

A photograph showing several people on a sandy beach. In the foreground, a man in a red IFRC vest and cap is handing a cardboard box to another man. Other people, some in vests, are standing around a small inflatable boat in the shallow water. The background shows a clear blue sky and a distant coastline.

The Treaty on the Protection of Persons in Disasters: Enhancing Global Solidarity and Cooperation in Disaster Risk Management

The Treaty on the Protection of Persons in Disasters

In 2024, States agreed through United Nations General Assembly resolution [A/RES/79/128](#) to 'elaborate and conclude a legally binding instrument on the protection of persons in the event of disasters' (PPED) based on the International Law Commission's [Draft Articles on the protection of persons in the event of disasters](#) by the end of 2027.

The General Assembly resolution calls on Governments to submit to the Secretary-General, no later than 31 December 2025, proposals for amendments to the Draft Articles, with a view to preparing the consolidated text that will form the basis of the treaty.

In 2025, IFRC developed detailed [proposals for amendments on the Draft Articles for the consideration of States](#), aimed at strengthening the Draft Articles ahead of the upcoming negotiations on a global treaty on the PPED based on extensive research, experience and IFRC tools such as the [Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance](#) and the [Disaster Risk Governance Guidelines](#).

The Rationale

As climate variability intensifies and disaster risks grow, cooperation is becoming more essential than ever. Effective disaster risk management requires coordinated action within countries, across borders, and among a wide range of actors, including States; international, regional and local organisations; communities and others.

Although existing international frameworks such as the Sendai Framework, regional agreements, UN General Assembly resolutions, and resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent highlight the importance of cooperation in disaster risk management, these commitments remain largely voluntary.

Gaps in cooperation and coordination can undermine prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery efforts, putting lives and livelihoods at risk. When national authorities, local and international partners do not work together closely and coordinate their efforts, the management of disasters and disaster risks may become uneven, inefficient, or unsustainable —perpetuating cycles of vulnerability and increasing exposure to future hazards.

How the Treaty on the Protection of Persons in Disasters can Help

The [Draft Articles](#) lay a strong foundation for enhancing cooperation in disaster risk management. If developed into a binding treaty and strengthened as [proposed](#) by the IFRC, it could:

- Create a clearer and more predictable framework for cooperation before, during, and after disasters, helping States and other assisting actors work together more effectively.
- Reinforce global solidarity by ensuring that cooperation is not dependent solely on goodwill, but on agreed legal duties.
- Enhance coordination and reduce gaps in external response, enabling faster, more coherent, and more complementary action across borders.
- Support inclusive cooperation, encouraging engagement with other assisting actors—such as international, regional, sub-regional and local organisations, including National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies—whose expertise is essential in disaster settings.

By grounding cooperation in a binding international instrument, the PPED treaty could transform cooperation in the context of disasters from a voluntary practice into a binding legal duty, enhancing global solidarity in disaster risk management.

IFRC's Key Messages: The Treaty on the Protection of Persons in Disasters

Objective 1: The treaty must prioritize disaster risk reduction across all sectors before, during and after disasters.

Objective 2: The treaty must ensure all people are protected in disasters, especially those in vulnerable situations.

Objective 3: The treaty must address the facilitation of fast, effective and coordinated humanitarian assistance to save lives after a disaster.

Objective 4: The treaty should recognize National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as auxiliaries to their public authorities in the humanitarian field.

Objective 5: The treaty should provide a role for IFRC in accordance with its mandate on disaster risk governance /disaster law received from States.

