns itself to the statement delivered by the European Union and its member States and wishes to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

The 33rd International Conference marks the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Geneva Conventions. Modern challenges impose us to strengthen our support and engagement to respect and promote international humanitarian law's fundamental principles in order to protect the innocent human beings in armed conflicts. Protracted crises, urban warfare, States' fragility, the new warfare technological tools, as well as long-lasting and cyclical natural disasters, require a collective action. The protection of civilians, all the vulnerable ones, as well as humanitarian operators, requires the respect by the parties to the conflicts of the limits defined by international humanitarian law, enshrined in the four Geneva Conventions and their Protocols, to which Italy is part.

Madam Chair, humanitarian access is still one of the most delicate topics on the international agenda. Building trust for access is paramount, because of its crucial impact on the effectiveness of humanitarian aid. For this reason, we acknowledge humanitarian principles which guide the work of the ICRC and the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. Our country firmly supports ICRC and all the Movement's initiatives and actions aimed at compassing the risk prevention of the crisis, as well as the response capacity to defend the spirit of Solferino helping the endorsement and respect of these principles of humanitarian action. In this context, Italy fully supports the resolution on Bringing IHL Home: A road map for better national implementation of international humanitarian law.

We are profoundly convinced that a sustainable and peaceful system of international relations must be based on shared rules and values, including those reflecting international humanitarian law, international human rights law, and international criminal law. Compliance with international humanitarian law must be ensured in armed conflicts, not only in documenting serious breaches of IHL. Complementary control mechanisms are key when it comes to prosecuting the perpetrators, in reinstating peaceful relations, and in preventing national and international armed conflicts.

The resolution on shifting vulnerabilities renews our commitment to protect the most affected categories in emergency situations – children, persons with disabilities, the elderly, the wounded – by taking into consideration their specific needs. In this regard, as a member of the Call to Action to end sexual violence in conflict, we are very much engaged not only in preventing and combating all forms of gender-based violence, but also in advocating awareness-raising on the need to protect and empower women in humanitarian settings. We also recognize and support the fundamental role that women play in managing disaster risk, in peacebuilding and stabilization processes, and within the Movement, as highlighted in the related resolution.

I conclude, Madam Chair, in the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, Italy is aware that much still needs to be done. We stand ready and fully committed to intensify our efforts with all major stakeholders, and we rely on ICRC and the Movement as a whole for its invaluable role and contribution to leave no one behind in war-torn societies. Thank you for your attention.

Mr Keefe Chin, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Singapore in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, this year's International Conference takes place in a landmark year, the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. This is a cause for celebration, as the Geneva Conventions are one of the few universally ratified international treaties, and a key component of the rules-based multilateral system.

We must review the consensus around international humanitarian law and institutions. Unfortunately, we are meeting at a time where the number of humanitarian challenges facing the world have only increased. Since the last International Conference in 2015, the number of active conflicts has risen, and their attendant complexities have been further compounded by global trends such as climate change, rapid urbanization and extremism. The humanitarian ideals and imperatives of organizations like the International Red Cross and Red Crescent and its National Societies have never been more relevant and enables the Movement to operate in challenging environments where trust is key.

Madam Chair, Singapore is not immune to natural and manmade disasters and global trends. As a small island state, we are naturally vulnerable, for example, to the consequences of global climate change. To mitigate this

challenge of these vulnerabilities, we plan for the long-term and integrate disaster risk reduction strategies into our national development strategies. We intend to set aside about 100 billion Singapore dollars over the next 50 to 100 years to address climate change, but it is not sufficient to merely focus on national strategies. Global problems require global solutions.

At the international level, Singapore contributes to international humanitarian missions. For example, Singapore assisted the Texas Army National Guard in Hurricane Harvey relief operations in September 2017. Closer to home, Singapore extended assistance in Indonesia following the earthquake and tsunami in September 2018, in Laos following the collapsing of Xe Pian Xe Namnoy Dam in July 2018, and in Taiwan following the earthquake affecting Hualien in February 2018. We also share our experience in disaster risk preparedness and resilience building with fellow developing States. Since 2015, as part of the Singapore Cooperation Programme, we collaborate with the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, (UNDRR, to build capacity in developing countries to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The most recent iteration of this course took place in September. In June 2019, Singapore also partnered with the UNDRR to provide customized training to strengthen the disaster resilience of 16 Caribbean countries that are among the most affected by climate change and natural disasters.

Singapore is a small state. We do not dictate the global agenda but are not entirely without agency. We will continue to contribute to multilateral efforts to address the grave humanitarian challenges facing us today, but we cannot do so alone. As an international community, we must together answer the call of this year's International Conference, to "Act today, shape tomorrow." Collectively, we need to chart a way forward to maintain peace and prosperity in the world and build a broader regional and international architecture of cooperation. I thank you.

H.E. Mr Alejandro Celorio Alcántara, Legal Counsel, Secretariat of Foreign Relations,
Foreign Ministry of Mexico

(Original Spanish)

Very good morning, Madam Chair, delegates,

International humanitarian law was born as a palliative to the horrors of war and since its implementation on the battlefields, the message has been clear: even war has its limits.

These limits defined by the Geneva Conventions, their additional protocols and customary law operate silently. For each violation reported in the international press, at the same time there are hundreds of scenarios where IHL dominates the logic of military operations.

The exchange of prisoners, protection of medical missions, schools and cultural assets and the requirement of minimum standards of treatment of prisoners are just some of the provisions which day by day are respected by the parties to the conflict.

In this respect, the effectiveness of IHL should not be measured in terms of its scandals but its silences.

The 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions takes place in a complex environment, in which they only alternative for the international community is to reaffirm the absolute force of the values and principles of IHL.

This Conference is the ideal place to reflect on the suitability of the current legal categories and concepts. We need to ask ourselves if the current classification criteria offer adequate protection to the parties to a non-international armed conflict and the civilian population.

In the face of new realities, such as asymmetric armed conflicts and in urban contexts, it is important to understand and ensure the full implementation of IHL. In particular, it is necessary to ensure its respect in the use of explosive weapons in prohibited populated areas, and recognise that nuclear weapons, by their very nature, are contrary to IHL.

For Mexico, compliance with IHL during an armed conflict requires the pre-existence of a national legal framework tied to the Geneva Conventions and other international instruments. Mexico recognizes the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross in supporting governments in the development of these legal frameworks and urges it to continue with these efforts.

In addition, today more than ever, it is essential to bear in mind that the vulnerabilities due to poverty, climate change and other natural and social phenomena, are challenges where we must work hand in hand with the components of the Movement and adopt new approaches which can ensure comprehensive protection of the civilian population.

We have presented our promises to continue working with the Movement in the next four years.

We express our hopes that the work of this Conference will result in a better understanding between the humanitarian actors, strengthen actions in situations of disasters, armed conflict or any other emergency, always considering the people and especially those in a vulnerable situation, as the central pillar of our work.

Let us never forget the power of humanity.

H.E. Mr Peter Matt, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Principality of Liechtenstein in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair. The year 2019 marks the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. The Conventions are the cornerstone of contemporary IHL. They are our primary legal framework for situations of armed conflict, including the protection of civilians. Yet, the erosion of the respect for IHL has reached alarming levels. It is therefore of utmost importance to take concrete steps to strengthen compliance with IHL. Liechtenstein supports all efforts in this regard, in particular the draft resolution for a road map for better National implementation of IHL.

Accountability for IHL violations is critical, not only to ensure justice for victims, but also to contribute to sustaining peace and preventing recurrence. The ICC is the centrepiece of the

international criminal justice system. The universality of the Rome Statute remains an important goal for Liechtenstein. Liechtenstein will also continue to remind the UN Security Council of the possibility to give the ICC jurisdiction of cases of grave violations of IHL.

Madam Chair, Liechtenstein remains deeply concerned about the high occurrence of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict. Not only women and girls are victims, but also men and boys, especially in the context of recruitment and detention settings. We therefore welcome and support the work of the Liechtenstein-based NGO "All Survivors Project" that conducts research and advocacy to improve global responses for every victim of sexual violence in conflict, including men and boys. We furthermore support the work of the Justice Rapid Response that has investigated grave violations against children.

Madam Chair, artificial intelligence and new technologies will affect our societies and determine the future of warfare. The emerging risks and challenges must be discussed and preventively addressed by the international community, with the understanding that IHL also applies to cyberspace. Technical developments clearly point to a need for new regulation in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS), in the form of binding standards to legally ensure a human component in the decision-making processes of such systems. In this regard, we underline the importance of the eleven guiding principles on LAWS by the group of governmental experts (GGE) within the United Nations Weapons Convention (CCW) as a step in the right direction. Liechtenstein has endorsed these principles in the framework of the 'Alliance for Multilateralism' and encourages States to follow suit. In addition, Liechtenstein pursues efforts to determine the extent to which the Rome Statute and other international legal frameworks, including IHL, apply to cyber-warfare, and we have, together with our partners, created a Council of Advisers to discuss these issues.

To conclude, let me extend Liechtenstein's deepest appreciation to the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement for the latest outstanding and most important engagement in the humanitarian cause. I thank you.

Mr Francisco Dionisio Fernandes, Chargé d'affaires a.i., Permanent Mission of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, excellencies, dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, I am honoured to deliver this statement at the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. The ICRC started working in Timor-Leste in 1975 and has since been a key player in assisting my country preventing and alleviating human suffering. Timorese will not forget the assistance given by the ICRC during the conflict and we highly recognize the importance of its mandate given by the Geneva Conventions.

The Red Cross of Timor-Leste was established in 2000 and incorporated as a National Society in September 2005, and in November of the same year was admitted as a full member of the Movement. Timor-Leste ratified the Geneva Conventions of 1949 in 2003, the first two Additional Protocols in 2005, then the third Additional

Protocol in 2011. In 2009, domestic legislation giving force to the protection of the red crystal was enacted through Government Law Number 12/2009, Usage and Protection of the Emblem of the Red Cross in Timor-Leste.

In addition, Timor-Leste, being a party to the Convention on the Rights Of the Child, signed the Optional Protocol to this Convention on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict in 2004, and entered a declaration to the effect that voluntary recruitment into the armed forces of Timor-Leste could not take place until an individual was 18 years of age. Government Law Number 3/2007 confirmed that the military census and service is for citizens who have reached 18 years of age.

Furthermore, Timor-Leste became a party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court on 6 September 2002, and decree law 19/2009, which approved the Penal Code, allowed under Book II, Title I, Chapter II for domestic prosecution for those accused of committing war crimes.

In relation to treaties dealing with the restriction or prohibition of certain weapons, Timor-Leste signed the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons in 2002, and both the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Landmines in 2003.

The Government of Timor-Leste and the Red Cross of Timor-Leste have a unique relationship, working closely on a number of issues and projects, mostly aiming in building resilience and management of disasters. These projects are based in Dili, the capital, and in all the 13 Municipalities, that is droughts, and animal disease outbreaks, and Asian Swine Flu, man-made disasters – fires or accidents – schools and in curriculum developments, ambulance services, water and sanitation, nutrition, community and health, and blood donations.

In 2019, the Timorese Government supported the Red Cross of Timor-Leste with funds of USD 250,000 and continue to support the Red Cross of Timor-Leste as they stand as an extremely important non-profit, voluntary humanitarian aid society. I thank you, Madam Chair.

H.E. Mr Michael Gaffey, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Ireland in Geneva

(Original English)

Excellences, the delegates who met here in Geneva 70 years ago agreed on the Geneva Conventions with the horrors of global war seared on their consciousness. They worked with a steely determination that action was needed to avoid a repeat descent into the abyss, by forging a set of Conventions to protect humanity in times of conflict. Today we recognize our debt of gratitude for their commitment and skill. Over the last 70 years, those Conventions have been a vital source of stability and order. Above all, they have protected literally millions of innocent people from unnecessary suffering.

We meet today in a world of technological advances which could end poverty and inequality. And yet far too many countries, and too many societies, are afflicted by layers of conflict and suffering. Over 148 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, and the single greatest driver of this suffering is conflict.

We pay tribute to those in the ICRC, the IFRC, and National Societies, who are at the front line in responding to this humanitarian need. Their courageous work is an inspiration. Ireland will continue to support you in your efforts, including through un-earmarked funding to the ICRC and IFRC.

We believe that the rising levels of humanitarian need, and the significant challenges to IHL which we have seen in recent years, are intimately connected. We are duty bound to address them collectively.

First, the nature of conflict has changed, becoming more urbanized, more fragmented and increasingly protracted. Ireland is gravely concerned that civilians continue to bear the brunt of armed conflict. We must work to strengthen the protection of civilians and enhance respect for, and compliance with, IHL. To this end, Ireland is planning to convene an international conference in Dublin in May 2020, following a series of consultations now underway in Geneva, to adopt a political declaration to address the humanitarian harm from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

Second, the development of cyber-attack capabilities, and Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems raises serious ethical, moral and legal questions. These new weapon systems have the potential to inflict suffering on countless lives and we must continue with urgency our discussions on the implications of their use.

Above all, however, respect for IHL is a question of political will. Too many in the modern world – from States to terrorist groups – are flouting IHL with impunity. And those suffering most as a result are innocent civilians.

It took the horrors of a global conflict to bring the nations of the world together 70 years ago. Let us not repeat the mistakes of earlier generations. We must redouble our efforts now to ensure the full implementation of the Geneva Conventions, the prevention of breaches of IHL, and strong, effective support of the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Thank you.

H.E. Mr M. Shameem Ahsan, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates, good morning. Let me commence by thanking you for being here today. We believe the theme of the Conference, "Act today, shape tomorrow", is timely and encouraging. The world is witnessing multiple cross-cutting threats, including the complex nature of war and conflict, and frequent natural disasters due to climate change. The emergence of new populism leading to racism and xenophobia is also a potential threat to peace and security. Consequently, we are seeing increasing numbers of people trapped in prolonged and severe humanitarian crises across continents. That is leading not only to infringement of human dignity but also to restraining our aspiration to inclusive development leaving no one behind.

Madam Chair, born out of a struggle for peace and justice, Bangladesh has consistently upheld renunciation of war, respect for human dignity and human rights, peaceful resolution of dispute in international relations. To this end, Bangladesh advocated "Culture of Peace" in the United Nations in 1999. Our sustained and leading participation in UN peacekeeping and peace-building efforts stems from these values and principles. Bangladesh is the first country in South Asia to sign and ratify the Geneva Conventions and its two Additional Protocols. Pursuant to our efforts to strengthen respect for IHL we established the National IHL Committee in 2014. We are in the process of formulating the national legislation with regard to the Geneva Conventions.

As well-known now, Bangladesh is hosting more than 1.1 million forcibly displaced Rohingyas solely on humanitarian ground. Despite scarcity of resources, we are doing all we can to meet their basic humanitarian needs with support from the international community. In this regard, ICRC and IFRC support is appreciated. It is clear that humanitarian approaches now need to be holistic, incorporating the host community, to obviate the rise of tensions in the region. Serious environmental degradation, extreme scarcity of land and social instability resulting from the continued stay of these people makes the situation untenable. Hence, the plan to primarily relocate 100,000 people to Bashan Char with cooperation of all concerned and to render better humanitarian assistance to them. Continued engagement and understanding of the international community in this regard is key to resolving the issues and upholding regional peace and stability.

Ideals of peace, security and humanity animated our struggle for independence; the same values for which our Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, dedicated his life. To uphold these values and in memory of this legendary leader, Bangladesh is going to celebrate his birth centenary next year, which also coincides with 100 years of multilateralism and 75 years of the birth of the United Nations. I thank you.

Ms Nino Osepaishvili, Secretary General, Georgia Red Cross Society

(Original English)

Even wars have limits. This simple and important idea expresses the main sense of the international humanitarian law, which has to be taken into consideration. The implementation of IHL is the primary objective of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and National Societies are well placed to promote implementation within their areas of operation, and many States have successfully created IHL bodies, National IHL Committees.

It is worth to mention that the Government of Georgia has created the Interagency IHL Commission which is a body set up for supporting the implementation of international humanitarian law and adopts the national action plan of implementation of international humanitarian law. The Commission is chaired by the Ministry of Justice of Georgia. Georgia Red Cross Society is a part of the national action plan of IHL and the Interagency IHL Commission, as an observer, together with the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The National Society supports the government in each various activity based on its auxiliary role. In order to strengthen the relationship between the National Society and its Government, Georgia Red Cross Society elaborated this draft version of the joint pledges based on the draft zero resolutions. The National Society has communicated and negotiated about the joint pledges with the relevant ministers on dissemination of

international humanitarian law, disaster risk reduction, restoring family links, epidemics and pandemics, and mental health and psychosocial support. We think that a joint pledge will foster dialogue and establish commitment to move forward on a particular issue.

Georgia Red Cross Society always ensures respect for the international humanitarian law rules, through dissemination of knowledge and facilitation of observance of the rules at a national level, as it is highlighted as a law of Georgia about Georgia Red Cross Society. GRCS will continue important work on strengthening support for IHL, in close cooperation with the Government of Georgia and Movement partners. Thank you.

Ms Liying Yu, Deputy Director of External Liaison Department, Red Cross Society of China

(Original English)

The Red Cross Society of China was founded in 1904. With its development over these years, its grassroots organization has reached 91,000, and with 17 million members and 1.2 million volunteers actively providing humanitarian services in urban and rural communities. The Chinese Red Cross has carried out emergency responses in major disasters, and set up our emergency response teams, and we hold the International First Aid Training attestation, and actively promoted the Community Resilience Programme.

The Chinese Red Cross has also tried its best to support other National Societies to help the most vulnerable. A China-Pakistan Medical First Aid Centre was built in Gwadar Port, Pakistan, with a Chinese medical team. Mobile hospitals were donated to Syria and Iraq in the areas of armed conflict, which played a vital role in medical service by local Red Crescent Societies. More than 200 children with congenital heart disease from Afghanistan and Mongolia received free surgery in China. Participants from 62 countries attended the capacity-building workshops in China. All this international cooperation was warmly welcomed and appraised by local government authorities and the community, and it made a great contribution to people-to-people connectivity.

The Chinese Red Cross would like to put forward two suggestions. First, we should first strengthen humanitarian communication and cooperation, and join hands to build a community with a shared future for mankind. Only development can eliminate the root causes of poverty and conflict, and only by strengthening cooperation can we jointly respond to the global demand for humanitarian assistance. Facing the complex and severe humanitarian crises, the members of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement should strengthen communication and its exchanges with each other, with the vision of building a community with a shared future, fully understanding the necessity and the urgency of joint action.

Secondly, we should focus on humanitarian education and the Red Cross Youth for sustainable and healthy development. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Society should foster a humanitarian quota and enhance service capacities through education and training, and it should be accessible for staff and members, volunteers and the general public. The National Societies should continue to support Red Cross Youth and provide a vital platform for Youth people to participate in humanitarian undertakings. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Khalil-ur-Rahman Hashmi, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in Geneva

(Original English)

Honourable Chairperson, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, let me begin by aligning ourselves with the statement delivered by Azerbaijan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We commend the Standing Commission, the ICRC and IFRC for their tireless efforts in making this Conference a success.

As a signatory of the Geneva Conventions and a responsible member of the international community, Pakistan has always been a faithful adherent to the Geneva Conventions. We are also a Party to Protocol 1 and 2 and respect their provisions. The Geneva Conventions represent our collective resolve to manage the effects of wars, and care for the sick and wounded. While this is both essential and important, our deliberations here and at the United Nations must also be geared towards prevention and resolution of conflicts, accompanied by promotion and protection of human rights and humanitarian principles in the entire cycle of an armed conflict.

The following primary considerations guide our national policy: full respect, promotion and dissemination, as well as implementation of international humanitarian law, its rules and principles; upholding victims' rights with full accountability; respect for State sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-intervention in its internal affairs; and rejection of unilateral use of force in violation of the UN Charter and international law.

I would like to make four points in our statement. First, new technologies and techniques being used in international and non-international armed conflicts have placed stress on the humanitarian law. We therefore must redouble efforts to evolve responses and work towards early consensus to address the challenges posed in modern times. Two, there is a need to ensure accountability in the doctrine of States' responsibility, particularly of powerful States. This is essential to enhance accountability across the board. Three, as everything around us is in a flux, IHL is also evolving; even as it is essential to frame new rules, effective implementation of existing ones is equally desirable. It is imperative to end selectivity, exceptionalism and discriminatory treatment in implementing IHL and protecting people. Four, in the context of South Asia, full respect of and compliance with the four Geneva Conventions is a must. The general principles and scope of application of the Geneva Conventions and IHL apply to situations in which people are fighting against foreign occupation for their right of self-determination, as enshrined in the UN Charter and all key human rights conventions. We urge the international community to step up efforts for protection of people under foreign occupation and to address humanitarian challenges faced by them.

Ms Gayethri Murugaiyan Pillay, Chargé d' Affairs, Counselor, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Seychelles in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, your excellencies, distinguished guests, the Government of the Republic of Seychelles wishes to firstly thank and express its appreciation to the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, for their efforts in bringing together this Conference successfully.

Seychelles remains ever committed to upholding the principles of international humanitarian law, including through its compliance and promotion of the Geneva Conventions, and its Additional Protocols, as well as the other key international instruments, such as the Arms Trade Treaty. Furthermore, in its promotion of democratic processes and national reconciliation practices, Seychelles maintains a peaceful society which has prevented the emergence of conflicts.

Although the global community marks the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions this year, the fundamental principles of respect for human rights and of humanitarian law remain more relevant than ever, in an era of continued conflicts, with increasing complexities, and unspeakable brutalities.

The theme for this year's Conference, "Act today, shape tomorrow," places an impetus upon all States and actors to work towards a safe and peaceful future of our making. One of the greatest threats we will face in this endeavour is that of climate change. As a Small Island Developing State, climate change is not an abstract concept for us, but a reality that impinges on our daily livelihoods. For people caught in a cycle of conflict, however, climate change causes a double vulnerability. For civilians experiencing conflict, for displaced persons and recovering communities, the impacts of climate change deter recovery, reconstruction and resilience measures. In addition, conflicts and warfare are inevitably contributing to climate change through the various forms of weaponry used, and the natural resources destroyed in the course of warfare.

Compliance to the principles of IHL will serve to protect our environment and reduce the risk of vulnerabilities to climate change. With the backdrop of the ongoing COP25, we call on all member States to take all necessary measures to mitigate the effects of climate change, especially in situations of protracted conflict. The onus is placed on all of us to build a future where civilians in need of humanitarian assistance not only survive but are given the building blocks to thrive.

We conclude, Madam Chair, by recognizing the tireless efforts and the sacrifices of the staff and volunteers of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to provide aid, relief, safety and security to millions of people in need across the world. Thank you, Madam Chair.

H. E. Mr Sek Wannamethee, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Thailand in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, on behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I wish to reaffirm our continued commitment to the Geneva Conventions, as well as our support to the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in upholding the humanitarian principles.

Although 70 years have passed, the Geneva Conventions remain as much relevant as before. The importance of humanitarianism is being accentuated by today's pressing global risks and challenges. Much has been said about new forms of conflicts, the use of new technologies – including autonomous weapons and artificial intelligence – natural disasters, pandemics, and socio-economic crises. What they have in common is the threat posed to the safety and wellbeing of people and, with it, a threat to humanity.

In retrospect, Thailand has had a long tradition of embracing the humanitarian principles since the First Geneva Convention of 1864. To us, the humanitarian principles apply to everyone, every nation, and those in need, irrespective of gender, age, race, ethnic or cultural backgrounds.

Distinguished delegates, let me share with you three main points. First, humanitarianism is more than 'response', but it is also about 'preparedness' and 'prevention'. The success of the international humanitarian law is not only about addressing violations of such law. It is the absence of violations that should also be counted. We have witnessed increasingly protracted conflicts and a series of challenges surrounding them. 'Preparedness' and 'prevention' have saved lives. Capacity-building and training of local authorities and humanitarian personnel also contribute to effective humanitarian response.

Secondly, the strengthening of compliance with the international humanitarian law requires, first and foremost, understanding and trust. People and officers need to understand humanitarian principles and norms, as well as the work of the Movement in supporting them. In order for the Movement to gain trust of the people and authorities, upholding the principles of neutrality, independence and impartiality is fundamental. Recent discussions have touched upon the Movement's protection and assistance activities in situations not covered by the international humanitarian law, such as in the event of internal disturbances and tensions. The Movement is encouraged to find a right balance while strictly abiding by the law and keeping close consultation with States and continued communication with people and local authorities.

Thirdly, partnership with local communities is key to bring the international humanitarian law to people on the ground. Working with local communities helps assess people's needs and priorities, extend implementation networks, and increase effectiveness and efficiency. The role of community volunteers should also be promoted. Thailand has had very good experiences in working with volunteers across sectors, including disaster risk reduction, education and health services, and sustainable development. We should aim to create a caring and sharing society. This culture of volunteerism can contribute to effective and sustainable humanitarian action. So, we need global movements of these sorts to inspire us to lessen pain and to ensure that no one is left behind.

Dr Omar Awadallah, Head of Public Administration for UN Human Rights Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair, I would first like to congratulate you for being chosen to chair this critical Conference. I would also like to thank the Government of Switzerland for hosting this Conference. The State of Palestine and its people have been some of the staunchest defenders of international humanitarian law and the multilateral humanitarian system, at a time when this system is threatened, undermined, attacked, and dismantled with the support of certain international parties. This is one of the major challenges we face today, in addition to the immunity and impunity that are obstructing accountability and preventing the achievement of justice for victims of crimes of war. It is unfortunate that 17 years after the adoption of the Geneva Conventions, some parties still violate international humanitarian law and fail to abide by its rules, as stipulated in Article 1, common to the four 1949 Geneva Conventions, which is the ultimate test to our humanity.

(Original English)

The international humanitarian law talks about not violating its articles. Madam Chair, impunity feeds criminality. Therefore, we all gathered here to educate in law, its applicability and practices.

International law can unfortunately be violated, but it cannot and must not be negated.

Madam Chair, violation of IHL is not about lack of knowledge in international law and its practices. It is about criminality and need of accountability. It is about lack of morals, ethics and principles. I thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms Kerry Nickels, National President, New Zealand Red Cross

(Original English)

On behalf of the New Zealand Red Cross, good afternoon. The 15th March 2019 was a memorable day for New Zealand. It started with thousands of school children calling for action on climate change. There was a buzz in the peaceful assembly on the streets around our Parliament in Wellington; a new generation finding their voice. But the voices of the young people were soon overshadowed by unfolding events in Christchurch. There had been a terror attack in two mosques, where 400 of our fellow New Zealanders were also in peaceful assembly, at worship. The number of fatalities on that day, and subsequently, stands at 51.

The immediate humanitarian response included community and individual psychosocial support to survivors and activating the Restoring Family Links service. The New Zealand Red Cross migration team has continued supporting former refugee communities directly affected by the attack as well as the broader refugee community around New Zealand with whom we work. In addition, we joined the many voices in civil society, led by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, who reaffirmed our commitment to principles of dignity, equality and diversity in Kiwi society.

Out of these experiences, we also wish to reaffirm the importance of wider connections in our humanitarian work: both connected problems and connected solutions. More than ever, the humanitarian challenges we face cross borders – the attack in the Christchurch mosques was immediately redistributed many thousands of times across the internet worldwide. Our approaches to these issues need to cross borders too. Climate change and the threat of the use of nuclear weapons are other cross-border issues that require cross-border solutions.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has always coupled humanitarian responses with the promotion and development of legal frameworks to protect vulnerable people. We recognize that a strong, multilateral, rules-based international system, such as we find in the Geneva Conventions, is in the common interest of humanity.

There is more work to be done. To this end, we affirm the continuing importance of working with our colleagues across the Movement, and our colleagues in governments, including our own. For example, we will pledge with the government of New Zealand to support a coordinated approach for universal ratification and implementation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. To help improve understanding of international humanitarian law, and inform dialogue on IHL issues, we will pledge with the New Zealand government to develop and publish reports on the domestic implementation of IHL. As part of the Pacific region, which is subject to the increasing frequency and severity of weather events, we will pledge with the New Zealand government to promote a localized approach to disaster preparedness and response in the climate-vulnerable Pacific. Thank you

Judge Suzan Abdel Rahman, Arab Group Coordinator

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair,

It is with great pride that the delegation of the Arab Republic of Egypt is delivering this statement on behalf of the Arab Group. The 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent coincides with the 70th anniversary of the four Geneva Conventions, which are the foundation of modern international humanitarian law. Despite the many achievements made in terms of ensuring respect for IHL, there is still a considerable amount of work to be deployed in order to overcome the challenges facing the implementation of IHL in our modern world, many of which were mentioned in the ICRC report on the matter. The Arab Group expresses its deep concern at the continuous violation of the basic IHL rules, the targeting of innocent civilians, which results in the death and displacement of millions and the destruction of their objects and the vital facilities that they rely on, the increase in the activity of armed terrorist groups, which use civilians as human shields, and the continuous occupation and foreign assaults and interference in the affairs of countries in the region, in a blatant violation of IHL principles and the aims and principles of the UN Charter. Considering the above, the Arab Group reiterates the need for all States to comply with and strengthen respect for IHL, in accordance with Article 1 of the four 1949 Geneva Conventions and Article 1/1 of the First Additional Protocol of 1977. The Arab Group would also like to refer to the fact that the international community had agreed on this principle in the resolutions issued in the 2007 and 2011 International Conferences. We call upon the international community to ensure that civilians, who are not involved in hostilities, are spared the suffering caused by war, particularly

women, children and persons with disabilities. These exceptionally vulnerable groups must be protected from acts of violence, including sexual violence and physical and psychological harm. The Arab Group would like to remind the participants of the great suffering endured by the region and its people throughout history, as a result of recurrent and egregious violations of the principles of IHL. This has encouraged the Group to find a common denominator between the various positions expressed during the intergovernmental process on strengthening respect for IHL. Despite those attempts, the participants failed to agree on a mechanism to move forward with the proposals that received consensus. The Arab Group reiterates its commitment to strengthening respect for IHL through all established national, regional and international mechanisms, namely the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. In this respect, we welcome the draft resolution related to the road map for better national implementation of international humanitarian law. The Arab Group would like to stress the importance of promoting the role and contributions of regional forums and mechanisms in strengthening respect for IHL. In fact, on 24 February 2019, the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States presented its report on strengthening respect for IHL within the framework of the League. The report gives an overview of the meetings held by experts from member States to strengthen respect for IHL since 2001. It must also be noted that a strategy has been adopted for the implementation of IHL in the Arab region from 2018 until 2020. The Group is willing to interact positively with all topics listed on the agenda of the 33rd International Conference, as well as all proposals and resolutions under deliberation, in the hope that the Conference succeeds in achieving its aims. Thank you.

Mr Novruz Aslanov, President, Red Crescent Society of Azerbaijan

(Original Russian)

Madam Chair, dear friends,

In our view, compliance with the provisions of international humanitarian law and other international obligations is extremely important, both at times of international and non-international armed conflicts, and in current complex situations. We also emphasize that IHL must apply in full in all circumstances without any limitations. And we, as the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, must strive to contribute to the fulfilment of these obligations.

In recent years, thanks to joint efforts in close cooperation with governmental bodies, we can say that we have made definite progress. However, despite that, we still encounter instances of serious violations of international humanitarian law and other branches of international law. As noted in the address of the President of the ICRC, Mr Peter Maurer, there is uncertainty about the applicability of IHL, and this means we must continue to strengthen the action taken.

International humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions are the basic authority for our activities. As we pointed out in previous statements at the Council of Delegates, we in Azerbaijan have been directly confronted with this problem. More than one million residents have become refugees, more than one million have been forcibly displaced. Thus, one in ten residents of the country is a refugee.

In the long drawn-out conflict, we have been witness to the indirect impact of violations of IHL rules on the lives of the civilian population in Azerbaijan, especially people living in border areas, internally displaced persons, missing persons, hostages and their families. And that is why we can say with conviction that compliance with international humanitarian law and other international standards is essential and must be actively supported by us as a Movement, and by States.

If we take a practical approach to the question, in other words, from the point of view of implementing IHL rules in relation to specific target groups, refugees, displaced persons, missing persons and the civilian population, specific resolutions must not only be adopted but also disseminated. For example, in response to the situation that had arisen in Azerbaijan, a resolution on missing persons was adopted by consensus in the plenary of the UN General Assembly on 19 December 2016. The resolution urged States parties to armed conflicts to strictly observe and to respect the rules of international humanitarian law, to take all appropriate measures to prevent persons from going missing, to determine their identity and to provide their family members with all necessary information.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that international humanitarian law is the foundation of our Movement, and we must make every effort to develop and implement it in every area of our activities. Thank you for your attention.

Ms Intissar Ben Attallah, Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Mission of Tunisia in Geneva

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair,

Allow me, first, to extend my country's sincere appreciation for the IFRC and the ICRC for their continuous efforts to respond to increasing humanitarian needs around the globe, despite the immense difficulties and challenges faced by humanitarian workers who are often directly targeted simply for doing so. It is imperative to continuously strive to ensure the protection of humanitarian workers and to shield them from the repercussions of compromises and conflicts, as their sole aim, which stems from their firm belief in the power of humanity, is to heal the wounds of those who are suffering and to make a change for the better. "Act today, shape tomorrow" is the slogan of our Conference. We hope that this appeal is heard and that there is an international political will to act upon it, especially since our Conference coincides with the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, which laid down the principles and values that constitute the common standards for humanity. It also coincides with the centenary of the foundation of the International Federal of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Despite the many benefits that humanity has drawn from these Conventions, and despite their importance, they remain insufficient for dealing with the challenges that our world faces today, especially with the increase in the number of long-lasting conflicts and flashpoints. The increasing lack of respect for the principles of international humanitarian law in many places around the world has exacerbated these challenges, leading to a rise in the number of people in need of humanitarian aid. The UN reports issued in the past week indicate that 2020 will be a tumultuous year, as it is estimated that 168 million people need humanitarian aid and protection, which is the equivalent of 1 out of every 45 people around the world. This is the highest figure recorded in decades, and it requires funding amounting to USD 28.8 billion. These challenges are a test to our universal value system. They compel us to unite our efforts, solidify our joint work and act urgently to reach peaceful solutions for raging conflicts, as well as to end the occupation of territories that are suffering from some of the most heinous breaches of the principles of international humanitarian law by occupying powers on a daily basis. Madam Chair, the serious assaults we are witnessing every day against our very humanity, and the breaches of IHL, urge us to act, now more than ever before, to strengthen respect for IHL. In this context, we welcome the draft resolutions proposed at this Conference, and we hope that we will reach a consensus on them. That would reflect our determination, as both governments and National Societies, to unite our efforts to contain humanitarian tragedies and resolve their root causes. We also stress the importance of the draft resolution on women and leadership in the humanitarian action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which recognizes the role of women in achieving an efficient and effective humanitarian response and enabling local communities to become more resilient. This makes women's access to decision-making positions and their empowerment to impact the core action of humanitarian organizations an absolute necessity. Thank you.

Wednesday, 11 December 2019 – Afternoon Session

(2 pm)

H.E. Ms Sigrid Kaag, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Kingdom of the Netherlands

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, on this 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, the urgency of this Conference could not be greater. On International Humanitarian Law, of which the Geneva Conventions are a key part, is under increasing pressure, as violations continue to occur. The protection of innocent lives (the lives of civilians and the lives of medical and humanitarian personnel), as intended by these Conventions, is no longer a universally respected principle.

So, as State Parties to the Convention, we must take every opportunity we can to reaffirm our commitment to the universally agreed rules of warfare, and to speak out against violations. Functioning compliance and accountability mechanisms are needed today more than ever. So, you must keep striving to maintain these.

At the same time, humanitarian principles must be respected by all. Impartial humanitarian organizations must be allowed unimpeded access to those in need. In many armed conflicts across the world humanitarian access is increasingly unsafe or hindered, depriving civilians of food aid and other lifesaving assistance. We

cannot allow this deliberate use of hunger and starvation. Security Council Resolution 2417 provides a basis for tackling conflict-driven hunger, one of the main priorities of the Netherlands' humanitarian aid agenda. Putting this resolution into practice requires our joint commitment. We have to make sure that no one gets away with the use of starvation as a weapon of war.

We also need to look at how we provide a humanitarian response, and make sure we focus on the right needs. Apart from life-saving assistance, we need to take a more holistic approach to the people we care for.

Mental health and psychosocial wellbeing are crucial to the overall functioning of individuals and societies recovering from armed conflict, or other emergencies. Meeting psychosocial needs from the earliest stages of a crisis response will help rebuild dignity and provide for resilience. The Kingdom of the Netherlands recently organized a conference on this very vital topic, as we believe that providing mental health care will prevent difficulties at a later stage. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, with its huge network of volunteers, well-rooted and connected to local communities, is an important partner in our efforts to include psychosocial and access to mental health in relief operations.

Finally, Madam Vice-Chair, excellencies, the enormous humanitarian needs in the world require an effective response mechanism to maximize the impact of our ever-limited resources. More work is needed from all of us to translate the commitments of the Grand Bargain into tangible action. And I am personally dedicated to help achieve this, as I have taken over the role as Eminent Person from Kristalina Georgieva, and I look forward to working with you all to make sure that aid is provided more efficiently, more effectively, and that above all, that our common relief efforts have maximum impact for the people we serve. Thank you.

Mr Peter Kaiser, Deputy Secretary General, Austrian Red Cross

(Original English)

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, esteemed colleagues, servers of the Austrian Red Cross, not knowing the fate of their loved ones causes large numbers of people throughout the world to live in an anguish of uncertainty. Bringing families together again is a core service of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The Austrian Red Cross acknowledges Restoring Family Links as a genuine humanitarian value and a unique Red Cross Red Crescent service, which is governed by the Geneva Conventions with their Additional Protocols and respective customary law. In the past years, especially since 2015, the Austrian Red Cross has been very active in the support of migrants. We consider the right to family life as a fundamental right, and thus we have scaled up our Restoring Family Links activities as an increasingly important part of our support to migrants.

Turning towards future challenges, we see that we are providing our services in a rapidly changing environment. The scale and speed of movement around the globe is increasing, and digitalization is offering us opportunities and also obstacles. The proposed resolution on RFL and data protection meets these challenges, as they are an essential part of the adopted new RFL Strategy 2020-2025. The Austrian Red Cross is aware and appreciates that important reasons of public interest are at stake when processing and transferring personal data across a border. At the same time, however, processing and cross border transfers exclusively for humanitarian purpose are a basic requirement for tracing services within the international RFL network.

The Austrian Red Cross supports the strategic orientations of the new RFL Strategy. We will continue our advocacy for the benefit of the missing and their families, the right to family life and actively contribute to the enhancement of RFL services by active membership in the RFL Strategy Implementation Group, the Trace the Face Coordination Group, the Family Reunification Working Group and the Deceased Migrants Working Group.

We, the National Societies around the world, together with the ICRC Central Tracing Agency, are responsible to give answers, ease the pain of those who are desperate for news of their loved ones, promote the right to family life and the concept of family unity. The Austrian Red Cross strongly supports the proposed resolution on RFL and data protection. Thank you very much.

Mr Mahieddine Khelladi, Executive Director, Secour Islamique France

(Original French)

Madam Vice-Chair, representatives of the States, dear Red Cross and Red Crescent friends, dear humanitarian colleagues, this is the first time that Secours Islamique France has taken part in the International Conference as an observer, and I would like to thank the Movement for its invitation.

It is a great opportunity for us to reaffirm our commitment to assisting the most vulnerable in order to alleviate suffering and preserve human dignity. We also wish to reaffirm here today the values that have always guided our actions, namely the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.

We share these values with you and are honoured to have this opportunity to contribute, as an actor operating on the ground, to the debates on global humanitarian priorities and to the work that will lead to the adoption of the resolutions.

We welcome the Conference's focus on the new vulnerabilities that communities are facing and their cross-cutting nature and interconnectedness. Secours Islamique France is committed to adapting its approaches to the new realities of today's crises and to thinking beyond conventional solutions.

On this subject, I would like to draw special attention to the question of children, who are among the most seriously affected. Prolonged displacement and protracted crises have a profound and lasting impact on children and their well-being. There are currently 142 million children living in areas affected by violent conflicts, and in 2018 one out of two refugees was a child.

In the Syrian Arab Republic, Secours Islamique France assists children who cannot go to school because of the conflict, by implementing protection measures as part of educational activities. This holistic approach makes it possible to overcome some of the barriers to education and to strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable children and families through relevant psychosocial support programmes. The aim is to carry out complementary and mutually reinforcing activities (education and protection) in order to deliver a comprehensive response to vulnerabilities.

I would also like to mention the Sahel, where the worsening security crisis is putting already very vulnerable people in even greater danger. In Mali and Senegal, Secours Islamique France carries out activities to assist Talibé children and young people in non-formal Quranic schools, including in areas where the security situation is very serious. Different approaches are being implemented to respond to their basic needs, improve protection, combat exclusion and give them hope.

I would like to finish by applauding the attention the Conference has given to the question of IHL violations having different implications depending on people's individual characteristics, particularly gender. Crises affect boys and girls differently. In 2019, we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Secours Islamique France would urge all actors to comply with IHL and undertake specific and relevant initiatives to ensure the protection of children in armed conflict.

Thank you on behalf of the whole team at Secours Islamique France. Thank you.

Dr Gustaf Lind, Head of Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law,
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden

(Original English)

Good afternoon. Madam Vice-Chair, The Geneva Conventions celebrate their 70th anniversary this year and we as States Parties have committed ourselves to respect and ensure respect for these rules and principles. Although the new technologies and methods of warfare have emerged, we think the Geneva Conventions stand the test of time. The biggest challenge is the lack of respect for existing rules and this calls for our continued work to improve respect and compliance with IHL and humanitarian principles, and I will now mention four areas to show where Sweden focuses on to do so.

If we look, for example, on the first Convention, originally from 1856, is the first agreement between States stipulating that the sick and wounded should be protected and cared for, and in order to be able to do this, also the persons that care for the wounded and sick must receive protection. Today, these are some of the most fundamental rules of IHL, but sadly even health care is being targeted in conflicts in violation of these rules. Sweden gives priority to work on how to improve the protection and to stop the attacks on health care. During this Conference we have hosted a side event on Protecting Healthcare: translating normative frameworks into practical solutions. And we think by focusing on this part of IHL and by giving concrete examples and lessons learned on how to improve in practical terms, we want to contribute to implementing IHL.

We also remain committed to humanitarian principles and to safeguarding the humanitarian space. The needs and challenges continue to increase in both magnitude and complexity. A significant challenge here is technical development, digitalization and the unintended consequences of counterterrorism and restrictive measures on humanitarian action. We welcome the depth of these discussions during this Conference.

A third priority is to include a gender perspective when interpreting and applying IHL. The Conventions are 70 years old and emanate from a period where men were soldiers and women were caregivers. Today we know that armed conflict can have different impacts on women and girls, men and boys, and therefore a gender perspective should be integrated in international humanitarian law. Work must be done to operationalize it in practice. Applying a gender perspective will improve the effectiveness of IHL and strengthen the protection of individuals during times of armed conflicts.

We cannot discuss the eroding respect for the rules based international order and outright violations of IHL, including war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, without mentioning accountability. It is our firm belief that accountability is necessary not only to ensure respect for international humanitarian law but also to prevent and deter future violations and breaches. This is crucial today and the world needs more accountability, not less. The world needs more gender equality, not less. And the world needs more humanity, not less. We must continue and step up efforts to enhance the protection of the rules-based international order where IHL is the central point. Thank you very much.

H.E. Ms Vesna Batistic Kos, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Croatia in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. This year we mark the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, instruments that established the international humanitarian law and that are universally accepted. They have set rules for the international warfare focused on the protection of all people affected by an armed conflict, especially civilians, and to which all parties should abide.

Sadly, wars and armed conflicts remain a common feature of the contemporary world. Their main victims today are civilians, despite the universal acceptance of the Conventions. Much too often the Conventions are not respected and IHL is deliberately breached. As the conflicts become more complex, the number of civilian victims raises. Therefore, we are obliged to use this anniversary occasion to reflect and strengthen the importance and respect for international humanitarian law.

Allow me to specifically underline two issues. One of the most devastating aspects of the armed conflict is the issue of missing persons. As long as a person is unaccounted for, the violation of IHL and human rights law continues, not allowing the family members to mourn and heal.

Croatia has a long open issue of 1,872 people gone missing during the Homeland War in the 1990s. The Government has been searching for mass graves and other places of sporadic burials for over 20 years. It is not only a moral but also a legal obligation, in accordance with the IHL, that armed forces provide information and every family is entitled to know the destiny of their family members. In our experience, without will for cooperation from the other side it is an extremely slow process, not to mention the pain and anguish families of missing people have gone through. They will not be able to come to peace until they discover and bury remains of their relatives. The Government and the Ministry of the Croatian Defenders are determined to continue with persistent tracing of all persons gone missing during the Homeland War.

Madam Vice-Chair, the armed conflicts destroy lives and property, but they also leave deep long-lasting scars on the mental health of the population. While, again, the civilians are heavily affected, virtually everyone touched by the war – the military personal, humanitarian workers – also often feel these consequences. Addressing the mental scars is a complex and long process that requires a range of measures, including appropriate psychological assistance.

With this in mind, The Ministry of Croatian Veterans, has been executing the national program of psychosocial and health assistance to participants of the Homeland War and all other victims, such as those suffered in various peace missions worldwide and the World War II. The goal is to provide adequate assistance and support reintegration of those people in society and everyday life.

And finally, as a country that suffered a great deal from the war hostilities in the 1990s, Croatia welcomes and strongly supports the efforts of the International Committee of Red Cross and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to strengthen the application of the IHL worldwide.

I thank you.

H.E. Archbishop Ivan Juricovič, Apostolic Nuncio, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, the minimum protection of the dignity of every person, which ought to be guaranteed with great vigilance through the implementation of international humanitarian law, is all too often violated in the name of so-called military necessity and political demands. Such progressive erosion and piecemeal compliance with international humanitarian law are alarming, as the globalization of indifference to the suffering of others seems to be the new normal.

The Holy See wishes to reaffirm the importance it gives to international humanitarian law and urges everyone to respect its norms in every circumstance, clarifying and reinforcing international humanitarian law in light of the new realities of conflicts where appropriate, especially with regard to non-international armed conflicts and to the protection of persons deprived of freedom.

In this regard, I have the honour to share two formal commitments that the Holy See is pledging to carry out during the next four years. First, to continue to promote initiatives for the ongoing formation of Catholic military chaplains in international humanitarian law. And two, to foster greater awareness of the ethical foundation of international humanitarian law and to promote its further development in relation to the protection of humanitarian workers, civilian religious personnel and places of worship in the context of armed conflicts, especially those involving non-State armed actors.

Madam Vice-Chair, Pope Francis has highlighted the need to reject the temptation of viewing the 'other' merely as an enemy to be destroyed, and has urged everyone, "never to tire of remembering that even amid the devastations of war and conflict every person is immensely sacred." This delegation deems it opportune to recall the enduring relevance of the Martens Clause. Indeed, that which is not prohibited by law is not therefore automatically acceptable. Thus, "where humanitarian law presents hesitations and omissions, may individual consciences be able to acknowledge the moral duty to respect and protect the dignity of the human person in every circumstance."

Madame Vice-Chair, this is particularly important when we consider how the technologies and artificial intelligence are being weaponized. For instance, how would fully autonomous weapons systems be able to respond to the principles of humanity and the dictates of public conscience? Removing human agency as the fundamental reference from the moral equation is problematic, not only from the point of view of ethics, but also from the foundation of law, including international humanitarian law. Indeed, the application of rules and principles of international humanitarian law requires prudential judgment in the timely interpretation and understanding of particular contexts and situations that are not programmable, for which the human person is irreplaceable. Thank you.

Ms Eun Young Park, Director General, International Relations and Inter-Korean Office
President, The Republic of Korean National Red Cross

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair. It is my honour to be given the opportunity to speak at this event. In addition, the Korean Red Cross has been active in promoting and disseminating IHL with collaboration with the relevant authorities of the Korean Government.

The Korean Red Cross established the international humanitarian law Institute in 1976 for disseminating IHL by publishing the annual journal and organizing seminars and IHL essay contests, etc. In addition, even before the National Committee of IHL was established in 2002, the Korean Red Cross created the Advisory Committee of IHL to play a key role in providing expert advice and recommendations on IHL. The Committee consists of 16 members from public authorities such as the Ministry of Education, Foreign Affairs, Justice, National Defence, National Human Rights Commission and academics contributed to making both the academic foundation and policy framework of IHL.

The Korean Red Cross would like to call for continuous ICRC support to strengthen the capacities of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in humanitarian diplomacy and IHL. In addition, it is needed to vitalize the knowledge sharing of successful cases at regional and international levels, and to strengthen efforts to make IHL a domestic agenda at the international level.

With strengthened collaboration with ICRC, we will make a continuous effort to further facilitate disseminating IHL by building the pool of expert IHL disseminators, including professors and staff, judge advocates generals. We will develop a learning strategy and a clear development path to strengthen the capacities of IHL disseminators.

Based on 40 years' experience in face-to-face IHL training, the Korean Red Cross will invest more in creating a digital environment for the promotion and dissemination of IHL for civilians to be protected at armed conflict. Innovative tools, including multiple online training will be shared within the Movement.

The Korean Red Cross has recognized the value of collaboration with the relevant authorities of the Korean government and components of the Movement, universities and professionals on matters pertaining to IHL. Therefore, the Korean Red Cross will keep working closely with the relevant organizations in particular for advocacy campaigns on IHL, including a campaign to protect the emblem of Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Crystal.

In order to faithfully fulfil the government's auxiliary role in the field of IHL, the Korean Red Cross will put more efforts in disseminating and promoting IHL at preventive measures of peace time by building cooperative network with diverse interlocutors, incorporating new technologies and carrying out advocacy campaigns with an innovative approach. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Valentin Zellweger, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Switzerland in Geneva

(Original French)

Madam Vice-Chair, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, the International Conference has come down through the centuries to become an indispensable multilateral forum where emergency issues are discussed to shape humanitarian action based on the Fundamental Principles. Allow me to congratulate the co-organizers on the excellent preparation of the event. The numerous consultations enabled all the actors to engage with the issues in the run-up to the 33rd International Conference.

The issues are many, to begin with, the need to give renewed impetus to IHL implementation, particularly at the national level. IHL has always been, and should remain, at the heart of this Conference. The obligation to respect and ensure respect for IHL is as relevant today as it was in the past, and we can all clearly do more to implement its provisions effectively and reduce suffering in armed conflict.

We therefore welcome the draft resolution on IHL. We would encourage all States that have not already done so to ratify the Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions, to recognize the competence of the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission and to establish national committees on IHL. Lastly, Switzerland encourages all participants to support the pledge concerning voluntary reporting on the national implementation of IHL submitted by the United Kingdom.

Another major topic of this Conference is addressed in the draft resolution on Restoring Family Links and personal data protection. It is crucial that we establish a standard so that the components of the Movement can continue to ensure the security of the data collected. It is a matter of maintaining affected people's trust in the Movement and in its humanitarian work. Switzerland is therefore putting a strong emphasis on this point in the negotiations.

The other resolutions addressing the vulnerabilities that humanitarian workers face in the field, such as mental health and climate change, propose approaches aimed at ensuring that humanitarian action remains relevant and effective and therefore have Switzerland's full support.

Ladies and gentlemen, the International Conference is a unique forum on account of its identity, inextricably linked to the Movement, and the trust enjoyed by the ICRC, the International Federation and the National Societies. It is a space for neutral dialogue, which leads to a better understanding of the issues and strengthens the unity of the Movement, thereby contributing to improving the effectiveness of humanitarian action on the ground. We hope that the numerous debates taking place during the Conference will move the humanitarian agenda forward and enable humanitarian actors to carry out their mandate effectively.

Thank you, Madam Vice-Chair.

Ms Brooke Takala, Secretary General, Marshall Islands Red Cross

(statement on behalf of 14 Pacific Red Cross National Societies)

(Original English)

I am pleased to deliver this intervention on behalf of 14 Pacific Red Cross National Societies attending this Conference: Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

I am particularly proud to deliver this as the first statement from the Marshall Islands Red Cross since our admission to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Crescent Societies a few days ago, and formal attendance with our Government at this International Conference.

Geographically, 95 percent of our region is ocean – we are large ocean island States, navigating waters of a blue continent. Our remoteness and land area to water ratio, means we face different challenges to other developing countries. The Pacific leaders declared recently, in Tuvalu, that climate change is the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific. It is within this context of acting now to shape our future tomorrow, that we emphasize the importance of the voice of the Pacific on this topic at this Conference, recognising that climate change affects all of us, but is being felt first in the Pacific and all of us have a role to play to take action now.

In the Pacific we are proud that we are resilient people that have shown our ability over centuries to adapt and withstand the impacts of a changing climate. But the recent acceleration of climate change is testing even our capacity to adapt. Through the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific, our leaders and partners have demonstrated global leadership in promoting integrated approaches to climate disaster resilient development in the Pacific

To implement the framework, we are taking a leadership role in the Pacific Resilience Partnership, together with governments. We are making significant progress to translate international and regional commitments into tangible action at both national and local levels. This includes supporting Pacific governments to revise their disaster laws and ensuring more climate-smart approaches in relevant disaster laws. Since our work began in the region, we have supported authorities to review their disaster laws in over ten Pacific countries, most recently in Fiji and with work starting in Palau, Samoa and back home in the Marshall Islands. Within this context of the auxiliary role that only Red Cross can play, we are also working with our Governments in Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Palau and Fiji to strengthen our own legal base revisions and have committed to work with our governments on this in the coming four years.

Through these collaborative models in the Pacific, we are excited to show how States, Red Cross and other stakeholders can work together collectively in genuine partnership in policy development and implementation and commit to continue to do this.

Within the context of shifting vulnerabilities, we also stand united in our support for the resolution to do more to support mental health and psychosocial needs of affected populations, as well as staff and volunteers, that arise as a consequence of armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies. The provision of mental health and psychosocial support is a core element of building community and individual resilience through the strengthening of coping mechanisms. It is vital in order to preserve and restore the resilience and well-being of those affected.

In our Pacific region, we have seen an almost exponential rise in the need for psychosocial support to enhance social cohesion, and for disaster affected people, particularly given the frequency with which we are now experiencing extreme weather and health events. We call for all societies, ICRC and States to commit to prioritising psychological first aid training for staff and volunteers. We also call on states to refrain from resorting to the use of and threat of nuclear tests in any circumstances, and to work together with Red Cross Societies towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Finally, we cannot continue to have the impact we want as a collective movement without reinforcing trust and upholding our individual and collective integrity. Inclusion and empowerment of women in our movement at all levels is essential if we want to maintain trust.

We recognize that good governance is the foundation of upholding integrity and we are particularly proud of the significant progress we are making with revising our constitutions in accordance with the new Guidance document for National Society Statutes, of which five out of our 14 National Societies have already complied, with more in process.

Thank you for this opportunity to share a little on how the blue Pacific region is committed to acting now to shape the future tomorrow and maintain trust.

H.E. Mr Julio César Peralta Rodas, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Paraguay in Geneva

(Original Spanish)

Madam Vice-Chair. Firstly, the delegation of Paraguay thanks you for calling this Conference, and likewise thanks all the team of the International Committee and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent for the efforts made in organizing it.

Currently, conflicts in all parts of the globe, and particularly in vulnerable areas, have a massive impact at national level, even reaching and affecting all neighbouring countries, and contributing to the destabilization of entire regions. This brings with it great challenges in fulfilling the international commitments in relation to international humanitarian law, the victims of which are mostly children and adolescents, older persons and women, as well as other groups in vulnerable situations.

As various reports tell, we are facing a combination of threats which combine phenomena such as violence, terrorism, development deficit, exclusion and climate change, which taken together further accentuate differences and increase vulnerabilities.

In this context, we view with satisfaction that the themes of this Conference are focused on “International humanitarian law (IHL): protecting people in armed conflict”, “shifting vulnerabilities” and “trust in humanitarian action”. These concentrate the key elements to forge strategies and synergies to confront the new challenges.

Madam Vice-Chair, in over 150 years of the work of the Movement and on the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, the Republic of Paraguay wishes to congratulate all the components of the Movement on their hard work in favour of the most needy, and we renew our firm commitment to the neutral, impartial and independent role that must underpin all humanitarian action. Thank you very much.

Ms Katja Gentinetta, Assembly Member, ICRC

(Original English)

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues, it is an honour for me to address the Conference on behalf of the ICRC. The world’s humanitarian needs are huge. More than two billion people are affected by a lack of security, conflict, or other forms of violence. Globally, a complex mix of factors are putting lives in danger: protracted and urban conflicts, climate shocks, pandemics, displacement, and migration. Millions of people remain unprotected, as the victims of indiscriminate warfare, family separation, sexual violence and inhumane detention. The call on us is grave and urgent.

Listening carefully to those in crisis, we hear a desire for effective and integrated support to put broken lives back on track. Let me bring three issues to your attention. First, in the face of expanding and diversifying needs, we, the ICRC, are determined to adapt our work. We are boosting our expertise in mental health and psychosocial support. We are leveraging new technologies to improve our response, while guarding against the weaponization of data. And we are putting a greater emphasis on partnership, with both local and international actors.

Second, I raise the issue of trust, as trust is our currency. People and governments rightly ask for greater accountability and transparency from our Movement. Affected communities need to be confident in our neutral and impartial approach. And we all, as a part of the Movement, must live a culture of integrity.

Third, we make a call on States. This year we mark the 70th anniversary of the 1949 Geneva Conventions. They are one of the very few international treaties that have been universally ratified. Yet, outrageous violations of international humanitarian law continue. We must do more to respect and ensure respect for them. Therefore, we call on States to champion the protective power of IHL, to focus on practical implementation in the field and in domestic systems, and to use their positive influence over their partners.

And last, but not least, to address the Conference’s theme, “Act today, shape tomorrow,” looking to the future, we also need to be brave and confront the difficult questions that new technologies raise. Thank you.

H.E. Ms Maria Nazareth Farani Azevêdo, Ambassador, Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Brazil in Geneva

(Original English)

Let me start by commending ICRC and IFRC for their invaluable work. Allow me also to express our appreciation for the extraordinary contribution of thousands of workers and volunteers of the International Movement.

Madam Vice-Chair, back in 1949 the Geneva Conventions established a legal framework and a set of principles that imposed limits on how war is waged. 70 years later, we still witness numerous violations of these principles and rules. We have entered an era of great complexity in the field of war. Conflicts nowadays implicate a greater number of actors, they last longer, affect new scenarios and involve tactics and weapons unforeseen decades ago. As a result, humanitarian needs have scaled up at an unprecedented level. The number of refugees, migrants and displaced people increase dramatically.

The slogan of this Conference, “Act today, shape tomorrow,” reminds us all the necessity to adopt concrete measures and efficient policies to address current challenges in the humanitarian field. Brazil is firmly committed to this objective.

Recently, more than 300,000 refugees and migrants from Venezuela have sought safety in our country. Brazil has responded with a policy of open borders and open arms. My government set up a multi-sector and multi-agency task force, called Operation Welcome, to organize the reception of refugees and migrants, provide humanitarian assistance, public shelters, and promote voluntary relocation to other parts of our territory. This effort did not compromise Our engagement to provide full rights and all public services to other nationalities, particularly Haitians and Syrians. This was a pledge announced at the last Conference, which we are very proud to have fulfilled.

Brazil has also progressed on another important pledge, related to Women, Peace and Security. In 2017, we launched our first National Action Plan. Madam Vice-Chair, Brazil has adopted concrete measures to incorporate IHL into domestic law and military practice. This includes special courses to officials deployed in UN peacekeeping operations. Finally, Madam Vice-Chair, Brazil is looking at ways to redesign its IHL National Commission. A new platform, with a more flexible structure, would allow us to pursue a more dynamic set of initiatives, engage different actors and better respond to challenges relating to IHL implementation. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Tamim Baiou, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission
of the State of Libya in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We extend our deep gratitude for all the organizers and officers of this conference. Libya aligns itself with the statements made by the groups we are members of. The State of Libya is fully on board with all coordinated action that seeks to improve the humanitarian situation in the framework of respect for international humanitarian law.

We also value and support all efforts made to secure a better future for humanity, as well articulated in the conference slogan Act today, shape tomorrow. In fact, we wholeheartedly believe that there is so much work that ought to be done today by the international community, collectively and now, to improve the humanitarian situation and alleviate some of the suffering of the innocent and vulnerable.

Libya is enduring much of everything that we are talking about in this Conference. Yes, the three tracks of this Conference are focussed on – protecting people in armed conflict, shifting vulnerabilities, trust – are so applicable to the current Libya situation and the human suffering. Libya is a fitting poster child waiting on the international community to act in unison, boldly and firmly, to end much of the suffering that is taking place on hundreds of thousands of people: innocent civilians, Libyan, expats and migrants alike.

Libya is enduring an armed conflict. Libya’s situation is rather less complicated than most of the conflict zones around the world. Much of this ongoing suffering can be stopped by a mere, clear and firm position by every nation to stop the violations of the Security Council arms embargo. However, the international community’s lack of will to stand against it is the direct cause for the human suffering. It was so well stated on the opening day of the Conference when it was said, and I quote, “When the integrity of the law is violated, we are all violating it.”

Let me take the opportunity to express our gratitude for the great and noble work that the Libyan Red Crescent Society is conducting under extremely difficult conditions throughout Libya. We also appreciate the support that is extended by the various States and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to the State of Libya and the Libyan Red Crescent Society. The unity of Libya and its institutions is critical for the nation's future and wellbeing. The Libyan Red Crescent Society embodies this unity. We salute them for their great work and wish them well. In conclusion, we welcome the special draft resolution for a road map to improve implementation of international humanitarian law at the national level, and our Government of National Accord looks forward to contributing to strengthening the respect for international humanitarian law. Thank you.

Dr José Benjamin Ruiz Rodas, President, Salvadorean Red Cross Society

(statement on behalf of the National Societies in the Central Americas region and Mexico)

(Original Spanish)

A very good afternoon to you all. And warmest greetings from our homeland, El Salvador.

In our region of Central America and Mexico, hundreds of people are setting out from their communities and embarking on a migration road in pursuit of a better future. As they head North, migrants can lose touch with their families, which can lead to anguish and uncertainty. The situations of armed conflicts and environmental disasters in our region have also caused displacement, separation of family members and disappearance of persons, and have weakened already inherently vulnerable communities.

In the absence of effective mechanisms and cooperation to clarify the fate and location of missing persons, those seeking information about their missing family members, are left alone in their uncertainty. Faced with the regulatory framework with respect to data protection legislation and rules, ensuring coordination at different levels and the transmission of data, very often across multiple borders becomes even more complicated

To better address these challenges and provide answers to family members, it is crucial for cooperation always to have good coordination and harmonization of practices among a wide range of actors in many countries. As National Red Cross Societies in the region, we form part of a network of family links implementing the Restoring Family Links (RFL) programme, through which we assist vulnerable people in restoring or maintaining contact with their loved ones

In the framework of the 10th Regional RFL Meeting, in November 2019 in our capital city of San Salvador, the Salvadoran Red Cross together with the Red Cross Societies of Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, the United States and others who associated themselves, highlighted the importance of RFL. Conscious that the 33rd International Conference is of the utmost importance in these issues to unite and agree efforts, we welcome the new Movement RFL Strategy 2020-2025 in the context of RFL, and we also support the adoption of the resolution on RFL and personal data protection, which is of enormous importance and sensitive, demonstrating our capacity to constantly renew ourselves, adapting to the changing environment to better serve communities and remain relevant in this environment. Thank you all for your attention.

H.E. Mr Hussam Edin Aala, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic in Geneva

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair,

Today, the world faces unprecedented challenges, especially with the prevalence of unilateralist trends that have no regard for the rules of international law and the principles upon which the contemporary global system was founded. The unilateral use of force, foreign occupation, imposing unilateral, coercive measures, supporting terrorism and exploiting it to destabilize states and target their legitimate governments are all fundamental factors that contribute to the spread of wars and armed conflicts, as well as to the resulting human suffering and forced displacement of unprecedented scale. It goes without saying that resolving traditional and emerging challenges require addressing their root causes. Therefore, ensuring compliance with international humanitarian law requires, first, abandoning double standards in dealing with breaches of IHL and strengthening respect for the rules of IHL and the principles and aims of the UN Charter. The dissociation of humanitarian response from political scores and the support for this response's development dimension are the most effective means to help the victims of this type of war. In this context, we would like to shed light on the selective nature of data collection

in such environments, as well as the lack of transparency and accuracy of this data, which leads to predetermined outcomes. Madam Chair, at the national level, the Syrian government has restructured the National Committee for International Humanitarian Law, which is chaired by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and includes representatives of the relevant ministries, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and the ICRC. The Syrian government also organized workshops for judges, diplomats, parliamentarians and officers of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Interior. We are also continuing to make efforts to integrate IHL in school curricula and to ensure alignment between national legislation and legal commitments. Syria will continue to face the challenges of responding to humanitarian needs in cooperation with the ICRC.

Mr Hichem Ayadat, Third Secretary, Permanent Mission of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria in Geneva

(Original French)

Madam Vice-Chair, ladies and gentlemen, the delegation of Algeria welcomes the holding of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, coinciding with the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. On this occasion, we wish to reaffirm our commitment to this unique forum that brings together the components of the Movement and the High Contracting Parties to debate and exchange views on the major issues and challenges relating to international humanitarian law.

My delegation would like to join in the statements of the Non-Aligned Movement, the African Group and the Arab Group.

Madam Vice-Chair, in an international context in which IHL is being severely tested by ongoing and new conflicts, some of which last for years and even decades, we would like to pay special tribute to the components of the Movement. Acting in accordance with their mandates and the principles of IHL, they play a crucial role in assisting the victims of armed conflict and people in need, often in extremely difficult conditions.

In this regard, the celebration of the centenary of multilateralism in Geneva reminds us of the importance of complying with the fundamental principles of international law, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, among other instruments, and the need for dialogue and cooperation, the cornerstones of the international system, in order to maintain world peace and security, which are indispensable conditions for building an environment conducive to IHL implementation and compliance.

We wish to renew our advocacy for the victims of armed conflict around the world, particularly people living under occupation, who persevere in the hope of exercising their fundamental right to self-determination and human dignity.

Since the 32nd International Conference, Algeria has been actively involved in the numerous intergovernmental consultations held for the purpose of strengthening respect for IHL and contributes, at both the national and regional level, particularly in the Maghreb and the Sahel, to creating the climate of stability and security required to promote and build respect for IHL.

Although no consensus was reached in the intergovernmental process on strengthening IHL, we note with appreciation that the Conference and other national and regional forums offer excellent opportunities for the States and the Movement to continue their work in this respect.

Madam Vice-Chair, Algeria has a deep and long-standing commitment to humanitarian values and to cooperation with the components of the Movement. It is in this spirit that my delegation takes part in the 33rd International Conference, in the exchange of views and best practices on the important issues on its agenda, especially those relating to recent analyses and reflections on today's challenges, such as localization, displacement, climate change and the use of new technologies, and their impact on IHL.

I would like to finish, Madam Vice-Chair, by assuring you that the Algerian delegation is fully committed to contributing to the success of the work of our Conference. Thank you.

H. E. Mr Yuriy Klymenko, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Ukraine in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, as armed conflicts continue to cause immense human suffering all over the world, ensuring respect for IHL remains pertinent as ever, since the

Geneva Conventions are being challenged. Over the years, great strides have been made to adapt and update IHL, and it has evolved considerably. What remains absent, however, is the corresponding development of mechanisms to strengthen compliance with it.

The 32nd International Conference adopted resolution 'Strengthening Compliance with IHL', and the ICRC and Switzerland afterwards facilitated unprecedented consultations among States focused specifically on improving the efficiency of mechanisms of compliance with IHL. Unfortunately, in the current multilateral environment, it was not possible to reach a consensus. Nevertheless, the intergovernmental process did unequivocally underline the universal validity, importance and value of IHL, as well as put forward a wide range of ideas on how to improve IHL implementation. These proposals, which were outlined during the previous years within the six formal meetings on strengthening IHL, most certainly can be further pursued.

Distinguished delegates, October 24, 2019, marked the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. Their universal ratification is a powerful affirmation that the principles of IHL are not tied to a political framework. Ukraine believes that IHL can make a difference in protecting civilians and respecting human dignity, and that the worldwide community must continue to strengthen compliance with it, first and foremost, on national level.

On its part, Ukraine, despite challenging external factors, is fully committed to the observation of IHL on its territory. To name some of the relevant accomplishments: a manual on the implementation of the rules of IHL for the armed forces has recently been updated to better reflect provisions of the customary IHL; the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs has been designated responsible for the organization and coordination work of the Government Commission on IHL implementation, ensuring that all law-enforcement agencies consistently follow and observe the IHL rules; with the assistance Of ICRC, the Ministry Of Defence continuously conducts robust trainings in IHL for military personnel; this November, Ukraine became the 100th State to have endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration.

Madam Vice-Chair, ladies and gentlemen, reaffirming my country's deep commitment to further IHL implementation, let me stress that the delegation of Ukraine is ready to fully cooperate with you, Madam Vice-Chair, the Commissioners and the delegations of other interested participants to ensure a fruitful and comprehensive outcome of the Conference. I thank you.

Ms Zigro Mbirimba, First Counselor, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Chad in Geneva

(Original French)

Madam Vice-Chair. The delegation of Chad joins in the statement delivered by Zimbabwe on behalf of the African Group.

My delegation would like to congratulate the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the Swiss government on the organization of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, which brings actors together to address today's major humanitarian challenges.

The main themes of the Conference, specifically international humanitarian law and protecting people in armed conflict, shifting vulnerabilities and trust in humanitarian action, are consistent with current realities, marked by global humanitarian priorities and new and emerging vulnerabilities around the world.

On behalf of the government of the Republic of Chad, the delegation of Chad would like to assure the components of the Movement that we fully support the draft resolutions and pledges that will guide the humanitarian work of the Movement in the coming decades.

As a State party to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and the two Additional Protocols of 8 June 1977, the government of the Republic of Chad notes with satisfaction the activities undertaken by the Movement to promote and implement international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles for the Chadian armed forces, police, public authorities and civil society, Restoring Family Links activities for internally displaced people, people deprived of their liberty and refugees throughout Chad and assistance activities for the most vulnerable people in communities affected by the conflict in the Lake Chad area, including displaced people, migrants and residents.

I would like to convey the sincere gratitude of the government of the Republic of Chad to the components of the Movement for their considerable support in the work undertaken to incorporate the provisions of international humanitarian law into domestic legislation, in particular, the adoption of the law governing the use and protection of the red cross and red crescent emblems and other distinctive signs, the incorporation of serious violations of international humanitarian law into Chad's criminal code and the inclusion of international humanitarian law in the training programme curriculum for Chad's armed forces and police.



The government of the Republic of Chad welcomes the close collaboration between the Chadian authorities and the components of the Movement in activities to promote and implement international humanitarian law and to disseminate humanitarian principles.

Thank you, Madam Vice-Chair.

Mr Hai Anh Nguyen, Vice President and Secretary General, Viet Nam Red Cross Society

(Statement on behalf of National Societies in the Southeast Asia)

(Original English)

Your Royal Highnesses, Your Excellencies, Government representatives, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, dear colleagues, I speak on behalf of the 11 National Societies in Southeast Asia: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam.

Thank you for this opportunity to address you here today at this important gathering. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Kingdom of Thailand on its successful chairmanship of ASEAN this year and we look forward to working with the Government of Viet Nam as they assume the ASEAN chairmanship next year. As such, in 2020 we will hold our Southeast Asia Red Cross Red Crescent Leaders Conference in Vietnam, allowing us to explore joint events with ASEAN, including a joint dialogue with ASEAN governments.

The Southeast Asian National Societies committed in Manila in 2018 and recommitted during the IFRC General Assembly and Council of Delegates to strengthen integrity and trust in our institutions, upholding zero tolerance for fraud, corruption, and sexual exploitation and abuse. We look forward to the continued discussions with our governments during the International Conference.

We fully support the resolutions being debated here at the International Conference. They are in line with the objectives and priorities in Southeast Asia, in that they seek to improve the safety, security and dignity of individuals by: addressing mental health and psychosocial needs in times of crises, enhancing climate smart disaster laws, strengthening our systems to be able to respond to the growing threats of epidemics and pandemics; promoting restoring family links, and contributing to the implementation and development of IHL.

These elements are in line with the priorities of ASEAN. For example, we have, together with ASEAN, recognized that mental health is a priority for us. The needs are growing, in conflict, disaster and other emergency settings, especially for young people.

We have also committed to invest in forecast-based financing and community-based surveillance, so that our communities can adapt to shocks and hazards. We will work with governments to improve our preparedness, to save lives and build resilience with and in the most vulnerable communities. We are committed to the creation of a knowledge-based Centre of Excellence for pandemics to promote knowledge-sharing and the development of expertise, within the Singapore Red Cross.

We also recognize that the development of our youth is a key factor in building resilience in our communities. We are very much proud that Southeast Asia now has a representative in the IFRC Youth Commission.

Humanitarian partnerships must be strengthened. We will further develop and contribute to a regional partnership and our strategic dialogue with ASEAN, at the regional and country levels, to foster National Society sustainability.

The One Billion Coalition is an initiative that is bringing together aid organizations, governments, the private sector, academia and community groups to support one billion people over the next ten years, to take action to strengthen their safety, health and wellbeing. This has also led to the ASEAN Coalition for Resilience, which is a commitment by ASEAN and the Red Cross and Red Crescent to support 40 million people in the ASEAN region become more resilient by 2025.

Disaster response and community safety and resilience are key priorities for our Southeast Asia network. By beginning in 2020, we will launch a Humanitarian Field School in Malaysia with the Malaysian Red Crescent. This is a 'learning by doing' humanitarian school with focus on the first weeks of a humanitarian operation.

We value our strong relationship with ASEAN. We pledge our support to work with all governments to further the collective objectives of ASEAN and to improve the resilience of our communities in Southeast Asia. Thank you very much.

Prof. Thilo Marauhn, President, International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, distinguished delegates, colleagues and friends, on behalf of the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission, I appreciate that many delegates have highlighted the continued support of States and National Societies for the 1949 Geneva Conventions. It is important that the 33rd International Conference focuses on ways to strengthen IHL.

The International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission, with appreciation, takes note of the draft resolution 'Bringing IHL Home'. The Commission invites States to uphold in this resolution a reference to the Commission in its operative part.

Established by States on the basis of Article 90 of Additional Protocol I, the Commission is the only permanent and treaty-based body on compliance with IHL. It offers its powers to conduct an inquiry or to perform good offices in order to restore an attitude of respect for the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol 1.

For the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission to be able to effectively fulfil its mandate, it is desirable that it is recognized by as many States as possible. In this sense, I invite all remaining States who have not done so yet, to recognize the competence of the Commission. This can be done by submitting a simple declaration, available on the website of the Commission, to the depositary of the Geneva Conventions.

At this moment we are pleased to inform you that a Group of Friends of the Commission has been established by States at the United Nations, both in New York and Geneva. We invite states to join this Group of Friends in support of the Commission's cooperative approach. We also invite every National Society and every government to sign up to the open pledge in support of the Commission submitted by Argentina and Hungary on behalf of 15 States. We look forward to discussions with any interested party. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

H. E. Mr Artak Apitonian, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Armenia

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair. Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it has been more than a century and half since this international movement was established to make humanitarian protection for victims of all kinds of conflict, violence and emergency the cornerstone of international responsibility, and 70 years since the codification of the IHL. The millennium has turned, but we still witness the vulnerability and suffering of people, beset by wars, natural disasters, persecution for reasons of race, religion, ethnicity or political affiliation. As we search for ways to build peace, solutions to humanitarian problems should be found through the genuine and universal application of fundamental individual and collective human rights common to all people, regardless of their location and irrespective of the political status of the territory that they inhabit.

In this regard, Armenia attaches great importance to the agenda of prevention of genocide and mass atrocities and encourages efforts of bridging human rights early-warning mechanisms with the concerted humanitarian actions. My government will spare no effort in further moving this agenda in different international and regional organizations and fora.

Madam Vice-Chair, I am here to declare Armenia's unswerving commitment to the IHL. Today we focus on civilians living along the border, missing persons and their families, mine victims and people deprived of their liberty. Armenia is gratified to highlight the successful implementation of the ICRC's projects to assist inhabitants along the entrenched border and encourages continuation of such projects. We welcome the role the ICRC plays in facilitating the agricultural works in border communities. Reiterating our firm commitment to the protection of children's rights to education in conflict situations and beyond, we take measures to ensure safety of schools located in border regions, including creation of safe rooms and shelters.

Armenia has significant successful experience of hosting and integrating refugees and IDPs. Since the eruption of conflict in 1988, Armenia has received hundreds of thousands of violently displaced persons. Recently Armenia has sheltered a substantial number of refugees from Syria and Iraq. By an open approach, my Government offered several protection options, as well as a set of benefits such as accelerated asylum-procedures and facilitated naturalization for refugees, their full integration in health, education, social and other spheres.

Madam Vice-Chair, next year we will mark the centennial anniversary of the Armenian Red Cross Society, established in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide with an aim to help hundreds of thousands of refugees.

Today I pay tribute to all Red Cross volunteers and missionaries from the United States, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Canada and elsewhere who, at that critical juncture of our history, saved thousands of lives, established orphanages and schools, helped them to survive. Their devoted efforts and atrocity reports generated strong public sympathy and, subsequently, relief assistance.

Today Armenia honours the remarkable bravery and empathy of all volunteers, particularly women, who devote themselves to the humanitarian cause nowadays. They must be given all the support and resources necessary to conduct their activities.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to conclude by recalling an event that happened here, in Geneva, a hundred years ago. Danish missionary Karen Jeppe put economic support to the Armenian Genocide survivor refugees on the League of Nations' agenda. When answered that it was of so little use, Karen Jeppe delivered probably the shortest speech in that forum, saying: "Yes, it is only a little light, but the night is so dark." I thank you.

Mr Rosario Maria Gianluca Valastro, Vice President, Italian Red Cross

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, the Italian Red Cross welcomes the resolution on 'Climate-smart disaster laws and policies that leave no one behind' and resolution on 'Time to act: Tackling epidemics and pandemics together'. Recognizing effective governance and laws as cornerstones of Disaster Risk Management, Italian Red Cross is working to promote a climate-smart approach and ensure that rights and dignity of vulnerable groups are protected.

At international level, we promote safer development practices and support holistic approach to community resilience. At a national level, our volunteers engage with the academia sector and with the International Institute of Humanitarian Law in disseminating laws and policies related to humanitarian effects of climate change and disasters, including through innovative training programs on disasters law. We are particularly pleased with the requests to States to enhance their engagements with National Societies for collaboration in strengthening their legal framework and its enforcement, using innovative tools such as the new checklist. Furthermore, we would like to encourage States to elaborate strategies and laws on climate change and disaster, engaging with National Societies to hear the voices of the communities to leave no one behind.

In terms of the resolution 'Time to act: Tackling epidemics and pandemics together', as Italian Red Cross, we are on the first line in supporting the public authorities with the enforcement of the international health regulation. As far as our role is concerned, our National Society is entitled to operate on behalf of the Ministry of Health in providing health control at the borders, including ports and airports. Our volunteers are trained to be deployed to safely transport patients with infectious diseases through a highly technological bio-containment unit, thus ensuring that the threat to the general population is properly managed. We would like to highlight the importance of National Societies in supporting and being auxiliary to the public authorities to protect, not only the population in-country, but contributing to the health and safety of the neighbouring geographical areas and enhancing cross-border collaboration. Thank you for your kind attention.

H.E. Mr Dejan Zlatanović, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Serbia in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, at the outset, I would like to call your attention to an important anniversary celebrated this year, 70 years since the adoption of the Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. In addition to being the most important instrument of international humanitarian law and the universal standard for the protection of civilians, the adoption of Geneva Convention IV in 1949 and its entry into force in 1950, symbolizes the true milestone in international relations after World War II. To protect and assist civilians in international and non-international armed conflicts is an unconditional duty of all state and non-state actors, with no exception. International humanitarian law is today's civilizational heritage of mankind and it is our shared obligation to ensure unconditional compliance with for and implementation of universal norms and to further develop and strengthen international humanitarian law.

Unfortunately, the challenges of modern times often raise the issue of universal observance of international humanitarian law. Armed conflicts in parts of the world, coupled with the suffering of the civilian population, forced migration, natural and man-made disasters, climate change effects, pose challenges nowadays for the

international community. Protection and aid to the crisis-affected people, especially to the most vulnerable groups such as children, women and elderly, is a test of our shared responsibility. Humanitarian ramifications of nuclear weapons proliferation and the impacts on the environment, social and economic development and human survival must also be taken into account when protecting individuals in armed conflict. Every effort must be made to remove the danger of weapons of mass destruction. ICRC and international humanitarian organizations play an important role in raising awareness of this significant problem.

Madam Vice-Chair, the Republic of Serbia highly values and respects the activities and commitment of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in solving humanitarian issues and in offering humanitarian assistance worldwide, consistent with its Fundamental Principles. As a State Party to the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols thereof, Serbia is strongly committed to the strengthening and promotion of international humanitarian law.

I would like to take this opportunity to say that our national organization, the Red Cross of Serbia, has demonstrated in the performance of its activities that it belongs to the group of the most competent and most reliable partners of my Government. I am proud to point out the long tradition of the Red Cross of Serbia, being one of the oldest national organizations of the International Movement founded back in 1876. The national Red Cross organizations supported by over 60,000 volunteers whom we owe immense gratitude for their commitment to the Principles of the Movement.

Serbia understands fully the scope and complexity of armed conflict humanitarian consequences as a country having experienced the tumultuous period of conflicts in the territory of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Today still, the tackling of residual humanitarian issues of the past remains one of our commitments. Over 27,000 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia are currently residing in Serbia, as are more than 300,000 persons who no longer have a refugee status but are facing a long-term process of local integration. Furthermore, Serbia is also home to around 200,000 persons internally displaced from Kosovo and Metohija, who were forced to flee the province in 1999 and seek shelter elsewhere. The missing person issue is yet another painful legacy problem burdening the region. Shedding light on the destinies and accounting for more than 10,000 persons gone missing in the region is something we owe to their families, regardless of their nationality. It is our belief that the resolution of a set of issues related to refugees, internally displaced and missing persons is of vital importance for the reconciliation process and regional stability. This is why the Serbian Government has been sincerely devoted to finding a just and durable solution to all these problems, while working together with the countries of the region and relevant international partners.

The role played by national and international humanitarian organizations is of key importance when dealing with natural disasters and in the event of crisis management and man-made disasters. The experience gained during the devastating floods which hit Serbia in May 2014 and the massive refugee and migration wave of 2015-2016 are still fresh in our memory. One of the lessons learned was that of the significance of charities and in particular the national Red Cross and Red Crescent organizations, which have made an immeasurable contribution to these charitable causes. Therefore, Serbia has taken a highly responsible approach to aid organizations, with our mutual cooperation being an important element of humanitarian relief operations.

May I take this opportunity to reaffirm here today the commitment of the Republic of Serbia to regional cooperation in humanitarian action. No country is able to respond on its own to the challenges of forced displacement, natural disasters or migration crises. In this context as well, cooperation is the best way to overcome national level limitations in terms of resources and capacities and be able to provide humanitarian assistance effectively. Having said that, allow me to point out the contribution made by the Serbian search and rescue team in alleviating the consequences of the earthquake which recently struck Albania, as a positive example of regional cooperation and implementation of practice of assistance to those afflicted on the ground. Thank you.

Dr Mohammed Bin Abdullah Al-Qasem, President, Saudi Red Crescent Authority

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair, esteemed guests,

May the peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you.

It is my great pleasure to be here today, during the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, with this elite group of officials, experts and stakeholders in international humanitarian law, whose essential purpose is to protect people during armed conflicts. We at the Standing IHL Committee have developed a national plan for the implementation of IHL at the domestic level, to ensure actual compliance with IHL and

to spread knowledge about it. Madam Chair, the Committee includes relevant government bodies and high-level representation. The Standing IHL Committee is the lead supporter and promoter of IHL at the national level. It embodies the profound interest of my country's leadership and government in IHL at all levels. This reflects my country's pioneering role in fostering. The Committee includes relevant government bodies and high-level representation. The Standing IHL Committee is the lead supporter and promoter of IHL at the national level, and it embodies the profound interest of my country's leadership and government in IHL at all levels. This reflects my country's pioneering role in fostering high-level interest in the commitment to IHL, as well as the dissemination and implementation of IHL principles.

Madam Chair, distinguished guests,

The Committee has carried out numerous activities at the national level, including but not limited to reviewing all relevant international agreements and offering counselling to government bodies to ensure the optimal implementation of those agreements. Through the work of its members, the Committee is also committed to disseminating and spreading awareness on the principles of international humanitarian law. The Committee has also organized many public awareness sessions and advanced workshops for professionals in official bodies, particularly military personnel, in cooperation with the ICRC in many regions of Saudi Arabia. More than six thousand trainees have benefited from these sessions, which were held in various cities across the Kingdom and targeted civilians and military personnel. My country is striving to spread awareness about IHL at different educational levels and to prepare several Saudi trainers to hold local training sessions and to nationalize knowledge in the field. The Committee has had useful contributions in many regional and international events and deliberations related to the optimal implementation of IHL.

Madam Chair, distinguished guests,

My country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, has made distinguished efforts to ensure commitment to and enforcement of IHL. This includes the work carried out by the Ministry of Defence which established a specialized legal team of IHL experts in international human rights law to provide legal counselling to the Ministry. A mandatory IHL course was also integrated into military academies and the Command and Staff College. Also, specialized sessions on various aspects of IHL were held for military personnel, including individuals, officers and commanders. The Committee also receives full support to carry out its duties. In conclusion, on behalf of my fellow members, I would like to thank for your attention.

H.E. Ms Jillian Dempster, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of New Zealand in Geneva

(Original English)

E ngā mana, E ngā reo, E ngā karangatanga maha, Tenā koutou. In Māori, the indigenous language of New Zealand, I bring greetings to all authorities, all voices and all affiliations.

At the United Nations General Assembly this year, our Prime Minister spoke about the challenges of an increasingly interconnected world and the Maori concept of kaitiakitanga. In simple terms, the concept empowers each of us with responsibility as guardians of our land, our environment and our people. In our interdependent world, guardianship is not a concept we can confine to our own borders.

The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols have provided the framework for protecting civilians and saving lives for 70 years. The principles underpinning the Convention and its Protocols remain as relevant today as they were in 1949. Yet the world, and the nature of armed conflict is changing. And we can foresee it will continue to do so. The 70th anniversary of these foundational documents is an important milestone. It provides an opportunity for the international community, and States, to reflect on these changes. To reflect on how international humanitarian law, including the application of the Geneva Conventions, must continue to evolve.

New Zealand is appalled by the widespread violations of international humanitarian law in recent years, and we are equally appalled at the impunity on display for such violations. Today, New Zealand unequivocally reaffirms our commitment to be a guardian for international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles. At this 33rd International Conference, we pledge to report voluntarily on New Zealand's domestic implementation of IHL, and we call on others to do so.

New Zealand reaffirms its commitment to work with our Pacific neighbours to guard against and respond to the impacts of climate change, including natural disasters. We pledge to work with Pacific governments and civil society to ensure that disaster preparedness and response is inclusive, locally led and owned, and reflects local priorities.

We pledge to cooperate to reduce the harm caused by explosive weapons in populated areas. We also re-affirm New Zealand's commitment to be guardians of the ambition for a nuclear free world. We pledge to work with States, the ICRC and civil society to bring into force the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and to abolish nuclear weapons.

Finally, we take this opportunity to thank the ICRC and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement for your role as guardians of core humanitarian principles that underpin our humanity. Your bravery, your integrity, and your selflessness are the embodiment of guardianship, of kaitiakitanga. For this we take inspiration and we give our heartfelt appreciation. Thank you.

Mr Juan Antonio Quintanilla Roman, Director for International Organisations, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba

(Original Spanish)

Madam Vice-Chair. Since the last Conference, we have observed the persistence of situations which cause immense suffering and threaten the life of numerous people and peace in the international community. Longstanding conflicts continue, regional tensions become more acute, the intensity and frequency of natural disasters is rising and the effects of climate change are increasing, all with humanitarian implications.

In these circumstances, the work of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has been remarkable in alleviating the hardships of the affected communities. However, it requires a greater joint effort by the international community to find effective solutions.

The 70th anniversary of the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions must be a moral breath of air to strengthen the commitment to the rules of international humanitarian law.

The Cuban Government will maintain strict respect for the commitments made in terms of international humanitarian law, in accordance with Article 1 common to all the Conventions.

Madam Vice-Chair, Cuba recognizes, in accordance with national legislation, the right to privacy and personal data protection and condemns the use of such data for purposes incompatible with a purely humanitarian nature.

Passivity in the face of the accelerating worsening of climate change, including failure to understand its existence, seriously threaten the human species.

We recognize the interaction between disasters and climate change, and the decisive function of disaster risk reduction in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Due to Cuba's geographical location, it is frequently struck by this type of event. In such circumstances, we have received support from friendly nations as well as the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, to whom we express our gratitude.

Madam Vice-Chair, even in the face of huge difficulties, the Cuban Revolution has been humanist and in solidarity with peoples who needed it. Guided by the principle of not sharing what we have left over but what we have, we have been consistent with the philosophy of our National Hero José Martí who said that giving up something so that all can share equally is a value which seems heroic.

Solidarity and internationalism are values which we have inherited from our greatest leaders and which were crystallized in the revolutionary example of the leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruiz. We, the new generations of Cubans, will follow without hesitation his conviction and reaffirm his philosophy that "someone who is not capable of fighting for others, will never be able to fight for himself". Thank you very much.

Mr Serdar Günel, Head of Movement Relations and Partnerships, Turkish Red Crescent Society

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, distinguished representatives to the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, dear colleagues and friends, I proudly come from a nation hosting the largest refugee population globally, many of whom are from Syria, but also from more than 70 other countries. I come from a nation where people prefer to call refugees as 'guests', with concerns that it might happen to hurt one of them if we call as a refugee.

Today, I want to take this opportunity to highlight the impact of displacement on children. Our children, our future, and our success in protecting them; a life-critical issue that we did not have a lot of opportunity to discuss at this Conference here in Geneva. We woke up here in Geneva today and probably many of us spoke with their children on a phone or with a video call, and see how they miss us at home. Unfortunately, for millions of people around the world, this morning has not started as peaceful as we had here in Geneva. Today, we have more than 40 million children displaced by conflict.

Speaking of children and protection, Turkey is a country where Syrians and people under international protection are provided a unique status which gives them access to health, education as well as the labour markets. And we, as the Turkish Red Crescent, given our auxiliary role to our Government and in cooperation with humanitarian partners, provide various services for the refugees in Turkey, such as monthly cash assistance to two million individuals, protection services, psychosocial support, language and vocational trainings, to more than one million people. I will keep it here and will not go into the programme details.

We did a lot and we will continue to do that. But we must admit that we have also failed at a point. We failed to protect hundreds of thousands of people who lost their lives. We failed to stop parties from violating the international humanitarian law. Always remember Aylan Kurdi, a baby whose little dead body was found on the coast. A baby, among other hundreds of thousands who lost her life during a dangerous journey at sea. A few other examples from Syria are Baby Kasim, Baby Karim, Noor and Alaa sisters. Not only Syria of course, I also remember Valeria and her father too, whose dead bodies were found at the Rio Grande Lake around the Mexico-US border.

On my way to the Conference, I was thinking about what to say. I knew that I would have maximum three or four minutes, which is already going on, but what is it that I can leave with the audience to take away? Shall I repeat what has already been said many times throughout these seven years of crisis? Is there anything left unsaid? Maybe not.

IHL violations, hospitals and schools bombed every second and probably now, besiegement as a tactic of war, hunger, casualties, injuries, babies, boys, girls? No words, no statement, including this one, is good enough to address what is happening inside Syria. With regards to the region, to me the biggest protection challenge facing Syrians is their future. We strive to help them adapt into the society in Turkey by various programmes. May be also supported by the European Union. But still, we are far from providing a great future for them.

I believe a protracted crisis like Syria, into its eight year, can only be fully resolved by young generations. Let us be frank, it is much more difficult and often not possible to change the mindset of people at my age. I will not even talk about those who are more senior than myself, we see that. So where is the change?

Young people, children; those innocent boys and girls. If I have a word today. Let us invest in the future of displaced children to prevent the lost generation. Let us invest more. Let us protect their future. Let us review what we did so far for the young generation and how much more we can do, for example for their education. That is where we can plant the tree of global peace. Thank you.

Elder (Chief) Bolaji Akpan Anani, President, Nigerian Red Cross Society speaking

(Statement on behalf of Zimbabwe Red Cross and Nigerian Red Cross)

(Original English)

We will make this statement for the Nigerian Red Cross Society, and Zimbabwe Red Cross.

It is an established fact that the Movement collaborates with the States to enhance the re-establishment of family links broken by separation and the absence of communication and contacts. The importance of this service underscores the proposal of this resolution. The resolution on RFL calls on the Conference to: one, recognize that the Movement is expected to process personal data of those involved for exclusively humanitarian purposes. Two, recognize that there is public and vital interest in the processing of personal data, more so when consent cannot be obtained. Three, ensure that data processing, especially when it involves cross-border transfers within the Movement remains as unrestricted as possible. Four, recognize the need for States to resist the temptation and pressure to request personal data from the Movement to use for purposes incompatible with the solely humanitarian drive of the Movement.

These four are the main elements of the Resolution and are essential to the Movement's ability to render RFL services as mandated by the States. From the National Society's point of view, this resolution is very critical. The Nigerian Red Cross Society and the Zimbabwe Red Cross will therefore depend on these key elements to ensure the proper functioning of the RFL in the countries and across the region. We are determined to adhere strictly to

data protection standards as expressed in the resolution and the Code of Conduct. Proper processing of personal data is also key to enjoying the trust of both the people in need of RFL services and, by extension, the State.

In our countries, as in a number of other contexts, thousands of people are on the move constantly and, in many cases, members of the same family, including minors, lose contact with each other. Some are never found, many others, hardly. The insurgencies, militancy, agitations, clashes and other forms of violence in our countries, even when they are reduced in numbers and volumes, the impact of climate change, migration, disasters, emergencies and catastrophes result in thousands of people moving from place to place and, sometimes, being separated from their loved ones, sometimes dying and sometimes disappearing.

Our National Societies, with the Support of ICRC and IFRC, have considerably developed their RFL activities and capacities from 2014, particularly in Nigeria, collecting tens of thousands of tracing requests, exchanging information with other National Societies and ICRC in a number of countries, in order to find responses for affected families.

In 2019, Nigeria has adopted new regulations on data protection to monitor the use of electronic data and other forms of electronic communication transaction, with the objective to safeguard the rights and privacy of personal data and prevent manipulation and misuse of the data.

In parallel to the increasing number of separations, there is a growing challenge in finding responses when there are many actors operating the RFL network, and in transferring data from Movement partners and other actors to one another. While the development of technology enhances the Movement, the collection of larger amounts of personal data in a quicker and easier manner, it also presents a major challenge with regards to the potential risk it entails. Hence the importance of developing and applying adequate data protection standards against the regulatory environment created by data protection legislation and standards of the various States.

In his letter of June 5 2018, Yves Daccord, Director General of ICRC, wrote, and we quote, “With this message, I would like to inform you of important developments in our joint endeavour to develop a new RFL Strategy for the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.” He termed it a joint endeavour, and we want to make sure we leave it that way. We must, as a Movement, keep it as a joint endeavour; joint between all the Movement partners and the States.

Therefore, recognizing that the RFL is at the origins of the Movement and that National Societies play a crucial role in the matter, the two National Societies welcome the Movement’s new Strategy on RFL 2025 and supports the adoption of the resolution on RFL, and personal data protection, which demonstrates our ability to continually renew ourselves, adapt to the changing environment to better serve our communities and remain relevant. Thank you.

Mr Sokol Gjoka, Director, Directorate of International Organisations, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania

(Original English)

Good afternoon. Dear Vice-Chair, dear participants, I am very pleased to be among you these days, amidst your worldwide known and respected organization, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent, to get to know more about your policies and commitments, humanity at the service of people in need. Power of humanity is not just a slogan; it is a mission. It is a mission we must be all committed to implement. The Nobelist, of Albanian origin, Mother Teresa, used to say, “Who saves a human life, saves the whole world.”

Albania has felt and is once again feeling strongly the hand of the solidarity and assistance of the international community and, in particular, of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent, after a powerful and devastating earthquake which hit only two weeks ago the central part of the country, but shook the whole territory, the young and the oldest. There were catastrophic consequences; over 50 lives lost, almost the same number of lives saved under the ruins by search and rescue groups; about 1000 injured; more than 6000 homeless, losing all they had, because of the strong and devastating earthquake. There were also health centres, schools, and social services ruined. Shocked people, traumatized children. The damage caused is believed to amount to over one billion Euros. These inflicted-damage figures are great for a small country like Albania.

But this devastating earthquake did not shake the solidarity and unity of the people. Though the earth continued to tremble, the Albanian people raised on feet to help the affected. The Albanian Government immediately mobilized special forces to save people’s lives first, accommodate the affected and identify the damages. International solidarity was great and immediate. Initially, this readiness and contribution was reflected by the countries of the region. Albanians, wherever they were, European countries, international organizations



such as the United Nations, European Union, Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC), they were committed from the first day till now, to shelter people, to feed them, to wear them, to appease them. Thank you all for your assistance, believing strongly that it will continue.

We thank RCRC and the Albanian Red Cross for their presence and humanitarian assistance 24 hours in 7 days. The RCRC symbol evokes hope, providing confidence. Assuring a three million Euros contribution by RCRC only at the beginning of this process assures us with the full confidence that this assistance will be increased in the coming period. The Albanian Government has declared the year 2020 as the year of the reconstruction from the earthquake remedies. And all together we can succeed. An earthquake can tremble the land, but not the solidarity of the peoples. Act now, shape the future. Thank you.

Ms Margareta Wahlström, President, Swedish Red Cross

(Original English)

Excellencies, Madam Vice-Chair, this International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is the instrument we have to strengthen, develop and apply international humanitarian law. This is the space where we, altogether, must defend and protect the concrete value of international humanitarian law and what it represents for all of us; people living in areas of conflict, communities, States and the humanitarian aid workers assisting people in distress. We wish to see this privileged space grow in importance as the number of people in need grows to numbers that we have not seen since the end of the Second World War. Defending the right to offer and the right to provide humanitarian protection and assistance is the highest priority. And accountability to ensure the respect for IHL and the humanitarian principles is of paramount importance. The Swedish Red Cross pledges to contribute to ensure the highest-level attention to the goals and work of our Conference.

People on the move, asylum seekers, displaced persons, migrants, need to connect and reunite with their families. The right to the confidentiality of information, and the participation of affected people, will boost and strengthen the prospect of responding to the needs of families and alleviate their suffering. A core element of the work of National Societies is the Restoring Family Links, and we are all stepping up our capacities to ensure the right to reconnect and reunite with families.

A gender-equal leadership of our Movement and the humanitarian sector is crucial to achieve better results, more inclusivity, and increase trust among all the stakeholders. The resolution on Women and Leadership contributes to ensure that the Movement and the humanitarian sector at large takes the matter seriously and continues to pay attention to its progress. For rules of IHL to be applied in a non-discriminatory manner, and for all persons to enjoy the protection as afforded by IHL, a gender perspective needs to be applied to IHL and be practiced.

Lastly, the climate. We need to green our humanitarian operations as well as our organizations. The humanitarian consequences of the climate and environment crisis are dramatic and today, and we need to take our responsibility as a humanitarian organization now. Thank you very much.

Mr Tunde Mukaila Mustapha, Minister, Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. Let me start by appreciating the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for their efforts in organizing this year's Conference, and to the millions of volunteers, members and staff worldwide for their commitment in saving lives. We are confident in the successful outcome of this three-day event.

This session offers member States and the humanitarian community an opportunity to pay tribute and salute the resilience of millions of displaced persons worldwide. This gathering clearly demonstrates our collaborative efforts in protecting lives, promoting good health and wellbeing, respecting the rights of all, preventing and alleviating suffering of displaced persons. Most importantly, it gives us an auspicious occasion to pay a befitting tribute to the landmark Geneva Conventions which were adopted 70 years ago, as well as the African regional frameworks. These legal instruments have moderated excesses in conflicts and created a better world, in spite of the reality of conflicts, and especially by giving added and deliberate protections to civilians, non-combatants and ex-combatants.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, this year's Conference coincides with the 70th anniversary of the 1949 Conventions, the 50th anniversary of the OAU Convention and the 10th anniversary of the Kampala Convention. This, therefore, calls for a deeper reflection on our commitments to bring succour to all vulnerable persons, refugees and internally displaced persons, victims of armed conflicts and disasters. On its part, Nigeria has also been affected but not overwhelmed by the global displacement crisis as a country of origin, transit and destination.

Madam Vice-Chair, Nigeria recognizes that the task of addressing the situation of Nigerian refugees, returnees and IDPs, is primarily that of the Federal Government of Nigeria. However, we know the value of partnerships and neighbourliness. For this reason, Nigeria has strategically engaged with its neighbours, international organizations and the international community to ensure that the victims of armed conflicts and environmental threats get succour. We will continue to collaborate with the Movement, member States and other stakeholders in promoting and strengthening respect for international humanitarian law. I thank you.

H.E. Mr Kyaw Moe Tun, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, distinguished representatives, ladies and gentlemen, Myanmar is of the view that, with the growing tensions and challenges around the world, the need for humanitarian activities have also increased tremendously.

Myanmar shares the concerns on how the world can act together in response to address those increasing challenges of the humanitarian crisis following the conflicts, disasters and climate change all over the world. The theme of the Conference, "Act today, shape tomorrow," is pertinent to the aims of the IFRC and the ICRC, and the prevailing circumstances of the changing world. Time is of essence for effectively addressing the challenge we all face.

Being one of the most disaster-prone areas, Myanmar tries her best in responding to the disaster affected areas throughout the country. In doing so, we have worked together with the relevant local and international partners of both humanitarian and development sectors, including UN agencies and international organizations. In addition, Myanmar also works on the disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction plans, in line with the Sendai Framework.

Madam Vice-Chair, Myanmar Red Cross Movement, with the assistance and cooperation of ICRC and IFRC, has played an important role in providing humanitarian assistance to the affected communities in Rakhine State. Taking this opportunity, Myanmar wishes to express its sincere appreciation to IFRC and ICRC for their continued cooperation and assistance. The Government of Myanmar always welcomes and ensures the participation of the Myanmar Red Cross Society in government-led activities and committees, such as the National Search and Rescue Committee and the National Disaster Management Committee.

Madam Vice-Chair, Myanmar underlines the vital role of the long-term solution to any crisis. Having this in mind, Myanmar has always made sure the recovery and resettlement measures are well provided for the affected people. Myanmar wishes to underline the government's efforts for the resettlement and rehabilitation of the displaced persons of either conflicts or disasters or any other crisis. Having said that, last month, in November, Myanmar Government launched the National Strategy on Resettlement of IDPs and Closure of IDP Camps. The Strategy will cover all the IDP camps within the country.

To conclude, Madam Vice-Chair, there is an urgent need for all of us to work together with the common goal to effectively address the challenges we face for improving the lives of people affected by conflicts, disasters and other emergencies. Through our collective efforts and working together, we are confident that the challenges will be overcome successfully. I thank you, Madam Vice-Chair.

Col. Godard Busingye, Chief of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Republic of Uganda

(Original English)

Vice-Chair of the International Conference, President of ICRC, President of the IFRC, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. Madam Vice-Chair, the delegation of Uganda congratulates you and other Officers of the Conference upon your election. Uganda looks forward to a successful Conference under your leadership. We welcome the themes for discussion and look forward to meaningful engagement.

Even as we meet in this Conference, armed conflicts and natural disasters continue to wreak havoc in many parts of the world. We are certain that amongst us are those living as victims of such horrendous acts and misfortunes. The observance of International Humanitarian Law and its principles is, therefore, of significant importance in times such as these when we witness unprecedented numbers of armed conflicts and natural disasters. We believe, without States being legally bound by the undertakings they made regarding observance and implementation of the IHL, consequences of war would be worse than they are today. It is our conviction that this Conference should discuss and adopt better means through which the capacity to observe IHL by States and non-state actors can be enhanced.

On this 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, Uganda reiterates its commitment already taken in respect of the role played by the Geneva Conventions, and the principles of IHL enshrined therein.

Uganda maintains an open-door policy to all persons forced to flee their home countries or countries of their habitual residence as a consequence of armed conflicts or natural disasters. Currently Uganda hosts about 1.3 million refugees, who enjoy all the freedoms and rights enjoyed by the citizens in the country. Refugees are, however, not allowed to participate or organize political activities to destabilize Uganda or any other country. We continue to extend a humane hand to those most in need of our support, despite our own development challenges.

As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Kampala Convention, that is the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, the unprecedented numbers of internally displaced persons in Africa attest to the relevance and importance of this framework. We encourage member States to ratify this instrument, which aims at enhancing the way we respond to crises within our States.

In the face of continued challenges and consequences of a changing environment, and the adverse effects of climate change, we emphasize the importance of international solidarity and humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of those most affected.

In this regard, my delegation extends its gratitude to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and in particular the Uganda Red Cross Society for all efforts made to reinforce Government intervention in situations of forced displacements. As a government, we are currently supporting the revision of the legislative instrument that established Uganda Red Cross Society and have started extending subvention towards disaster response activities by the National Society. Uganda will continue supporting the Uganda Red Cross Society programmes in the country.

We conclude by reiterating the importance of addressing the root causes of forced displacement, whether natural or manmade. We believe that, even as we try to find better ways to mitigate the consequences of war, the best solution, would be having no war at all. Thank you very much.

H.M. Margareta of Romania, President, Romanian Red Cross

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the landmark Geneva Conventions, it is with great satisfaction that we salute the importance given to international humanitarian law in the conference's agenda. Our National Society has pledged to continue and further strengthen the implementation of IHL.

We are witnessing an unimaginable level of violence in numerous conflicts throughout the planet, so it is imperative that protecting the life and dignity of people in vulnerable situations continues to be our absolute priority. Furthermore, facing today's new challenges resulting from urbanization of conflicts and hybrid wars, new warfare, terrorism and the impact of the climate crisis, we must strengthen our preparedness and capacity of reaction, of support and intervention. It is essential to focus on integrating IHL into the early education curricula and thus spread knowledge about it widely and deeply, both in peacetime and in times of war.

Over the years, the Romanian Red Cross, in close cooperation with our Government and the Movement, has developed programs of humanitarian education for young Romanians, which develop social awareness and civic responsibility. We are also active in social welfare: 52.2% of Romanian children are at risk of poverty and social exclusion, while fully 29% of them suffer severe material deprivation with profoundly damaging consequences for their development and mental health. Children affected by poverty from socially marginalized families are also at risk of school dropout. Access and equal chances to education are crucial in combating marginalization. We support inclusive education and life skills programs for the most vulnerable, to build resilient communities and create a chance for a fulfilling future.

In 2014, with the help of other National Societies, we opened five Community Day Care Centres in the most deprived areas of Romania. And in 2018, our National Society added two EU funded projects that offer support and guidance to children within their communities.

In the years to come we aim to increase our efforts to secure a safe environment for our communities, and to teach our young generations to become solutions-oriented in this fundamental threat that is the climate crisis.

Sharing ideas, experiences and best practices during this Conference is a rich source of inspiration for us. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

H.E. Mr Doung Chi Dzong g, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair, 70 years have passed since the conclusion of the four Geneva Conventions, to which Viet Nam acceded 62 years ago. The core principles and values of humanity and dignity embedded therein are timeless and continue to guide us today.

As a country that has gone through hardship during and after the wars, Viet Nam profoundly understands the war's devastating consequences. Wars cause and leave painful and irreparable losses for generations, even long after they end. As a victim of wars, Viet Nam has always upheld the values of peace, tolerance and humanity. If the war is inevitable for legitimate self-defence, Viet Nam pursues a consistent policy to reduce sufferings during armed conflicts by protecting those who do not or no longer participate directly in hostility.

During different wartime periods in the 60s and 70s of the last century, despite serious hardship and difficulties, Viet Nam has always strictly implemented its obligations under the Geneva Conventions, including providing information, ensuring medical assistance, food, shelter and clean water for sick and wounded people and returning prisoners. In peacetime, we continue to provide care and assistance to war victims, especially those who suffer from explosive or toxic remnants of war, addressing enormous consequences of war on people and the environment. In this regard, we support the provision on corporate liabilities in the draft conclusions of the ILC on the topic 'Protection of the environment in relation to armed conflict', as it poses a clear indication that not only States but also non-state actors, like corporates providing toxic chemicals to the belligerents, should be held liable for environmental damages caused by their products deployed in mass quantity and over a mass area in armed conflicts.

Madam Vice-Chair, last but not least, the respect for human life and dignity even in the extreme circumstances is the starting point of International humanitarian law. This fundamental principle also guides the activities at sea nowadays, both in wars and peace. In this regard, we emphasize the duty of States, non-State actors and individuals to protect people hors combat and to rescue persons in distress at sea, regardless of who they are or why they are in such a situation, be it a natural disaster or any other incidents at sea, including incidents involving maritime disputes. I thank you, Madam Vice-Chair, for your attention.

H.E. Mr Puneet Agrawal, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of India in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair. On behalf of India, I would like to extend our warm felicitations and congratulations on your appointment as the Vice-Chair of the 33rd International Conference. We thank the ICRC President Peter Maurer, and IFRC President Francesco Rocca, and their able teams, as well as the Standing Commission for their tireless efforts in preparing for this important Conference.

The Conference is timely, as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the four Geneva Conventions. We believe that IHL and the existing mechanisms remain the most appropriate framework for regulating the conduct of parties to armed conflict and providing protection for the persons affected. The need of the hour is to improve the existing mechanisms to ensure greater respect for IHL.

Madam Vice-Chair, we take note of ICRC's report on contemporary challenges to IHL. The technological developments hold great promise, but they may also present risks for civilian protection and may challenge the rules of IHL. It is undisputed that any new technology of warfare must be capable of being used in strict compliance with IHL.



Madam Vice-Chair, the impact and creation of new vulnerabilities in terms of factors such as climate crisis, large-scale health threats, alongside protracted armed conflicts and violence necessitates immediate humanitarian action. While the efforts of the Movement to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress is laudable, however, such activities should be in accordance with domestic laws and regulations, and complementary to and not duplicative of the work of the State and other agencies. The effects of forced migration as a consequence of disasters also need to be addressed

Likewise, climate change is too complex an issue and is the subject of serious and intense deliberations at various international fora. It is our view that the Movement should focus on the need to mitigate the adverse impact of environmental degradation, which also subsumes climate change, encourage members to prepare and proactively plan for such contingencies, and build its capacities.

Madam Vice-Chair, today the biggest threat to human dignity emanates from terrorism. There can be no justification for terrorism and no alibi for terrorist acts. Often attacks against States have been conducted by non-State actors, such as armed rebels, insurgent outfits and terrorist organizations. It is important that humanitarian actors work in accordance with the applicable legal frameworks and not provide legitimacy, even inadvertently, to the armed terrorist groups.

We admire the efforts and the dedication of the staff and volunteers of the Movement in their noble mission, often in difficult and dangerous situations.

Finally, Madam Vice-Chair, India looks forward to productive deliberations during the Conference. Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Xu Chen, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair. On behalf of the Chinese delegation, I wish to congratulate you on your assumption of this important post and reassure you of our full support to you and to the Bureau.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, and the 100th anniversary of the founding of the IFRC. I wish to express sincere appreciation to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement for their tremendous efforts and in protecting human life, health, dignity, and promoting mutual understanding, friendship and cooperation. Our world is undergoing profound changes. There is an ever urgent need to work together to make sure that everyone enjoys peace, development and dignity.

Firstly, we need to enhance multilateral cooperation to improve humanitarian situations. More steps should be taken to help developing countries in terms of both financial and technical support, and capacity building.

Secondly, we need to take comprehensive approaches to address both symptoms and the root causes of humanitarian crises. On the one hand, the United Nations needs to strengthen political and peace building efforts to effectively prevent conflicts. On the other hand, we should work together to reinforce our efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, to narrow the gap between the North and the South, to eliminate poverty and to achieve common development.

Thirdly, we need to strengthen the political will to further implement the international humanitarian law, not only to better advocate and promote the international humanitarian law, but also to transform political commitment into practical actions. Bearing in mind the need to fully respect state sovereignty, humanitarian agencies are expected to assist all parties to enhance their capacities to implement the international humanitarian law.

Last but not least, we need to promote humanitarianism and the spirit of the Red Cross. China will continue to join hands with the international community to advocate the Red Cross spirit of 'Humanity, Fraternity and Devotion', and to build a community of shared futures for mankind. Madam Vice-Chair, thank you for your attention.

Mr Md Feroz Salah Uddin, Secretary General, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society

(Original English)

Madam Vice-Chair. Natural disaster-prone Bangladesh is now also dealing with unprecedented, large-scale, and complex humanitarian crisis in Cox's Bazar district. From the beginning of the explosion of the Rohingya

population from Myanmar to Bangladesh in August 2017 Bangladesh Red Crescent society provides life-saving humanitarian services. Despite our continuous humanitarian effort, more than 1.2 million forcibly displaced people from Myanmar living in Cox's Bazar are still uncertain about their future. A durable solution can only be achieved when the root cause for forcibly displaced people from Myanmar are duly addressed and resolved. Therefore, it is also important for our Movement to work closely with member States to find out a durable solution for this humanitarian crisis.

In this fast-changing world, the emergence of populism, nationalism, racism and xenophobia is not only a threat to our global peace and security, but also putting a large number of populations at risk. We believe humanitarian education is key to promote humanitarian values and to tackle these emerging challenges. We are also happy to inform the 33rd International Conference that the Bangladesh Red Crescent, together with the Bangladesh Government, has started Red Crescent activities in every school to teach our future generation about the humanitarian values and norms, and of course about the importance of humanity.

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society already recognized globally for its flagship programme known as Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) to save lives and reduce suffering. Dealing with natural disasters is not something new for us. However, the current intensity and frequency of the disasters following the changes in the climate are putting additional pressure on us and other humanitarian organizations. Being based at one of the most vulnerable countries in the world, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society is also responding to climate-disaster induced crises on a regular basis.

We firmly believe our concrete action and cooperation today, shape tomorrow and the future for better. Thank you very much.

Mr François Rivasseau, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of France in Geneva

(Original French)

Madam Vice-Chair, allow me to congratulate you on your important role in directing our Conference.

This 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has an important symbolic dimension. This year, we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. Over these past decades, the ICRC and the National Societies have played a crucial role in promoting, disseminating and safeguarding international humanitarian law. Their work remains critical today, 70 years after the adoption of the Conventions, because international humanitarian law still faces multiple challenges, some of them new.

Prime among these challenges is compliance with the Geneva Conventions and, more generally, with international humanitarian law by parties to a conflict. The rules of the Geneva Conventions are still often flaunted in many armed conflicts. In the face of the blatant violations of the Conventions and their Additional Protocols, France applauds the work of the ICRC to strengthen compliance with international law.

France itself is also fully mobilized to step up efforts to strengthen compliance with international humanitarian law, primarily within the European framework, as demonstrated by the voluntary pledges it intends to make with the European Union and other Member States. It also launched a call for humanitarian action, together with Germany, under the Alliance for Multilateralism at a side event at the United Nations General Assembly in September.

This call for action, which has now been joined by 43 States and is open to all States for signature, aims to mobilize United Nations Member States around four main objectives. The first is to implement international humanitarian law effectively on the ground, particularly United Nations Security Council Resolution 2286 on the protection of health-care facilities and personnel, in relation to which France put forward a political declaration on 31 October 2017, listing a number of specific measures aimed at strengthening the implementation of these provisions.

The second objective is to improve knowledge of the law by the parties to armed conflicts, by supporting the provision of training to State actors and non-State actors, including NGOs and organized armed groups. The aim is to promote the sharing of best practices, and Geneva has unique experience in this area, which I wish to commend.

The third objective is to take into account the concerns and needs of humanitarian actors when drawing up anti-terrorist sanctions and legislation, with a view to preserving a margin for humanitarian action on the ground.

The last objective is to strengthen the documentation of violations of international humanitarian law and the fight against impunity.

We must take into account the challenges of our times, and France is pleased to see that the draft resolutions before you concern today's pressing issues: shifting vulnerabilities, the humanitarian consequences of climate change, the response to mental health needs, personal data protection, and women and leadership.

France is deeply committed to addressing these new challenges. Ladies and gentlemen, 70 years on from the adoption of the Geneva Conventions, armed conflicts are increasingly protracted, increasingly complex and increasingly internal, and their impact on civilians remains high. In this context, international humanitarian law is a remedy, often of last resort, against arbitrary acts. That is why it is important to seize the opportunity provided by this Conference, which brings all of us – humanitarian actors and representatives of the States – together here today, to wholeheartedly reaffirm the consensus of the international community on the universal principles that guide our action. Thank you.

Dr Ana Elizabeth Cubrías Medina, General Director of Social Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador

(Original Spanish)

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is an honour for me to speak on behalf of the Government of El Salvador as representative of the Interinstitutional Committee on International Humanitarian Law (CIDIH ES) in the framework of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the 1049 Geneva Conventions and in support of our institution, the Salvadoran Red Cross, which has been serving the Salvadoran people for 134 years.

El Salvador, neither in 1953 when it ratified the Geneva Conventions, nor in 1978 when it ratified the Additional Protocols, imagined the enormous importance that these instruments would have in the armed conflict which was to break out in the country during the 1980s.

The work of the ICRC in this period was decisive for the implementation of international humanitarian law, thereby succeeding in regulating the actions of the combatants and, together with the Salvadoran Red Cross, protecting the civilian population,

Later, on 4 April 1990, in this very city, the parties involved in the Salvadoran armed conflict engaged in a process of dialogue, which culminated in the signing of the peace agreements in January 1992, which envisaged, among their principal paragraphs, the modernization of the country's armed forces.

In those years, progress in the sphere of modernization and professionalization has been substantial. The Ministry of National Defence has adopted the necessary measures to include in the military portfolio the obligations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, in which army personnel are constantly trained.

In addition, in 1997, the Government of El Salvador created the CIDIH ES, whose principal objective is to be an advisory body for the Government on measures to be taken for the adoption, application and effective dissemination of IHL, and the Salvadoran Red Cross was a key participant in this important task.

In these twenty-two years of work, the CIDIH ES has promoted the signing of various IHL instruments and has provided continuous training to various government institutions, the armed forces, police and civil society, with the support of the universities.

The Government of President Nayib Bukele, opted for an open model of government, respectful of human rights, and it is on the basis of this vision that the CIDIH ES contributes to this work, with the dissemination of IHL to the general public, including the activities which were carried out last November in the context of the commemoration.

In the context of this Conference, whose theme is "Act today, shape tomorrow", which seeks to impact on improving the living conditions of people affected by armed conflicts, disasters and other emergency situations. El Salvador upholds the promise to work to create a National International Humanitarian Law Plan which tackles the themes addressed here and confronts the challenges identified in this Conference. Finally, we thank the ICRC for its invaluable and ongoing support in the dissemination and application of IHL in our country. Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Sumbue Antas, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Vanuatu in Geneva

(Statement on behalf of the Governments of Fiji, Marshall Islands, Vanuatu and Kiribati)

(Original English)

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, I make this statement on behalf of the governments of Fiji, Marshall Islands, Vanuatu, and Kiribati.

As Big Ocean States, Pacific Island Nations comprise the largest geographical region on the planet. Our people, the stewards of a Blue Continent. The Pacific and her people are on the front lines of climate change, and just two weeks ago in the Republic of Marshall Islands, king tides in combination with large swells created 16 foot waves that forced the displacement of more than 200 people. In Fiji and Vanuatu, entire communities have been forced to relocate as their ancestral homes are now underwater. Caribbean countries have been similarly affected, as recently seen in the Bahamas.

As such, we are the world's largest carbon sink. The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, highlighting the oceans and cryosphere, notes that the increased carbon uptake has led to ocean stratification and acidification, deeply affecting our livelihoods as our human health directly depends on the health of our ocean. Our reefs, often our only protection from high waves, face mass bleaching events, compromising life below water and challenging biodiversity.

To echo the words of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, we all need climate smart policies now in order to avert the cost of doing nothing. In the Pacific, we have learnt that such policies are more likely to succeed when people and their needs are central, including health both physical and mental, gender equality and the strengthening of the family unit. Such a link has been recognized recently by the Pacific Island Forum leaders in the implementation of our Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific.

We appreciate the commitment and assistance from the Movement regarding disaster law review – recently completed in Fiji and soon underway in the Marshall Islands, Palau, and Samoa – and Disaster Risk Reduction and Law, Preparedness and Response Law, and the integration of climate-smart approaches to these activities aligned with the key goals of our Pacific Islands Forum and Climate Vulnerable Forum.

Madam Vice-Chair, we recognize that no government can integrate such approaches without a strong and trusting partnership between the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and the national governments. As drivers of the High-Ambition Coalition, the Pacific led the way forward on the Paris Agreement. We urge your continued support to strengthen our collective Nationally Determined Contributions and support for adaptation and mitigation measures.

We support the resolution on Climate smart disaster law and policies that leaves no one behind, and we urge our States and National Societies to adopt an oceans worldview, recognizing, in the words of the Pacific scholar, Epeli Hau'ofa, that we are not, "islands in a far sea, but rather a sea of islands." Kormmol tata, vinaka vaka levu, malo, tagio turnas. Thank you

Ms Dyanne Morenco González, Director of the National Board, Costa Rican Red Cross

(Original Spanish)

Madam Vice-Chair,

2019 is an especially important year for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, since it commemorates 160 years since the battle of Solferino in 1859, where Henry Dunant took part in the battle of Solferino and subsequently wrote the book "A Memory of Solferino". Thanks to Henry Dunant's humanitarian vision, the society of assistance volunteers was born, now known as National Societies, and which form the basis, among other things, of international humanitarian law.

In addition, we are celebrating at the same time 70 years of the Geneva Conventions which are the international pillar of international humanitarian law as a set of rules which, for humanitarian reasons, seek to limit the effects of armed conflicts and which protect people and property, and limit the means and methods of war.

We also celebrate 134 years of the Costa Rican Red Cross, founded on 4 April 1885.

We also celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the Costa Rican International Humanitarian Law Commission, founded in 2004, in accordance with the ratification of the four Geneva Conventions and their three additional protocols,

The Costa Rican Red Cross firmly believes in the management of knowledge; it firmly believes in the support that it receives from the International Humanitarian Movement and the International Conference where we are present today. Thank you very much.

Ms Eveline Kuang, Youth Member and **Ms Jane Munro**, National Coordinator,
Australian Red Cross

(Original English)

Dignitaries, government representatives, Movement colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, I am Eveline Kuang, and this is Jane Munro, and we will jointly present this statement on behalf of the Australian Red Cross.

Rather than using this as an opportunity to state our position, we would like to instead bring to you the voices of important people who are not physically present with our delegation in Geneva: the people and communities we support, our volunteers, our members and our staff. As the focus of this important Conference is, "Act today, shape tomorrow," we would like to bring you their views on what and how we should be working on now and into the future.

This year, we asked what issues we should be working on over the coming years. This is what our staff, volunteers, members and supporters said to us, and I quote: "We must be focused on climate change as the most significant social, economic and environmental issue facing Australia and the global community. The organization must play an active role to ensure communities are prepared for the emerging impacts of climate change." Another said, "Over the 60 years I've been a member of Red Cross, I've always regarded the organisation as the most important first responder to an emergency." Another, "We should focus our energy into things that make us unique like emergencies, the laws of war and tracing."

We also asked, what is the added value of the Movement, and how can we best help you? This is what we heard, and I quote, "If I lost everything, the first thing I would think about is the Red Cross." "What I'm wearing was given to me by my caseworker. It's because of them I have a place to sleep." Another said, "Working with communities to design your responses is bringing back hope and is giving people an opportunity to have a say and be heard." And another, "This is an organisation that I have not observed anywhere else. A culture that has a foundation of heart."

To our Red Cross people and those who we seek to support back in Australia, we say thank you for putting your trust in us. To our staff, volunteers, members, supporters and communities in Australia, we also have a message for you from Geneva. From this Conference, we have made some important progress which we will bring home to our work in Australia. We want to share with you: ways to re-imagine our work that privileges your lived experience; a commitment to work to address the humanitarian issues arising from climate change and migration; the importance of our work reuniting families through the Restoring Family Links programme; looking at how we can embrace digital transformation as well as address the humanitarian challenges that technology poses; how important it is to support women to be leaders in our Movement; working to ensure that we are trusted as a humanitarian partner; and ideas and actions that will see the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement continue to be the biggest humanitarian Movement for the world. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Jorge Valero, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in Geneva

(Original Spanish)

Madam Vice-Chair,

This Conference is an opportunity to discuss and adopt decisions by the humanitarian institutions responsible for ensuring the application of the Geneva Convention.

This event can impact on the global humanitarian programme, protecting and improving the lives of human beings who are victims of armed conflicts, disasters and other emergency situations.

Twenty-five years ago. Mr. Cornelio Sommaruga, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross said, "We must all work to humanize political action rather than politicize humanitarian endeavour".

We advocate for a humanity which respects human dignity and where social justice predominates. The sad fact is that humanitarian assistance is conditionalized and politicized. It is necessary to preserve the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality

Many of the humanitarian challenges that we face are the product of new forms of neo-colonialism which exacerbates human suffering. Wars and conflicts have not disappeared. Whence the role of the institutions met here.

All States must comply with the UN Charter and humanitarian law, the fundamental pillars of relations between sovereign States.

We value the efforts of the ICRC to alleviate human suffering. We commend its achievements in the framework of its mandate, based on the principles of neutrality, independence and confidentiality.

In Venezuela, the ICRC concentrates its activities on the promotion of humanitarian rules and principles among the armed forces and security services.

The visit of the President of the ICRC, Mr. Peter Maurer to Venezuela last April helped to consolidate the organization's work on four humanitarian issues: migration, health, water and sanitation, and detention. The ICRC tripled its budget.

The strengthening of this relationship has produced excellent results. On 4 November last, the Framework Cooperation Agreement was signed between the Ministry responsible for water and the ICRC, to cover the provision of drinking water, collection and treatment of wastewater and urban drainage.

We are examining an agreement between my country and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The cooperation with these humanitarian institutions has made it possible to alleviate the suffering caused by the imposition of unilateral coercive measures against the Venezuelan people, measures which have made it hard for our population to access vital goods and services. Thanks to the cooperation with the ICRC, the situation has been successfully managed in terms of hospital care, community health and general health care.

The ICRC contributed to restocking of 30 health centres with medical supplies, including public hospitals and other health facilities in the capital and other states of the country.

The cooperation between the Movement and Venezuela has been conducted in a context that respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the State.

Thank you very much, Madam Vice-Chair.

Mr Azamat Baialinov, President, Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan

(Original Russian)

Good morning, colleagues.

As you know, Kyrgyzstan is one of the countries of central Asia which is prone to major emergencies; I would like to draw your attention to the question of climate change.

Kyrgyzstan is faced with over 200 different emergency situations every year, which, unfortunately, cause a loss of 35 million US dollars. And, of course, this loss affects over 200,000 people. We would also like to emphasize how important the issue of climate change is, in particular the higher temperatures in our country.

Up to a point, we gave no thought to the matter of climate change. It was, of course, a burning issue, but not so much for us as a mountainous country. Every day we now feel its effect on us. For this reason, we would like to call on the international community, the governments of our countries and National Societies to pay more attention to these questions.

Climate change is one thing, but to work, actively work, in National Societies, that is another matter. Hence we must join together to seize today's opportunity to strengthen the potential of our National Societies, and use the mechanisms which our International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and our National Societies offer. For example, it may be said that one of the best tools is forecast-based financing which allow us, for example, to actively help the vulnerable population living in our country.

We must also recognize that our volunteers and our staff must be trained and ready to provide the appropriate, requisite help to those countries, especially mountainous countries, where access to the vulnerable section of the population is far from rapid. We must realize that we must work effectively in the region and cooperate within a single region, for example, within Central Asia. And, of course, we would appeal for more attention to be paid to us, to Central Asia, even though we are grouped together with Europe, because this region has ample prospects, but faces specific difficulties and problems. Thank you very much.

4.8 PLENARY: ELECTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMISSION

Wednesday, 11 December 2019

(6 pm)

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome back to this plenary session of the Conference which will be dedicated to the election of five members of the Standing Commission.

Before we move to the main purpose of our meeting, let me mention that we have distributed a further resolution in your pigeonholes and published it on the app, as well as on the website of the Conference. As in previous conferences, this resolution takes note of and endorses the resolution on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Magen David Adom of Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society, which was adopted by consensus at the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement last Sunday. This has already been announced by the Chair of the Council of Delegates on Monday.

Regarding general statements in the Voices from the Conference which had to be cut short because of the time limit, I would like to ensure that we will publish your full statements as handed over to the secretariat, including the parts that you were not able to read in the records, with the exception of any parts that might be inconsistent with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement, reflected in Article 10, paragraph 4 of the Statutes of the Movement (Statutes)

We are now returning to the election of five members of the Standing Commission. As you certainly know, the Commission has a total of nine members. In addition to the five members elected from National Societies by the International Conference, the ICRC and IFRC Presidents and one more representative from each of those organizations are members of the Commission.

The Standing Commission is the trustee of the International Conference between two Conferences. Its functions are laid in Article 18 on the Statutes and can be summarized as follows. It oversees the preparation of the Movement's Council of Delegates and International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. It promotes the implementation of the decisions of the Council of Delegates and International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. It promotes the harmony and the unity among the components of the Movement. It identifies strategic issues that should be of concern for the Movement as a whole.

Ten candidates run for this election, including three women, seven men. The members of the International Conference are invited to take into account in their vote, "the personal qualities of the candidates and the principle of fair geographical distribution," in accordance with Article 10.4 of the Statutes and Rule 21.1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Movement. Moreover, in its resolution CD/19/R4 adopted on 8 December, the Council of Delegates urged all the members of the Conference to, "take into account equitable gender balance when electing the five elected members of the Standing Commission at the International Conference, and thus notably by choosing at least two women and two men among the candidates."

For the election of the new members of the Standing Commission, we will first hold an electronic roll call using the voting keypads in order to determine the absolute majority required in the first ballot. For the purposes of the roll call, each head of delegation, of their substitute delegate by proxy, will need to have their voting card which they will have collected at the registration desk.

We will then proceed to the election of the members of the Standing Commission, which will also be carried out electronically. For the election, each head of delegation will need to have their username and password, which is contained in their sealed envelope.

If you do not have your voting card or sealed envelope with you, please immediately make yourself known to the Electoral Cell, the voting team or volunteers who are situated here in the room. The Electoral Cell, you can

see them on the stage. Please remember that it is only the heads of delegation or their substitute delegate by proxy are authorised to vote.

If five candidates or more obtain an absolute majority in the first ballot, the five candidates who have obtained the largest number of votes shall be declared elected to the Standing Commission. If in the first ballot less than five candidates obtain an absolute majority or in the case of a tie, we will proceed to a second ballot where the candidates obtaining the largest number of the votes shall be declared elected. I would like to draw your attention again to the importance of taking into account the personal qualities of the candidates, as well as the principle of fair geographical distribution and the principle of equitable gender balance.

I now give the floor to the Secretary General, who will guide you through the election procedure. Thank you very much.

H.E. Mr Didier Pfirter, Secretary General of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair. Before proceeding to the roll call, I will read out, in alphabetical order, the list of ten candidates in the Standing Commission election, together with each candidate's region.

- First candidate, Mr Hilal Al-Sayer, from the Kuwait Red Crescent Society, MENA region.
- Second candidate, Ms Mercedes Babé, Spanish Red Cross, European region.
- Third candidate, Mr Azamat Baialinov, Red Crescent of Kyrgyzstan, European region.
- Fourth candidate, Mr Hassan Esfandiar, Iranian Red Crescent Society, MENA region.
- Fifth candidate, Mr Abbas Gullet, Kenya Red Cross Society, African region.
- Sixth candidate, Mr Obid Yahya Hadi Mardam, Yemen Red Crescent Society, MENA region.
- Seventh candidate, Ms Ashanta Osborne Moses, Guyana Red Cross Society, Latin America region.
- Eighth candidate, Mr George Nangale, Tanzanian Red Cross Society, African region.
- Ninth candidate, Ms Fine Tu'itupou-Arnold, Cook Islands Red Cross Society, Asia-Pacific region.
- Tenth candidate, Mr George B. Weber, Canadian Red Cross Society, North American region.

We will now proceed to the roll call of the National Societies, the State Parties to the Geneva Convention, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), by using your voting card and the keypad which is on each delegation's table. We will do this in three rounds – first National Societies, second State Parties to the Geneva Conventions, and thirdly the ICRC and the IFRC.

I will ask each delegation to place their voting cards in the keypad with the chip face up, and to firmly press “1” on the keypad in order to confirm their presence. Once your vote is registered, the LED light on your keypad will turn red, and after a few seconds your delegation's name will appear green on the screen projected in the plenary room. The voting team and volunteers are here to help you if you have any questions.

We will now start with the National Societies. I ask each National Society to place their voting card in the keypad with the chip face up, and to press “1” on the keypad in order to confirm their presence.

[PAUSE]

I now ask each State Party to the Geneva Conventions to place their voting card in the keypad with the chip face up, and to press “1” on the keypad in order to confirm their presence.

[PAUSE]

Finally, I invite the ICRC and the IFRC to place their voting card in the keypad and to press “1” on the keypad in order to confirm their presence. Thank you.

[PAUSE]

The Roll Call is now completed. Today, 180 National Societies, 160 State Parties to the Geneva Conventions, and the ICRC and the IFRC are present – which is a total of 342 delegations. The absolute majority needed to be declared elected in the first ballot of the Standing Commission election is 172 votes.

Please do keep your voting cards safely and bring them with you tomorrow afternoon. In the unlikely event that we would have to vote on any motion, you will need your card in order to participate in the vote. Thank you.

We can now proceed to the election. The head of delegation or substitute by proxy will need the sealed envelope which has each delegation's unique username and password inside. For the election of the new members of the Standing Commission, the vote will be carried out using the delegate's own telephone, tablet or laptop. We also have tablets that can be used in the voting booths on each floor of the plenary room.

In a few moments you will all be able to access the secure electronic voting platform by using the link that will be projected on the plenary room screen. You will be able to select your preferred language and login using your username and password that are found in your sealed envelope.

Once you enter the platform, you will be able to vote in 3 simple steps. Firstly, vote and select up to five candidates of your choice. Secondly, in the "voting summary", review and confirm your selection and submit your vote. Thirdly, once you have submitted your vote, the voting process has ended and you can logout of the voting platform. The voting team and volunteers are here to help you if you have any questions.

As a large number of voters will be accessing the system at the same time, there is the chance that there may be a slight delay in registering your choices, so I thank you in advance for your patience.

The members of the Electoral Cell will shortly proceed to officially open the election in front of all of the delegations – with their USB stick and a unique password in order for the electronic voting platform to open and for the voting to be able to commence. This will take a few minutes, but please remain in your seats whilst this is happening as the voting will commence shortly afterwards upon my announcement. We foresee a period of 30 minutes for this vote, but if necessary, we may extend the voting period by a few minutes. I invite the members of the Electoral Cell to proceed now to open the vote.

[PAUSE]

The election has now been initiated by the Electoral Cell. The election itself will start in five minutes. I will announce it.

[PAUSE]

I now declare that the voting platform for the election of the Standing Commission is open. The link to access the electronic voting platform is now on the screen. Delegates should not hesitate to speak to the voting team or volunteers if they need assistance.

[PAUSE]

Please be aware that there might be a second round, so we just heard that some delegates are already going home. We cannot exclude that there would be a second round after the voting.

Also, once we are sure that all delegations have voted, we might announce the result, even before the 30 minutes are up. If you step out, do not stay out for ten or 15 minutes, just briefly. Thank you.

[PAUSE]

May I ask for your attention please. There is five minutes left to vote, Apparently, there are a couple of delegations that have not yet voted. You have five more minutes left to vote.

[PAUSE]

The vote has now been officially closed by the Electoral Cell. The results will soon be announced. I ask you to all remain in your seats to await the results of the vote. Thank you.

[PAUSE]

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Ladies and gentlemen, the results of the vote are in and the results will be displayed on the screen. The following candidates have been elected as members of the Standing Commission

Ms Mercedes Babé, Mr George Weber, Mr Abbas Gullet and Mr Hilal Al-Sayer.

[Applause]

Noting that only four candidates have an absolute majority of votes, we will proceed to a second round, after which we will be electing the candidates who receive the greatest number of votes. Since four candidates have already obtained the absolute majority of votes, you can only choose one candidate. We will pause for an hour before the second round of voting. Thank you for understanding.

[BREAK FOR AN HOUR]

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Welcome back. I will announce once again the results of the first round of the election. The following candidates have been elected as members of the Standing Commission with an absolutely majority required of 172 votes: Ms Mercedes Babé, 290 votes; Mr George Weber, 249 votes; Mr Abbas Gullet, 231 votes; Mr Hilal Al-Sayer, 216 votes.

Noting that four candidates received an absolute majority of votes, we have to proceed to a second round, after which we will be electing the candidates who received the greatest number of votes. Since four candidates have already obtained the absolute majority of votes, you can only choose one candidate in the second round of election.

I now give the floor back to the Secretary General.

H.E. Mr Didier Pfirter, Secretary General of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair. We will now proceed with the second ballot. There are six remaining candidates to be elected to the Standing Commission. Only one of them will be elected. I will read out the list of candidates who will be in the second ballot, in alphabetical order: Mr Azamat Baialinov, Mr Hassan Esfandiar, Mr Obid Yahya Hadi Mardam, Mr George Francis Nangale, Ms Ashanta D. Osborne Moses, Ms Fine Tu'itupou-Arnold.

In this second ballot, a relative majority is sufficient in order to be elected. The one candidate obtaining the largest number of votes will be elected. The electronic voting procedure is the same as the first ballot, except the link to the voting platform is different and will be shown on screen. You will, again, need your sealed envelope with your username and password, the same as in the last round.

The members of the Electoral Cell will shortly proceed to officially open the election in front of all delegations. This will take a few minutes, please remain in your seats whilst this is happening, as the voting will commence shortly afterwards upon my announcement.

I request that all delegations vote in this second ballot. We foresee a period of 15 minutes for this vote. I now invite the members of the Electoral Cell to proceed to open the vote.

[PAUSE]

I now declare that the voting platform for the election of the Standing Commission is open. The link to access the electronic voting platform is now on the screen. Delegates should not hesitate to speak to the voting team or volunteers if you need assistance.

[PAUSE]

Please take note, as I mentioned, the website is different, and in particular at the end, it is not SC1, it is SC2. You have to punch into a different website in order to have access to the voting system.

[PAUSE]

The vote has now been officially closed by the Electoral Cell. The results will soon be announced. I ask you to remain in your seats to await the results of the vote. Thank you very much.

[PAUSE]

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Now the results of the second round of elections are in. Ms Fine Arnold, 134 votes; Ms Ashanta Moses, 78 votes; Mr Azamat Baialinov, 69 votes; Mr George Nangale, 20 votes; Mr Hassan Esfandiar, 14 votes and Mr Obid Mardam, one vote.

Congratulations to the fifth elected member of the Standing Commission, Ms Fine Arnold.

Once again, let me announce all the five newly elected members: Mr Hilal Al-Sayer, Ms Mercedes Babé, Mr Abbas Gullet, Mr George Weber, Ms Fine Arnold. Congratulations.

Can I invite newly elected members of the Standing Commission to come on stage for the round of applause.

[Applause]

I invite the new members of the Standing Commission to present themselves at 9.45 am in Room 13, where we will be holding the first meeting of its XVIIIth session, that I will have the privilege of chairing for the time of the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission.

I wish you all a good evening and see you tomorrow. Thank you very much.

4.9 FOR THE RECORD: VOICES FROM THE CONFERENCE

Thursday, 12 December 2019

(9 am)

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Good morning. We have just one hour today for the Voices from the Conference session, and we have several delegations registered. To remind you that every delegation gets three minutes. If the statement is on behalf of a group, then you get five minutes, and if it is the ministerial level you will get five minutes; if not it is three minutes, and please keep it in time. Thank you very much.

H.E. Ms Ji-ah Paik, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea in Geneva

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair. When the last Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference took place in 2015, we were in the midst of transitioning, in terms of saving people's lives. We agreed on the sustainable development goals and made efforts for the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. We spoke with one voice in advocating the most vulnerable people and criticizing the violation of international humanitarian law. We confirmed our determination to make a better world for all.

Despite the progress we have made since then, today's humanitarian landscape is not much different from or even worse than four years ago. Every year there is a record-breaking, unprecedented scale of forced displacement, mainly due to major protracted crises. Protracted crises in areas such as Syria and Afghanistan still persist, while more recent emergencies of Rohingya refugees, and outflow of Venezuelans have been added to the list. The blatant violation of IHL is disturbing humanitarian access to targeted people. Climate change and epidemics are affecting people around the world in different ways.

Madam Chair, such challenges are not the reason for us to be frustrated, but rather a motivation to be focussed and reinvigorated. From these challenges sprang the objectives of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, reaching the furthest behind in armed conflicts, restoring respect for international humanitarian law, and responding promptly to natural disasters and pandemics.

Therefore, this year's Conference, held in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the 1949 Geneva Convention on armed conflict, is significantly timely, and its three main themes, IHL, vulnerability and trust, are all the more relevant. As a State Party to the Convention and a responsible stakeholder of international solidarity, the Government of the Republic of Korea has cooperated with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and will strengthen the partnership down the road.

We hereby renew our commitment to rigorously engaging with the Movement, to deliver more effective humanitarian assistance, and build on resilience for natural disasters. In addition, we will double our efforts to tackle sexual and gender-based violence in accordance with our Government's newly launched initiative, Action with Women and Peace. We look forward to furthering the cause by working in various ways with the Movement, ranging from raising awareness to conducting effective programmes for women and girls empowerment in the humanitarian context.

Let me conclude by reiterating the Republic of Korea's steadfast commitment to the work of the Movement and expressing its heartfelt appreciation to the volunteers dedicated to reach the most vulnerable people in the spirit of humanity and solidarity. I thank you, Madam Chair.

H.E. Mr Adrian Vierita, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Romania in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, the universally ratified Geneva Conventions, whose 70th anniversary we celebrate this year, represented the highpoint of the international consensus regarding the sanctity of human life and personal dignity under any circumstances. The relevance of principles and norms guiding today's international response to armed conflicts have stood the test of time. Yet, their operational applicability is challenged by the complex nature of modern-day warfare.

While supporting the Bringing IHL Home resolution and the indispensable focus on better national implementation plans, Romania will continue to advocate for the need of regular, non-politicized dialogue among States at the global level as a means of strengthening compliance with IHL. Promoting respect for international law represents an important pillar of Romania's foreign policy.

Apart from being party to the vast majority of the IHL treaties and adopting in 2007 a National Strategy for the application of the international humanitarian law, Romania has created the inter-institutional infrastructure to coordinate and monitor the fulfilment of its relevant international obligations and domestic laws, namely the Romanian National Commission on IHL acting as a consultative body to the Government. More than ten years after its establishment, the National Commission has proved its usefulness by maintaining IHL high on the political agenda and playing a role in its dissemination, including through the events marking the IHL's Day in Romania. It has overseen the elaboration of national reports and has promoted initiatives to accede to new legal or political instruments, such as the endorsement in 2017 of the Safe School Declaration and the ongoing acceptance procedure of the amendments to Article 8 of the ICC Statute. Also, the Commission has facilitated the preparations for the current International Conference.

At the end of March 2018, the Romanian National IHL Commission has organized in Bucharest, together with the ICRC, a Regional IHL Conference for States in Central and South-Eastern Europe. The reunion focused on the performance of existing national IHL committees and other similar bodies, with a view to sharing best practices and in support of enhancing the activity in this field. This meeting offered an incentive to further develop the practice of IHL dialogues in our region.

To conclude, Madam Chair, as we confront with shifting vulnerabilities of populations, we have to further work towards the implementation of a comprehensive approach to crisis and conflict, tackling their root causes and providing emergency response and maintaining the independence and impartiality of humanitarian actors. The resolutions under adoption at this Conference showcase our priorities for action in line with this holistic approach, while reaffirming the importance to support access to and acceptance of vulnerable communities. I thank you for your attention.

Mr Anare Leweniqila, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Fiji in Geneva

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, the global humanitarian landscape is quickly evolving and requires more robust action by all actors operating within this space. The theme today, "Act today, shape tomorrow", is a stark reminder why we need to put in place the necessary enabling environment to support our efforts in addressing the humanitarian challenges of the future.

Today, some parts of the world are being affected by armed conflict, natural disasters and epidemics, to name a few of these global challenges. These challenges have resulted in an increase in the number of displacement of persons, cross-border migration and refugees around the world. Responding to this crisis requires greater humanitarian action to ensure that the human rights of these people are protected together with the need for security and protection.

The opening statement of the Conference acknowledges the need to be mindful of the climate emergency that is besetting this world. This climate emergency is envisaged to bring about new challenges which will affect the whole planet. To ensure that we step up our humanitarian efforts, given the growing complexities about the future, in Fiji we are trying to localise our international humanitarian law. This global call focuses on allowing the State to chart its own destiny and foster partnerships with domestic humanitarian partners to carry out our post-disaster emergency response work. This will reduce our reliance on international actors, but also work with our local humanitarian partners in responding to any emergency event.

This will allow the state to build capacity at all levels of our governance structure, from the grassroots to the national level on the importance of this humanitarian work.

Humanitarian work must be people centred. Fiji has nine cluster groups focused on food security, protection, communication, logistics, infrastructure, health and sanitation. The Fiji cluster system brings together the state, development partners and international NGOs to work together to further our domestic humanitarian agenda

Trust is a critical aspect of this partnership. The State bestows its trust on our humanitarian partners to be first responders in the event of an emergency, and our humanitarian partners will ensure that assistance and support is provided according to international best practice.

The State supports the work of the National Society volunteers as first respondents and also to work on assessing mental health and psychosocial needs of people affected by disasters. This is an area that we will look to strengthen and build capacity into the future to ensure that those trained can identify victims and can provide support when needed.

We look forward to working with our National Society to build our partnership on the delivery of our humanitarian endeavours to ensure that together we can address the growing challenges of the future. Thank you, Madam Chair.

H.E. Ms Aviva Raz Shechter, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Israel in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, on the occasion of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, allow me to convey a message of support for the important work done by the ICRC, the IFRC, and by the Movement, not only in delivering vital humanitarian assistance to the places where it is needed, but also in fostering a much-needed dialogue between the relevant stakeholders. The conversation we have been having these past few days has been successful in bringing together the many different voices of States and National Societies, in an attempt to find common ground on how to advance our common humanitarian mission.

This is the true power of humanity, to bridge the gaps that exist between different points of view and create the necessary foundations that enable us to cope better with the mounting challenges of humanitarian action.

Israel's approach to humanitarian questions draws to a large extent on the age-old Jewish concept of 'Tikkun Olam' or mending the world. This idea means that it is each person's responsibility to take action and make the world a better place. It is this philosophy that guides us in lending a helping hand to those in need near and far, and it is what has made Israel such a reliable partner in emergency response.

The humanitarian relief operations programme of MASHAV, Israel's agency for international development cooperation, are constantly being adapted to changing realities and shifting vulnerabilities. The sharing of know-how is a key component in Israel's humanitarian action, with a special focus on the training of medical teams in emergency and disaster medicine. Theoretical training is accompanied by practical simulation exercises, and Israeli humanitarian relief has been extended to over 140 countries in all corners of the globe.

We will continue to work together with the ICRC, the IFRC, and other partners, in particular our National Society, in helping to do Tikkun Olam.

In this vein, beside the medical and emergency work I mentioned, we have a moral responsibility to ensure the safe return of missing persons

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the ICRC for their important role in advancing the cause of missing persons and urge the international community to continue to strive to address this crucial humanitarian issue, which has recently been highlighted with the UN Security Council Resolution 2474. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Esmaeil Baghaei Hamaneh, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as the Chair of the 33rd International Conference. We thank the Swiss Government and are grateful to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the Standing Commission, for

all the efforts they have put into organizing this important event. We appreciate this occasion as an opportunity for States and other components of the Movement to review the current situation, identify emerging challenges, and renew our commitment to the cause of humanity through collective humanitarian work, and respect for IHL.

Madam Chair, today's world is endemic with many diverse challenges, both old and new, which are set to test the power of humanity. Disasters, both natural and manmade, armed conflicts, protracted occupation, violence and terrorism, as well as restrictive measures and vindictive sanctions, continue to inflict untold suffering and heartbreaking pain on fellow human beings. They also pose serious challenges to humanitarian work. Our world, indeed our common sense of humanity, is badly hurt and in need of urgent measures to be healed. We share the atmosphere of concern alarmed by the Standing Commission. Of particular concern is what was well versed by the Chair of the Standing Commission as, I quote, "Instrumentalization and politicization of the humanitarian work," or, again I quote, "The infringements on neutral and impartial humanitarian spaces."

This is an overly upsetting trend that could only be described as the weaponization of humanitarian needs for political purposes. It has hampered the normal functioning of the ICRC and other humanitarian actors to help people in need, and consequently undermines the privileged status of the Movement, by damaging the trust of the affected communities to the humanitarian work. For sure, principled humanitarian action requires humanitarian space protected from political intervention. That needs to be recognized by all and observed in practice. The ideals of humanitarian work for political purposes manifested in deliberate denial of access to targeted population and States is outrageous and inhuman. It is a breach of all the Fundamental Principles the Movement is grounded in, and which we all, as member States and national movements share, including the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence and universality.

The proof of our commitment to humanitarian action is not necessarily in the volume of our donation or the longevity of our membership in IHL instruments, it is better tested in our actions and policies in real terms and on the ground. Charity is not a recipe for wrongdoing, nor does it absolve the themes.

Madam Chair, as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the IFRC and the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Geneva Conventions as two landmark achievements of human civilization to mitigate the suffering of fellow human beings, and to humanize wars, we are reminded how well equipped we are to deal effectively with disasters, conflicts and crises. We need to adopt those tools to face new and emerging challenges ahead of us. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr Miguel Villarreal, Vice-President, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

(Original English)

The International Conference is the only space where the States and humanitarians sit together to jointly commit to resolutions that will make a positive difference to the lives, livelihoods and wellbeing of millions of people in need. IFRC would like to take this opportunity to thank all the delegations for their support to this unique platform, and for their continued commitment to furthering the power of humanity through dialogue and action.

Over the past three days we have together recognized that the way in which we are treating our planet and the impact that it is having, and will increasingly have, on all of us is not sustainable. We must make every effort to prepare for more frequent and more extreme weather events. We must support communities, particularly the most vulnerable, to anticipate and adapt to the realities of our changing climate, and to develop the capacity to take early risk informed action. In line with the draft resolution on climate smart disaster management, IFRC commits to support National Societies to work with their governments to review and, if needed, develop appropriate national disaster law. IFRC also commits to work with National Societies to further strengthen disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation and emergency anticipatory and response capacities.

IFRC recognizes that increasing urbanization and globalization, antibiotic resistance, species interaction and falling vaccination rates are heightening the risk that a significant outbreak of infectious disease will occur. IFRC welcomes the draft resolution on pandemic and epidemic preparedness and response, particularly the recognition it affords to the role that community-based volunteers played in early detection and response to infectious disease.

Mental health and psychosocial support during and following conflicts, disasters and other emergencies, is lifesaving. The resolution on this subject is timely and will help to shed light on the often neglected and stigmatized issue. In line with the draft resolution, IFRC commits to support the comprehensive inclusion of psychological and first aid training within first aid and other first responder training, as well as the inclusion of mental health and psychological support in all disaster response programmes.

Trust is our most precious commodity. Being trusted with data, with personal histories and information, is critical to being able to restore family links, to ensure lifesaving access, to working with and alongside communities, critical, in fact, to all our humanitarian work. IFRC therefore welcomes the discussion on trust, integrity, accountability, data protection, and establish a conducive environment during the 33rd International Conference, and hope that these critical issues within there, between National Societies and Governments, can continue long after this unique Conference ends. Thank you very much.

Mr Shri Ravinder Kumar Jain, Secretary General, Indian Red Cross Society

(Statement on behalf of the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka)

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair, and colleagues, good morning. I make this statement on behalf of the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Thank you for this opportunity to make this statement here, today, at this very important gathering, and to voice our support about the resolutions and thematic areas under discussion at this International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

South Asia is a region that is continuously hit by a relentless sequence of hazards and disasters, such as earthquakes, cyclones, air pollution, floods, landslides, droughts, dust storms, heat waves, in addition to pandemic and epidemics, many of which have no respect for national borders. The unfolding climate crisis worsens the risk both to our countries and communities. That is why we are putting concerted efforts into working better as a region to prepare, respond and reduce risk both by disasters and climate change.

Last month, in Kathmandu, in Nepal, South Asian member States, Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies, the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation, and IFRC met and discussed how to accelerate implementation of the South Asia Agreement on Rapid Response to Natural Disasters, and this is the regional treaty which outlines how South Asia will cooperate, in trust boundary disaster preparedness and response efforts. Drawing on the recognized expertise of the Red Cross and Red Crescent on disaster laws, a partnership has been commenced with SAARC to strengthen climate and disaster risk governance, including domestic implementation of the regional arrangements.

From 2020, South Asia National Societies, supported by IFRC, are committed to work with governments that expressed interest to review disaster related national laws and policies in the light of the provisions of the Sendai Framework, South Asia Regional Treaty, Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance (IDRL Guidelines), as well as draw on the new Checklist on Law and Disaster Preparedness and Response. This regional analysis will be brought back to South Asian leaders, with actionable recommendations on how to strengthen regional preparedness and response. These commitments are very much in line with the climate smart disaster loss resolution, to which we express our full support.

We value our growing relationship with regional and international organizations, both at the secretariat level and at the country level among our National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. We pledge our support to work with all governments in the region to further our collective objectives. Thank you very much. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Dr. Mahesh Gunasekara, Director General, Sri Lanka Red Cross Society

(Statement on behalf of Afghan Red Crescent, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, Bhutan Red Cross, Indian Red Cross Society, Maldivian Red Crescent, Nepal Red Cross Society, Pakistan Red Crescent and Sri Lanka Red Cross Society)

(written statement)

(original English)

I make this statement on behalf of the Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Madam Chair, the South Asia Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies want to express our full support to the resolution on women leadership in humanitarian action and our firm commitment to the advancement of women's participation and leadership across all the activities we do to ensure the highest levels of inclusion, diversity with considerations to cultural dimensions.

We are convinced that reaching the most vulnerable people in communities requires people of all genders with the necessary skills to be involved in all levels of humanitarian work to achieve community acceptance. Only by having the acceptance from the communities, is it possible to protect the dignity of women, children and people in need. We believe to do that it is important women to be at leadership positions.

Too many times, women who are hardest to reach are overlooked, unseen, and unheard in our work. This is the last mile we must ensure today. It has been proven time and again greater representation of women in decision making levels is linked with increased access and effectiveness of services for women. However, representation must be fair and equitable, and must consider all intersections of diversity. Women in decision making at both local and national levels, and even at the global level, can ensure that the women's needs at various contexts are addressed.

Madam Chair. In the investments to strengthen and protect livelihoods, the centre of our collective actions must be to create enabling conditions for women. In this regard, we want to commend Kuwait Red Crescent Society's financial contribution towards women's capacities that is already benefiting two National Societies from the South Asia region. We would like to request other National Societies and governments to support the idea of a Women Empowerment Fund. By achieving so, we will walk the talk. This creates the roots for greater resilience and provides opportunities for expanding the role of women, beyond traditional moulds, in their homes, communities, institutions and the State.

Madam Chair. Considering that 51% of the population are women, it is imperative that women are both seen and heard in decision making.

This is why the investment for women leadership is crucial. we must create career pathways for future leaders. We must mentor women and give the needed encouragement. We must introduce affirmative action including constitutional amendments where necessary. We commend the IFRC and our sister National Societies for achieving the positive change towards the right direction, in our constitution.

At the same time, we, the National Societies of South Asia, recognize that we have to provide special focus to strengthen our efforts and measure our successes:

- a) On the way we work towards achieving greater gender parity within our Branches, and within our volunteers base at the community level;
- b) On the way we support women and harness their unique strengths in local communities;
- c) On the way our institutions provide greater space for women leadership;
- d) On the way we collectively demonstrate our commitments.

Madam Chair. Finally, and not the least, we South Asia Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies reaffirm our commitment towards empowerment and representation of women, in leadership in our own National Societies, in both governance and management roles, as was agreed during the 10th Asia Pacific Regional Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

We appeal all of you here today to join our journey. Thank you.

Ms Delia Chatoor, Vice-President, the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society

(written statement)

(Original English)

Madam Chair. Since the last International Conference in 2015, the international community has been witnessed in certain regions of the world to the erosion of many well-established principles and norms of international law. In the midst of such developments, our volunteers, delegates, staff and well-wishers can be justly proud that we, the components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, have continued to serve the most vulnerable.

This year's theme "Act today, shape tomorrow" serves to remind us that we must be forward-looking through collaboration and cooperation in order to address the global challenges. Coming from a small island State, even as we are described as "high income", my country does face certain challenges and we acknowledge that no one State, no one organisation is equipped to tackle the myriad concerns at our doorsteps.

As a Movement though we can be proud of the accomplishments over the past few years such as the 70th anniversary of the 1949 Geneva Conventions - a landmark legal approach to the tenets of international humanitarian law (IHL). Trinidad and Tobago can also recognise the role which it placed in the adoption of the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the country's ratification of the Treaty in September 2019. A special commendation must go out to other Caribbean States which have become Party to this most relevant Treaty.

We are nevertheless mindful that to advance in the solving of the issues faced and to implement the policies we have adopted, there must be trust in all forms of humanitarian action initiated by us, the Movement and States. It is our goal, therefore, to strengthen all our internal mechanisms on accountability and transparency through, among other things, the updating of all of our legal instruments. We will also ensure that there is a firm understanding and appreciation of the National Society's auxiliary role in its relations with the public authority.

We must also acknowledge that without our volunteers, a significant amount of our mandate would not be accomplished. We express our appreciation to them and to volunteers internationally. A special word must also be extended to Red Cross Youth in our school system. Their enthusiasm and positive demeanour to programmes can only be emulated.

By acting today then we indeed shape tomorrow but we must deepen our commitment and recognise our role in multilateralism so that working together (the Movement, States and others), we can shape "our common heritage" for future generations. I thank you.

Jamaica

(written statement)

(Original English)

Madam Chair. At the outset, the Jamaican delegation wishes to express congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the 33rd International Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Then three themes of this year's Conference - respect for international humanitarian law, shifting vulnerabilities and trust in humanitarian action - were appropriately framed to promote discourse around both the challenges and achievements of the international community in implementing international humanitarian law.

International humanitarian law: Protecting people in armed conflict

This year marks significant milestones in the annals of history of international humanitarian law (IHL): the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions and the centenary of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Jamaica recalls its ratification of the four Geneva Conventions in 1964, just two years after the country achieved its independence. This is a testament to the commitments of a relatively young country to the rules and principles under IHL. These rules and principles of IHL are key to safeguarding the humanity and dignity of people.

Without these rules, developing countries, in particular small island nations, would face additional vulnerabilities due to their small size, as well as limited military power and resources.

IHL further provides the world with guarantees that are deeply based in fundamental principles of international law such as the sovereign equality of states. While recognizing that throughout the years, much has been achieved in implementation and promotion of IHL, there are now emerging challenges that impede this process.

Shifting vulnerabilities:

The Climate crisis

Madam Chair. It is evident that the nature of vulnerabilities is evolving. The world is now grappling with challenges such as extreme weather events that never existed previously. These weather events continue to increase in frequency and intensity. In 2019, 13 of the 20 countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change had an interagency humanitarian appeal. Despite this, climate change adaptation, regrettably, is not prioritized as a part of the humanitarian response.

Climate related events threaten both the sustainable development and mere existence of small island developing states. Over the period of 1999-2017, adverse hydro-meteorological events in Jamaica have had an economic impact of approximately J\$127.95 billion or an average of 1.8 percent of the GDP per event.

In addition to the economic loss, the unpredictable risks posed by natural disasters in creating humanitarian crises and exacerbating vulnerabilities, cannot be overemphasized.

In 2019, humanitarian assistance was required by more persons than the United Nations office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) had forecasted, due in part to climate events. An estimated 9,000 families in The Bahamas, for example, received emergency relief, psychosocial support and financial assistance.

We express sincere gratitude to the ongoing support from the various components of the Movement, in particular, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), in providing support to those who are often the most vulnerable in societies.

Mental health impact of humanitarian crisis

Madam Chair. Jamaica acknowledges that humanitarian crises whether stemming from armed conflict or natural disasters, can have debilitating effects on the mental health of members of the population. The country continues to focus on reducing stigma and discrimination and other barriers to accessing healthcare services.

Jamaica respects the right of its citizens to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. This, we believe, are inextricably linked to achieving sustainable development, in particular SDG target 3.

Jamaica urges the international community to redouble its efforts to ensure that much needed support is provided towards the rehabilitation, treatment, and access to services by people suffering from traumatic experiences in humanitarian crises.

Trust in humanitarian action

Trust is an essential element of humanitarian action; without this, much needed assistance would not be able to reach those most in need. The strengthening of trust between actors should be encouraged to actively cooperate towards maintaining and building trust in principled humanitarian action.

In closing, the Jamaican delegation reiterates its commitment to the principles of international humanitarian law and to working with the relevant agencies across the Government and the Movement to ensure that respect for these rules is maintained.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

We complete the list of registered speakers and will now close the Voices from the Conference session. I want to thank the interpreters once again for the great job you have been doing. Thank you very much also for the volunteers. Thank you.

4.10 CLOSING PLENARY MEETING

Thursday, 12 December 2019

(3.30 pm)

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you to this final plenary of our Conference. As you know, yesterday we elected five new members of the Standing Commission. I would like to invite all the newly elected members of the Commission to join me on the podium.

The Commission had its first meeting last night, and Ms Mercedes Babé was elected as Chair of the Standing Commission and Mr George Weber as Vice-Chair. We congratulate the Chair and Vice-Chair and all of the newly elected members on their appointment and wish them luck in their work. They have the important task of being the trustees of the Conference for the next four years, and of working for the harmony of the Movement. I congratulate you once again. **[Applause]**

The first item for this final session is to receive the conference report from our General Rapporteur. Bas, you have the floor.

4.10.1 REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE 33RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN COMMISSIONS AND SPOTLIGHT SESSIONS

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE RAPPORTEUR

Mr Bas van Rossum, General Rapporteur of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair. It is my real pleasure to present to you the official report of the Conference.

More than 2,300 people have come together over the past three days – 170 states, 187 National Societies and 77 observers – a truly global engagement to discuss some of the most complex challenges our world faces.

A total of 155 statements were given during the Voices from the Conference, and 36 side events, 14 spotlight sessions and 21 RedTalks took place. Additionally, over 120 pledges have been submitted, and seven resolutions were deliberated and negotiated in the Drafting Committee under the tireless chairmanship of Ambassador Flores of Mexico. The numbers, they speak for themselves and represent the potential impact of our discussions.

Each day, a commission focused on one of the conference themes. On Tuesday, we explored international humanitarian law (IHL) and protecting people in armed conflict. Spotlight sessions were held on new technologies, influencing behaviour, voluntary reporting, different impacts of IHL on people and urban warfare. Participants debated on a range of legal, ethical and policy challenges, and identified key concepts that can help States and other actors to address them.

We saw how hard law is complemented by research, imagination, cutting-edge technology and, of course, people's actions and behaviour. We heard that new technologies are constantly changing the way armed conflicts are fought. This brings new types of risks for civilians and civilian infrastructure and poses questions about whether the existing rules of IHL and whether new ones are needed. In many cases, this raises profound ethical questions for society and for humanity. Yet, new technologies can also help limit human suffering in situations of armed conflict.

There are different sides to each of the challenge involved in ensuring better respect for IHL in today's world. Cyber warfare, autonomous weapons systems, artificial intelligence and machine learning could potentially lead

to new vulnerabilities and unpredictable consequences. We also heard how armed conflicts are increasingly fought in urban areas, with devastating effects on civilians. There was discussion of new ways to influence behaviour in armed conflict and the sometimes overlooked utility of voluntary reporting and the sharing of best practice. Although violations do continue to take place, it is equally important to remember the success stories and the critical role IHL plays.

On Wednesday, the second commission focused on shifting vulnerabilities. Experts and practitioners explored the overlapping impacts of the climate and environmental crisis, persistent conflicts, the threat and challenge of epidemics and pandemics, and high levels of inequality.

Spotlight sessions drew attention to the role of volunteers in building safe and inclusive communities, and in addressing humanitarian consequences of the climate crisis, migration and internal displacement.

We heard community health volunteers and workers highlighting how important it is to promote community health delivery within national health systems and to use their knowledge in designing and delivering our response.

Panellists also underlined that the impact of climate change is already here and is a real issue for our National Societies. As always, it is the poorest and most vulnerable people who suffer the most, whether they live in conflict-affected, developing or developed countries or small island States. And one message seemed to resonate: partnerships and collaboration, especially with local governments, are key in our collective response.

We heard how, within such partnerships, both States and the Movement see an urgent need to scale up responses to the mental health and psychosocial needs of people affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies and how that we must also “help the helpers” as our volunteers work under sometimes horrendous conditions.

As on Tuesday, many speakers highlighted the fact that, while digital technologies can improve our response and our work with affected populations, we also have a common responsibility to ensure that they are used ethically, without further exposing already vulnerable groups, to ensure nobody is left behind. This is because humanitarian action in the digital era is not about machines – it is about trust.

The spotlight session on migration highlighted how people who migrate in search of safety or better prospects often face unacceptable suffering. Too often, they are deprived of their humanitarian assistance and protection they need to ensure their safety, dignity and rights. Participants agreed that more must be done to respond to the vulnerabilities of migrants and to preserve the humanitarian space we operate in.

On Thursday, our final commission looked at trust in humanitarian action from three different perspectives: community engagement and accountability; integrity and risk sharing; and how we can create a more conducive environment for principled humanitarian action.

We were reminded that trust is strengthened through continuous improvement and that robust checks and balances are needed to ensure trust.

Trust is fragile and a two-way process, which means that understanding and being close to communities is essential. We also need to improve our listening skills. Trust is the most critical currency for the future of humanitarian action. It comes from humility and being truthful and transparent.

Yesterday, we States and Movement components elected five new members of the Standing Commission. It will be their role to ensure that these discussions do not just stay here in this room. I was glad to see the election of such a diverse group of people in terms of geographical and gender balance, but despite there being two excellent young candidates on the ballot, neither was elected. Nonetheless, young people will work with the elected Commission, and I hope that, in four years’ time, we continue to truly embrace diversity in all senses and position young people to make an active contribution.

Without doubt, the last days have shaped the conversation. However, a conversation is just an exchange of words, and what we need is action, your action.

Young people fear for what our future holds. My generation has inherited some of our world’s most complex challenges. And it is these challenges that will - and already are - defining our lives.

The climate crisis, mental health... it is all putting our lives at risk. We are relying on you, as the leaders in this room, to show courage, to show that we have discussed truly matters and goes beyond words. It is not about dry text in resolutions; it is about the lives of real people – and they count on us to care for them. Thank you very much.

4.10.2 CHAIRPERSON'S PAPER

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much, Bas. The report clearly shows us the richness of the Conference, the discussions we had, and the commitments set out in the pledges that we have made. These discussions raised some good questions. and that is the reason why I have decided to summarize them and the thoughts expressed in a Chair's Paper, which I would like to bring to your attention.

During these days together, we have painted a picture of a future which has many challenges. Yet we have identified solutions, commitments and collaboration to help us address these together, and so my reflections are about how can this International Conference can set the humanitarian agenda moving forwards: about **how we are shaping tomorrow**.

Creating an inclusive humanitarian environment.

Firstly, a clear message echoed throughout the Conference, from the opening ceremony and via multiple spotlight sessions, side events and Red Talks, was that our humanitarian workforce must reflect the diversity of the communities we work with. We need to have an inclusive humanitarian environment. This is not just because it is the right thing to do, but because it leads to more relevant and effective humanitarian outcomes.

Naturally, as a Movement deeply rooted in communities and with millions of volunteers who are from and part of them, we reflect this diversity. But we too have a way to go, and there are many exciting initiatives that are paving the way to strengthen this inclusive environment. Pledges on disability inclusion, promoting diversity and women's leadership are still open for all of us to make a commitment for change. The resolution on women's leadership is particularly important for the success of our broader humanitarian ecosystem.

Addressing “invisible” people and reaching the hardest to reach.

We have shed light on the suffering that often happens in silence. Mental health and psychosocial needs – the less visible – have become a natural part of the humanitarian debate. Many of us are taking important steps to scale up addressing these needs.

However, significantly more resources need to go into mental health and psychosocial support in humanitarian settings, and local community-based capacity requires a sustainable investment. We must move from promises to action and all invest financial, human and political capital in this agenda.

There are challenges in reaching, assisting and protecting people, “walk the last mile” to address the needs of migrants and displaced people, restoring family links and strengthening community health and epidemic and pandemic preparedness.

Digital transformation provides us with opportunities for increased reach, one example being effective cash transfer programmes. However, the digital transformation of the humanitarian sector is not just a matter of technologies and their adaptation; it is first and foremost about people. It is about maintaining trust in the digital age and ensuring that we keep people firmly at the centre of any technology conversations in a way that upholds our Fundamental Principles. We need to co-create new models of partnerships with the private sector and governments so that humanitarian actors can use technologies with the highest ethical principles and standards of security and privacy in place. Protecting personal data is about protecting people. Growing insecurity linked to the digital age and the pervasive threat of unauthorized access to personal data that require us to devote ourselves even more diligently to the protection of our Restoring Family Links activities.

Bringing IHL home.

A message I heard through the statements made during the Voices from the Conference session was that we all have a shared responsibility to make sure that international humanitarian law (IHL) is known and implemented in order to protect victims of armed conflict. States and National Societies can and must take concrete steps to implement IHL at the domestic level. In other words, “bring IHL home” – bring the ideas and solutions you have heard with you and take steps to implement the resolutions and pledges from this Conference. IHL is about protecting people – women, men, boys, girls. We need to take into account the different impact of armed



conflict and IHL on different people, and we need to think about effective – and all the times innovative – ways to ensure respect for IHL.

IHL is highly relevant in today's changing world – it matters and belongs to all of us. Seventy years ago, States came together to agree on the Geneva Conventions and, later, their Additional Protocols. Even in a changing world, these basic rules still apply and provide essential guidance for all parties to armed conflict. Of course, new realities also pose new challenges to IHL. However, what we have seen at this Conference is that IHL is up to these challenges, and there are examples of good practice in IHL implementation that the members of the Conference can share with each other.

Climate action today and for the future.

At this Conference, we have explored frightening future scenarios and current realities of the devastating humanitarian impact of extreme weather events, climate change and the multiplying effects of these developments. Many of us, while exploring these scenarios here at the Conference, are simultaneously dealing with the practical consequences in our home countries, cities and communities. The effects are here and now, and we must scale up and speed up actions urgently.

While I hear this alarming message loud and clear, I have also heard and experienced the strength and commitment to finding solutions together. For example, we will be developing effective disaster laws, policies, strategies and plans that take climate change into account and protect the people most at risk. Going forward, we need to connect the local and global levels to work together. As a Movement, we have a relevant role as a connector. I especially liked how we connected this International Conference's humanitarian community and the COP25 climate community through a lively side event. You can also join the open pledge on climate-smart humanitarian action to support transformative change across the sector and consider pledges for climate action in your own domestic contexts.

Trust local action and sharing the risk.

People's trust is our strongest currency and the best licence for us to operate. At the heart of trust is community engagement and accountability, and National Societies are the frontline of this engagement. The Conference identified the importance of States supporting the development of the National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society of their own country, in line with the Statutes of the Movement, and strengthening the auxiliary role. To this effect, we invite States and National Societies to contribute to strengthening the global network of strong National Societies by signing the model pledge available in the Conference pledge database.

I experienced a more sombre moment during the conference when I walked through the Humanitarian Village and saw the display of T-shirts representing more than 90 volunteers who have been killed on duty in the past four years. We need to protect our volunteers and ensure that they (or their families) are properly compensated in the event of injury or death while on duty. This is an initiative we are taking forward, and your support, which you can show, for example, by signing up to the different pledges on volunteer safety, is essential.

We, as a Movement, are taking active steps to ensure that we live up to the expectations of our partners and safeguard our work. I strongly believe that the Movement's integrity statement, adopted at the Council of Delegates, shows our commitment and will be implemented by all Movement components.

We need a continuous dialogue between States and the Movement to preserve principled humanitarian action in complex environments affected by sanctions and counterterrorism measures. Let us continue to talk about how we share risk to make sure we do not just transfer the risk.

Finally, let us maximize this privileged engagement with you – States, Red Cross and Red Crescent partners and observers – for the next Conference. I specifically choose the word 'engagement' because at this Conference I have seen many innovative ways for us to get closer to the humanitarian reality on the ground. I would like to finish by reflecting back to the beginning of the Conference when Genevan school children challenged us to "heal the world". I feel proud of the steps we have taken together, and let us continue to "Act today, shape tomorrow".

Thank you very much for your attention and support. **[Applause]**

I now have the pleasure to hand the floor to the Chair of the Drafting Committee, Ambassador Flores. She will present the outcomes of the Drafting Committee. Ambassador Flores, you have the floor.

4.10.3 REPORT OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE

H.E. Ms Maria Socorro Flores, Chair of the Drafting Committee

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is my great pleasure to report to the plenary of the 33rd International Conference on the work of the Drafting Committee. I am very grateful for the cooperation, patience and enthusiasm of the colleagues who contributed to the negotiations. I owe a special thanks to all the colleagues involved in the drafting committee secretariat for their tireless support during the negotiations this week.

The Drafting Committee was established by the Conference to revise and consolidate the resolutions submitted for adoption. These resolutions are the product of much energy, passion and determination to strengthen fundamental areas of work for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, together with the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions. They are a symbol that we are doing our best to act today, and shape tomorrow.

Many of you here will have been part of the evolution of these resolutions from their draft elements at the beginning of this year, through to the ‘zero drafts’ that we discussed together at the Preparatory Meeting here in the very same room in Geneva, at the end of June. The momentum and energy that followed from that meeting and throughout the intensive rounds of consultations led by the co-organizers, ICRC and IFRC, has been incredible, and I commend the co-organizers for their remarkable efforts.

Madam Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen. We had less than 48 hours to discuss and agree on seven proposed resolutions. We appreciated the ambition to have resolutions that are succinct and focused on the most prominent humanitarian concerns we face today. The issues addressed which enjoyed broad agreement from the delegations in the room were in the following areas: mental health and psychosocial needs; tackling epidemics and pandemics; women’s leadership in humanitarian action; restoring family links while respecting privacy, including as it relates to personal data protection; and on better national implementation of international humanitarian law. We also agreed on the resolution that shares the same slogan of this conference: ‘Act today, shape tomorrow’.

With regard to the resolution on ‘disaster laws and policies that leave no one behind’, there was broad agreement except for one paragraph.

Madam Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen. I wish to thank once again everyone involved for their incredible efforts. It was my greatest honour and privilege to be the Chair of the Drafting Committee for the 33rd International Conference.

4.10.4 ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much Ambassador Flores, and congratulations on your achievements. This was not an easy task, and we are very grateful for your work and your personal investment. Thank you very much.

We have now heard the reports on the overall work of the Conference and on the work of the Drafting Committee. The time has now come to invite you to adopt the resolutions. You have the revised versions on your desks, and you can also find them on the app.

I invite you to adopt them by acclamation, which means by consensus.

I invite you to adopt the first resolution: “Bringing IHL home: A road map for better national implementation of international humanitarian law”. Can we approve it? **[Applause]** Thank you.

I now turn to Resolution 2 as revised by the Drafting Committee: “Addressing mental health and psychosocial needs of people affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies.” Can we approve it? **[Applause]** Thank you very much, we have this amazing spirit going on in the Conference, thank you very much.

Resolution 3 as revised by the Drafting Committee: “Time to act: Tackling epidemics and pandemics together”. Can we please approve it? **[Applause]** Thank you.

Resolution 4: “Restoring Family Links while respecting privacy, including as it relates to personal data protection”. Can we approve it? **[Applause]** Thank you.

Resolution 6, “Women and leadership in the humanitarian action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”. Can we approve it? **[Applause]** I congratulate all the women leaders attending the Conference. Thank you very much.

Resolution 7: “Act today – shape tomorrow” Can we approve it? **[Applause]**

Resolution 5: “Disaster laws and policies that leave no one behind” Can we approve it? I see that the delegation of Iran wants to take the floor.

H.E. Mr Hamid Baghsee, Islamic Republic of Iran

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair. Let me begin by expressing my appreciation for all your efforts in steering the conference debate. I would like also to congratulate all the new members of the Commission.

My delegation would like to submit the following amendments to be added as PP3bis and OP7bis to the draft resolution. The two paragraphs have already been considered by the Drafting Committee, and I appreciate all the hard work and leadership shown by Ambassador Flores of Mexico. However, I would like to put them to the Plenary with some slight amendments, in the hope that they will be endorsed by the Conference. I will read out the two paragraphs.

PP3bis: “Expressing grave concern that barriers caused by economic sanctions hamper the timely and effective provision of humanitarian assistance and may be an important cause of the prolonged suffering of affected people.”

OP7bis: “Urges all States to refrain from enacting and implementing laws and policies which may hamper the timely and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, and response operations to the people affected by disasters.”

I thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much. Iran raises a motion to request the introduction of the paragraphs that were not included in the Drafting Committee. Can I please ask for the motions to be displayed on the screen?

Frank Mohrhauer, Assistant Secretary General of the Conference

(Original English)

For the interpreters, and because it is not translated on everybody’s table, I will read out the text again, so it will be interpreted orally via your headsets.

So, the first paragraph is PP3bis: “Expressing grave concern that barriers caused by economic sanctions hamper the timely and effective provision of humanitarian assistance and may be an important cause of the prolonged suffering of affected people.”

OP7bis: “Urges all States to refrain from enacting and implementing laws and policies which may impede the timely and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, and response operations to the people affected by disasters.”

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you, Frank. Do we agree to adopt this motion by consensus?

We have a delegation, the US, please, you have the floor.

Mr Richard Albright, Deputy Assistant Secretary, State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, United States of America

(Original English)

Madam Chair, the United States opposes these two amendments.

H.E. Mr Hussam Edin Aala, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Syrian Arab Republic in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair. I would first like to join in expressing our appreciation for the excellent work that has been done in the context of the Drafting Committee by Ambassador Socorro Flores. My delegation has expressed support for the two proposals just made by the distinguished government representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and we would like to reiterate our support for the inclusion of the two proposed paragraphs. Thank you.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much. I give the floor back to the delegation of Iran. Please, you have the floor.

H.E. Mr Hamid Baghsee, Islamic Republic of Iran

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I have nothing to add, except to call upon all member States to consider this proposal as a genuine effort to remove any barriers to the provision of humanitarian assistance to all people affected by disasters. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Julian Braithwaite CMG, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom in Geneva

(Original English)

Thank you very much, Chair, and first of all I would like to offer my congratulations to the new members of the Standing Commission and also to commend the excellent work of the Drafting Committee and of its Chair. On this issue, as my delegation stated throughout the negotiations, we are not able to agree to the language proposed by the distinguished delegation of Iran, and we do not believe that discussion of these issues belongs in this resolution. Thank you.

H.E. Mr Jorge Valero, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Venezuela in Geneva

(Original Spanish)

First of all, we would like to express our appreciation of the excellent work carried out by the Chair of the Drafting Committee and her endeavours to achieve consensus on all the resolutions considered in such a short period of time. I would also like to congratulate the new members of the Standing Commission elected yesterday. We wish to join in supporting the proposal, or rather two proposals, relating to the preambular section and the operative section, presented by the delegation of Iran. It seems perfectly clear to us that imposing sanctions on a country constitutes a serious obstacle to the exercise and enjoyment of human rights, in particular, in relation to international humanitarian law [sic]. We would therefore urge all the delegations, or at least the majority that do not agree with such punitive measures against nations, to support the proposal or proposals presented by the distinguished delegation of Iran.

Dr Guillermo González Sinapred, Ministro-Director, Nicaragua

(Original Spanish)

Madam Chair. We would like to join in congratulating Ambassador Flores on her excellent work. Without her wise leadership, we could very well still be debating these resolutions. The people of Nicaragua experienced



the repercussions of sanctions first-hand for a decade. They left a lasting mark which has given rise to a desire today for peace, harmony and solidarity with all nations. Precisely because of this milestone in our history, we would like to openly and firmly support the proposal presented by the Islamic Republic of Iran in relation to these two paragraphs. Thank you very much.

Mr Alan H. Kessel, Assistant Deputy Minister, Permanent Mission of Canada in Geneva

(Original English)

Madam Chair, first of all I would like to thank Ambassador Socorro Flores for the incredible work and diligence that she performed this week, under great pressure. And also to the members of the Standing Commission, congratulations on your election.

Canada sincerely regrets the politicization of this resolution. The International Conference is a non-political forum, where we have the opportunity to come together on urgent humanitarian issues of lifesaving importance. The preservation of the humanitarian character of this Conference is of utmost importance. The theme of this resolution is climate change and disaster resilience, and Canada does not see the relevance of this amendment to the resolution with sanctions language. There have been many hours of constructive dialogue on this resolution, and much progress made. Canada regrets that consensus could not be reached on this resolution. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr Juan Antonio Quintanilla Roman, Director, Division of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Cuba

(Original Spanish)

Thank you, Madam Chair. I apologize for interrupting, but I have been trying unsuccessfully for a while to take the floor but was unable to catch your attention from this corner of the room. I had raised my hand even before you gave the floor to Peru and to Canada, so I believe that I should also have the opportunity to speak and, with your permission, will do so briefly.

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would first like to thank the Ambassador of Mexico for the great effort she has put into guiding the work of the Drafting Committee over the past few days in an endeavour to achieve consensus. I would also like to congratulate the newly elected members of the Standing Commission. With regard to the proposals put forward by the distinguished Ambassador of Iran, I would like to state that Cuba firmly supports them and that it is pity, I have to say, that one delegation – we all know which one – should hold the work of this Conference hostage. This has happened with this resolution and with another one, in which a principle of international humanitarian law enshrined in the Geneva Conventions was disregarded, with the intransigent position of the delegation of the United States making it impossible to have it included in the resolution. My country is a clear example of how coercive unilateral measures can adversely affect humanitarian action in natural disasters and other emergencies. We therefore have all the moral authority in the world to support these amendments and urge all the members of the Movement to do so too. Thank you very much.

Mr Médard Gouaye, Secretary General, Central African Red Cross Society

(Original French)

Madame Chair. I apologize for insisting, but I wanted to speak on behalf of the Central African Red Cross Society in this Conference of Red Cross nations to say that, in Africa, it is our custom to settle our differences under the “palaver tree”, and I think that the problem raised, whether by Iran or Syria, cannot be sidestepped, especially as we are here together as a family. Remember what Dr Diallo said at the start about washing our dirty linen in private. I would therefore urge you all to listen to everyone. We live in a multicultural world. When someone is given the floor, let them speak and listen to what they have to say. I think that the solutions will come from us because we belong to the same family. Thank you.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much. It is a rule that the number of interventions before the vote must be limited. I have already allowed more interventions to be heard. We listened to two in favour and two against; that is the rule that we need to follow.

Now, please let us move on to the vote. As a general rule, it should be taken by a show of hands in accordance with Rule 20.4 of the Rules of Procedure of the Movement. To vote, delegates will use the electronic voting keypad system that we used yesterday. We will explain the procedure again; the Secretary General will go through the procedure. Thank you.

Now, we are voting on the amendments. Thank you very much.

The delegation of Iran is asking for the floor. You have the floor, please.

H.E. Mr Hamid Baghsee, Islamic Republic of Iran

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair. I do not think I asked for the vote, Madam Chair. If Canada, or any other delegation requested the vote, then that is for them to explain. My delegation did not ask for the vote. I simply submitted two paragraphs for consideration by the plenary. Thank you.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Can we adopt the amendments by consensus?

Mr Richard Albright, Deputy Assistant Secretary, State's Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, United States of America

(Original English)

There is not consensus in the room to adopt the two amendments.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

So we will vote on the resolution now. We need five minutes. Thank you.

[A SHORT BREAK]

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

In accordance with Rule 20, paragraph 4, if we do not have consensus, we go to the vote. Unless the delegation of Iran wants to withdraw their proposed amendments. Delegation of Iran, would you like to withdraw the amendments? If not, there is no consensus in the room, which means we have to put it to the vote.

Iran, you have the floor.

H.E. Hamid Baghsee, Islamic Republic of Iran

(Original English)

Madam Chair, I think some other delegation asked for the floor earlier. Thank you.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Marshall Islands, you have the floor.

Mr Guillaume Charron, Adviser, Marshall Islands

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair. Actually, the Marshall Islands, and in consultation with others, feel that while we sympathize and understand both points, and the effect that they have on the population of all the countries

that have supported the suggestions from Iran, climate change is something that is existential to us, and we would like to ask Iran whether, in the spirit of compromise, it would be willing to withdraw its suggestions. Thank you.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Iran, you have the floor.

H.E. Mr Hamid Baghsee, Islamic Republic of Iran

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair, and I thank our distinguished colleague from the Marshall Islands. We have listened carefully, Madam Chair, to all the comments, particularly from those delegations that oppose these two amendments, and I have learned by experience that certain States would be quick to label whatever they do not like as politicization. This is not politicization of this meeting, this is simply a matter of fact. And if this is not the place to raise the matter, where else would we have the opportunity to raise this issue of serious concern to many delegations?

We deeply regret, Madam Chair, that Iran's proposal, offered to address the negative impacts of unilateral sanctions on the enjoyment of humanitarian assistance by people in need, was blocked by a few delegations. It is appalling that unilateral sanctions, imposed as a manifestation of the extra-territorial application of domestic laws, continue to hamper the provision of humanitarian assistance and undermine all the Fundamental Principles of the Movement, in particular the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence and universality.

We call upon all responsible stakeholders, including the member States, the ICRC, the IFRC and the National Societies, to be extremely mindful of the ever-increasing pressure and limits imposed on the space for neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian action, as a result of unilateral economic and financial sanctions. They are grave breaches of international humanitarian law, and a betrayal of the power of humanity.

Madam Chair, we value this resolution as the embodiment of the concerns and aspirations of many countries and national movements regarding the effects of climate change on the humanitarian situation of their respective constituencies and as the outcome of tremendous efforts by all involved. We hope that it will further sharpen our collective vision and improve humanitarian work in the areas concerned, and we joined the consensus in a bid to further empower our commonly shared human values. We trust that except for a couple of delegations, no one else would approve of the economic sanctions that adversely affect the enjoyment of human rights by fellow human beings and that no one else approves of the unilateral sanctions that hamper the provision of humanitarian assistance and adversely affect the integrity, neutrality, independence and overall functioning of humanitarian organizations, the ICRC, the IFRC, and other components of the Movement.

I thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

If I understand you correctly, you want to withdraw the amendments?

H.E. Mr Hamid Baghsee, Islamic Republic of Iran

(Original English)

Madam Chair, out of respect, as I have said, we would not insist on keeping these two paragraphs, but it is our general feeling that, except for a few delegations, everyone agrees with the gist of these two paragraphs. Thank you.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you for your flexibility, Iran.

Now, can I ask that we adopt the resolution by consensus. Can we approve it? **[Applause]**

Thank you very much.

There is now one last item left on our agenda, the resolution on the Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements dated 28 November 2005 between Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (MoU).

I would like to invite Dr Moamena Kamel, Political Adviser to the Conference and Secretary General of the Egyptian Red Crescent Society to introduce the draft resolution on the MoU. As announced last night, the resolution was left for you in your pigeonholes and it is also available on the website and the app. Thank you.

Dr Moamena Kamel, Political Advisor of the Conference

(original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair. Ladies and gentlemen, your excellencies, good afternoon.

As Secretary General of the Egyptian Red Crescent Society, at the Movement's Council of Delegates, I had the responsibility to chair a working group of 15 National Societies. These National Societies represented all the different regions and had the task of reviewing this matter, based on the report of Mr Tickner, who is the Independent Monitor for this work and the implementation of the MoU, to define a way forwards and draft a resolution, taking into consideration the contributions of all the National Societies and the consensus that was reached, including Magen David Adom and the Palestine Red Crescent Society.

The resolution adopted by the Movement and the Council of Delegates seeks to strengthen Movement support for the implementation of the MoU and its monitoring system in order to make progress and have a successful MoU that can be legalized in the very near future. The conference resolution before you today takes note of and endorses the Council of Delegates' resolution, and the approach adopted by the Movement.

So, ladies and gentlemen, your Excellencies, Madam Chair, thank you for allowing me these few minutes to tell you what has happened in the working group. Thank you, thank you everybody.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much, Dr Kamel.

As has been the tradition at past International Conferences, I would like to ask you to approve this resolution by acclamation and I will open the floor after its adoption for statements. Can you approve it?

I have Syria, please.

H.E. Mr Hussam Edin Aala, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Syrian Arab Republic in Geneva

(Original English)

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like first to draw attention to the fact that the text of the resolution which the Conference is asked to adopt has not been formally distributed to members. Secondly, I would like to take the floor to make a statement to disassociate the Syrian Arab Republic from consensus on this draft resolution. Thank you.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

I wish to remind you that I announced last night that it had been distributed via the pigeonholes and that it was also available on the app. Thank you very much. I have taken due note of your concern and will give you the chance to explain yourself after the adoption of the resolution, as provided in Rule 19 paragraph 1. Thank you.

Can we now adopt the MoU resolution, by acclamation?

[Applause]

Now I give you the floor. Syria, thank you, you have the floor.

H.E. Mr Hussam Edin Aala, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Syrian Arab Republic in Geneva

(Original Arabic)

Thank you, Madam Chair. The draft resolution presented to the conference points clearly ongoing violation of its obligations within the legal framework. The declaration signed by the Head of the Israeli National Society and the oral statement which he delivered, and which was distributed by Switzerland on 30 September 2005 to the other contracting parties to the Geneva Conventions, provides for the recognition that the Palestinian territories and the occupied Syrian Golan Heights have been occupied territories since 1967 which fall within the jurisdiction of the Palestinian and Syrian National Societies; similarly, said declaration and statement provide for adherence to the Movement's rules of 1921.

Fourteen years after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Palestine Red Crescent, the occupying power continues to hinder its implementation and evade the pledges it made in this regard. It has also continued to use the emblem associated with its society on occupied Palestinian land, and in the occupied Syrian Golan. This reality requires the Conference to take appropriate measures to deal with the disregard being shown by the occupation authorities, and to guarantee their compliance with the legal obligations imposed upon them in their capacity as an occupying power. In view of the fact that the draft resolution presented to the Conference falls short of adopting such measures, the Syrian Arab Republic disassociates itself from the consensus on it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much. I would like to ask you to ensure that your statements, respect the Fundamental Principles. I now have Lebanon on the list for the floor. Lebanon, you have the floor.

H.E. Mr Salim Baddoura, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Lebanon in Geneva

(Original Arabic)

Madam Chair, Lebanon would like to congratulate you on the success of the conference and, of course, to congratulate Ambassador Flores on her skillful chairing of the Drafting Committee's work. However, we would like to draw attention to the fact that Lebanon's vote in favour of the resolution on the Memorandum of Understanding relating to the work of the Palestine Red Crescent grows out of our conviction of the importance of securing all possible forms of support for the Society in order for it to continue carrying out its humanitarian duties toward the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories. However, this vote in favour does not, by any means, indicate acceptance of some of the formulas adopted in the text of the resolution, particularly as it relates to borders and the characterization of the occupying power in keeping with the principles and foundations of international law and relevant United Nations Resolutions, in particular given that parts of Lebanese territory are still occupied by Israel. Thank you, Madam Chair.

H.E. Mr Hamid Baghsee, Islamic Republic of Iran

(Original English)

Madam Chair, my delegation would like to take the floor to register its reservation to this resolution. We all know that the humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory has been steadily deteriorating due to systematic violations of IHL by the occupying power and, unfortunately, the power of humanity has long been paralysed in dealing with the persistent suffering and the unrelenting pain of the Palestinians living under decades of occupation. This wound can only heal when the occupation ends. I thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms Nina Shoshana Ben-Ami, Director, Human Rights and International Organizations Department, Israel

(Original English)

Madam Chair. I would like to once again, congratulate the Mexican Ambassador for her excellent work and tireless work over the past few days to reach this precise moment, and I also congratulate the new members of the Standing Commission.

I think it is deplorable and unfortunate that, at the moment when we are trying to celebrate common humanity and the seven principles of the Movement, certain representatives have chosen to politicize this Conference, which has been conducted in good faith and with tremendous determination.

Finally, I would just say that the MoU that was reached between Israel and the Palestinians has brought about a better situation on the ground and provided important humanitarian aid to people in need, and for that it should be commended. Thank you, Madam Chair.

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4.11 CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you very much. The speakers list is now closed.

We have reached the end of this Conference, a successful end. I would like to thank you all for making this possible. We should not forget that this is the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

I want to thank the two Presidents present here, the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Mr Francesco Rocca, and President Peter Maurer of the ICRC. All the leaders of the National Societies, thank you for everything you are doing on the ground; you are doing an amazing job.

[Applause]

I would like to thank all the States and ask you to support your National Societies because, as I said in my opening remarks, strong National Societies make governments stronger.

I would also like to thank, this amazing team I was surrounded by: Frank, Kate, Ambassador Pfirter, and all the ambassadors involved in our Conference - Ambassador Flores, with the Drafting Committee. **[Applause]** Thank you all for the great support you have given me. I would not have been able to do it without you.

In addition, on behalf of all of us, I would like to thank all the interpreters for the great job you have done.

[Applause] And, of course, a big thank you to our volunteers. **[Applause]**

[CLOSING VIDEO SHOWN TO THE CONFERENCE]

H.E. Mr Didier Pfirter, Secretary General of the Conference

(Original English)

It is now my pleasure to invite you to join in a round of applause, but please wait for me to tell you who we are clapping for. For our wonderful Chair, Natia Loladze, her deputy, Ambassador Athaliah Molokomme, the other wonderful officers of the Conference - Ambassador Flores, who chaired the Drafting Committee, the Political Adviser, Ambassador Moamena Kamel, the great Chairs of the Commissions, Ambassador Carole Lanteri, Ambassador Nazhat Shameem Khan, Ms Delia Chatoor and Mr. George Kettaneh. And again, our Chair. **[Applause]**

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the Conference

(Original English)

Thank you so much. I cannot express what a great honour this was for me. I thank you all. Throughout these days, I have received encouragement from each one of you, and that really meant a lot to me and is what kept me going. So thank you very much for the support that you have given me.

And now I declare the 33rd International Conference closed, and I will see you in four years.

4.12 REPORTS OF THE WORK OF THE COMMISSIONS

4.12.1 REPORT FROM COMMISSION I

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW: PROTECTING PEOPLE IN ARMED CONFLICT

Context:

Recent years have seen many shocking and egregious violations of international humanitarian law (IHL). The capacity of IHL to protect the victims of today's complex armed conflicts has been questioned by some, and significant challenges lie ahead. Yet, in armed conflicts across the world, many belligerents are fighting by the rules. IHL continues to govern their behaviour, successfully protecting victims and restricting the way hostilities are conducted. Every day, the achievements of IHL – a wounded person allowed through a checkpoint, a child who receives the food they need, detainees able to send a message to their families, and many other examples – may not always be visible to the public. However, in every instance, they prove that IHL is respected. Created for the worst of times, IHL preserves the core of our common humanity. And respecting IHL prevents human suffering that would otherwise be felt not only years but possibly decades after conflicts have ended.

2019 marked the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which are universally ratified. The 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference) seized this opportune moment to reaffirm its commitment to IHL and to work towards its full application and implementation, especially at the national level. An entire day was dedicated to IHL through a commission, which included five spotlight sessions, as outlined below. The commission allowed participants to engage in positive and pragmatic discussions, and share, learn, explore, and have a meaningful dialogue about key areas related to respecting and implementing IHL. It set the scene for the subsequent days of discussion at the International Conference, given the connections to some of the International Conference's cross-cutting themes, such as digitalization and new technologies, the challenges of operating in urban contexts, and how different groups of people are vulnerable and impacted in different ways. Many of the topics discussed throughout the commission also stemmed from the quadrennial report by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on IHL and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts.

Overall objectives of the Commission:

The aim of the commission and its spotlight sessions was to foster important and engaging conversations on key issues related to IHL and armed conflicts today, with a focus on the protection of people. An opening plenary set the scene for the day and was followed by five spotlight sessions. A closing plenary session was held at the end of the day, which served to consolidate the discussions and highlight connections with themes to be discussed throughout the rest of the International Conference, and with the broader theme of trust in humanitarian action.

Chair of the Commission: H.E. Ms Carole Lanteri, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Monaco to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

Rapporteur for the Commission: Mr Adriano Iaria, youth representative, Italian Red Cross

Format of the Commission:

The Commission on 'International humanitarian law: protecting people in armed conflict' consisted of two main plenaries (opening and closing) and five spotlight sessions on the following topics:

- Influencing behaviour to enhance respect for IHL
- IHL: Different people, different impacts
- Preventing and responding to the consequences of urban warfare
- IHL and new technologies
- Voluntary reporting and sharing of good practices

SUMMARY OF SPOTLIGHT SESSIONS

1. INFLUENCING BEHAVIOUR TO ENHANCE RESPECT FOR IHL

Date and time: Tuesday 10 December, 11:30 am–1:00 pm

Objective of the spotlight session:

- The aim was to showcase some of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's latest initiatives aimed at understanding the sources of influence on behaviour, how these sources can be utilized, and how we can measure their effectiveness in promoting respect for IHL.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

- It was stressed that IHL norms play a vital role in easing suffering caused by armed conflict.
- It is important to reiterate the role and purpose of IHL to the public, and to armed forces and armed groups. Using social references, including popular culture, can improve broad understanding of IHL.
- Various ways to measure different sources of influence on the behaviour of individuals and groups were explained. There is a need to invest more energy in influencing behaviour and in measuring the impact of our strategies or tools of influence.
- The session highlighted how technology, through tools such as virtual reality simulations, offers new potential to promote the uptake and retention of IHL rules.

2. IHL: DIFFERENT PEOPLE, DIFFERENT IMPACTS

Date and time: Tuesday 10 December, 11:30am–1:00pm

Objective of the spotlight session:

- The aim was to promote a shared understanding that civilians often experience armed conflict in different ways (sometimes dramatically so) depending on who they are (e.g. that the impact is different for different women, men, girls and boys). These different experiences may in turn have implications for how IHL could be better implemented. Three examples were used to illustrate this message.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

- IHL stipulates that the wounded and sick must receive the medical care required by their condition without adverse distinction. In different ways in different contexts, gender may influence how women, men, girls and boys access health care. The discussion highlighted the need to understand different barriers to access, and to ensure everyone receives the care they require.
- Boys and girls can have different experiences of being recruited and used by armed forces and armed groups, depending on the context (for example, girls might be used for domestic or sexual purposes while boys are recruited as “fighters”). Consequently, what they need to reintegrate into the community can also be different (e.g. boys and girls can face different stigmas). Participants discussed States' obligation to support the reintegration of children associated with armed groups, and how States could implement these obligations in different ways depending on the needs of the boy or girl.
- Participants also underlined the need for more in-depth research and analysis across a variety of contexts in order to better understand the different impacts armed conflict can have on men, women, boys and girls.
- Another key point was that evidence suggests that algorithms can sometimes be more inaccurate when they deal with darker shades of skin, and with women. The implications for machines that use such algorithms in armed conflict need to be carefully considered.

3. PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO THE CONSEQUENCES OF URBAN WARFARE

Date and time: Tuesday 10 December, 11:30am–1:00pm

Objective of the spotlight session:

- The overarching aim of this session was to highlight the need to address the causes and consequences of urban warfare. It sought to raise awareness of the direct and indirect humanitarian consequences of urban warfare and provide an overview of the key causes of civilian harm.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

- The discussions centred on the fact that armed conflicts are increasingly fought in urban areas, and thus have devastating effects on the civilian population. When war is waged in urban areas, respect for IHL is all the more challenging, and critical, owing to the blurring of the civilian population and military objectives. In particular, the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects, especially in cities, results in a high number of civilian casualties and entails a high risk of indiscriminate effects.
- It was also emphasized that, because cities are dependent on a complex web of interconnected services, when critical infrastructure is damaged, the resulting disruption in essential services can trigger a domino effect causing even more suffering to the civilian population.
- The issue of weapon contamination was also highlighted (i.e. landmines, improvised explosive devices, unexploded and abandoned ordnance). It endangers civilian populations and hinders humanitarian operations during hostilities and after they have ended.
- Challenges related to displacement were also discussed: people displaced due to the effects of urban warfare are often exposed to harsh living conditions and to additional or heightened risks.
- The Movement's humanitarian activities to protect and assist urban populations are often hampered by parties to conflict denying access, the lack of safety for staff and volunteers, and the lack of adequate resources to address the increasing needs of the population.
- These issues and the issue of capacities need to be addressed. The suggestion was made to focus on strengthening National Societies' operational capacity to respond to the humanitarian consequences of urban warfare.

4. IHL AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Date and time: Tuesday 10 December, 2:30–4:00 pm

Objective of the spotlight session:

- This session sought to build awareness among the International Conference participants of the range of legal, ethical, societal and policy challenges posed by new technologies of warfare.
- It also aimed at identifying key concepts that can help States and other participants address these technologies in ways that reduce potential human suffering and ensure compliance with and respect for the rules and principles of IHL.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

New technologies of warfare are constantly changing the way armed conflicts are fought. This introduces new types of risks for civilians and civilian infrastructure, raises novel questions about how existing rules of IHL apply and whether new ones are needed, and, in many instances asks profound ethical questions for society and for humanity.

Cyber warfare, autonomous weapon systems and military applications of artificial intelligence and machine learning create the potential, among other things, for increasingly remote warfare, new vulnerabilities and unpredictable consequences for civilians and civilian infrastructure, decreasing space for human control and judgement, and increasing the speed of warfare. The potential human costs and the way IHL regulates these digital technologies when used as means and methods in armed conflict must continue to be discussed.

New digital technologies can also help limit human suffering in situations of armed conflict.

5. VOLUNTARY REPORTING AND SHARING OF GOOD PRACTICES

Date and time: Tuesday 10 December, 2:30–4:00pm

Objective of the spotlight session:

- The aim of this session was to share examples, inspiration, practical support and tools to help States start or improve their voluntary reporting on IHL obligations and to encourage more voluntary reporting from States and regional organizations.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

- It was explained that voluntary reporting is undertaken internally by a State and can be presented internally or made public. It may be done through a national IHL committee or cross-government involvement, and the National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society may be involved or provide support.
- Participants learned about the process for drafting voluntary reports and about the resources within government that are necessary for a comprehensive report.
- The session emphasized that voluntary reporting is a tool through which States can assess their legislation implementing IHL, for example on war crimes, marking protected sites, protecting health-care facilities and workers, and protecting the emblem. It is also an opportunity for States to identify the gaps that it can fill with better implementation (for example, through legislation, administrative procedures, military manuals or training or awareness-raising).
- The voluntary reporting process may also be seen as an opportunity to strengthen the relationship between the government and the Movement through cooperation. National Societies and their governments were encouraged to begin by discussing their collaboration on voluntary reports.
- States were encouraged to then consider whether it would be best to report individually or as a regional group to ensure that good practices on IHL implementation were shared.
- During the session, States and regional organizations presented the voluntary reports they had already produced and shared their experience on why they draft them. Participants created pitches for their governments on why voluntary reporting on IHL should be prioritized, with the aim of using them when promoting or advancing this work later on.
- The ICRC and the panellists from States, National Societies and regional organizations offered their assistance to those wishing to draft their own report.

ANNEX

List of Speakers and facilitators Commission I - IHL: Protecting people in armed conflict

Chair: H.E. Ms Carole Lanteri, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Monaco,

Rapporteur: Mr Adriano Iaria, youth representative, Italian Red Cross

Opening Plenary

- Ms Helen Durham, Law and Policy Director, ICRC
- Ms Margot Walström, Former Swedish Foreign Minister, Sweden
- Ms Cosmotina Jarret, Judge at the Constitutional Court, Sierra Leone
- Mr Dapo Akande, Professor in International Law at Oxford University
- Ms Nuha Shamsam, Assistant Head of Sub-Delegation, Yemen, ICRC

Closing Plenary

- Ms Helen Durham, Director Law and Policy, ICRC
- Mr Naseer Shamma, Maestro and Oud Master, Iraq

Spotlight Session: Influencing Behavior to enhance respect for IHL

- Ms Eva Svoboda, Deputy Director of Law and Policy, ICRC
- Ms Yvette Zegenhagen, National IHL Manager, Australian Red Cross
- Ms Fiona Terry, Head of the Centre for Operational Research and Experience, ICRC
- Ms Rebeka Johnson, Research Advisor, Communication Analytics
- Ms Nan Buzard, Head of Innovation, ICRC
- Mr Juerg Kesselring, Neurologist
- Mr Abdulkadir Ibrahim Haji, Director of Organisational Development & Communication, Somali Red Crescent

Spotlight Session: IHL and New Technologies

- Mr Amandeep Singh Gill, Project Lead, I-DAIR and Senior Fellow, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies
- Ms Cordula Droege, Chief Legal Officer, ICRC
- Mr Neil Davison, Science and Policy Advisor, ICRC
- Mr Li Peng, Deputy Secretary General of CACTA
- Ms Marina Krotofil, BASF-German company (Chemistry solutions)

Spotlight Session: IHL Different People, Different Impact

- **Moderator:** Ms Helen Durham, Law and Policy Director, ICRC
- Col. Jerry Lane, Irish Defence Forces Legal Services, Ireland
- Prof. Noel Sharkey, Expert on Gender & AI, University of Sheffield
- Mr Bilal Sougou, Child Protection Coordinator, Office of Emergency Programmes, UNICEF
- Ms Margareta Wahlström, President, Swedish Red Cross
- Dr Judith Carvajal de Álvarez, President Colombian Red Cross

Spotlight session: Voluntary Reporting and Sharing of Good Practices

- Ms Jasmine Moussa, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Egypt in Geneva
- Ms Kelisiana Thynne, Legal Adviser, Advisory Services, ICRC
- Mr Andrew Murdoch, Legal Director, United Kingdom
- Mr Olatunde Olayemi, ECOWAS
- Mr Alexander Basalyga, Secretary of the NCIHL, Belarus
- Mr Michael Meyer, Head of International Law, British Red Cross

Spotlight Session: Preventing and Responding to the Consequences of Urban Warfare

- Mr Michael Talhami, Adviser, WATHAB, ICRC
- Mr Robert Mood, President of Norwegian Red Cross
- Mr Nilab Mobarez, SG of the Afghan Red Crescent
- Mr Mohamed Mohamed, Executive Director of Somali Red Crescent
- Ms Reka Dobri, Policy Officer, DG ECHO
- Ms Maya Brehm, Adviser Article 36

4.12.2 REPORT FROM COMMISSION II

SHIFTING VULNERABILITIES

Context:

The challenges of the 21st century are complex and interrelated. Fast-moving shifts in technology, climate, population movements, demography and urbanization are shaping the world we live in, with unavoidable impacts for millions of people. These impacts bring new opportunities but also create or exacerbate existing vulnerabilities. The climate crisis, protracted armed conflicts, and natural and health-related disasters are each contributing to increases in migration and internal displacement – all at a time when preserving the space for impartial, neutral and independent humanitarian action is increasingly being challenged. These trends are fast changing the fabric of societies and the humanitarian landscape, to the extent that our traditional assumptions and ways of working might not be effective in addressing the challenges presented. Faced with this rapidly changing environment, new approaches are needed to meet the challenges. The presence of National Societies at the community level, coupled with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's (Movement) global reach, allows us to better understand, prevent, prepare and respond to these shifting vulnerabilities. Together with States, the Movement and their humanitarian partners have a responsibility to use their reach and resources effectively. To do this, we must listen, think and act differently, and be open to learning and willing to adapt along the way.

Overall objectives of the Commission:

This Commission sought to highlight the interconnectedness and cross-cutting nature of new and emerging vulnerabilities (hence the title “Shifting vulnerabilities”), and to explore how these global shifts are impacting the lives of affected people. It also sought to provide a platform to discuss ways in which the global humanitarian community – and the Movement in particular – can strengthen their efforts and work better together to prevent, prepare and eventually respond to the increasing needs.

Co-chairs of the Commission: Ms Delia Chatoor, Vice-President of the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society, and H.E. Nazhat Shameem Khan, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Fiji to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

Rapporteur for the Commission: Mr Rakibul Alam, Youth Representative, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society

Format of the Commission:

The Commission on shifting vulnerabilities consisted of two main plenaries (opening and closing) and six spotlight sessions on the following topics:

- The role of volunteers in community health
- Addressing the humanitarian consequences of the climate crisis
- Building safe and inclusive urban communities through urban humanitarian action
- Scaling up mental health and psychosocial support for emergency-affected populations
- Humanitarian action in the digital era
- Migration and internal displacement: upholding humanity.

SUMMARY OF SPOTLIGHT SESSIONS

1. THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS IN COMMUNITY HEALTH

Date and time: Wednesday 11 December 2019, 10:30am–12:30pm

Objectives of the spotlight session:

- Create a shared understanding of: the role of community health in reaching the last-mile population; the importance of long-term and sustained engagement with communities as being crucial for prevention, preparedness, response and recovery work; the existing competencies and knowledge of communities; and the critical requirements needed in this area for achieving universal health coverage (UHC) and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Encourage action through the examples of real stories that demonstrate the potential of community health to meet the needs of the most marginalized, and the valuable role of community health workers (CHWs), including volunteers.
- Drive commitments from the audience to support the formal recognition of RCRC volunteers as part of national human resource systems for health; to sustain the delivery of community-led, people-centred interventions during the life continuum; and to ensure the role for communities in epidemic response is strengthened and rooted in a longer-term sustainable development agenda.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

- CHWs, including volunteers, should be recognized as equal partners and active participants in community health work. They are uniquely placed to help overcome the limited capacity and shortage of human resources that many countries face in prevention, preparedness and response, and possess a contextual knowledge that is of critical importance in addressing health care needs in a way that is acceptable to communities.
- CHWs, including volunteers, should be formally recognized as part of national human resource systems for health delivery.
- In order to build the trust of communities and for volunteers to be able to reach those who are left behind, meaningful engagement and participation is required. It is therefore essential to expand partnerships with local actors, including the most vulnerable, to ensure trust and improve access to health care.
- It is important to harmonize the efforts of CHWs, including Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers and other actors, in providing community health and promote community health delivery as an integral part of national health systems. This can happen only by strengthening the link between public health policies, communities and health systems, and by promoting integrated community-based approaches to prevention, preparedness, response and recovery work.
- It will also be important to establishing a conversation with State actors to create a shared understanding of how community health is vital to the achievement of UHC and the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. ADDRESSING THE HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS

Date and time: Wednesday 11 December 2019, 10:30am–12:30pm

Objectives of the spotlight session:

- Create a shared understanding of the humanitarian impacts of climate change.
- Draw attention to some of the key challenges and opportunities to scale up action to address these humanitarian impacts.
- Create a sense of what needs to be done to scale up collaborative action at all levels, and to address rising risks, reduce vulnerability and build resilience.
- Foster commitment to deliver what is needed to address these impacts.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

- The impacts of climate change are here and now – it is not an issue of the future. It was highlighted that this is an everyday and real issue for many National Societies that are dealing with a range of impacts – and not just in the communities they work with, but within their own families and networks. It was noted that the increased frequency, intensity and unpredictability of the climate and extreme weather events, however, are not just the result of climate change, but also the result of how we manage risks and take development decisions.
- Vulnerabilities are evolving and are not static. The participants discussed how the climate crisis is having the greatest impact on the poorest and most vulnerable and how the impacts are different for each context.
- We need to ground our actions in the interests of communities, as well as in scientific evidence, given that historical experience is no longer enough to understand future risks. This will require working with communities, understanding how they interpret and manage risks, and making the most of traditional knowledge and combining that with scientific knowledge (including forecasts of climate and weather events).
- It was also recognized that there is already important work being undertaken to address climate risks, including steps by States and National Societies alike (including joint initiatives). The issue now, however, is to bring these efforts to the scale and the pace we need. Participants were invited to sign up to an open pledge on climate action and to consider submitting their own pledges to commit to scaled-up climate action in their own domestic contexts.

3. BUILDING SAFE AND INCLUSIVE URBAN COMMUNITIES THROUGH URBAN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Date and time: Wednesday 11 December 2019, 10:30am–12:30pm

Objectives of the spotlight session:

- Create an understanding of the global context of rapid and unplanned urbanization.
- Create a sense of what the Movement needs to do in order to respond better to humanitarian needs in urban settings.
- Strengthen collaboration between Movement actors, States, local authorities and communities.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

- Participants acknowledged that the Movement needs to rethink its role and actions in order to remain relevant in this rapidly changing context. Urbanization is defining the future, with an increasing number of people moving to and living in cities, many of whom are living in dire situations. Poverty, marginalization and inequality render them increasingly vulnerable. Climate change, insufficient basic services, overwhelmed capacities, warfare and violence increasingly play out in cities. The way that current urbanization is unfolding and the pace at which it is doing so, particularly in developing countries, creates multiple needs that will continue to shape the operational context for all Movement components – one which we need to adapt to remain relevant and effective.
- There was also the realization that urban vulnerabilities require long-term coordinated action and that partnerships are essential to achieve such action, especially with local governments. The scale, density and complexity of urban areas is enormous, and the many issues that render people vulnerable need to be addressed simultaneously if this action is to be effective. This requires the involvement of many partners. The Movement can use not only its formal assets (National Societies' auxiliary role and international humanitarian law), but also the trust bestowed on it by communities and public authorities to be a convening partner in these contexts.
- Participants also highlighted the importance of being there before, during and after crises – and the need to understand how various trends impact communities differently. At the same time, communities should remain at the centre; sustainability will be poor if communities are not fully and

meaningfully involved because, from their perspective, there is no distinction between humanitarian and development needs.

- Finally, the discussions emphasized that the Movement is a vital partner in building safe and resilient urban communities. The Movement, through its National Societies, is a permanent, local actor and this enables long-term actions. Having this local perspective is fundamental when it comes to ensuring trust in the organization. This trust is also something that can be built upon and harnessed in order to engage with communities or groups which are difficult to reach (for example marginalized and isolated populations and gangs).

4. SCALING UP MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FOR EMERGENCY-AFFECTED POPULATIONS

Date and time: Wednesday 11 December 2019, 2:30–4:30pm

Objectives of the spotlight session:

- Create a collective sense of urgency to motivate States, the Movement components and other concerned actors to intensify their efforts in mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS).
- Highlight the consequences of the stigma surrounding mental health.
- Identify different avenues to strengthen the mental health and psychosocial well-being of people affected by emergencies.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

- One key point that was emphasized during discussions is that mental health affects everyone. A poll conducted during the session showed that nine out of ten participants know someone close to them with mental health needs. The narrative about mental health must therefore change. MHPSS should not be considered a luxury but a basic humanitarian necessity. Providing MHPSS is relevant to affected people and is key for gaining their trust.
- Early and sustained MHPSS for emergency-affected populations can be ensured by:
 - ⊙ increasing investments in local and community-based resources, such as Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers and staff, teachers and other local professionals, as well as through investments in formal health systems
 - ⊙ increasing knowledge about people's diverse mental health and psychosocial needs and the required responses, including basic psychosocial support through to specialized mental healthcare
 - ⊙ building on existing experiences and knowledge, and ensuring the people affected are included
 - ⊙ integrating MHPSS in all humanitarian assessments and responses; the education sector is particularly important
 - ⊙ bridging short-term interventions with long-term investments in capacity-building and systems (bridging the humanitarian–development nexus)
 - ⊙ ensuring cooperation and complementarity, also strengthening the workforce
 - ⊙ increasing the status of MHPSS in humanitarian action – leading by example
 - ⊙ caring for the staff and volunteers responding to humanitarian needs and considering this as critical for the quality and sustainability of all humanitarian responses
 - ⊙ increasing resources for MHPSS during an emergency response.
- Finally, to address the stigma associated with mental health, participants discussed the importance of talking openly about mental health and psychosocial needs. Role models are important in communities, as well as within States and organizations, learning from the experiences of anti-stigma work in relation to HIV and TB, and showing positive examples of recovery.

5. HUMANITARIAN ACTION IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Date and time: Wednesday 11 December 2019, 2:30–4:30pm

Objectives of the spotlight session:

- Explain what digitalization is and to seek buy-in on the importance of digital transformation in humanitarian action.
- Demonstrate the impact and the relevance of adopting a principled approach in the digital era.
- Explore *how* to adopt a principled approach in the digital era, with an emphasis on issues of digital responsibility, data protection, digital inclusion and digital literacy.
- Facilitate an exchange of experience related to the use of digital technology and encourage peer-to-peer support within the Movement, as well as with States and external partners, where relevant.
- Explore potential Movement-wide solutions for further input and approval.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

- The spotlight session highlighted that digital transformation is not an option and is already happening across the Movement. Communities and the Movement are already in various stages of digital transformation and the Movement is committed to embracing this in a responsible manner, as illustrated with the development of a digital pledge.
- While digital technologies help improve the Movement's work with affected people, there is also a common responsibility to ensure that these technologies are used in a way that does not further expose people to risk, create additional harm or leave anyone behind. For this reason, the Movement, States, other humanitarian actors and the private sector must come together to find ways of using technologies while respecting the Fundamental Principles.
- It was also emphasized that there needs to be a process of co-creation, where the Movement – together with States and key partners (including the private sector) – develop partnerships that help the Movement to use technologies while ensuring that the highest ethical principles and standards of security and privacy are adhered to.

6. MIGRATION AND INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT: UPHOLDING HUMANITY

Date and time: Wednesday 11 December 2019, 2:30–4:30pm

Objectives of the spotlight session:

- Create a sense of urgency regarding the unaddressed needs of vulnerable migrants and internally displaced people (IDPs).
- Call for the strengthening of coordinated efforts by States and the Movement to improve protection and assistance for these populations and secure commitment for the adoption of the respective model pledges.
- With regard to internal displacement, this spotlight session sought to call for further engagement in supporting durable solutions for IDPs, based on their voluntary, safe and dignified choices, and in responding to the needs of urban IDPs outside camps and those of their host communities.
- With regard to migration, this spotlight session sought to call for the preservation of humanitarian space in the field of migration as necessary to protect migrants from death, disappearance, family separation and violations of their rights along the entire migratory route, and to guarantee them access to essential services irrespective of their status.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

On internal displacement:

- This session highlighted that the global scale and gravity of internal displacement-related needs speaks of the collective failure to prevent, address and reduce internal displacement. The specific predicament of IDPs must be recognized and addressed as a matter of priority, without linking humanitarian responses to containment agendas, and while preserving people's rights to seek and enjoy asylum in other countries.

- It also recognized that internal displacement is increasingly urban. Effective complementarity, coordination and cooperation between authorities, humanitarian and development actors and other stakeholders must be ensured to better understand and improve responses to the needs of people displaced in cities outside camps and those of their host communities.
- Finally, the session demonstrated that the Movement components and States are committed to working together to help IDPs have a dignified life and achieve a durable solution according to their priorities and intentions, by supporting voluntary return in safety and dignity and by creating concrete alternatives, such as local integration in cities, for those who cannot or do not wish to return.

On migration:

- It was acknowledged that across the globe, people who migrate in search of safety or better prospects often face unacceptable suffering. Too often, they are deprived of the humanitarian assistance and protection they need to ensure their safety, dignity and rights. It was emphasized that more must be done to respond to the plight of vulnerable migrants and, to this end, to maintain the required humanitarian space.
- Participants were reminded of the commitment undertaken at the 31st International Conference in 2011 (resolution 3), which stated the commitment of conference members to continue to work together to meet the humanitarian needs of migrants and uphold their rights, and – more specifically for refugees – to support their integration and self-reliance.
- Participants reiterated their firm belief in the relevance of the Fundamental Principles to guide the Movement’s action in favour of vulnerable migrants, and committed to work together to preserve humanitarian space, with the aim of ensuring that the provision of humanitarian assistance and services to migrants is never criminalized.
- They also emphasized the importance of refraining from political instrumentalization in the implementation of migration policies, including through funding and data requests, in order to maintain the trust between migrants and the Movement, and to support the ICRC’s and the IFRC’s dialogue with States and donors on the issue, and to refer the matter to the 34th International Conference in 2023.

ANNEX

List of Speakers and Facilitators

Commission II - Shifting Vulnerabilities

- Co-Chair: Ms Delia Chatoor, Vice President, Trinidad & Tobago Red Cross
- Co-Chair: H.E. Nazhat Shameem Khan, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Fiji
- Rapporteur: Mr Rabikul Alam, Youth Representative, Bangladesh Red Crescent

Opening Plenary

- Ms Aishath Noora Mohamed, Secretary General, Maldives Red Crescent
- Ms Sigrid Kaag, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Netherlands
- Ms Judy Slatyer, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Red Cross
- Mr. Erki Kodar, Undersecretary on Legal & Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Estonia
- Ms Aynur Kadihasanoglu, Advisor, Urban Disaster Risks, IFRC
- Ms Cecile Leonie Memento Akame, President, Cameroon Red Cross

Closing Plenary

- Ms Monique Parlat, ECHO Director-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection
- Ms Nohémie Mawaka, Founder, StatsCongo
- H.E. Ambassador Tariq Ali Al-Ansari, Director of International Cooperation Department, Qatar
- Dr Michael Ryan, Executive Director, WHO

Spotlight Session: Addressing the Humanitarian Consequences of the Climate Crisis

- Ms Veronica Pedrosa, independent journalist, Philippines
- Mr Maaten Van Aalst, Director, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre

- Mr Martin Tofinga, President, Kiribati Red Cross Society
- Mr Mamadou M. Traoré, Secretary General, Mali Red Cross
- Ms Claudia Herrera Nekgar, Executive Secretary of CEPREDENAC, Central America
- H.E. Mr Shameem Ahsan, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Bangladesh in Geneva
- Ms Margareta Wahlström, President, Swedish Red Cross

Spotlight Session: The Role of Volunteers in Community Health

- Aishath Noora Mohamed, SG Maldives Red Crescent
- Dr Santosh Kumar Giri - Community Activist, India
- Mr Jacques Katshitshi, Secretary General, DRC Red Cross
- Miss Tarika Wongsinsirikul, Deputy Director, The Thai Red Cross Youth Bureau
- Sabina Ibraimova Deputy Director General/Head of Health Department, Kyrgyzstan Red Crescent
- Mr. Cosmas Sakala, Health and Care Manager, Zambia Red Cross
- Ms. Ann Clancy, Chief of Staff, Canadian Red Cross
- Olivia Tulloch, PhD, CEO, Anthrologica

Spotlight Session: Building Safe and Inclusive Urban Communities Through Urban Humanitarian Action

- Mr Jagan Chapagain, Under Secretary General, Operations, IFRC
- Ms Julie Arrighi, Climate Advisor, American Red Cross
- Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat
- Ms. Maryke van Staden, Director of the Bonn Center for Local Climate Action and Reporting, ICLEI
- Dr. Asha Mohammed, Secretary General, Kenya Red Cross Society
- Dr. Hugo Slim, Head of Policy, ICRC

Spotlight Session: Humanitarian Action in the Digital Era

- Mr Erki Kodar, Undersecretary on Legal and Consular Affairs, Estonia
- Mr Samar Abou Jaoudeh, Planning Unit Coordinator, Lebanese Red Cross
- Ms Rosie Slater-Carr, Chief Information Officer, British Red Cross
- Ms Sandy Kpawuru, Secretary General, Sierra Leone Red Cross
- Ms Anahi Ayala, former Director for humanitarian programs, Internews
- Mr Ben Ramalingam, Director, Global Alliance for Learning on Adaptation and Management, Overseas Development Institute (ODI)
- Mr Nathaniel Raymond, Yale University

Spotlight Session: Scaling Up Mental Health and Psychosocial Support for Emergency Affected Populations

- Mr Yves Daccord, Director General
- Ms Sigrid Kaag, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, the Netherlands
- Mr Hanna Kaade, German RC volunteer
- Ms Terez Curry, SG of Bahamas Red Cross
- Mr Jean Urbain Zoa, SG, Cameroon Red Cross
- Ms Amal Emam, Advisor Egyptian Red Crescent
- Mr Mahesh Gunasekar, SG, Sri Lanka Red Cross
- Ms Milena Osorio, MHPSS Project Coordinator

Spotlight Session: Migration and Internal Displacement: Upholding Humanity

- Ms Sorcha O'Callaghan, Head of Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute
- Ms Cecile Leonie Mendo Akame, President, Cameroon Red Cross

4.12.3 REPORT FROM COMMISSION III

TRUST IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Context:

Trust is the foundation of humanitarian action. Access, support and respect for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's mission depends on the trust of the people and communities we serve, of the relevant authorities and of the general public. Trust in humanitarian action was a central theme on the agenda of the 33rd International Conference, owing to the declining trust in institutions and governments, an increase in public scrutiny, and calls for stronger integrity and accountability. This Commission sought to explore how the components of the Movement could work together with States to maintain and strengthen trust in principled humanitarian action. It provided a platform for an open and honest discussion about the respective responsibilities of Movement actors and States, resulting expectations and how to achieve a balance between mitigating the risks that are inherent to humanitarian action and the need to share residual risks. The topics of trust, accountability and integrity featured on the agendas of the Statutory Meetings and acted as a common thread connecting the Council of Delegates, the 33rd International Conference, and the IFRC's General Assembly.

The Trust Commission of the 33rd International Conference served to remind participants that the issue of trust in humanitarian action has many sides. Well-known institutions are being challenged and, as expectations change, accountability is increasingly being demanded and trust no longer a "given". The multilateral system is under increasing strain, and without trust, people may default to a narrower perspective of the world. A lack of trust can also lead to more self-centred and violent behaviour. Trust is something subjective, which can mobilize both rational and emotional dimensions. To build trust, institutions need to reassure others of their ability, integrity, dependability and purpose. They need to critically review their behaviour and ask where the focus lies: with themselves, with others, or with both? Whose interests are coming first? Trust is a *consequence* of good behaviour, not an ingredient, and while it takes decades to build, it can vanish overnight.¹ This Commission emphasized the fact that access to populations affected by armed conflict, disasters or crises requires significant trust in impartial humanitarian action by *all* parties. Trust is both a fragile and a two-way process, which means that understanding and being close to communities is essential. Furthermore, locally-led responses to disasters and crises will increasingly drive both domestic and international response. Trust is the most critical currency for the future of humanitarian action, and one which stems from humility and being truthful and transparent.

Overall objectives of the Commission:

This Commission sought to create a common understanding about why trust is so important to humanitarian action. The purpose was also to bring clarity about the respective responsibilities of Movement actors and States in maintaining trust in principled humanitarian action, including in terms of risk mitigation and risk sharing. The ambition was to underline the fact that everyone can and must make a difference, and to highlight concrete actions that could be taken to strengthen trust.

Chair of the Commission: Mr Georges Kettaneh, Secretary-General of Lebanese Red Cross

Rapporteur for the Commission: Mr Epeli Lesuma, Fiji Red Cross Society

Format of the Commission:

The Commission on Trust in Humanitarian Action consisted of two main plenaries (opening and reconvening) and three spotlight sessions, with the following topics:

- Community engagement and accountability
- Conducive environment for principled humanitarian action
- Integrity and risk sharing.

¹ This contextual summary draws upon remarks made during the opening plenary of the Trust Commission, including by representatives of the Edelman Trust Barometer and The New Humanitarian.

SPOTLIGHT SESSIONS

1. TRUST THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Date and time: Thursday, 12 December 2019, 10:30am–12:30pm

Objectives of the spotlight session:

- Create a shared understanding of the interdependence of trust and community engagement and accountability (CEA)
- Share and celebrate what constitutes successful community engagement, and the impact it can have on the quality and effectiveness of aid
- Discuss how poor community engagement can lead to trust issues
- Summarize the key benefits of the CEA resolution adopted at the 2019 Council of Delegates (which was subsequently taken note of in the 33rd International Conference Resolution “Act today, shape tomorrow”)
- Identify what leaders and stakeholders need to do to ensure that the CEA resolution is translated into action and achieves positive impact.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

- Participants discussed how increasing the participation of affected communities requires a shift in how decisions are made in humanitarian action and by whom (and that such decisions should involve community and local-level participation).
- The point that “change is in the hands of leaders” was made, meaning that leadership can drive the changes we need to ensure community voices are valued, listened to and acted upon.
- The need to be deliberate in engaging and encouraging diversity among Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement staff and volunteers was emphasized, together with the need to seek views from people from diverse backgrounds to inform how humanitarian action is carried out.
- Participants discussed a number of possible next steps to further the commitments and discussions of the 2019 Statutory Meetings, and CEA more broadly, including incorporating accountability mechanisms in humanitarian policies and strategies to facilitate the safe, accessible and equitable participation of communities with a focus on improving contextual analysis and listening, responding and acting on community feedback.
- Creating institutional space for humanitarian staff to reflect on community perspectives was suggested, and mandating bodies that encourage staff to change behaviour and listen differently.
- Finally, ensuring that donor funding is compatible with CEA commitments (e.g. allowing sufficient time for community participation) and enabling sustainability was encouraged. CEA should be long-term and sustainable, as a crisis cannot be the starting point for thinking about community engagement – it must be considered beforehand.

2. CREATING A CONDUCIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR PRINCIPLED HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Date and time: Thursday, 12 December 2019, 10:30am–12:30pm

Objectives of the spotlight session:

- The aim was to explore how to build a conducive regulatory environment at the global, national and local levels to enable effective and principled humanitarian action.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from the spotlight session:

- Participants discussed the crucial role of States in building an enabling regulatory and legal environment and the importance of ensuring dialogue among the main stakeholders in the spirit of mutual responsibility and trust.
- The absence of a comprehensive legal framework can create bureaucratic delays, which slow down the humanitarian response. Having a solid legal framework in place at the domestic level that pertains to disaster risk management and response (e.g. disaster law) can help clarify roles and responsibilities and provide the necessary legal facilities to carry out the response.
- Having a framework in place that follows international guidance, such as the “Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance” (also known as the “IDRL guidelines”), can ensure that the roles, responsibilities and legal facilities for international actors are provided for, thereby both facilitating and regulating international support.
- The session discussed how a legal base is essential for strengthening and positioning National Societies’ distinct and privileged status in defining their domestic roles as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian sphere.
- The regular review of National Societies’ organizational capacity and accountability, legal base and statutes, gender equity, and diversity and inclusion among staff and volunteers were noted as essential elements for building well-positioned and well-trusted organizations.
- The session discussed the crucial responsibility of States to ensure that their security and political interests do not impede impartial humanitarian action. Security and political concerns, which can lead to sanctions and counter terrorism measures, must not weaken the application of IHL, for example, nor obstruct the provision of humanitarian assistance.
- It was noted that a whole-of-government dialogue, together with humanitarian organizations, is essential for enabling impartial humanitarian action, including when sanctions and counter-terrorism measures are imposed.
- The discussions resulted in a number of possible next steps and considerations, including a proposal to establish a systematic global monitoring and review of the impact of sanctions and counter-terrorism measures on principled humanitarian action, to ensure that the issue is duly recognized and high on the humanitarian agenda (i.e. that the protection of humanitarian space and action should be better coordinated at the global level).
- It was suggested that sanctions and counter-terrorism measures should not affect humanitarian action, and that IHL and humanitarian principles need to be protected in all circumstances. Their impact should be systematically assessed, and clear humanitarian exemptions established, to enable principled action by local humanitarian organizations.
- Finally, the need for the UN, EU and other sanctions regimes to be more consistent in preserving space for humanitarian action was emphasized.

3. INTEGRITY AND RISK SHARING

Date and time: Thursday, 12 December 2019, 10:30am–12:30pm

Objectives of the spotlight session:

- Demonstrate what is being done by Movement components and other humanitarian actors to live up to high standards of integrity.
- Identify connections and tension points in the way integrity is practised by humanitarian actors by sharing and understanding the different perspectives and risks.
- Begin a dialogue on what needs to be done together to strengthen integrity and manage compliance requirements, while enabling principled humanitarian action.

Summary of key issues identified and any next steps from in the spotlight session:

- The discussion emphasized that the components of the Movement must demonstrate the highest standards of integrity, as unethical behaviour can greatly erode the public's trust in humanitarian action, including with the communities that the Movement serves.
- The Movement is responsible for ensuring service delivery in accordance with the Fundamental Principles, the Code of Conduct and comprehensive statutory, regulatory and policy framework requirements, as these are the foundation of principled humanitarian action.
- It was noted that donors have an important role to play by incentivizing and supporting integrity-related processes and mechanisms, while at the same time ensuring that their compliance requirements do not result in a transfer of risk that would hamper an organization's ability to deliver principled humanitarian action.
- In moving forward, it was suggested that humanitarian organizations invested in ensuring that staff, volunteers and people affected by crises know and understand policies and guidance related to integrity, including what to do when confronted with misconduct.
- It was suggested that humanitarian organizations should be able to identify and act swiftly in response to allegations of misconduct. They must also demonstrate that they are striving for excellence and are willing to learn and improve.
- The importance of humanitarian organizations and donors work together to ensure that compliance requirements are met and seen to be met, without impacting negatively on an organization's ability to deliver principled humanitarian action, was noted.
- Finally, the session emphasized that humanitarian organizations and donors can and must work together to ensure that residual risk is shared rather than transferred down to national and local organizations.

ANNEX

List of Speakers and Facilitators Commission III - Trust in Humanitarian Action

Chair: Mr Georges Kettaneh, Secretary General, Lebanese Red Cross

Rapporteur: Mr Epeli Vakalalabure, Youth Representative, Fiji Red Cross

Opening Plenary

- Ms Heba Aly, Director, the New Humanitarian
- Mr Antoine Harary, Preident, Eldeman Intelligence

Closing Plenary

- Mr Janez Lenarčič, EU Commissioner, Crisis Management
- H.E. Ms Carole Lanteri, Chair of International Humanitarian Law Commission
- H.E. Ms Khan, Co-Chair Shifting Vulnerabilities Commission
- Mr Georges Kettaneh, Chair of Trust in Humanitarian Action Commission
- H.E Ms Athaliah Molokomme, Ambassador, Permanent Representative Botswana

Spotlight Session: Trust through Community Engagement and Accountability

- Ms Ruth Rhodas Allen, President CDA Collaborative
- Ms Shelley Cardinal, National Advisor, Indigenous Community Engagement and Research, Canadian Red Cross
- Md Feroz Salah Uddin, Secretary General, Bangladesh Red Crescent
- Mr Nick Van Praag, Executive Director of Ground Truth Solutions
- Mr Jim Clarken, CEO, Oxfam Ireland
- Ms Fiona Smyth, Head of Humanitarian Policy, Advocacy and Campaign, Oxfam Ireland
- Ms Angela Oduor, CEO Ushahidi, Kenya

Spotlight Session: Creating A Conducive Environment for Principled Humanitarian Action

- H.E Mr. Valentin Zellweger, Ambassador, Permanent Representative, Switzerland
- Ms Sorcha O'Callaghan, Head of Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute
- Mr Reynaldo Ekonomo Funes, President of the Emergency Commission of the Congress in Honduras
- Mr Karl Dhaene, Director of Counterterrorism Belgium
- Ms Bolormaa Nordov, Secretary General, Mongolian Red Cross
- Mr Hassan Esfandiari, Deputy Director General, Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Spotlight Session: Integrity and Risk Sharing

- Ms Imogen Faulks, Independent BBC correspondent
- Mr Volkmar Schoen, Vice President, German Red Cross
- Mr Chris Taylor, Head of Internal Audit and Counter Fraud, DFID
- Ms Joanna Alexander, Senior Director of Investigations, International Rescue Committee
- Mr John Lobor, Secretary General, South Sudan Red Cross



4.13 PLEDGES

This is an overview of pledges as of 31 December 2020. The pledges submitted and signed up after this date are not reflected in the figures below. The pledges can be consulted on the pledge section of the conference website².

- Total number of pledges submitted: 249

Specific pledges

Submitted by any member and observer of the Conference, these pledges should include commitments to concrete action tailored to the national/regional context. The pledge can be submitted individually or jointly between a National Society and a State member (mostly their respective government) or other organization that is an observer to the Conference. The implementation of these pledges is the responsibility of the signatory/signatories.

Total number of specific pledges: 191

(Including 105 individual specific pledges and 86 jointly submitted specific pledges)

Open pledges

Initiated by any member of the Conference and opened for signature by any members and observers of the conference, these pledges have the character of a petition. They cannot be modified individually. The initiator of an open pledge is responsible for monitoring its implementation.

Total number of open pledges: 58

Total signatures on open pledges: 411

2 <https://rcrcconference.org/about/pledges/>

4.14 LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE CONFERENCE

Agenda and programme

- Provisional agenda and programme of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
- Overall programme

Commission outlines

- Commission I: International humanitarian law: protecting people in armed conflict
- Commission II: Shifting vulnerabilities
- Commission III: Trust in humanitarian action

Draft resolutions and background documents

- Bringing IHL home: A road map for better national implementation of international humanitarian law
 - ⊙ draft resolution (33IC/19/12.1DR)
 - ⊙ background document (33IC/19/12.1)
- Addressing mental health and psychosocial needs of people affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and other emergencies
 - ⊙ draft resolution (33IC/19/12.2DR)
 - ⊙ background document (33IC/19/12.2)
- Time to act: Tackling epidemics and pandemics together
 - ⊙ draft resolution (33IC/19/12.3DR)
 - ⊙ background document (33IC/19/12.3)
- Restoring Family Links while respecting privacy, including as it relates to personal data protection
 - ⊙ draft resolution (33IC/19/12.4DR)
 - ⊙ background document (33IC/19/12.4)
- Climate-smart disaster laws and policies that leave no one behind
 - ⊙ draft resolutions (33IC/19/12.5DR)
 - ⊙ annex: Checklist on law and disaster preparedness and response
 - ⊙ background document (33IC/19/12.5)
- Women and leadership in the humanitarian action of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
 - ⊙ draft resolution (33/19/12.6DR)
- Act today, shape tomorrow
 - ⊙ Draft resolution (33IC/19/7DR)
- Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements dated 28 November 2005 between Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society
 - ⊙ Draft resolution (33IC/19/12.7)

Follow-up to the 32nd international conference of the red cross and red crescent and other reports

- Report on “Strengthening International Humanitarian Law Protecting Persons Deprived of their liberty” (33IC/19/9.1)
- Factual Report on the Proceedings of the Intergovernmental Process on Strengthening Respect for IHL (33IC/19/9.2)
- Report on “Sexual and gender-based violence: Joint action on prevention and response” (33IC/19/9.3)
- Progress report on the Implementation of Resolution 5 of the 32nd International Conference on the Safety and Security of Humanitarian Volunteers (33/19/9.4)
- Report on the “Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement on Operational Arrangements dated 28 November 2005 between Magen David Adom in Israel and the Palestine Red Crescent Society (CD/19/13 - 33IC/19.9.5)
- Report on the “Outcomes of the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (33IC/19/9.6)
- International Humanitarian law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts. Recommitting to protection in armed conflict on the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions (33IC/19/9.7)

5

17TH SESSION OF THE STANDING COMMISSION OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT “MEETING SC XVIII –01”

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**GENEVA, 11 DECEMBER 2019
(9:45PM)**

MINUTES

PARTICIPANTS

Chair

Ms Natia Loladze, Chair of the 33rd International Conference

Members

Dr Hilal Al-Sayer

Mr Francesco Rocca

Ms Mercedes Babé

Mr Peter Maurer

Mr Abbas Gullet

Mr Elhadj As Sy

Ms Fine Tu'itupou-Arnold

Ms Katrin Wiegmann

Mr George Weber

Commission Secretariat

Mr Yves-Jean Duménil

Ms Erica Tong Junod

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF THE STANDING COMMISSION

The meeting of the newly elected Commission was opened and chaired by Ms Natia Loladze, the Chair of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, as provided for by the Statutes and Rules of Procedure (Rule 29) of the Movement. The meeting included only one item on its agenda for the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee.

Ms Natia Loladze expressed her congratulations to the five elected members of the Standing Commission. She shared the results of her consultations with each of them concerning their interest in the functions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standing Commission, asking everyone to confirm their wish. After discussion among its members, the Commission reached the following consensus:

Decisions:

- The Standing Commission elected, unanimously, Ms Mercedes Babé of Spain as its Chair.
- The Standing Commission elected, unanimously, Mr George Weber of Canada as its Vice Chair.

Mercedes Babé thanked everyone for the trust placed in her with this election and promised to work with all, to maintain the positive team spirit within the Standing Commission and the harmony and high level of work achieved so far by the Standing Commission.

2. AOB AND CLOSING

After reiterating the thanks he had made at the previous meeting of the Standing Commission (SCXVII-15, 7 December) to the outgoing elected and ex-officio members (Mr Chrystold Chetty; Dr Massimo Barra; Mr Greg Vickery; Mr Balthasar Staehelin), Mr George Weber expressed his appreciation for the contribution of Mr Elhadj As Sy to the work of the Commission over the past five years. He would do the same after the meeting with Mr Ibrahim Osman, member of the Standing Commission since 2017.

Ms Natia Loladze closed the meeting.

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Power of humanity

33rd International Conference
of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
9-12 December 2019, Geneva

