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**Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross
and Red Crescent Movement**

Geneva, 26 November 2011 – **For humanity**



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OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

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Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement Strategy)

Background Report

prepared for resolution 3 “Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent
Movement”

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Document prepared by

**The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
in consultation with ICRC and the International Federation**

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REPORT

STRATEGY FOR THE MOVEMENT

Executive Summary

Work on the Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is ongoing, despite years of effort towards a functional resolution.

During the last two years, two specific aspects have been at the centre:

- 1) work on Movement fora, or Action 4 as it is better known,
- 2) and the evaluation on the implementation of the Strategy (as requested by the Nairobi Council)

In addition the process of reviewing National Society statutes has continued under the leadership of the Joint Statutes Commission. Progress has been achieved although a number of National Societies (NS) still have work to do. The Nairobi resolution set a goal to have all NS statutes reviewed by the end of 2010. The resolution before this Council foresees the work to continue and the goal to be renewed.

The Standing Commission (SC) anticipated the Movement Strategy would largely be completed by the statutory meetings in 2011. Thus, an external evaluation was commissioned to determine how the Movement has fared in implementing the Strategy.

The findings are mixed. The evaluator has made recommendations, which are being analysed by the ICRC and the International Federation. The incoming Commission will need to determine what action to take upon hearing the analysis from the ICRC and the Federation.

A review on Movement fora was undertaken building on previous findings which were carried out before the Nairobi Council. NS leaders explored various options for improving the planning and alignment of the statutory meetings and in particular addressed ways of increasing NS participation, in setting the agendas and in shaping the expected outcomes.

Despite clear support for change among NS leaders, key questions concerning the main meetings involving Movement components – the International Conference, the CoD, the General Assembly of the International Federation and the regional conferences – could not be moved towards decision at this Council. Questions of frequency and duration along with options for aligning or possibly merging items on the agenda of both the Council and the General Assembly require more discussion, between, in particular, two key stakeholders, the ICRC and the Federation. A positive development in this regard, however, has been the decision to reduce the length of the Statutory Meetings for 2011 to 9 days from a total of 12 days in 2007.

Strategy for the future, by definition, is elusive and dynamic, yet essential for improved efficiencies and increased effectiveness. It is incumbent upon the leaders who have the ability, given their respective positions, to accept the call for action, to acknowledge the need for compromise, and to make the forward thinking, albeit difficult, decisions necessary to implement true change in the way we, as a Movement, do business.

The draft resolution on the Strategy asks this Council to task the incoming SC to complete the work, including proposals for change, as relevant, to the 2013 Council for decision. The Commission extends its gratitude to the National Society leaders for their valuable input and reflections on the state of our Movement for and for their guidance on how to move forward.

STRATEGY FOR THE MOVEMENT

1. Introduction

The Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, originally adopted in 2001 and updated in 2005, has sought to promote cooperation among the Movement components for greater efficiency and effectiveness. Eight (8) of its ten (10) actions, with expected results and recommended action, have been the lead responsibility of either the ICRC or the International Federation. The Commission has led work on actions 4 and 8, on Movement fora and on speaking with one voice.

There is a separate report and draft resolution before this Council on the work of the ICRC / International Federation Joint Statutes Commission on review of NS statutes, originating in the Strategy.

SC member Steven Carr has within the Commission had the overall lead on the work on the Strategy, while SC member Adama Diarra directed the evaluation.

2. Movement fora

The Movement Strategy (Action 4) expected “*enhanced dialogue and consultations within the Movement through better use of existing fora, and improved co-ordination of the agendas of statutory and other meetings*”. It further established that “*the Council of Delegates reviews the entire construct of Movement fora and makes recommendations on reducing unnecessary complexities and improving effectiveness*”.

The report to the Nairobi Council included findings from a review on the *implementation of the resolutions [from Movement meetings] and responses to the questions on Movement fora*, which revealed, for example, that

- The *level of implementation* correlates with the capabilities, interests, and the priorities of the National Society;
- When *perceived relevant* to the context of the NS, there is a rather *high degree of* creativity and efficiency in *implementation*;
- Non-implementation was due to inadequate capacities (e.g., resources, political space) or lacking relevance from a NS point of view;
- Most NS *preferred a regional approach* to dealing with issues of importance to them and would like to see this enhanced and upgraded.

During the Nairobi Council and at various regional meetings, NS leaders and representatives participated in a follow-up review on how to improve and to achieve the goal of “*reduced complexities and improved effectiveness*”.

In total, 31 NS leaders took part in structured interviews; additional leaders were consulted at regional meetings. There was wide agreement among them that development should be towards

- shorter, crispier and better focused meetings
- more formal handling of the meetings (respect for rules of procedure)
- a GA and CoD every 4 years
- new schedule for the International Conference
- participatory processes to better reflect NS requirements and concerns when setting the agendas
- re-design of regional meetings to allow for a better link to Movement fora

The role and mandate of the Standing Commission also emerged in the reviews. Participants expressed different views and levels of understanding, showing the necessity to clarify the role of the SC.

Future work should also take into account *financial resources*: it is estimated that the cost of one day of statutory meetings in Geneva is approximately CHF 300'000. This amount does not include expenses covered directly by Participating NS. The environmental impact of the meetings should also be considered, with travel being the most important factor.

The Nairobi resolution on the Strategy for the Movement also called on '*the Standing Commission, the ICRC and the International Federation to take concrete steps to improve the dialogue with and the involvement of National Societies in the preparation of the 2011 Statutory Meetings in the interest of better ownership and implementation of the results of those meetings*'.

There has been progress in involving National Societies in the preparation of this year's Council and International Conference. A number of key-issues on the Council agenda originate in the outcomes of workshops at the Nairobi 2009 Council. Further, most of the items "for decision" by the Council rely on reference groups of NS, which provide input into the development of the substance from start to finish. The sharing of draft elements of resolutions for both the Council and the Conference already in July/August is 'a first' and an example of the efforts made to promote increased participation and to address the perceived lack of ownership among NS concerning the outcomes of statutory meetings. This trend should continue and build on the achievements that have been realized by the Federation, the ICRC and the Standing Commission – in combination, for more and more regular engagement with NS on agenda and substance.

Another aspect of new ways of communicating in the preparatory process has been the use of websites. At an early stage, potential agenda elements for both the Council and the Conference were shared over the Standing Commission's website and in its Newsletter, to inspire feedback and comments in particular by NS. Various regional meetings have also been used to collect feedback on plans and hear initiatives.

The establishment of an international conference website (www.rcrcconference.org) by the Standing Commission provided a new and efficient communications channel to both NS and Governments for sharing information with a wider target audience among the primary stakeholders of the Conference.

Earlier involvement of Governments was introduced in the form of general briefings for their Permanent Missions in Geneva. In addition to inviting and consulting the already traditional Group of Ambassadors, four such briefings were organized with broad attendance. The last briefing was attended also by NS legal advisers.

Despite substantive progress, the outgoing Commission was not in a position to move on key questions concerning Movement fora. It found itself locked regarding the 'unnecessary complexities' and options for change. Further, it did not examine the question of the role of the Standing Commission, which in itself is a Movement forum. It is therefore recommended that the incoming SC be tasked to address

- ways to achieve better alignment and efficiency of the CoD and the Federation's General Assembly;

- frequency and timing of statutory meetings;
- external review of the role and functioning of the Standing Commission, including recommendations for modifying, maintaining or abolishing the Standing Commission;
- analysis of the Movement statutes in light of the debate over the statutory meetings, with results presented to the 2013 CoD for *possible* review / revision of the Statutes by the 32nd International Conference in 2015;
- ways to improve the understanding of the role of the International Conference, its timing and frequency.

3. Monitoring implementation

The Nairobi Council also called on the *‘International Federation and the ICRC to enhance their monitoring mechanisms, involving their regional structures, for improved feedback from NS on the implementation of resolutions adopted by statutory meetings and to share the findings with the Standing Commission’*.

Effective statutory meetings support RCRC humanitarian diplomacy, which is why concrete support to advocacy efforts and recommended steps for implementation should be added to resolutions, as guidance for the components.

A project management approach to monitoring/follow-up of implementation of adopted resolutions would ensure that set objectives are attainable and could provide a basis for evaluation at future meetings of progress and success achieved.

4. Speaking with One Voice

This action (8) calls on the Movement to *“Communicate effectively and powerfully about Red Cross and Red Crescent actions and consistently advocate on humanitarian issues of common concern”*. It recommends that the Movement has *“clear and coherent common positions on major issues confronting the international community and external partners”* and *“clear advocacy strategies, including prioritisation of issues”*.

The ‘Our World – Your Move’ campaign in support of communication about the Movement’s work and its impact was launched in May 2009. The Nairobi Council called for a review of the impact of the campaign. An evaluation has been carried out and found that, overall, the campaign reached over 100 million persons with activities involving 70% of NS in at least 121 countries. Those interacting with the campaign reported higher awareness of IHL compared to those that did not. Nevertheless, the campaign was not able to translate this wide exposure into mass mobilisation, particularly online. The evaluation looked at the 10 desired outcomes and presented nine overall conclusions to guide future Movement-wide campaigns. The full evaluation report is available *upon request*.

5. Evaluation of the Strategy for the Movement

The Nairobi Council called on *“the Standing Commission, with the International Federation and the ICRC, to present the 2011 Council of Delegates with an evaluation of the achievement of the strategic objectives and the expected results in the ten actions of the Movement Strategy”*.

The Terms of Reference for the external evaluator commissioned to carry out the work, established as its purpose *“to seek to establish to what extent the strategic objectives and the expected results in the ten actions of the Movement Strategy have been achieved, allowing the SC to present its findings and its recommendations to*

the 2011 Council of Delegates to shape a possible future Strategic Framework for the Movement”.

The objective of the evaluation was to establish to what extent

- a) the identified expected results for each action (as set out in the 2005 update) have been successfully achieved;
- b) the implementation points were carried out and helped achieve the expected results and
- c) progress made in the ten actions helped achieve the three strategic objectives of the Strategy

It was managed by an evaluation Management Team chaired by SC member Adama Diarra, and which included Helena Korhonen, SC secretariat, Velina Mikova, ICRC and Stephen Wainwright, IFRC in addition to the external evaluator, Ms Michèle Mercier.

The methodology included an analysis of each of the ten actions, their expected outcomes and how well these were attained.

Below is a summary of the main findings and the evaluator's recommendations. The full report (in English) is available to all CoD Members by request.

All actions in the Strategy were considered relevant. They reflected the day-to-day work and topical issues addressed by the Movement components. Some actions matched existing institutional objectives as set by the IFRC, ICRC and NS, while others were not deemed as priorities. The consolidated responses resulted in mixed overall results. A few Action items averaged high scores for implementation, others, average scores, and yet others low scores.

Interesting developments have occurred, encouraging Movement partners to get closer together. Working patterns are changing, particularly in field operations, involving more frequent, if not systematic, contacts between RCRC partners.

However, more remains to be done to build stronger working relationships in the preparation of Movement fora, to reinforce the power of influence the RCRC can have on its direct environment and for the public acknowledgement of the Movement as a significant global humanitarian network.

The evaluator concludes that components of the Movement tend to move on parallel tracks that sometimes merge. They share the same values and work along the same principles, but their goals and interests are different. Their physical and political environment directly influences their degree of involvement in the implementation of a specific action. Therefore, global effectiveness remains a remote target.

The evaluation also concludes that the Strategy failed in building a process of strategic thinking within the Movement. Measures to reach such a goal were not activated. No significant initiatives have been taken in direct reference to this aim. There was also a very low level of ownership of the Strategy. It was rather well known when it was first launched, but faded away from everyone's landscape.

Movement components seem to be more focused on strengthening their individual positions, rather than addressing an issue as intricate as the Movement image. The wish of the Movement to become an influential global body is challenged by the diversity of profiles, needs and aspirations of its members, according to the evaluation.

Clear facts on implementation of each action by the various components are only partly available. Useful information can be drawn from reports and testimonies demonstrating a notable amount of work accomplished over the years in relation to the Strategic objectives, although not always consciously linked to it.

Summing up, the evaluation finds that *significant progress* was recorded in the fields of capacity building, Movement fora, response to emergencies, areas involving auxiliary role and effective communication. *Less impressive results* were registered on integrity issues and links with the private sector. External trends and best practices attracted the *least interest*, or were not addressed.

Recommendation 1

Build on the strengths and weaknesses of the Movement

All components to take stock of progress made, to be aware of areas where improvements can be achieved to upgrade the Movement's effectiveness and efficiency and to consider

- Ø creating cross-cutting **systems and policies** in the field of capacity building, leadership management, handling of integrity issues, and effective communication
- Ø creating an effective **knowledge management** system allowing all RCRC partners to take advantage of the huge amount of intelligence available throughout the Movement, to share best practices and lessons learned in a systematic way and to upgrade overall knowledge on Movement ventures
- Ø improving their response to emergencies and to other humanitarian requirements by encouraging and adopting a systematic use of tools for regular **monitoring and evaluation** of large as well as of minor emergency response operations, based on internationally agreed OECD/DAC criteria, emphasizing aspects of cooperation between Movement partners and other specific working modes used within the Movement (Seville, etc.)
- Ø establishing rules and guidelines to practice **impact analysis** in all stages of action (emergency, rehabilitation, reconstruction, teaching, campaigning, advocacy, etc.) thus supporting knowledge sharing efforts and improving the overall performance of Movement actors.

Recommendation 2

Focus on key issues

A centre-piece of the Strategy called for improving the development of movement-wide coordinated approaches. This requirement remains on the agenda for the future and all components are encouraged to define areas of common interest and priorities for the Movement by establishing

- Ø a clear vision on priorities emerging from broader and topical international concerns (climate change, environment, migration, poverty, hunger, violence, community safety, urbanization, DRR)
- Ø a clear choice of issues or areas of intervention based on specific strengths of the Movement components and its added value, and a balanced approach taking into consideration capacities and needs of all components, their diversity and their resources
- Ø an active partnership between all those taking part in Movement-driven initiatives to produce results with a RCRC added value
- Ø proper reporting on achievements to feed knowledge management processes and as input into planning future interventions.

Recommendation 3**Bridge gaps**

IFRC and ICRC to take full consideration of the need for and the advantage of systematically involving National Societies in all Movement related initiatives and to undertake major efforts to improve the present situation through

- Ø a better use of regional meetings as opportunities to debate issues in the headlines, new trends or other Movement concerns in need of more transparency
- Ø a more extensive use of electronic communication channels to install regular dialogue between RCRC partners, without increasing operational costs (e-conferences, e-consultations, Skype, etc.).

Recommendation 4**Support Movement-wide initiatives**

The Standing Commission, together with IFRC and ICRC specialists and with the support of interested National Societies, should initiate

- Ø a robust system of consultation, review, monitoring and evaluation for all significant projects inspired by or commissioned in the name of the Movement, keeping Movement partners abreast of key issues throughout processes.

Recommendation 5**Guide Movement processes**

With regard to the necessity to create a process of strategic thinking for the whole Movement, the Standing Commission, in liaison with all Movement components and using international fora, to set the course for

- Ø a reflection on a principled approach to inspire initiatives taken across the Movement
- Ø a proposal on future ways and means to foster the cohesion of the Movement and to capture mobilizing themes to promote more global wisdom and the strengthening of the unity of the Movement based on revisited Principles
- Ø a commonly shared understanding of the specific functions of the Standing Commission and of its role for the years ahead.

5. Future Strategy

There was no formal end-date for the Movement Strategy. Ten years after the adoption of the 'original' Strategy, which defined its aim as follows: "*...rather than being a document set in stone, the Strategy aims at building a dynamic process of strategic thinking within the Movement*", the Council may want to consider tasking the incoming SC with analysis of the need for some strategic framework for the future.

During the review and evaluation process, NS, ICRC and IFRC leaders expressed their views on what a future Strategy could or should be. Some interesting avenues were put forward, which can serve as starting point for the suggested analysis.

The assumption is that a proactive and forward-looking Movement benefits from a relevant strategic framework or a vision for the future to direct coordinated and efficient cooperation, taking into account the main trends in the internal and external environments.

The outgoing Commission did not see it as its role to prepare proposals for the future. Rather, it recommends that the Council mandates the incoming SC to analyse the need for and content of a strategic framework or vision and submits its proposals, as relevant, to the 2013 CoD for decision.