



150 years of humanitarian action
**Council of Delegates of the International
Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement**
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COUNCIL OF DELEGATES
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS
AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

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STRATEGY FOR THE MOVEMENT
Movement Fora

REPORT

Document prepared by
The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent

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A. Executive Summary

After reviewing past discussions and previous work related to the development of Movement fora and considering the rapidly transformed and still fast evolving humanitarian landscape, the Working Group is convinced that the Movement must anticipate and adapt to change in order to stay relevant and continue to excel as the world's foremost humanitarian network.

The case for change is strong. At the international and national levels organisations – both NGOs and those formed by inter-governmental co-operation – have proliferated and created a more competitive environment. A quick scan of humanitarian aid shows that many of these organisations have become more successful than Movement partners in attracting donor support.

Another concern is the potential erosion of the Movement's unique ability to convene governments and other pivotal players to attend regular conferences to discuss key humanitarian issues. Unless we change our approach to and improve the quality and effectiveness of Movement meetings, governments may simply lose interest in them. This would deprive the Movement of a precious resource – its strong convening powers to engage with governments directly, notably through the International Conference.

Although the Working Group was not mandated to propose solutions to these challenges, it nonetheless strongly believes they should be met. It further considers that a good starting point would be to modify the architecture of Movement fora, from the manner in which the meetings are run and the allocation of subjects on their respective agendas to the quality of the ideas and decisions they generate.

To achieve these goals, the Working Group believes it is necessary to move beyond the notion of institutional "ownership" of meetings and instead to view them in terms of their objectives; to make maximum use of the four-yearly "conversation" with States; and to distinguish more clearly between formal decision-making on the one hand, and the celebratory and learning aspects of meetings on the other.

None of this can be achieved without change in *all* components of the Movement, and the Working Group recommends as a priority that the ICRC and the International Federation in particular be open to change. One such change would be to adopt an approach of openness to structural change and synergy aimed at keeping the International Federation General Assembly and the Movement's Council of Delegates both leaner and more effective.

This would pave the way for a different cycle of meetings, one which begins and ends with an International Conference – the intervening period being used for engaging in consultations with governments. Intersecting with this midpoint, a cycle of meetings exclusively for components of the Movement would consist of four-yearly Councils of Delegates, General Assemblies of the Federation and Regional Conferences.

In addition to these overarching ideas the Working Group is keen to find ways to increase the ownership of Movement meetings and to make them less confusing and more relevant. It also seeks to institute changes of a more practical nature by for example: further reducing reliance on paper documentation; standardising ceremonials for all relevant meetings; and making greater use of social media and modern communications. Some of these changes are already being put in place.

It is the view of the Working Group that such measures would make Movement meetings more satisfactory and fulfilling for all components. The meetings would have objective-driven agendas and decisions would only be taken based on substantive consultations *between*

meetings. Furthermore, a greater proportion of meetings would be devoted to exploring issues, looking ahead, sharing insights and concerns, and to celebrations of one another's successes. At the same time, equal attention would be focused on the agenda for the *next* meeting and on the lessons learnt from efforts to attain objectives set by previous meetings. This approach would infuse participants with a sense of accomplishment and renewed enthusiasm for being part of the global Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

In line with its mandate, and subject to the International Federation's own decision-making procedures, the Working Group has produced a set of practical recommendations (see section D) related to the general conduct, costs and environmental impact of the International Conference, the Council of Delegates and the General Assembly.

These recommendations are made after consideration of previous recommendations and decisions, which the Working Group endorses and asks the Standing Commission, the ICRC and the International Federation to implement without further review or decision-making.

B. The Case for Change

After 150 years of humanitarian action and concerted support for the world's most vulnerable people, and decades of effort to support the growth and strengthening of National Societies in practically every country in the world, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement deserves to celebrate its successes in 2013, and will do so.

In the meantime, in the face of increasing competition at the international level and the closer scrutiny and more demanding expectations of States, the Movement must anticipate and adapt to the fast pace of change in order to stay relevant. Crucially, the increasing number of organisations operating in most countries has created a more competitive environment for National Societies – both in their domestic work and in their international activities.

Furthermore, there are increasing signs that the competition is becoming more coherent and better organised. It has also had greater success than the Movement in attracting funding support over the past decade. In short, the Red Cross and Red Crescent are losing out to more agile, cost-effective and flexible competitors – including NGOs, intergovernmental organisations and, in some cases, private sector actors.

The Working Group on Movement Fora took as its starting point the assumption that the current arrangement is not a given. Notably, it believes that the Movement's unique bond with States and its convening powers that are unparalleled outside the inter-governmental sphere are only as strong and durable as the degree to which States continue to value this singular relationship. The fact that States are already, albeit discreetly, questioning the relevance of the International Conference is a wake-up call in this respect. States are demanding more relevance, sharper focus, and clearer usefulness from the International Conference – or they may lose interest.

The traditional dichotomies – conflict versus non-conflict, disaster versus development, long term versus short term – have become far less clear, and an institutional architecture based largely on these dichotomies risks leading to increased irrelevance. New divisions of labour and ways of co-operating and improved efficiencies must be found to preserve and enhance the Movement's collective capacity to respond.

The financial and economic crises that have swept the world during the past 5-6 years have devastated countless lives, while the violent upheavals in North Africa and the Middle East have brought complex crises to the fore. Has the Movement provided an appropriate response? Does it have the tools, the methods, and the understanding to deal with these and other pressing issues such as climate change and reducing humanity's carbon footprint?

As funding moves increasingly to other humanitarian actors, the Movement must not only be efficient but be perceived as such in order to continue to attract the resources it requires to fulfil its mission.

Though the Working Group was not mandated to address the multiple challenges facing the Movement, it believes that a good place to start to increase its efficiency would be to review how it organises and runs its meetings, and how it measures the impact of the decisions taken therein. For it is here – at its own meetings – that the Movement has exclusive control and can enact change.

It is clear there has been some dissatisfaction among National Societies, especially regarding the architecture of Movement fora, which has basically remained unchanged since the 1920s, apart from the emergence of the Council of Delegates in the 1960s. To a large extent, this sentiment is shared by the two international institutions. That is why the Council of Delegates in 2011 asked the Standing Commission to make yet another effort to produce proposals for change. More recently, the International Federation's Regional Conferences also represent a change. Strictly speaking, however, they are not formal *Movement* meetings.

The model for Movement meetings emerged well before the advent of near-instantaneous global communications, a development that has changed the nature and benefits of face-to-face meetings. At that time travel costs were high and meetings significantly longer. Hence, consultations were held *infrequently* and shared decision-making was a necessity. In the current world of fast-moving change, Movement decision-making must respond to issues as they emerge – not according to an outdated schedule.

The emergence of options for different and new approaches to structured interactions between components of the Movement, and the need to reduce the environmental impact of its meetings are reasons enough to consider options for change, given, not just the need but the responsibility to remain relevant and our global conservation stewardship duty

While Movement meetings belong to all components of the Movement, a specific concern is to ensure that they are relevant to and perceived as such by National Societies. Movement fora must draw on National Societies' combined knowledge and experience, incorporate their priorities and find shared solutions that they feel ownership for. Equally important, the meetings must foster co-operation among components and mobilise them in response to humanitarian issues and needs across the world. This can only happen if National Societies *own* the meetings to a higher degree than many believe has been the case in the past.

Finally, the case for change rests on the argument of the Fundamental Principle of *Humanity* " [...], 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".

Changing the Movement fora will not, on its own, deliver that result – but it is a good place to start, and one that can be initiated by the Movement itself. Hence, the Movement must make some choices, and the Council of Delegates in 2013 is the best – and earliest – opportunity to do so.

These choices will not be painless but unless we significantly improve the way we prepare and run our meetings we will not be able to influence the perceptions of our partners and the future will be less bright.

Fortunately, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement can draw on considerable strengths and resources. It continues to be highly respected and regarded with affection by both the public and governments, and there is a positive will for it to succeed.

During its deliberations the Working Group reached consensus on several major points and the first and overriding message is that the recommended changes to Movement meetings need to be part of a broader cultural change and we will have to find ways to address general challenges that have a wider dimension than the statutory meetings.

It is in this spirit that the Working Group has developed its thinking. This will be fleshed out in the following pages, but important key elements include:

- A shift from tradition-bound meetings to statutory gatherings that are shaped by the key issues and events of our time, and which achieve specific objectives that need to be addressed in order to advance our Movement's work. Instead, Movement meetings should be looked at in terms of their objectives. In so doing, subjects for discussion and decision can be allocated accordingly, creating meetings that deal with important substance in a more focused and dedicated manner.
- One clear and distinct objective is to preserve and make the most of our unique opportunity to meet with States every four years. Greater focus and capacity must be dedicated to this objective.
- The Working Group also suggests making a clear distinction between the objectives of celebrating and inspiring each other on the one hand and formal decision making on the other.
- While both the ICRC and IFRC made it clear that matters internal to them were beyond the Working Group's mandate, the Working Group takes the view that Movement meetings are impacted by the governance of both. Therefore, it strongly recommends that both institutions be open to change. As suggested earlier, one such change would be to adopt an approach of openness to structural change and synergy aimed at keeping the International Federation General Assembly and the Movement's Council of Delegates both leaner and more effective. Internally we must find a way to increase National Society ownership of Movement meetings and take measures to make them less confusing and more relevant, while encouraging the engagement of National Society leaders.
- A number of individually minor changes that can be introduced without further decision-making should be implemented. These include the further reduction in the volume of paper documents, the standardisation of ceremonials for all meetings, and greater use of social media and modern communications. Some of these proposals are already being introduced.

Lastly, it is our view that the work of the Working Group cannot be seen in isolation. For example, it has obvious affinities with other initiatives such as the effort to establish a new framework for Movement co-operation and the International Federation's own governance review process. It will be important to ensure coherent linkages between these initiatives.

C. Main Issues

a. International Conference

The Working Group grappled with many issues in the course of its meetings. Two stood out. Firstly, the importance of the International Conference and the increasingly urgent need to take action to protect and promote it as the most important forum for humanitarian debate, and maintain it as the unique arena for interaction between components of the Movement and States.

It is the firm opinion of the Working Group that the International Conference is in danger – not of being abolished – but of losing its relevance unless it is renewed and revitalised. Though declining interest in the International Conference is not an inevitable fate, it will require a thorough review of the manner in which it is prepared, run, and promoted for it to remain relevant as a forum for all components of the Movement to meet with government representatives.

The Working Group also takes the view that much can be achieved to make the International Conferences more effective without statutory change. It furthermore considers that better shared decision-making among components of the Movement outside the International Conference will be key to achieving that goal in the future.

b. Red Cross Movement Meetings

Secondly, the nature and architecture of Movement meetings were important dimensions of the Working Group deliberations. Given that the issue of Movement fora has been on the agenda for some 15 years or more, it is clearly a matter that requires more than merely technical adjustments and improvements – important as these may be.

The tradition in the Movement – as in peer organisations with a similar structure – is to think of each meeting as belonging to a particular category linked to institutional “ownership”. The Working Group urges all concerned to move beyond this notion and to consider and implement other ways of arriving at shared and agreed conclusions.

One option – the one recommended below – is to move towards objective-based meetings each tasked with addressing specific themes, topics and issues. In delineating clear objectives, the evaluation of the meetings also becomes easier. This would require all 190 components to be open to change. The result would be a lighter framework for faster, more responsive and more useful joint decision-making – thereby enhancing the contribution of these meetings for the benefit of those they seek to serve.

c. Efficient, Economical and Reduced Environmental Impact

While the Working Group believes that the meetings must maintain their seriousness of purpose and the integrity of their deliberations and decision-making, it also considers that much can be done to make them more lively, interesting and stimulating. For example, burdens such as cumbersome paper documentation could be removed, complemented by the continued progressive introduction of social media, new communications technologies, and renewed choreography for the meetings. This would not only benefit participants but also widen the audience of stakeholders with an interest in the meetings and their outcomes.

D. Recommendations

The Working Group endorses previous recommendations, especially those contained in the report of the Standing Commission on implementation of the Strategy for the Movement to the Council of Delegates in 2009, and emphasises the importance of continuing to implement them.

a. For the International Conference

- The Working Group believes it is necessary to move beyond regarding Movement meetings in terms of their institutional “ownership”. Instead, Movement meetings should be looked at in terms of their objectives. In so doing, subjects for discussion and decision can be allocated accordingly, creating meetings that deal with important substance in a more focused and dedicated manner.
- It is beyond the Working Group’s mandate to deal with matters that are internal to the ICRC and the International Federation. The Working Group recommends, however, that both institutions be open to change in relation to the architecture of Movement fora.

Every four years the focus should be on preparing for the International Conference. This would lead to the development of two distinct but linked four-year cycles: one focusing on the Movement as such, the other on meeting with governments. The two cycles would be linked by discussing the issues to be brought forward to the International Conference at the meeting that exclusively concerns the components of the Movement at the mid-point between two Conferences.



- Internally this might facilitate the commitment of National Societies to global co-operation and make the meetings more relevant to them.
- Consider, at the symbolic level, the use of a term such as “Congress of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement” to denote the statutory meetings in the years between International Conferences.
- The Working Group recommends that the Standing Commission, together with the ICRC and the International Federation, seriously consider moving towards objective-driven Movement meetings, as suggested above, and that a decision on this matter be made at the 2015 Council of Delegates.
- Organise at least one workshop to prepare for the 2015 International Conference.
- Engage in more and earlier consultations in advance of International Conferences.

- Avoid agenda items already dealt with in other fora, and define more clearly the role and position of the International Conference in the broader constellation of international meetings with State participation.
- Provide more information more frequently between International Conferences.
- Improve implementation and monitoring.
- Take constructive steps to better engage States and boost their participation, including by continuing to avoid clashes, in terms of timing, with other important events.
- Actively seek creative input from components, States and peer organisations with regard to the future of “Conferencing”.

b. For the Council of Delegates/General Assembly

- Adopt an open approach towards structural change and synergy with a view to making the International Federation General Assembly and the Movement’s Council of Delegates both leaner and more effective.
- Reorganise and relabel the practical arrangements for the Council of Delegates and the International Federation’s General Assembly so that they are formally opened in a joint ceremony.
- Once the opening ceremony is over, the Council is adjourned, and the International Federation holds its General Assembly
- Once the General Assembly session ends, the Council resumes the business portion of its meeting.
- To emphasise the spirit of “oneness” this represents, it is proposed to relabel, without changing the formal name of the Council or the General Assembly, the combined meeting: “Congress of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent”.

c. For the General Conduct of Meetings

- Commission a “Code of Good Conduct for Participating in Meetings”
- Ensure that a clearer distinction is made between the explicit treatment of a topic and related follow-up action.
- Increase the use of social media and webcasts. Use IT for remote participation and test it for this purpose in one workshop.
- Move towards a “rolling” agenda”.
- Ensure longer lead times for all.
- Develop a bottom-up consultation process to complement the current “top-down” model.
- For each topic, engage key National Societies in direct and substantive consultations.
- Invite outsiders to attend meetings and to provide feedback on them before formal decisions are adopted.
- Make meetings paperless.
- Require National Societies to make specific requests if they wish to obtain print versions of documents.
- Introduce formal remote participation in meetings.
- Look into obtaining, as a donation, a sufficient number of tablet computers to make available one per delegation for the forthcoming meeting.
- Seek to widen the range of hotels for meeting participants, including budget / youth accommodation.
- Move the statutory meetings to the first half of the year to avoid the crowded calendar of the second half of the year and endeavour to synchronise their scheduling with the regular planning processes of components.

d. To the Standing Commission

The Working Group strongly recommends to the Standing Commission that it make follow-up to the eventual decisions of the Council of Delegates with regard to *Movement Fora* a regular item on its agenda, and that in the follow-up to such decisions emphasis is placed on the need ensure solid linkages between this work and the work undertaken on Movement Co-operation, development of strategy and the positioning of the Movement in general.

e. Our Discussions

The Working Group met three times prior to reporting to the Standing Commission in September 2013:

- In London, hosted by the British Red Cross, in February 2013
- In Divonne in May 2013
- In Prangins in September 2012

Broadly speaking, at the first meeting, the Working Group discussed its general approach and spent considerable time understanding both the strengths of the present arrangements and the weaknesses identified through earlier reviews of Movement fora.

At the second meeting, the Working Group reviewed existing proposals, new ideas generated among its members, and the outcomes of consultations held by the Secretariat of the Standing Commission with peer organisations and Permanent Missions in and around Geneva.

At the final meeting, the Working Group focused on the production of the present report, based on a draft by the Secretariat of the Standing Commission.

E. Success – what it might look like

In its deliberations, the Working Group agreed that effective and relevant Movement meetings would have the following characteristics:

- The meetings would satisfy the needs of all components – as well as the Movement's partners.
- Future meetings would have objective-driven agendas based on a distribution of themes, topics and issues related to those objectives.
- Issues would only be brought to the plenary for adoption after they have been subject to deeper, broader and more inclusive consultations between meetings.
- The meetings themselves would be devoted to exploring issues, looking ahead, sharing insights and concerns, and to celebrations of one another's successes.
- Equal attention would be paid to the agenda of the *next* meeting and to follow up past decisions.
- The logic of the meetings and when/how issues are being considered would be transparent to all participants and mapped out over a multi-year calendar.
- Participants would leave the meetings with a sense of accomplishment and renewed enthusiasm for being part of the global RC Movement.

All this must be monitored and measured – without adding to the plethora of questionnaires and surveys – through regular collection of feedback from participants. Successful change will entail sustained effort over time, as well as ongoing monitoring and adjustments as new experience is gained.

This will be done by regular monitoring of National Society websites, by using opportunities to sound out individual or groups of National Societies when they meet for other purposes, by repeated invitations to contact the Standing Commission, the ICRC and the International Federation, and by stimulating feedback through regular reporting on the data monitored. Measuring *satisfaction* among components of the Movement must be explicitly included in the approach adopted. To ensure that the system eventually employed yields reliable results professional assistance should be sought for its development.

ANNEXES

I. Precedents

This Working Group of the Standing Commission is by no means the first group tasked with reviewing and proposing changes to Movement meetings.

Successive Standing Commissions have grappled with the matter, which has been a frequent topic of discussion among Movement. The issue was included in the original Strategy for the Movement in 2001, and the current Working Group is the result of a decision of the Council in 2011. In the intervening period every Council session has also addressed the issue.

The 2009 Council of Delegates called on the Standing Commission to present to the 2011 Council an evaluation of the achievement of the strategic objectives and the expected results in the ten actions of the Movement Strategy. Such an evaluation was commissioned and a report delivered in February 2011ⁱⁱ.

One of the key findings, and the one most directly relevant to the present report, was that “[...] more needs to be done to: build stronger working relationships in preparing for Movement fora; boost the influence the RCRC can exert on its direct environment; and to intensify public acknowledgement of the Movement as a significant global humanitarian network.”

Both the review findings and the results of consultative processes fed into the report to the 2009 Council on implementation of the Strategy for the Movement, along with recommendations concerning Movement fora.

The Working Group has drawn upon and incorporated many of the earlier recommendations in its own proposals.

Resolution 3 of the Council of Delegates in 2011 called on the Standing Commission to finalise the work on Movement fora and to submit change proposals in 2013. Moreover, the Council asked the Standing Commission to establish a Working Group for this purpose, and for it to base its recommendations on the outcomes of previous reviews, with a view to enhance efficiency, lower costs and reduce the environmental impact of the meetings.

The Standing Commission subsequently established a Working Group composed of the following members:

- 1) Fatima Gailani, Afghan Red Crescent Society
- 2) Fernando Jose Cardenas, Colombian Red Cross
- 3) Mads Espersen, Danish Red Cross, representative of the Youth Commission
- 4) Matthias Schmale, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- 5) Muctarr Jalloh, Sierra Leone Red Cross Society
- 6) Nick Young, British Red Cross
- 7) Philip Spoerri, International Committee of the Red Cross
- 8) Steve Carr, Vice Chairman of the Standing Commission, Chair of the Working Group
- 9) Susan Johnson, Canadian Red Cross

II. Overview of Actions Taken by Previous Working Groups on Movement fora

The original Strategy for the Movement – from 2001 - contained a determination that :

“By 2005, the Council of Delegates reviews the entire construct of Movement fora and makes recommendations on reducing unnecessary complexities and improving effectiveness.”¹

The update to the Strategy for the Movement, adopted in Seoul in 2005, continued “Action 4”:

“Enhance dialogue and consultations within the Movement through better use of existing fora, and improved co-ordination of the agendas of statutory and other meetings.”¹ Implementation was envisaged through reviewing the implementation of previous decisions at each new meeting; through more consultation by the International Federation with the ICRC and the Standing Commission prior to its regional and sub-regional conferences and meetings; inclusion in the agenda for these regional conferences and sub-regional meetings of Movement matters and decisions from Council of Delegates and International Conferences; and

“2.4.4 The Council of Delegates reviews the entire construct of Movement fora and makes recommendations on reducing unnecessary complexities and improving effectiveness.”¹

In 2007, the Council of Delegates in Resolution 7

“5. invites National Societies, the ICRC, the International Federation and the Standing Commission, involved in the organisation of international meetings within the Movement, to take into account the recommendations submitted by the Standing Commission:

- to increase the efficiency of meetings and to ensure better articulation and continuity between different statutory and non-statutory meetings within the Movement, and
- to enhance the involvement of National Societies in preparations, discussions and follow-up relating to meetings within the Movement.

6. requests the Standing Commission to continue its work on Action 4, including making further recommendations in the way it finds appropriate;”¹

The Nairobi Council of Delegates, in 2009, also dealt with the matter:

“4. invites the Standing Commission to continue its work on reducing the complexities of the Movement fora in close consultation with National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation and to present its proposals for change, as relevant, to the 2011 Council of Delegates;

5. invites National Societies to communicate to the Standing Commission and its working group their views and thoughts on options for better alignment of Movement fora;

7. calls on the Standing Commission, with the International Federation and the ICRC, to present to the 2011 Council of Delegates an evaluation of the achievement of the strategic objectives and the expected results in the ten actions of the Movement Strategy;

In 2011, when the Council met in Geneva prior to the 31st International Conference, it made the decisions that led to the creation of the present Working Group of the Standing Commission.

III. Working Group Terms of Reference

The Working Group decided at an early stage to sharpen its understanding of its Terms of Reference and subsequently agreed to interpret the latter as follows, with particular emphasis on certain aspects:

- “Movement fora” encompasses a wide range of Movement meetings and it is important to take a holistic view. However, for the purposes of this work, the primary focus will be on the International Conference and Council of Delegates meetings.
- To focus particular attention on efforts to protect and strengthen the International Conference as the unique opportunity to advance the interests of the RC Movement through dialogue with governments.
- To develop recommendations that will strengthen the effectiveness of Movement fora with a particular focus on:
 - Improving National Society participation (and ownership);
 - Creating better opportunities for learning and celebrating;
 - Improving policy and decision making that is relevant to all stakeholders, including National Societies, IFRC, ICRC and governments.

For each of these focus areas, the Working Group also decided to group its eventual recommendations and proposals under four “headings”:

- Can be implemented under the authority of the Standing Commission;
- Require(s) further decision making by the Council of Delegates;
- Might require wider consultations with components and States
- Intended to help reduce costs and the environmental impact of the meetings.

The meetings of the Working Group were lively, open, friendly and constructive, and free of institutional and other positioning. The discussions, therefore, were forward-looking and rich in ideas. Given that the group was composed of senior National Society personalities with an aggregate Movement experience covering many decades, the discussions, while remaining ambitious, were realistic.

IV. Feedback from Permanent Missions – summary

Several Permanent Missions in Geneva were contacted to solicit their views and ideas about the International Conference.

Preparations for the International Conference:

- Start consultations with States earlier;
- Consult more widely;
- Reassure States that the outcomes are not entirely “pre-determined” by the institutions;
- Consider using Expert Meetings and similar as part of the preparatory process;
- Ensure that States are reminded of the International Conference regularly well before the next scheduled edition;
- Permanent Missions should receive more frequent reminders:
 - Possibly through a mid-term meeting;

- Possibly through regional consultations / briefings;
- It would unquestionably be of value to call in the missions before the Sydney meetings to brief them on the agenda topics.
- Engage in more communication between meetings;
- Consider a midterm meeting: possibly on a regional basis, and preferably involving both governments and National Societies;
- Having a defined Group of Ambassadors meant that some were included while others were excluded;
- The Group of Ambassadors, as a chosen mechanism, does not allow for sufficient influence on the eventual outcome;
- The Movement sometimes brings issues to the Group of Ambassadors with insufficient preparation to justify ambassadorial-level engagement;
- Either reduce thematic duplication of issues under debate in other fora, or involve non-RCRC representatives more actively in the deliberations at the International Conference. For example: during discussions about migrants and refugees there was hardly any visible participation from IOM and UNHCR. Their presence in the room as observers is not really what States are looking for: they want to see substantial collaboration.
- Plan a more strategic and forward-looking agenda and try to reach longer-term goals.

Maintaining Support

- Visibility and impact – what one ambassador referred to as the “echo” – could be significantly greater. Media coverage helps to maintain support politically and among opinion formers and the general public for the fairly large periodic investment governments make to the International Conference.
- Perhaps more engagement is required with the media in the run-up to, during and after the International Conference in order to gain more media coverage.
- The media as well as many State and National Society participants would no doubt far prefer to receive a concise “one-pager” summary of International Conference outcomes expressed in everyday language, rather than sift through lists of resolutions.

At the Meetings

- Division of labour among meetings is generally a good idea: the International Conference as a forum for developing IHL and also for giving broad directions to the Movement and its components agrees on longer term priorities and principles, while the Council of Delegates is more a celebratory element in the process.
- There is a strong belief in some quarters that the Red Cross Red Crescent has a sufficiency of positive decisions at its disposal in relation first to IHL as well as to other issues, and that both States and Movement components must place far more emphasis on their implementation.

V. Feedback from international organisations – summary

The following international organisations, including two inter-governmental organisations and two with some governmental involvement located in the Geneva area, as well as one London-based NGO umbrella organisation, were solicited to discuss their experience of and thoughts about large international meetings:

International Labour Office
 International Olympic Committee
 International Telecommunications Union
 Save the Children International
 World Wide Fund for Nature

Summary of ideas offered in conversations with these organisations:

- Organise the agenda according to work-flow analysis, not on the basis of items or topics, or the decisions of discreet committees.
- Meetings can become too large for their own good.
- Seek clear decision-making focus on core issues with less emphasis on more peripheral issues.
- The goals of having shorter, more focused meetings on the one hand, and maintaining a broad agenda on the other are likely to fuel tension.
- Actively seek to involve the small and the distant National Societies.
- Invest in “conferencing” training for those participants who lack experience in this field.
- Regularly brief the Permanent Missions in Geneva on the issues about to be presented and thereby stimulate higher level representation at the meetings.
- Create better links to regional meetings.
- Youth do not wish to be treated as a separate category: they want to be at the table where decisions are made, not in an anteroom where they are limited to discussing youth “stuff”. The corollary is that those issues that are seen as important by young people have to be mainstreamed into the main events.
- Auxiliarity is a very valuable resource that others seek.
- Eliminate physical paper documentation and rely exclusively on electronic distribution.
- Use electronic registration for meetings.
- Increase the use of electronic means of consultation between meetings and during their preparatory phase.
- Engage in consultations between meetings through regional dialogues and conferences supported by technical committees and the secretariat / zone / regional offices.
- Rules of procedure can be maintained even as technology changes: be creative in their interpretation.
- Increase the use of remote participation in meetings.
- Familiarise senior members with the benefits of electronic communications by sending them documents via iPads.
- The key to effective inter-meeting debate and interaction is to hold an actual face-to-face meeting at the end of the process; this is what provides both focus and motivation for participants in the work required to follow up on and prepare for meetings.
- Motivation, enthusiasm and commitment do not come entirely spontaneously: they must be fostered and produced by making meetings more interesting, effective and relevant.
- Set aside 30% of the meetings for dealing with *one* overarching issue. Examples from the past include “the economy”, “globalisation”, and “storytelling”. Address each topic from different angles (e.g., environmental effects of economic activity, towards a green economy, how economies can be made to protect the environment) and through different forms: workshops, seminars, or brainstorming sessions. Some of the outcomes are either reported back or simply consolidated into broader feedback.
- Include various forms of leadership development as part of the meetings, calling in specialist help if necessary, and organise mentoring for new leaders at the meetings.
- Encourage participants to use the opportunity of sitting and discussing with their peers issues of shared concern to help develop their own domestic programmes.
- Provide numerous opportunities for leaders from comparatively small or weak organisations “to shine” and to have their voices heard by their peers; this might be one of the most useful functions of the global meetings.
- Pay attention to the nature of meeting venues:

- Give preference to smaller towns and rural settings as far as possible: ensure that participants have ample access to fresh air and opportunities for physical exercise.
- Ideally, the venues should be located in settings that afford participants close contact with and easy access to nature.
- Choose meeting rooms with natural light: how can people working on bits of paper in an artificially lit room for a whole day be expected to be inspired and enthusiastic?
- Make a big show and dance about medals and their recipients at each meeting: much appreciated.
- Pay attention to the social dimension of the meetings, and provide ample room for people to be together in agenda-free settings.

ⁱ In this regard a way should be found to make a link to the proposed new Strategy, which is partly designed for this purpose

ⁱⁱ Evaluation. Achievement of the Strategic Objectives and the Expected Results of the Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement", Michèle Mercier, February 2011. Available at http://www.standcom.ch/download/strategy_for_the_movement_update_2005/Evaluation_report.pdf