

The Almaty Declaration

from the regional consultative conference on legal aspects of disaster risk reduction in Central Asia

The participants of the regional consultative conference, including representatives from the national authorities and Central Asia National Red Crescent Societies, the American Red Cross, the German Red Cross, United Nations agencies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and the Centre for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction (CESDRR), that took place in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 18th January 2017;

Recognising that effective disaster risk management at the regional and national level lies in consolidation of efforts, strengthened collaboration and cooperation among all stakeholders, collaborative and people-centred approaches, shared values and concern for vulnerable communities;

Acknowledging the important role that laws, rules and principles have to play to reduce disaster risks, prevent new risks, make communities safer and more resilient, as well as facilitate effective international cooperation in times of disaster;

Highlighting the significant disaster law progress already made in Central Asia, including the adoption of a Model Law on the “Support and Regulation of International Assistance in Emergency Situations and Initial Rehabilitation” by the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in November 2014;

Recognising the need to effectively implement this Model Law at the national level by developing domestic law and policy on the facilitation and regulation of international disaster assistance;

Noting the signature of the ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ between the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Red Crescent Society of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Red Crescent Society of the Kyrgyz Republic, and the Centre for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction, regarding cooperation in the area of disaster preparedness and response;

Encouraging other National Red Crescent Societies and key partners to also sign on to the aforementioned MoU, and ensure its effective implementation, especially regarding the commitments to strengthen domestic legal frameworks for disaster risk management;

Acknowledging the international commitments of the Central Asian Republics, including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resolutions from the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement which have encouraged states to review and strengthen their national legal frameworks for international disaster response and disaster risk reduction;

Recognising the unique auxiliary role of National Red Crescent Societies and the expertise available from the IFRC and other key international partners to support disaster law processes in the region;

Having explored and discussed issues relating to DRR and International Disaster Response Law (IDRL), and also the importance of working together to ensure effective approaches to disaster risk management;

Collectively agree, express their free will and call for all stakeholders to undertake the following actions:

1. Consolidate joint work to ensure the effective implementation of regional instruments, such as the CIS inter-parliamentary Model Law on the “Support and Regulation of International Assistance in Emergency Situations and Initial Rehabilitation”.
2. Promote and contribute to the development of national disaster law, policy or other related instruments, paying due consideration to interests and needs of vulnerable groups including children, women and people with disabilities, based on discussions and plans made at the consultative conference today;
3. Ensure effective implementation and dissemination of national disaster law instruments among national authorities, National Societies, practitioners and other key stakeholders.
4. Utilise the platform provided by National Red Crescent Societies, as auxiliary to Governments, and their extensive network of branches and volunteers to support disaster law dissemination and implementation activities;
5. Develop and consolidate continued collaboration, cooperation, information sharing and peer-to-peer support for disaster law developments across Central Asia utilizing the capacity of the Centre for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction as a resource centre and a platform for regional collaboration in the area of disaster risk reduction, preparedness and response.